

## Sort 21 Greek Word Parts: Sound, Light, Write, and Distance (*phon*, *photo*, *graph*, *tele*)

This sort offers robust opportunities for exploring some Greek word parts that occur frequently in printed materials from the intermediate grades onward. When these word parts combine with other Greek elements, the resulting meaning is usually transparent. There are many words in this sort that offer rich opportunities for elaboration, but they cannot all be discussed at the same time. Plan to talk about different words on other days and extend this lesson to two or three weeks if necessary.

**Generalization:** The Greek word part *phon* means “sound”; *photo*, “light”; *graph*, “write”; and *tele* means “far, distant.”

<i>phon</i>	<i>photo</i>	<i>graph</i>	<i>tele</i>
phonics	photograph*	graphic	television
phono-graph*	photocopier	autograph	telegraph*
headphones	photo-grapher	telegraph*	telegram
homophone	photo-synthesis	calligraphy	telephoto*
microphone			tele-phone*
symphony			

\*These are words that go in more than one category.

**Explore Meaning:** There may be a number of unfamiliar words, and all will be discussed during the lesson. However, ask students about *phonograph* (record player) and *calligraphy* (handwriting), and ask someone to look them up if needed.

### Sorting and Discussion:

1. Introduce this lesson by sharing that, **In our last two lessons, we’ve been looking at Latin word roots. In this lesson, we’ll look at Greek word parts.**
2. Display the words, and have the students read through them. Ask, **What do you notice about these words?** Students will notice the common word parts. Introduce the headers and say, **Let’s sort these words by their word parts, and then we will talk about what they might mean. I see**

the word part *phon* in the word *phonics*, so I will sort it under that heading. You can continue sorting as a group or ask students to sort independently. Explain, **Some words can go under more than one header, but choose one for now.**

3. Read down the words under the *phon* header, and say, **Think about what the meaning of all these words have in common. Does that give you any ideas what the word part *phon* might mean? Share your ideas with a partner.** If someone comes up with the right answer right away, ask, **How did you figure that out?** or **What words helped you?** Prompt the students as needed by focusing on particular words: **What do you do with headphones?** (listen to music) **With a microphone?** (record music or talk) **So what do music and talking have in common?** (They are sounds.) Say, **Let’s check and see if *sound* goes with the other words: Telephone? Phonics? Phonograph? Homophone? Symphony?**
4. Repeat with *photo*, *graph*, and *tele* in the same way to establish that *photo* means “light,” *graph* means “to write or record something,” and *tele* means “distant” or “far off.” Move words, like *phonograph* and *telephone*, that share two elements into the appropriate columns as they are discussed. Elicit definitions and explanations from the students using the best-known words first. Remember to ask, **How did you figure that out? Or, What words helped you?** (You may elect not to use *photosynthesis* if it fits within your science curriculum, however, talk about it on another day as described in the Extend section.)
5. Wrap up the first day’s discussion by saying, **What did you learn from this sort? How can this help you as a reader when you encounter new words? Can knowing the word parts *phon*, *photo*, *graph*, and *tele* help you as a speller? Which part of these elements may get misspelled?** (The *ph* spells the /f/ sound.) Explain, **Many words contain these Greek word parts and they usually have a pretty consistent meaning. Most of the time they do not occur by themselves as words, although sometimes they do, as in *photo* and *graph*.**

### Extend:

Assign weekly routines that reinforce meaning, such as using words in sentences or phrases and illustrating words. Word hunts will prove challenging, because these additional words are rather rare.

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# Greek and Latin Elements

Many English words are derived from Greek and Latin.

## What is Etymology?

etymology—the study of the origin of words (where they came from) and how their meanings have evolved (changed) throughout history

Use [www.etymonline.com](http://www.etymonline.com), an Online Etymology Dictionary, to discover additional words related to the Greek and Latin elements being studied. This will also provide a solid definition for the element when you simply type in the word part.

## Other Web Resources:

[www.wordhippo.com](http://www.wordhippo.com)

[www.onelook.com](http://www.onelook.com)

## What is PIE?

You may see "from PIE root" when researching Greek and Latin elements. PIE stands for Proto-Indo-European. Linguists believe that all modern Indo-European languages descended from a single language called Proto-Indo-European. It was a spoken language by people who lived from 4500-2500 B.C. and left no written texts.

You can learn more at [Wikipedia's Proto-Indo-European Root](#) page.

# Greek and Latin Elements Analysis

## Additional Words Containing Element

wordhippo.com:  
"Find Words"—type in your  
word element to see a list  
of words that contain the  
word part.

## Etymology

etymonline.com:  
In the search box, type in  
your word element; find it in  
the list and read about the  
etymology of the Greek or  
Latin element.

## Where to Look

Create an illustration using  
as many of the words for  
this word element as you  
can or to express the  
element's meaning.

## Illustration

etymonline.com:  
In the search box, type in  
your word element; find it in  
the list to identify the  
meaning of the word element.

## Meaning of Greek/Latin Element

Greek Roots Analysis  
Blue Sort 21

Additional Words  
Containing Prefix

Etymology

tele-

Illustration

Meaning of  
Greek/Latin Element

Greek Roots Analysis  
Blue Sort 21

Additional Words  
Containing Prefix

Etymology

phon-

Illustration

Meaning of  
Greek/Latin Element

Greek Roots Analysis  
Blue Sort 21

Additional Words  
Containing Prefix

Etymology

photo-

Illustration

Meaning of  
Greek/Latin Element

Greek Roots Analysis  
Blue Sort 21

Additional Words  
Containing  
Prefix/Suffix

Etymology

graph-

Illustration

Meaning of  
Greek/Latin Element



# Sort 21 Word Search

Name \_\_\_\_\_

R Z B T R S N P W P Y H R P E T C G S N  
T E L C Y E H O H E S N H W F O N A S O  
C L H X A O I O I U N O O N I E K I X O  
D X G P N L T P T S T O F H S W X Z B A  
P C P I A O L X O O I X H P P W Z G A O  
H H C T G R E I S C U V W P S M G B B T  
U S O R E N G Y G I O W E O O Y Y H V L  
I D A N G L N O P R C T N L N R U S R K  
B P Z E O T E I T N A A O N E V C R A N  
H D A J H G S P F O C P L H R T V I W N  
P C I E Q X R D H J H F H M P C Z H M H  
R F S P S B M A S O W P C Y C Y H G P T  
C I Q V B P E Q P S N S R Q I D R A U E  
S T E L E G R A M H G E U Z U A R B L L  
H O M O P H O N E C R G V N P G T D X E  
J I G E A U T O G R A P H H E T P J M P  
D U W R S W L T H Y Z E I L H K P M Y H  
S E N O H P D A E H B C E G B V O D H O  
U G U T S X Z Y X C J T C Q O A D X A T  
G B J X W Q S V L C C W C E Y G H P Y O

autograph	phonics	symphony
calligraphy	phonograph	telegram
graphic	photocopier	telegraph
headphones	photograph	telephone
homophone	photographer	telephoto
microphone	photosynthesis	television

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