

# Science Word Detectives

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Decoding the many terms used in science may seem like learning a new language. Scientists often use scientific words for common words that most of us already know. For example, a scientist will say “neo” instead of “new” or “pseudo” instead of “fake”.



To learn science, you need to also learn this new language using the list of prefixes and suffixes provided by your teacher. Just remember that most words can be broken up into a **PREFIX** (the beginning of the word) and a **SUFFIX** (the end of the word).

## Example of how to use the list

**Word: TELESCOPE**

**Step 1:** Break the word into its parts.

- TELESCOPE → TELE + SCOPE

**Step 2:** Look up each part of the word and record it in your chart

- tele = at a distance
- scope = look or observe

**Step 3:** Use the meanings of each to write a definition. Write it in your chart.

- Definition = “distance-look” or to look at something at a distance.

## Things to remember ...

- The order of the words may not always seem right as prefixes and suffixes may be used in different places. You can rearrange them to make the definition.
- If you can only find one part of a word, use that as a good clue about the meaning of the whole word.
- You may have extra letters like **o** or **a** or **i** between two parts of a word that do not add to the meaning.

A list of scientific prefixes and suffixes is available at  
<https://www.biologyjunction.com/prefixes%20and%20suffixes.pdf>

**Part A:** Use the prefix and suffix list to help you figure out the meanings of the following words. Fill in the chart by listing the meaning of the prefix and suffix along with a definition. The first one has been done for you as an example.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Prefix Meaning</b>	<b>Suffix Meaning</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Cardiology	Heart	Study	Study of the heart
Phototropism			
Arthropod			
Echinoderm			
Epiglottis			
Multicellular			
Hypodermic			
Anthropology			
Hypothermic			
Pseudopod			
Decapod			
Hepatitis			
Microbiology			
Cytology			
Geology			
Meteorology			

**Part B:** List (or create) five science terms and explain the meaning using the method you did above.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Prefix Meaning</b>	<b>Suffix Meaning</b>	<b>Definition</b>