

Prefixes and Suffixes (continued)

Suffixes

Suffixes are word parts that are found at the end of words. Here are some common suffixes you can learn to recognize in your reading.

Common Suffixes			
-able, -ible	able to be	-less	without
-ful	full of	-ly	in such a manner
-hood	condition, state	-ment	state; act
-ion, -tion,		-ship	state, condition
-ity	state; quality	-some	like, tending to
-ish	like; having the characteristics of	-ward	in the direction of
-ive	relating to; having the quality of		

Example

- *The crew of the clipper ship spotted land to the windward side.*
Since *-ward* is a suffix meaning "in the direction of," you can assume that the crew saw land in the direction from which the wind was blowing.

Prefixes and Suffixes in Action

Read the following passage.

In November 1753, George Washington was asked by the governor of Virginia to investigate the newly built French forts along the Ohio River and to ask the French to withdraw. Washington met with many difficulties along the way, including impassable streams and bothersome weather.

When he finally met with the French, Washington commented, "They pretend to have an undoubted right to the river from a discovery made by one La Salle sixty years ago." His counterproductive discussions with the French eventually led to the beginning of the Seven Years War.

The underlined words in the paragraph above may be unfamiliar to you. Your knowledge of prefixes and suffixes can help you decode them. Take the word *impassable*, for instance. It consists of three parts: the prefix *im-* ("not"), the core word *pass* ("to go by or over"), and the suffix *-able* ("able to be"). If you put all three of these meanings together, you get "not able to be passed or crossed over." In other words, Washington found many streams that he could not cross.

