



Prefixes:

Meaning-Changing Prefixes: re-, pre-, over-, under- & More

Fill in the blank with the correct option.

- The bridge was damaged in the storm, so the council decided to ____ it.
a) prebuild
b) overbuild
c) rebuild
d) unbuild
- The film trailer is a short ____ of what the movie will be about.
a) preview
b) review
c) overview
d) interview
- I ____ the pasta and it became too soft to eat.
a) undercooked
b) precooked
c) recooked
d) overcooked
- Many workers feel they are ____ for the amount of work they do.
a) overpaid
b) underpaid
c) repaid
d) prepaid
- The ____ period after the Second World War saw rapid economic growth.
a) prewar
b) antiwar
c) postwar
d) interwar
- She speaks three languages fluently — she is truly ____.
a) bilingual
b) multilingual
c) monolingual
d) semilingual
- The company launched an ____ campaign to fight online bullying.
a) re-bullying
b) anti-bullying
c) pre-bullying
d) sub-bullying
- The two countries signed an ____ trade agreement.
a) multinational
b) supernational
c) subnational
d) international
- Please ____ your essay carefully before submitting it.
a) pre-read
b) over-read
c) re-read
d) mis-read
- The children went to a ____ group before starting primary school.
a) postschool
b) preschool
c) subschool
d) reschool



Answers

1. c) rebuild
2. a) preview
3. d) overcooked
4. b) underpaid
5. c) postwar
6. b) multilingual
7. b) anti-bullying
8. d) international
9. c) reread
10. b) preschool
11. a) automatically
12. d) ex-husband
13. b) underestimate
14. a) postponed
15. a) semi
16. c) submarine
17. d) superhuman
18. a) continue
19. c) subway
20. d) overreacted



Explanations

1. “rebuild” (c)

The prefix re- means 'again'. To rebuild means to build again after damage or destruction.

2. “preview” (a)

The prefix pre- means 'before'. A preview is a viewing of something before it is officially released. A 'review' is an evaluation after watching.

3. “overcooked” (d)

The prefix over- means 'too much'. To overcook means to cook for too long, making the food too soft. 'Undercooked' would mean not cooked enough.

4. “underpaid” (b)

The prefix under- means 'too little' or 'not enough'. To be underpaid means to receive less money than deserved for the work done.

5. “postwar” (c)

The prefix post- means 'after'. Postwar refers to the period after a war. 'Prewar' means before the war; 'interwar' means between two wars.

6. “multilingual” (b)

The prefix multi- means 'many'. Multilingual means speaking many languages. 'Bilingual' means two languages; 'monolingual' means one language.

7. “anti-bullying” (b)

The prefix anti- means 'against'. An anti-bullying campaign is one that works against bullying.

8. “international” (d)

The prefix inter- means 'between'. International means between two or more nations. 'Multinational' refers to a company operating in many countries.

9. “reread” (c)

The prefix re- means 'again'. To reread means to read again, which is what you do when checking your work. 'Misread' means to read incorrectly.

10. “preschool” (b)

The prefix pre- means 'before'. Preschool refers to education or care for children before they are old enough to attend primary school.

11. “automatically” (a)

The prefix auto- means 'self'. Automatically means working by itself without human action. 'Manually' means by hand — the opposite.

12. “ex-husband” (d)

The prefix ex- means 'former'. An ex-husband is a man who was previously someone's husband but is no longer married to them.

13. “underestimate” (b)

The prefix under- means 'too little'. To underestimate means to think something is less important or less valuable than it really is.

14. “postponed” (a)

The prefix post- means 'after' or 'later'. To postpone means to move an event to a later time. 'Disposed' means to throw away or be willing; 'reposed' means to rest — both have different meanings.

15. “semi” (a)

The prefix semi- means 'half' or 'partly'. A semi-final is the round before the final. In a quarter-final, the winner advances to the semi-final, not the final — so 'semi' is the only correct answer here.

16. “submarine” (c)

The prefix sub- means 'under' or 'below'. A submarine is a vessel designed to operate under the surface of the sea.

17. “superhuman” (d)

The prefix super- means 'above' or 'beyond'. Superhuman means having abilities beyond those of a normal human being.

18. “continue” (a)

The sentence says the current strategy 'is working well', so there is no need to change it. 'Continue' (no prefix needed) is the correct choice. Not every sentence requires a prefixed word!

19. “subway” (c)

The prefix sub- means 'under'. A subway is an underground railway system used for city transport. It runs below ground, helping commuters avoid traffic on the surface.

20. “overreacted” (d)

The prefix over- means 'too much'. To overreact means to react more strongly than is necessary or appropriate. Making a fuss over a minor inconvenience is a clear overreaction.