

Topic 2: Plants of the Riparian Ecosystem

I. Two-Minute History

English is a very versatile, fluid language. It allows those who speak it to make up new words at any time, just by cleverly employing some basic principles of its grammar. For example, if you have a friend who dances really well, you could compare him to the great dancer Patrick Swayze by saying that your friend was "swaying" at the club the other night. Latin is very similar. During the Middle Ages and continuing throughout the 19th century, scientists in particular used ancient Latin roots to create new words that described scientific processes. This week's vocabulary word, "herbivore," was actually invented in the 1850s to describe grass-eating animals.

II. Learning Latin Roots

native/non-native

English definition: belonging to a particular place by birth

Latin root: *nativus* = by birth, inborn, innate

Related Latin words: *nativitas* (a birth), *natio* (race or tribe), *natales* (lineage, ancestry)

herbivores

English definition: animals that eat plants

Latin root: *herbivorus* = created from *herba* (grass, green stalks) and *voro* (to eat); hence, grass-eating

Related Latin words: *herbaceus* (grassy, grass-colored), *herbaria* (knowledge of plants), *vorax* (eating greedily), *voratus* (destruction)

stabilization

English definition: to make steady or firm

Latin root: *stabilis* = steady, firm, enduring

Related Latin words: *stabilimen* (a support or stay), *stabilitas* (stability)

restoration

English definition: the process renewing to a previous condition

Latin root: *restaure* = to repair, rebuild

Related Latin words: *restituo* (to set up again), *restauratio* (renewal)

III. Affix of the Day

Two words this week end in *-tion*. This affix turns a verb into a noun -- so if you start out with *restauro* (to restore), you can turn it into *restauratio* (the act of restoring).

-tion

Latin root: *tio* = (makes a verbal concept into a noun - "the act of ---")

English words using *-tion*: *verification* (the act of verifying), *computerization* (the act of putting data on a computer), *solidification* (the act of becoming solid)

IV. Etymology Exercises

1. Fill in the blanks using words related to the vocabulary words from this week.

restaurant
nativity
herbalist
unstable

- a. We stopped at a _____ to relax and get a bite to eat before hitting the road again.
- b. Some Christians have _____ scenes at Christmas, showing Jesus Christ as a baby lying in the manger.
- c. My crazy Berkeley auntie sees an _____ instead of a Western doctor for her medicinal needs.
- d. The rickety old footbridge was highly _____ and looked like it would collapse at any moment.

2. Supply the noun ending in *-tion* that matches each verb.

the act of making something shorter	abbreviation
the act of saying yes to something	affirmation (or) confirmation
the act of separating into groups	segregation
the act of breathing	respiration
the act of choosing one candidate over another	election

BONUS: the act of becoming like California Californication