



Pu Latin and Greek Roots in Academic Vocabulary

Most modern English words originated in other languages, especially Latin and Greek. Learning the meaning of these common Latin and Greek roots will help you with English academic vocabulary, especially in Social Studies and Language Arts. Use the back of this page to test yourself.

Common Root	Meaning	Origin	Examples
arist	<i>excellence</i>	Greek	aristocrat, aristocracy
aut, auto	<i>self</i>	Greek	autograph, automatic, automobile, autonomy, autonomous, autism, autistic
bene	<i>good, well</i>	Latin	benefit, beneficial, beneficiary, benefactor, benevolent, benediction
civ	<i>citizen</i>	Latin	civil, civilian, civilized, civility, civilization, civic, civics
cracy, crat	<i>rule, government</i>	Greek	democracy, democrat, bureaucracy, bureaucrat, autocracy, theocracy
crit	<i>judge, separate</i>	Greek	critic, critical, criticize, critique, criterion
dem, demo	<i>people</i>	Greek	democracy, democratic, democrat, demography, demographic
dict	<i>say, speak</i>	Latin	contradict, dictate, dictator, dictatorship, dictation, dictionary, edict, predict
eu	<i>good, well</i>	Greek	euphemism, euphoria, euthanasia, eulogy
ism	<i>system</i>	Greek	anarchism, monotheism, polytheism, nihilism, pantheism
jud	<i>judge</i>	Latin	judge, judgement, judgemental, judicial, judiciary
lab	<i>work</i>	Latin	labor, elaborate, laboratory, laborious, labored
lib	<i>free</i>	Latin	liberty, libertarian, liberate, liberation, liberal, liberalize
mal	<i>bad, not well</i>	Latin	malicious, malice, malign, malignant, malady, malevolent, malnutrition, malpractice
ment	<i>mind</i>	Latin	mental, mentality, dementia, demented, mention, memento
ortho	<i>straight</i>	Greek	orthodox, orthodoxy, orthodontist, orthography, orthopedics
para	<i>beside, along side of</i>	Greek	paradox, paradigm, paramount, paraprofessional, paralegal
pol	<i>city</i>	Greek	police, metropol, monopoly, megalopol, policy, politics, politician, political
prim	<i>first</i>	Latin	primary, primitive, primate, primer, primeval, supremacy
serv	<i>save, serve</i>	Latin	servant, conserve, conservative, conservation, reserve, preserve, deserve, service