Buried Word Clues

Use Latin word parts and context to uncover meanings in an archaeology text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.4b "Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., precede, recede, secede)."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline four words with Greek or Latin roots or affixes, then write each word part and your inferred meaning in the margin, using nearby details to check your ideas.

Pompeii Beneath the Ash

1 In 79 CE, Mount Vesuvius erupted near the Roman city of Pompeii. Ash and small stones fell for hours, covering streets, homes, and gardens. Many residents fled, but others remained indoors or were unable to escape. Over time, layers of material protected parts of the city from weather and later construction. Pompeii became a remarkable record of daily Roman life, including shops, painted walls, tools, and public fountains to study carefully today.

2 Beginning in the eighteenth century, excavators removed ash carefully, layer by layer. They found some subterranean rooms. Later deposits lay above these rooms, and narrow paths ran between buildings. Archaeologists do not simply collect attractive objects. They document each item's location, position, and nearby materials. These records help researchers reconstruct events, such as which rooms people used for cooking, trading, or sleeping. Careful documentation also lets later scholars review earlier claims when new evidence appears during future investigations.

3 One striking find is the carbonized food discovered in bakeries. Heat from the eruption changed loaves of bread into hard, black remains. In one bakery, a mill and oven show that grain was ground and baked close to where customers bought bread. Researchers can compare these remains with written records and images from other Roman sites. This process is not infallible, however. A missing object or an unexplored area can change an interpretation. For that reason, archaeologists describe what evidence supports each conclusion. Researchers also examine pottery imported from other parts of the Roman world.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. The Latin root terra relates to earth. What does subterranean most likely mean in paragraph 2? Name the passage clue that supports your inference.

2. The Latin root struct means build, and re- can mean again. In paragraph 2, what does reconstruct mean as it relates to events?

3. The Latin prefix in- can mean not. What does infallible most likely mean in paragraph 3? Which detail supports your inference?

4. The Latin root port means carry. What does imported mean in paragraph 3?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a word not used in the passage that contains a common Greek or Latin root or affix. In two sentences, name the word, identify one word part and its meaning, explain the whole word's meaning, then use it correctly in a sentence.

ANSWER KEY

Buried Word Clues

GRADE 8 · L.8.4b

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline four words with Greek or Latin roots or affixes, then write each word part and your inferred meaning in the margin, using nearby details to check your ideas. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	The Latin root terra relates to earth. What does subterranean most likely mean in paragraph 2? Name the passage clue that supports your inference.	**Subterranean means below the ground or earth. The clue is that later deposits lay above the rooms.**
2	The Latin root struct means build, and re- can mean again. In paragraph 2, what does reconstruct mean as it relates to events?	**It means to build again or piece together an account of past events from evidence.**
3	The Latin prefix in- can mean not. What does infallible most likely mean in paragraph 3? Which detail supports your inference?	**Infallible means not able to be wrong, or perfect. The passage says a missing object or unexplored area can change an interpretation.**
4	The Latin root port means carry. What does imported mean in paragraph 3?	**Imported means carried or brought in from another place, here from other parts of the Roman world.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The Greek root micro means small, so microscope means a tool used to see small objects. In science class, I used a microscope to examine the cells in a drop of pond water.

Accept equivalent meanings when students connect a correct Greek or Latin word part to a relevant passage clue. For the open task, accept any accurate word analysis and a sentence that clearly shows the word's meaning.