

Latin Words

January 7-14

As we study biology, you will encounter some strange-looking words. For example, *chemotropism*, *macromolecule*, *carnivore*, and *saprophyte* are words biologists use to describe living things and how they behave. These words are from a language called *Latin*.

Why Latin? Well, good question! Latin, as well as Greek, are “dead languages”. Unlike English, French, Norwegian and other spoken languages, they don’t change as the years go by. Nobody walks around speaking Latin to each other on the soccer field, but they do use it when they need to communicate with scientists from other countries.

Latin is a valuable language for biology. It has also sneaked its way into our English language, so you will recognize some parts of Latin words – prefixes and suffixes – in our everyday vocabulary. For example, you know that a “unicycle” is a one-wheeled bicycle, right? The prefix *uni* is a Latin word meaning “one.” Ta da! How about “microscope”? It is an instrument (scope) to see little things (*micro* means “small”). Now you can understand why Latin is both fascinating and significant for scientists, as well as the rest of us!

Each week I will give you about TEN Latin prefixes and/or suffixes, along with their definitions. You must study them and complete a little exercise for your Nature Journal. As always, I will collect your Journal pages on the last Tuesday of each month.

On the day I collect Journals, I will also give you a quiz on the Latin words you have learned.

Words for this Week

Word	Meaning in English
Arth	Joint
Auto	Self
Cellular	Related to cells
Cyto	Cell
Itis	Disease
Logy	Study of
Meso	Middle
Phyll	Leaf
Troph	Food
Uni	One

Your Assignment

Below are five biology words written with Latin prefixes and/or suffixes. Your job is to write the meaning of each word in English. The first one has been done for you.

Word	Meaning in English
Hydrophyte	A plant that grows in water.
Arthritis	
Autotroph	
Cytology	
Unicellular	
Mesophyll	