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**Etymology**

“The more words you know the more clearly and powerfully you will think…and the more ideas you will invite into your mind.” Wilfred Funk

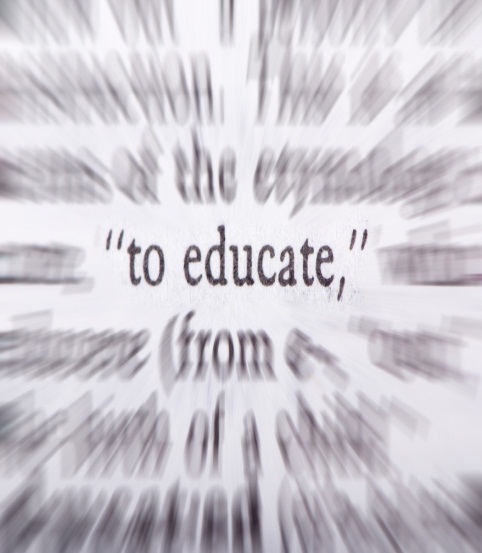
How many of the following words do you know?

1. bibliophile
2. euphonious These words are typical of the kind you are
3. misanthrope likely to meet in your daily reading.
4. agnostic The first ten are of Greek, the
5. cacophony others of Latin origin. If you knew the
6. polytheist the most important Greek and Latin roots,
7. microcosm you would seldom have to consult the dictionary
8. iconoclast for the meanings of words, for words
9. misogynist define themselves if you have the clues.
10. caustic Take a look at how this works.
11. ameliorate
12. vicarious
13. inexorable
14. cogent
15. perfunctory
16. cursory
17. lachrymose
18. punctilious
19. paucity
20. deciduous

Here are the meanings of a few Greek roots and prefixes.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ROOTS** | **MEANING** | **PREFIXES** | **MEANING** |
| bibl, biblio | book | a-, an- | without; not |
| anthrop | man; mankind | eu- | good |
| gno, gnos | know | caco | bad |
| phon | sound |  |  |
| phil | Love |  |  |
| miso | hate |  |  |

Then a *bibliophile* must be a lover of books, a *misanthrope* one who hates mankind, a *philanthropist* one who loves his fellow man. *Euphony* evidently means good sound or harmony; *cacophony*, discord; *aphonic*, silent. A *bibliognost* is one who knows books; an *agnostic*, one who does not know or one who doubts, and so on. After you have learned a few roots, any new one is likely to be found in combination with those already known, so that the number of new words added to your vocabulary with every new root keeps increasing.



Source: WORD CLUES by Amsel Greene Harper & Row Publishers ©1976.