

Root Clue Detectives

See when a known word helps you understand a new word.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.3.4c "Use a known root word as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word with the same root (e.g., company, companion)."

NAME _____

DATE _____

ROOT CLUE

A longer word has a known root word and a related meaning. The known word helps you figure out the new word.

Known word: joy. New word: joyful. Joyful means full of joy.

NO ROOT CLUE

Sometimes a word starts with a known word, but the meanings are not related. The known word does not help you figure out the new word.

Known word: pan. New word: panda. A panda is not related to a pan.

1 SORT _____ 8 items

Circle ROOT CLUE or NO CLUE for each pair, then choose two pairs and explain how the known word did or did not help you.

1. Known word: help. New word: helpful.

ROOT CLUE

NO CLUE

2. Known word: farm. New word: farmer.

ROOT CLUE

NO CLUE

3. Known word: car. New word: carpet.

ROOT CLUE

NO CLUE

4. Known word: kind. New word: kindness.

ROOT CLUE

NO CLUE

5. Known word: can. New word: candle.

ROOT CLUE

NO CLUE

6. Known word: pie. New word: piece.

ROOT CLUE

NO CLUE

7. Known word: read. New word: reader.

ROOT CLUE

NO CLUE

8. Known word: fear. New word: fearless.

ROOT CLUE

NO CLUE

2 PROVE IT Explain your thinking

Pick two items from Part 1. For each one, tell how you knew where it belonged.

ITEM # _____ HOW I KNEW _____

ITEM # _____ HOW I KNEW _____

3 MAKE YOUR OWN One of each

Write one new ROOT CLUE pair and one new NO CLUE pair.

ROOT CLUE _____

NO CLUE _____

CHALLENGE

Choose your ROOT CLUE pair, write a sentence using the new word, and tell what the root word helped you understand.

PART 1 • SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	Known word: help. New word: helpful.	ROOT CLUE	Helpful means able or ready to help, so help is a clue.
2	Known word: farm. New word: farmer.	ROOT CLUE	A farmer is a person who farms, so farm is a clue.
3	Known word: car. New word: carpet.	NO CLUE	A carpet is not related in meaning to a car.
4	Known word: kind. New word: kindness.	ROOT CLUE	Kindness means the quality of being kind, so kind is a clue.
5	Known word: can. New word: candle.	NO CLUE	A candle is not related in meaning to a can.
6	Known word: pie. New word: piece.	NO CLUE	A piece is not related in meaning to a pie.
7	Known word: read. New word: reader.	ROOT CLUE	A reader is a person who reads, so read is a clue.
8	Known word: fear. New word: fearless.	ROOT CLUE	Fearless means without fear, so fear is a clue.

PART 2 • PROVE IT

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item.

PART 3 • MAKE YOUR OWN (SAMPLE ANSWERS)

- **ROOT CLUE:** Known word: rain. New word: rainy.
- **NO CLUE:** Known word: tea. New word: team.

Challenge: The rainy day filled the puddles. The word rain helped me understand that rainy means having rain. Items 1, 2, 4, 7, and 8 are ROOT CLUE. Items 3, 5, and 6 are NO CLUE. Accept proof explanations that name the known word and explain whether the meanings are related.