

# Word Building Dominoes

Word Building Dominoes are a fun, hands-on way for beginning readers to practice using word analysis and word formation skills to build vocabulary. Included are 108 double-sided, color-coded dominoes (216 words and affixes):

44 green prefixes, 70 blue suffixes, 102 yellow base words. Use the dominoes with small groups of students, or place them at a center for hours of independent, skill-building learning.



## Word Building Activities

### Introduce the Dominoes

Encourage students to explore the dominoes, helping them to read any dominoes that are difficult for them. Point out the different color dominoes, and explain that they show different word parts. Print sentences, such as the following, on sentence strips or on the board:

*I locked the door when I left.*

*Mom unlocked the door when she came home.*

*She will relock the door when she goes out.*

Have a volunteer read the sentences aloud. Ask students what the *un-* means in *unlocked* (not or opposite of) and what the *re-* means in *relocked* (to do again). Explain to students that *re-* and *un-* are prefixes. When a prefix is added to the beginning of a base word, it forms a new word.

Do the same activity with suffixes, explaining that a suffix is a word part that is added to the end of a base word to form a new word.

**Note:** Point out to students that some verbs, such as hope, excite, use, etc., drop the vowel before they add *-ing* to form the present participle and, because they already end in e, add *-d* to form the past tense. Or, if you wish, remove these dominoes when focusing on those suffixes.

### Match Meanings

Write the meaning of each prefix and suffix included in this set on an index card. Place the index cards and dominoes at a center. Have students match the prefix and suffix dominoes with the index cards that show the word part's correct meaning. For example, students would match the domino with *un-* and the index card with *not*. You may also want to provide a "hint," such as \_\_\_happy or \_\_\_lock.

**Note:** You may choose to place prefixes with similar meanings, such as *dis-*, *non-*, and *un-*, on the same card or make separate cards for them.



## Speed Words

Assign a student or group of students a prefix or a suffix domino, such as *-ful*, and have the students make as many words as possible that contain that affix – *careful*, *restful*, *wonderful*, *cheerful*, etc.



*Variation:* Once a word has been made, have children write it down, and then put the dominoes back in the pile to be reused in another word. Give students a time limit and see how many words they can make.

## Word Race

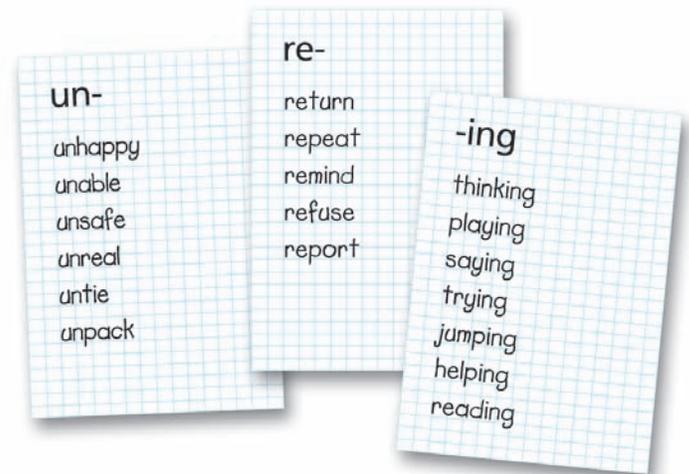
Depending on the age and experience of your students, spread some or all of the dominoes out on a table, or use the base words and *either* the prefixes or the suffixes. Ask a child or small group of children to form as many words as possible, using *at least* two dominoes per word. When a word is formed, put it aside. Remind students to look at both sides of the dominoes for more options. When students are finished, count how many words were made. As students become proficient creating words with two dominoes, challenge them to use three dominoes.



*Variation:* Once a word has been made, have children write it down, and then put the dominoes back in the pile to be reused in another word. Give students a time limit and see how many words they can make.

## Prefixes and Suffixes Word Wall

Start a word wall for words that contain prefixes and suffixes. Write the affixes you wish to focus on, such as those most commonly used (*re-*, *un-*, *dis-*, *-s*, *-ed*, *-ing*) on chart paper. Give each student a prefix or suffix domino. Have students look through books, newspapers, and magazines to find words that use their assigned affixes. When students find a word, they can write it on the corresponding piece of chart paper.



## Prefix Big Book

Write different prefixes on chart paper. Give a child or small group of children a prefix domino and a dictionary. Children should find a word in the dictionary that uses their prefix, and then write the word and its definition on the paper. Students can also illustrate their words. Children can then switch dominoes to work on a new prefix, adding their words and definitions to those of their classmates. Afterward, read all the words and definitions aloud so students can reinforce the prefixes and learn the new words. Finally, bind the pages in a Prefix Big Book.



## Word Recipes

Set out several prefixes, suffixes, and base words. Give a definition, such as "not kind," "mix again," "full of fear," etc. Have students make the words as you read the definitions. Then have students read the words aloud: unkind, remix, and fearful.

## Partner Words

Choose several prefixes, suffixes, and base words. Make sure each domino will have at least one word-forming match. Place all the dominoes in a bag and let each student pick one. Then have students move about the room, trying to find another student with whom they can form a new word. When they find a partner, they sit down together. When everyone has found a partner, have students say their new word aloud.

*Extension:* Ask the students holding a prefix domino to stand. Then ask students holding a base word domino to stand, etc. so that students learn the types of word parts.

## Base-word Bingo

The object of this game is to be the first student to change nine base words into new words. Give each student a blank 9-square grid as a game board. Write a variety of base words on the board, including familiar adjectives (kind, fresh, slow, etc.) and verbs (agree, cover, play, etc.) from the set. Have students copy any nine of the words onto their game boards in random order. Place the prefixes and suffixes dominoes in a bag. Invite a volunteer "caller" to draw a domino and read it aloud. Students try to make a word by adding that prefix or suffix to one of their base words, and writing it in the square. Play continues until one player has changed all of his or her words into new words.

unkind	slowly	cooked
disagree	playful	helping
newer	pretest	replace



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