Word Part Detectives

Build words and find where each new part goes.

4.LF.4 "Apply knowledge of roots, prefixes, and suffixes to encode unfamiliar multisyllabic words."

NAME _____ DATE _____

PREFIX

A prefix goes before a base word. Join the parts to spell the new word.

over- + heat = overheat

SUFFIX

A suffix goes after a base word. Join the parts to spell the new word.

cloud + -y = cloudy

1 SORT

8 items

For each item, write the new word and circle PREFIX or SUFFIX, then choose two items and explain how you knew where each added part goes.

1. The clues were not clear: un- + clear = _____ PREFIX SUFFIX
2. Write the list again: re- + write = _____ PREFIX SUFFIX
3. A person who teaches: teach + -er = _____ PREFIX SUFFIX
4. The message was understood the wrong way: mis- + understood = _____ PREFIX SUFFIX
5. The puppy is full of play: play + -ful = _____ PREFIX SUFFIX
6. The room was still and silent: still + -ness = _____ PREFIX SUFFIX
7. The teams did not agree: dis- + agree = _____ PREFIX SUFFIX
8. See a movie before it opens: pre- + view = _____ PREFIX SUFFIX

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 word made with a prefix and one made with a suffix, and show the parts you joined.

PREFIX _____

SUFFIX _____

CHALLENGE

Write one word with both a prefix and a suffix, and show all three parts you joined.

ANSWER KEY # Word Part Detectives

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The clues were not clear: un- + clear = _____	**PREFIX**	Un- goes before clear to spell unclear.
2	Write the list again: re- + write = _____	**PREFIX**	Re- goes before write to spell rewrite.
3	A person who teaches: teach + -er = _____	**SUFFIX**	-Er goes after teach to spell teacher.
4	The message was understood the wrong way: mis- + understood = _____	**PREFIX**	Mis- goes before understood to spell misunderstood.
5	The puppy is full of play: play + -ful = _____	**SUFFIX**	-Ful goes after play to spell playful.
6	The room was still and silent: still + -ness = _____	**SUFFIX**	-Ness goes after still to spell stillness.
7	The teams did not agree: dis- + agree = _____	**PREFIX**	Dis- goes before agree to spell disagree.
8	See a movie before it opens: pre- + view = _____	**PREFIX**	Pre- goes before view to spell preview.

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)

- **PREFIX**: sub- + zero = subzero
- **SUFFIX**: farm + -er = farmer

Challenge: un- + help + -ful = unhelpful

For Part 2, accept explanations that identify whether the added part goes before or after the base word. Check that students spell each joined word correctly.