What Is a Prefix?

A prefix is a group of letters at the beginning of a word that changes the word's meaning.

Word	Prefix and Meaning	New Word
view	*pre-* meaning "before"	preview
happy	*un-* meaning "not"	unhappy

A. Add the prefix *pre-* to make new words.

1. pre + school = _____

2. pre + cook   = _____

3. pre + test   = _____

4. pre + paid   = _____

5. pre + heat   = _____

6. pre + historic = _____

B. Add the prefix *un-* to make new words.

7. un + lucky = _____

8. un + fair   = _____

9. un + usual = _____

10. un + lock   = _____

11. un + kind   = _____

12. un + true   = _____

C. Complete each sentence with a word that has the prefix *un-* or *pre-*. Use a dictionary to help you.

13. If something is too difficult, you may be _____ to do it.

14. Mom will _____ the crust before she bakes the pie.

Activity

Invite students to find other words that begin with these prefixes or end with these suffixes.

Connections to the Standards

With the goal of providing students nationwide with a quality education that prepares them for college and careers, broad standards were developed to establish rigorous educational expectations. These standards serve as the basis of many state standards. The chart below details how this activity aligns with specific language and foundational skills standards for students in grade 3.

English Language Arts Standards	
Language	**Conventions of Standard English**
	• Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
	• Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
	Knowledge of Language
	• Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
	Vocabulary Acquisition and Use
	• Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 3 reading and content, choosing flexibly from an array of strategies.
	• Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.
	• Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal spatial and temporal relationships.
Foundational Skills	**Phonics and Word Recognition**
	• Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.
	Fluency
	• Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.