Common Core Language Standards: "It's All Greek (and Latin) to Me!"
Focus: Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

Overview: After preliminary review of key terms (prefix, root, suffix), students will use online and print resources to learn the meanings and use of Greek and Latin roots in sentences of their own construction.

Standards

- **9-10.LS. 4.** Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases *based on grades 9-10 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
  - **a**. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of the word or phrase.
  - **b**. Identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., *analyze, analysis, analytical*; *advocate, advocacy*).
  - **c.** Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning, its part of speech, or its etymology.
  - **d**. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).

Objectives

- To acquire new vocabulary
- To decode meanings of words using context clues
- To determine the meaning of words by deconstructing hem
- To recognize parts of speech by suffix clues
- To use various references to decode exact meanings of words
- To understand appropriate use of common domain-specific language

Materials

- Greek and Latin Roots PDF File
- Internet access to online dictionary source such as Dictionary.com
- (Optional) Subscription to the Oxford English Dictionary

Activity 1: Words, Words, Words

Purpose: To review essential terminology for vocabulary study and demonstrate that prefixes change the meaning of a word while suffixes tend to change the function of the word in a sentence.

Lecture
Introduction
Explain to students the importance of Greek and Latin roots and their impact on the English language -- their use in medicine, science, law, religion, and almost every other academic discipline.

A helpful comparison to make is to a master key: Knowing Greek and Latin prefixes and roots allow you to "decode" new and unfamiliar words such as *Mesozoic* or *polydactyl* with confidence. Also explain that if students are fortunate enough to speak a Latin-based language (e.g., Spanish) fluently, they will be in a tremendous position of advantage to decode Latinate words in English.

Introduce some of the basic terminology you will be using during this unit, particularly *prefix, suffix, article, plural,* and *root*. Most students will probably just need reminding of these terms.

Present students with a short list of common **prefixes** such as *pre-, anti-, un -, pro-, sub-*, and so forth and ask them to suggest possible ways the words could be continued, as in the following example:

> - **Pre+view = preview**
> - **Pre+amble=preamble**
> - **Sub+marine=submarine**
> - **Sub+tract=subtract**
> - **Anti+thesis=antithesis**
> - **Pro+fession=profession**
> - **Un+fair=unfair**

Now, explain that words in English often end with suffixes -- "word tags" that come at the end of the word and often indicate the function of that word, e.g., what part of speech the word happens to be. Explain that many of the same prefixes and roots can have a variety of suffixes, but that if you change the suffix, you change the part of speech that word happens to be.

Example: Have students add some of the following suffixes below to the word "preview."
Note: Obviously, they won't be able to add all of the prefixes to that word.

Example Suffixes
• - ing
• -s
• -ed
• -ly
• -tion
• -ness

Discussion
- Ask students what the difference is between *preview, previews, previewing, previewed*? Ask students to put the words in a sentence to explore their different meanings.
- In discussing the other suffixes, ask students what words end with *-tion, -ness,* or *-ly*.
- Stress the idea that prefixes change the word's meaning (e.g., preview versus review), but suffixes change the function of the word in a sentence as in the example *fair* (an adjective) to *fairly* (an adverb) to *fairness* (a noun).

Small Groups
In small groups, ask students to establish the differences between or among the following word groups and be prepared to put the words into example sentences during whole-class discussion. Dictionary access should be made available -- either online dictionaries or print.

• gentle	• gentleness	• gentility
• fair	• fairness	
• quick	• quickness	• quickly
• analytical	• analysis	• analyze
• advocate	• advocacy	
• subtract	• subtraction	

Conclusion
Reflect on the important ideas discussed so far: that prefixes change the word's meaning, roots are the "core" of the word, and suffixes change the word's function in the sentence. Explain that Greek and Latin vocabulary will contain prefixes, suffixes, and roots, and that students will learn to move from one form of the word to another, eventually being "word detectives" to decode unfamiliar words using the "master keys" they have learned.

Activity 2: Playing With Words

Purpose
Students will begin to use the Greek and Latin root-based words in sentences of their own devising.

Activities
Introduce students to the Greek and Latin roots list. Start with the first list in the PDF file (printed below) and provide in-class examples and guidance for incorporating the words into independently-written sentences.

Make the Words Your Own!
Give students the following list of words (Greek roots list #1).

anthro	man	anthropology, misanthrope
phil	love	bibliophile, philanthropy
biblio	book	bibliography
phon	sound	phonograph, microphone
graph, gram	record	phonograph, telegram
caco	bad	cacophony
micro	small	microphone, microscope
log(y)	study of	etymology, psychology
gam	marriage	bigamy, polygamy, monogamy

Students may be unfamiliar with these words or their pronunciations. Go through (for example) the word *anthropology*. Explain that the word actually consists of a root (anthrop-, meaning *man* or *human*) and a suffix (-ology, meaning *the study of*). Ask students, "What does this mean when you put the two pieces together?" A useful comparison to make would be to Legos -- you snap them together to create a new object. Here, you "snap together" roots and suffixes to create a new word. If necessary, proceed through other Greek roots in the list to demonstrate the "Legos" concept of Greek prefixes, roots, and suffixes.

Group Work Exercise
Split students into small groups and give them the first five words. Provide students with the following directions:

Word Work

1. Divide your paper into three columns like so:

Root	Word Containing Roots	Sentence Showing Meaning
anthro	anthropology	I study **anthropology**, which is the <u>study of mankind's development</u>.

2. You will be writing down the roots, one word containing the root, and inventing a sentence showing the word's meaning.

    HINT: I should not be able to replace the word in your sentence with the word "chocolate." For example, if you said in the sentence above, "I love anthropology," I could replace that with, "I love chocolate." However, if you really, really told me what the word meant and showed that in your sentence, replacing "anthropology" with "chocolate" would not work!

3. Write down at least five roots, five words, and five sentences. Each person in your group is responsible for writing at least one sentence each or more.

Whole-Class Discussion
Ask students to share the sentences they came up with. Correct as you go, ensuring that students are using the words correctly, defining the words within the sentences, explaining meanings sufficiently, and understanding the correct form of the word. (For example, a student should not be saying, "He is an *anthropology* because he studies human beings.")

Individual Work
Students should complete the remaining words in Greek roots #1 by themselves, continuing the work they have begun in group work.

Note: This exercise can be done weekly. Depending on the ability level of the class, work can begin in class under teacher supervision (as above) or can be given to the students independently. Quizzes may be needed to demonstrate student mastery.

Extension

If students are particularly adept at vocabulary, they may be asked to write sentences incorporating both Greek root-based words with sentence patterns (e.g., to write all sentences in a *subject-verb; subject verb* pattern such as *I study anthropology; it is the study of humankind*).

Conclusion
Review major elements of the assignment, emphasizing that basically the best way to really make vocabulary "real" and lasting is to make it your own in sentences you construct. A quick "drive-by review" can conclude the class in which the teacher engages in fun, rapid-fire questions for competition, e.g., "Okay, what does the Greek root *anthro* mean? How about *biblio*? What does an *anthropologist* study?"

Activity 3: Your Turn to Play

Purpose
To reinforce student understanding of Greek roots through interactive games online keyed to the words. Note: Greek roots 1 = Greek roots 1.1 on Quia. Greek roots 2 = Greek roots 1.2 on Quia, and so on.

Word Games
Using the computer as a reinforcement activity, students can play online games modeled after *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?* The questions get progressively more challenging, and three "misses" sends players back to the beginning. Review is therefore built into the game.

- **Greek Roots 1**
  Review Game
- **Greek Roots 2**
  Review Game
- **Greek Roots 3**
  Review Game
- **Greek Roots 4**
  Review Game
- **Greek Roots 5**
  Review Game
- **Greek Roots 6**
  Review Game
- **Greek Roots 1 through 6**
  Review Game
- **Greek Roots 7 - 8** Review Game
- **Greek Roots 9-10-** Review Game
- **Greek Roots 11**
  Review Game

- **Greek Roots 12**
  Review Game
- **Greek Roots 13**
  Review Game

This exercise can be used for reinforcement, for reward when students have finished work on other projects, or for just plain fun.

Conclusion
Students effectively learn vocabulary when they incorporate it into their own sentences and "make it their own." Greek and Latin roots, the basis of so much college- and career-focused vocabulary, are among the most useful elements of language to teach students in a unit on vocabulary. Work on vocabulary can be ongoing throughout the year.

Resources

- ***Perfect Inventions=Perfect World*. New York: Scholastic Inc., 2000.**
  This was written by a group of fifth-grade students in South Carolina. They used Greek, Latin, Old English, and modern English roots and created a clever 'ABC book' of very funny inventions. It's adorable.
- **Board Game**
  http://www.brighthub.com/education/k-12/articles/35437.aspx
  This site actually shows you how to create a board game using the roots. Clever.
- **More Roots!**
  https://www.msu.edu/~defores1/gre/roots/gre_rts_afx2.htm
  A very long list of roots, but a good mix to choose from.
- **Using Technology**
  http://www.slideshare.net/hendersondp/using-technology-to-teach-greek-and-latin-roots
  This is a short how-to slide presentation. It's a bit complicated, but some good ideas.
- **Lesson**
  http://www.resourceroom.net/comprehension/wordparts/
  A very good, simple lesson with easy examples.
- **Quizzes and Exercises**
  http://edhelper.com/Word_Roots.htm
  This may be too easy, but the quizzes and exercises are already written; it could be adapted quite easily to accommodate your grade level. Cute.
- **Exercises!**
  http://www.centurylink.net/search/index.php?_LT=HOME_GBARGLBCT_UGLSR&q=using+greek+and+latin+roots&context=www.centurylink.net&x=0&y=0
  This is a pdf file of lots of exercises (and answers!) You could pick and choose; they're already written!
- **Prefixes, Roots, Etymology**
  http://www.r-go.ca/pages/Etymexe.htm
  Wow! A great site for prefixes, suffixes, roots, etymology…with several exercises ready to print!
- **Online Dictionary Quizzes**
  http://www.ncistudent.net/studyskills/learningskills/UsingDictionaryQuizzes.htm
  This uses an on-line dictionary for a quick etymology 'quiz.' It might be good or an intro lesson or homework lesson. Easy.
- **Vocabulary Exercises**
  http://www.wordfocus.com/vocabulary-resources.html
  This has lots of vocabulary building exercises using roots.