Reef Word Detectives

Use Greek and Latin word parts to unlock science vocabulary.

ELA.6.V.1.2 "Apply knowledge of Greek and Latin roots and affixes to determine meanings of words and phrases in grade-level content."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline four words in the passage that you can break into a Greek or Latin root, prefix, or suffix. In the margin, write a short meaning for each word based on its parts and the sentence around it.

A Reef Research Dive

1. At dawn, a research team launched a small submersible from a boat above a coral reef. The vehicle carried cameras, lights, and a mechanical arm. As it moved below the surface, scientists watched its video on a monitor. They hoped to map places where broken coral might recover. The team also recorded aquatic animals that hid among the reef branches. A map of these observations could help park workers protect the reef from damage caused by anchors and careless visitors.

2. After sunset, the submersible returned to examine a deeper ledge. In the dark water, several bioluminescent creatures flashed blue-green patterns near the cameras. A nocturnal fish followed the machine for several minutes, then disappeared beneath a shelf. Scientists compared the video with earlier recordings to see whether the creatures appeared in the same locations each night. Such repeated observations can reveal changes in an ecosystem over time. The quiet vehicle allowed the team to observe without touching the animals.

3. On the next day, the crew visited a shallow bay near a busy harbor. They collected microplastic particles in fine nets and sorted the material on deck. The researchers noted the location of each sample before sending it to a laboratory. To prevent extra trash, crew members packed meals in reusable containers. They will share their findings with local leaders, who can consider ways to keep litter from reaching the water. Careful records and thoughtful choices can support healthier coastal habitats.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. The Latin prefix sub- means “under.” What does submersible most likely mean in paragraph 1?

2. The Latin root aqua means “water.” What does aquatic most likely mean in the passage?

3. The Greek root bio means “life,” and the Latin root lumin means “light.” What does bioluminescent most likely mean?

4. The Greek prefix micro- means “small.” What does microplastic most likely mean in paragraph 3?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write exactly two sentences about a science topic. In the first sentence, use a content word with a Greek or Latin root or affix. In the second sentence, name the word part and explain how it helps you determine the word’s meaning.

ANSWER KEY

Reef Word Detectives

GRADE 6 · ELA.6.V.1.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline four words in the passage that you can break into a Greek or Latin root, prefix, or suffix. In the margin, write a short meaning for each word based on its parts and the sentence around it. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	The Latin prefix sub- means "under." What does submersible most likely mean in paragraph 1?	**A vehicle designed to go under water.**
2	The Latin root aqua means "water." What does aquatic most likely mean in the passage?	**Living in, growing in, or related to water.**
3	The Greek root bio means "life," and the Latin root lumin means "light." What does bioluminescent most likely mean?	**Producing light from a living organism.**
4	The Greek prefix micro- means "small." What does microplastic most likely mean in paragraph 3?	**Very small pieces or particles of plastic.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A geologist examined rocks near a volcano. The Greek root geo means Earth, so geologist means a scientist who studies Earth.

Accept definitions that accurately use the stated word parts and fit the passage context. For Part 3, accept any accurate Greek or Latin root or affix explanation in exactly two sentences.