

**OBJECTIVES**

- **Understand** the meaning of the root **FORM**
- **Build** words in the root **FORM** family
- **Break Apart** words in the root **FORM** family
- **Understand** the meaning of words in the **FORM** family
- **Understand** the spelling principles applied to the root **FORM**
- **Apply** knowledge of words in the **FORM** family
- **Assess** and **Reinforce** knowledge of words in the **FORM** family

**MATERIALS**

- Student Activity Books, pages 3-6
- Dictionary (*print or on-line*)
- Modeling clay (*optional*)

**CROSS-CURRICULAR EXAMPLES OF FORM**

- Science:**  
formation, formula, oviform, transform, variform, uniformly
- Social Studies:**  
reform, reformation, formality, reformer, counterreformation
- Language Arts:**  
formal, format, informative
- Math:**  
information, formula, inform

# FORM



meaning “shape, appearance, or arrangement”

**reform**

to give another **shape** to

**uniform**

having one **appearance**

**formula**

a small **arrangement**

Morpheme: **FORM**

Allomorphs: none

Nearly 500 words containing the morpheme **FORM** are current in English. During this unit, have students keep on the lookout for this root during their school day and in general conversation. Some of the words they might encounter in their school subjects are given on the left.

U N I T A T A G L A N C E

Day **1**

*Root Squares*  
for **FORM**

Day **2**

*Magic Squares*  
for **FORM**

Day **3**

*Stair Steps*  
for **FORM**

O P T I O N A L

Day **4**

*Comprehension  
Booster* for **FORM**

Day **5**

*Assessment*  
for **FORM**

Each activity should take approximately **15 minutes.**



## Word Fun Facts

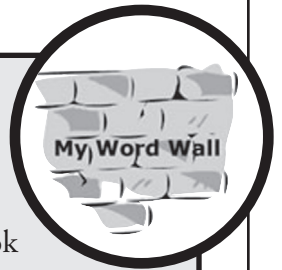
The root **FORM** is the Latin version of the Greek root **morph**. Both roots mean “shape, appearance, or arrangement,” but Latin reversed the first and last consonant sounds of the Greek. (Such a switch is an occasional language phenomenon called **metathesis**.) Students may know of Mighty Morphin Power Rangers, Animorphs, or the X-Men character Morph, and they will know that all these have the ability to change shape or appearance.

Shapes or forms that have meaning within words are called **morphemes**. Mastery of a few hundred of these pieces opens the door to understanding thousands of words, even if they have never been seen before. Sometimes **morphemes** occur with different spellings, called **allomorphs** (“other forms”), but they still all have the same meanings. You will see more about this in the next lesson.

The word **formula** is a Latin word used in English, having two suffixes, **-ul** and **-a**, a Latin noun-marker. The word means “a little shape or arrangement.” We discover the same two suffixes together, **-ula**, in the name of a scary character whose name means “little Dragon.” Can your students figure out who that is? (*Dracula*).

## WORD WALL

Every day, provide time for students to write words that they have built or found using the current root, or morpheme, in their personal Word Wall, found in the Student Activity Book with each new root. Encourage students to add words to their personal Word Walls throughout the year. Some teachers also keep versions of the Word Walls hanging in the classroom, depending on space and décor, and invite students continually to add pertinent words as they are found.



**Word Alert!** There are a few words that have the letters F-O-R-M in them and that seem to be in this root family, but they derive from other roots.

Words	Where they come from
former, formerly	from an Old English root family related to <i>fore</i> and <i>front</i>
formaldehyde	from a Latin word meaning <i>ant</i>
Formica ( <i>trade name</i> )	from <i>formerly</i> + a Latin word meaning <i>rainy rock</i> ( <i>mica</i> )
formidable	from a Latin word meaning <i>fearsome</i> (causing something to become stiff or <i>firm</i> with fright)
perform	from a Germanic root meaning to <i>carry out</i> or to <i>furnish</i>

The word **former** can mean two different things, based on which root is meant. As seen above, and as most commonly used, **former** means *earlier*, as in **Mr. Albert is a former student of music.**

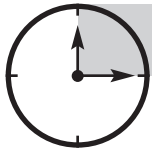
However, less commonly, the word **former** can also mean *a person or force that makes a shape*, a **form-er**, as in **The ocean serves as a former of the coastal outline.**

# Day 1

## Root Squares for FORM

FORM means shape,  
appearance, or arrangement

### LESSON TIME



15 Minutes

### OBJECTIVES

- **Understand** the meaning of the root **FORM**
- **Build** words in the **FORM** family
- **Understand** the meaning of words in the **FORM** family
- **Understand** the spelling principles applied to the root **FORM**

### MATERIALS

- Student Activity Book
- **FORM** Word Wall
- Dictionary  
(*print or on-line*)
- Modeling clay (*optional*)

### DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION

If you prefer easier or more difficult activities, use your personal account at [www.dynamicliteracy.com](http://www.dynamicliteracy.com) to access novice or expert versions, along with ideas on using them.

## Build Words with FORM

**TEACH** Have students turn to the Root Squares on page 3 in their Activity Books. Write **FORM** on the board and explain that it is a root, or morpheme, but can also stand alone as a word. Lead students to a definition “shape, appearance, or arrangement” as a noun (“We fill out *forms* for a job”) or a verb (“Ice *forms* on the lake.”) Explain that the pieces, or morphemes, surrounding the middle box can attach before or after **FORM** to build other words. For example, put **-at** on the end of **FORM** to make *format*. Write *format* in the spaces at the bottom of the page and

write a definition such as *to put into a certain arrangement*.

### COMPLETE THE ACTIVITY

Have students add other morphemes to **FORM**, list their words, and write simple definitions. If students have difficulty building words, show them how by modeling a matrix approach found on the next page, taking one affix at a time and seeing if it will connect with the root.

**DISCUSS** After five minutes, have volunteers write up some of their words. Remind students about doubling **t** if they add **-ed** or **-ing** to **format**. Discuss the meanings of **FORM** and of the affixes as a guide. Emphasize that the meaning of **FORM** in each word is still “shape, appearance, or arrangement,” even with prefixes

and suffixes added. If desired, use the focus word approach that you see modeled on the next page.

#### Root Squares

How many words can you make?

Start in any square. Your goal is to combine two or more word parts to make as many words in the ‘form’ family as you can. Write each word and a definition you can think of for it in the space provided at the bottom of the page. Use the back of the page if you need to.

con	ing	re
s	form	de
ed	at	ion

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# Day 1 Extend the Learning

Focus Word: **REFORM** → Write this word on the board.

## TEACH

Sample leading question:	“Who can tell us what a <b>reform</b> is or what it means to <b>reform</b> ?”
Target response:	“It means <i>a change</i> or <i>to change</i> .”
Teacher continuation:	“That’s good, and let’s look closely at the word to see why it means <i>change</i> . What two parts make up the word <b>reform</b> ?”
Target response:	“ <b>Re-</b> and <b>form</b> . They mean <i>again</i> or <i>back</i> for <b>re-</b> , and <i>shape</i> or <i>appearance</i> for <b>form</b> .”
Continuation:	“So together, they make a word that means what?”
Response:	“ <i>To shape again</i> ” or “ <i>to give a new appearance to</i> ” or “ <i>to arrange in a different way</i> .”

Encourage students to define **reform** using the meanings of the two pieces that make up the word: *to shape again*.

**DISCUSS** Sample focused discussion: Martin Luther King was a **reformer**, a person who worked for **reform**. Why do we call him a **reformer**? What did he “shape again”?

**DEMONSTRATE** Sample fun demonstration: Get some modeling clay and **form** a shape. Ask a student to make a new shape. Show the class that the clay has been **reformed** (technically, re-formed—see Word Play on day 3).

## Root Squares Matrix

You can refer to this matrix to guide students in this activity. Students could build at least these 32 words. *It really doesn’t matter how many they build* – the point is that they understand the consistent meanings of the root **form** and of its prefixes and suffixes.

	no prefix	con-	de-	re-
no suffix	form	conform	deform	reform
-ed	formed	conformed	deformed	reformed
-ing	forming	conforming	deforming	reforming
-s	forms	conforms	deforms	reforms
-at(e)	format			reformat
-at + -s	formats			reformats
-at + -ed	formatted			reformatted
-at + ing	formatting			reformatting
-at + -ion	formation	conformation	deformation	reformation
-ion + -s	formations	conformations	deformations	reformations

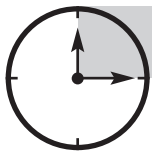
Words that students coin for empty slots are legitimate learning tools: have students who coin such words give appropriate definitions for them.

# Day 2

## Magic Squares for FORM

FORM means shape,  
appearance, or arrangement

### LESSON TIME



15 Minutes

### OBJECTIVES

- **Understand** the meaning of the root **FORM**
- **Break Apart** words in the **FORM** family
- **Understand** the meaning of words in the **FORM** family

### MATERIALS

- Student Activity Book
- **FORM** Word Wall

### DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION

If you prefer easier or more difficult activities, use your personal account at [www.dynamycliteracy.com](http://www.dynamycliteracy.com) to access novice or expert versions, along with ideas on using them.

## Break Apart Words with FORM

**TEACH** Have students turn to the Magic Squares on page 4 in their Student Activity Books. Explain that nine words from the root **FORM** family are listed in lettered order on the left. Some are words that they built using the Root Squares, and others use different affixes. To the right are nine numbered definitions. Students are to match definitions to the lettered words by placing the number of the definition into the correct lettered box. Model for the students: “I’m looking at word A, *deform*. I know that **FORM** means *shape or appearance* and that **de-** means ‘take away or opposite.’ Looking through the

definitions, I see that definition 7 has the words ‘take away’ and ‘shape,’ so I will place the number 7 into box A.”

### COMPLETE THE ACTIVITY

Let students use a similar strategy to find correct definitions for the other words and to write the number of the definition in the box that matches the letter. Tell students that if all their answers are correct, each row and each column will add up to the Magic Number.

**DISCUSS** After 5 minutes, go over the words and ask students to describe their strategies for discovering the correct answer. Add any new words to the classroom **FORM** Word Wall and remind students to add these words to the **FORM** Word Wall in their Activity Books. As needed, follow the focus word approach that you see modeled on the next page.

Magic Squares Name \_\_\_\_\_

Select the best answer for each of the words in the 'form' family from the numbered definitions. Put the number in the proper space in the Magic Square box. If the total of the numbers is the same both across and down, you have found the magic number!

'form' means shape, appearance, or arrangement

WORDS	DEFINITIONS
A. deform	1. act of shaping again
B. conforms	2. shape, appearance, or arrangement; a reusable pattern or structure
C. formal	3. becomes similar in shape to something else; complies
D. format	4. without shape or arrangement; relaxed
E. informal	5. in accord with accepted shape or arrangement
F. formula	6. having one shape or appearance
G. uniform	7. to take away the nature or shape of; to ruin or contort
H. transform	8. to move across to another shape or appearance
I. reformation	9. logical arrangement of steps in a process

Magic Square Box

A.	B.	C.
7	3	5
D.	E.	F.
2	4	9
G.	H.	I.
6	8	1

Magic Number   15  

\*\*\*\*\* ANSWER KEY \*\*\*\*\*

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# Day 2 Extend the Learning

Focus Word: **DEFORM** → Write this word on the board.

## TEACH

Sample leading question	“Who can tell us what <i>deform</i> means?”
Student response:	“It means to be ugly looking.”
Teacher continuation:	“That’s right, but let’s look carefully at the word. What parts do we see?”
Target response:	“A prefix <b>de</b> and the root <b>form</b> .”
Teacher:	“And what do those parts mean?”
Target responses:	“Away or down and shape or appearance.”
Teacher continuation:	“So tell me what a <i>deformed</i> animal or a <i>deformed</i> pearl might look like.”
Response:	“It won’t look normal—its right shape is taken away.”
Continuation:	“Therefore, what does <i>deform</i> mean?”
Response:	“To take away the shape or to have a different appearance from normal.”

Encourage students to define *deform* using the two pieces that make up the word: *to take away the shape or appearance*.

**DISCUSS** What is the difference between *reform* and *deform*? A change happens with both words, but how are the changes different?

**DEMONSTRATE** If you have clay, fashion a face with a regular-looking nose. Now ask a student to *deform* the nose. Ask another student to *reform* the nose.

## Tech Connect

Looking up a word in a dictionary today is as easy as clicking with a mouse on a computer. One of the best web sites is called simply <http://www.dictionary.com>. Type a word you want to know more about in the search box and an array of dictionaries and word resources will appear. For the word **form**, Dictionary.com has 44 entries and a list of synonyms and antonyms.

Scroll down to find a link to **form** in *Encyclopedia Britannica*; a list of **form** entries appears from a variety of dictionaries like the *American Heritage Dictionary*; the *Online Etymology Dictionary*; *Word Net*, from Princeton University; the *American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms*; the *Kernerman English Multilingual Dictionary*, with translations of **form** in its various meanings into 28 different languages; and, now online and free at this site, *Webster’s Revised Unabridged Dictionary*.

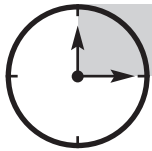
This site, made up of many different word resources, provides access to thousands of words like **form**. Students will want to bookmark this site, and you may find yourself revisiting often. Who would have thought a dictionary could be such fun!

# Day 3

## Stair Steps for FORM

FORM means shape,  
appearance, or arrangement

### LESSON TIME



15 Minutes

### OBJECTIVES

- **Understand** the meaning of the **FORM** root
- **Apply** knowledge of the **FORM** root
- **Break Apart** words in the root **FORM** family
- **Understand** the meaning of words in the **FORM** root family
- **Understand** the spelling principles applied to the **FORM** root

### MATERIALS

- Student Activity Book
- **FORM** Word Wall

### DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION

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## Apply Knowledge of FORM

**TEACH** The prefix **mal-** appears for the first time in this lesson. Introduce students to this prefix using the **mal-** Mini-Lesson on the next page.

Have students turn to page 5 in their Student Activity Books. Explain that the boxes in front of and after the root indicate letters that spell out prefixes and suffixes. Students will spell out the correct prefixes and suffixes determined by clues in the definitions at the bottom of the page.

Have a volunteer read definition number one at the bottom of the page. Say, “The clue ‘again’ leads us to a two-letter prefix **re-** to put in front of **FORM**.” If you would like, follow the discussion on the next page for the focus word, **conform**.

### COMPLETE THE ACTIVITY

Let students work in pairs (optionally) and tell them to use the same strategy to find the correct prefixes and suffixes for the words listed. These activities can be quite challenging!

**DISCUSS** After a few minutes, review the answers as a class. Ask if there were any difficulties. Listen to any problems and have volunteers solve the difficulties by explaining key clues in the given definitions. As needed, follow the focus word approach that you see modeled on the next page.

### Stair Steps

Fill in the missing letters of each 'form' word by using the definitions below  
'form' means shape, appearance, or arrangement

1.	r	e	f	o	r	m													
2.	c	o	n	f	o	r	m												
3.	d	e	f	o	r	m	e	d											
4.	f	o	r	m	a	t	i	o	n										
5.	f	o	r	m	a	t	t	i	n	g									
6.	i	n	f	o	r	m	a	t	i	o	n								
7.	m	a	l	f	o	r	m	a	t	i	o	n							

1. to give another form to; shape again
2. to become similar in shape to something else; to comply
3. took away the nature or shape of; ruined or contorted
4. shape, appearance, arrangement
5. shaping or arranging; putting into a reusable pattern or structure
6. knowledge arranged or shaped to be understood
7. bad shape or structure

# Day 3 Extend the Learning

Focus Word: **CONFORM** → Write this word on the board.

## TEACH

Sample leading question:	“If you are asked to <b>conform</b> , what do you do?”
Target response:	“You do what others are doing.”
Teacher continuation:	“And therefore, what does it mean to <b>conform</b> ?”
Response:	“To do the same things.”
Continuation:	“Let the word tell you what you are doing.”
Target response:	“You take on a shape together or you have the same appearance as others.”

**DISCUSS** Sample focused discussion: What does it mean if a mattress *conforms* to your body?

**DEMONSTRATE** Strike a pose, arms akimbo, for example. Ask the class to take on the same shape. Ask them what they have done. (They have *conformed*!)

## MINI-LESSON: the Prefix **mal-**

**TEACH** Propose the following hypothetical question to students: “What would happen if I poured water over a computer?” Guide students to answer with the word *malfunction*. If they suggest other words, such as *break* or *stop working*, acknowledge that these are synonyms for *malfunction*.

Explain to students that the prefix **mal-** means “bad.” Ask students to name words with this prefix (*malformation*, *malcontent*, *malfunction*, *malevolent*, *malpractice*, *malaria*, *malady*).

If students suggest the word *male*, encourage them to remove the prefix to see that only a meaningless letter *e* remains. Therefore, the word *male* does not have the prefix **mal-**. (The word *male* derives from the word *masculine*.)

**DISCUSS** Guide students through a discussion of the sample sentences below.

- A doctor who practices badly can be accused of \_\_\_\_\_. (*malpractice*)
- Satisfied people are content; unsatisfied people are \_\_\_\_\_. (*malcontent*)

- People once thought that bad air around swamps caused the disease \_\_\_\_\_. (*malaria*)

## Word Play

Explore with students the difference between the words *reform* and *re-form*. **Reform** means ‘to change,’ usually for the better. **Re-form** means ‘to put back into the same shape as before.’

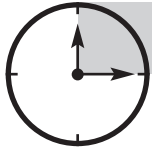


# Day 4

Comprehension  
Booster for **FORM**

FORM means shape,  
appearance, or arrangement

LESSON TIME



15 Minutes

## OBJECTIVES

- **Understand** the meaning of the **FORM** root
- **Apply** knowledge of the **FORM** root
- **Break Apart** words in the root **FORM** family
- **Understand** the meaning of words in the **FORM** root family
- **Understand** the spelling principles applied to the **FORM** root

## MATERIALS

- **FORM** Word Wall
- Copies of the Comprehension Booster for **FORM**, page B-2

# Using Vocabulary in Context

**TEACH** Make and hand out copies of the Comprehension Booster for the root **FORM**. Explain to students that they are now going to use words in sentences, and that there are context and grammatical clues to help select correct words from the Word Bank at the bottom. For example, focus on sentence 2 and ask what clues are given (target responses: the word **many** expects a plural noun, and the word *rock* describes the word we are to select). Say, “Checking our Word Bank, we see that **formations** fits both clues, so we will write **formations** into the blank at sentence 2.” Explain that sometimes two different

words may seem right for a context, but that by a process of elimination, the appropriate word will become clear.

### COMPLETE THE ACTIVITY

Allow students to complete the activity individually or in small groups.

**DISCUSS** After a few minutes, ask if there were any difficulties and have volunteers explain strategies that led to correct answers. Ask students who answered the Challenge Question correctly what clues led them to the answer.

# Day 5 Assessment

The instructions are on page A-2. Make and hand out copies. The answer key is on page A-3.

## COMPREHENSION BOOSTER

Read the sentences below and use context clues to decide which word of the **form** family best completes each thought. Choose words from the Word Bank at the bottom of the page. Use each word only once.

1. Jon’s grade in math improved once he learned the formula for the area of a rectangle.
2. There are many beautiful rock formations in the Badlands of North Dakota.
3. The soda can was deformed after Chante’ stepped on it.
4. Mr. Harding told Shasha that if she didn’t conform to the dress code she would be sent home.
5. Jameel needs more information before he can decide which college to attend.
6. Some mountains are formed by volcanic eruptions.
7. In the last stage of its life, a caterpillar transforms itself into a butterfly.
8. Ben observed that all the eggs were uniform, or the same in shape.
9. Sarah’s invitation says the dress is informal, so people can wear whatever they want.
10. A conformist is a person who easily adapts to a shape or arrangement.

Challenger: The **form** word that completes this sentence is not in the Word Bank. Use the context of the sentence and your word knowledge to determine which **form** word you need to fill in the blank.

A nonconformist is a person who cannot or will not adapt to a shape or arrangement.

# Check-Up for FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Which of these is not a meaning for the root **FORM**?
- A appearance
  - B straight
  - C arrangement
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. What is the meaning of the word **conform**?
- A to put back
  - B to take away
  - C to shape together
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. What is the meaning of the word **informal**?
- A to put out of shape or arrangement
  - B not having a shape or arrangement
  - C straightened into
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. What is the meaning of the word **reformation**?
- A an act of shaping again
  - B to appear again
  - C becoming one in appearance again
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. What is the meaning of the word **malformation**?
- A a little shape
  - B to give definite shape to
  - C a process of being badly shaped
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Which word means **taking away the shape of**?
- A informalizing
  - B deforming
  - C conforming
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Which word means **to change from one shape across to another**?
- A uniform
  - B information
  - C transform
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Which word means **arranged**?
- A formatted
  - B regional
  - C formulas
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. If the root **dendri** means tree, what is something described as **dendriform**?
- A it has the shape of a tree
  - B it lives in a tree
  - C it eats trees
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. **Nonconformists** are people who do not:
- A want to be different
  - B straighten up their rooms
  - C go along with other people's arrangements



# Magic Squares

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

Select the best answer for each of the words in the 'form' family from the numbered definitions. Put the number in the proper space in the Magic Square box. If the total of the numbers is the same both across and down, you have found the magic number!

'form' means shape, appearance, or arrangement

## WORDS

- A. deform
- B. conforms
- C. formal
- D. format
- E. informal
- F. formula
- G. uniform
- H. transform
- I. reformation

## DEFINITIONS

- 1. act of shaping again
- 2. shape, appearance, or arrangement; a reusable pattern or structure
- 3. becomes similar in shape to something else; complies
- 4. without shape or arrangement; relaxed
- 5. in accord with accepted shape or arrangement
- 6. having one shape or appearance
- 7. to take away the nature or shape of; to ruin or contort
- 8. to move across to another shape or appearance
- 9. logical arrangement of steps in a process

Magic Square Box

A.	B.	C.
D.	E.	F.
G.	H.	I.

Magic Number \_\_\_\_

# Stair Steps

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

Fill in the missing letters of each 'form' word by using the definitions below  
'form' means shape, appearance, or arrangement

1.			f	o	r	m				
2.				f	o	r	m			
3.			f	o	r	m				
4.	f	o	r	m						
5.	f	o	r	m						
6.			f	o	r	m				
7.				f	o	r	m			

1. to give another form to; shape again
2. to become similar in shape to something else; to comply
3. took away the nature or shape of; ruined or contorted
4. shape, appearance, arrangement
5. shaping or arranging; putting into a reusable pattern or structure
6. knowledge arranged or shaped to be understood
7. bad shape or structure

**F O R M**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Read the sentences below and use context clues to decide which word of the FORM family best completes each thought. Choose words from the Word Bank at the bottom of the page. Use each word only once.**

1. Jon's grade in math improved once he learned the \_\_\_\_\_ for the area of a rectangle.
2. We saw some beautiful rock \_\_\_\_\_ on our field trip to Luray Caverns.
3. The soda can was \_\_\_\_\_ after Chante' stepped on it.
4. Mr. Harding told Shasha that if she didn't \_\_\_\_\_ to the dress code she would be sent home.
5. Jameel needs more \_\_\_\_\_ before he can decide which college to attend.
6. Some mountains are \_\_\_\_\_ by volcanic eruptions.
7. In the last stage of its life, a caterpillar \_\_\_\_\_ itself into a butterfly.
8. Ben observed that all the eggs were \_\_\_\_\_, or the same in shape.
9. Sarah's invitation says the dress is \_\_\_\_\_, so people can wear whatever they want.
10. A \_\_\_\_\_ is a person who easily adapts or complies to a shape or arrangement.

**W O R D   B A N K**

deformed	conformist	informal	formed	formations
uniform	conform	transforms	formula	information

**C H A L L E N G E R**

**The FORM word that completes this sentence is not in the Word Bank. Use the context of the sentence and your word knowledge to determine which FORM word you need to fill in the blank.**

A \_\_\_\_\_ is a person who cannot or will not adapt to a shape or arrangement