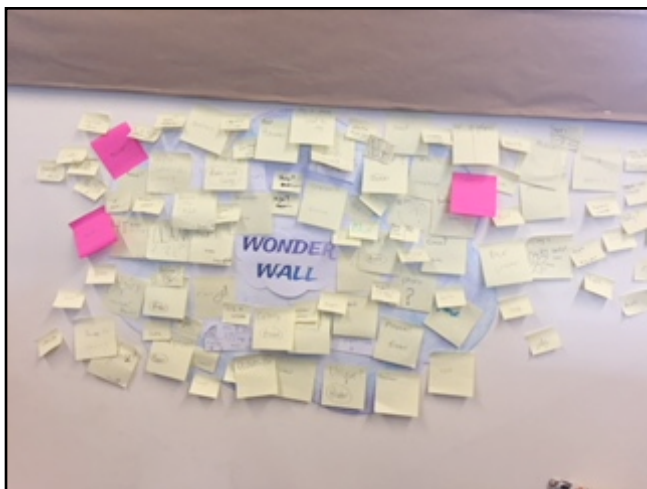## Follow up from Sandi Crozier - a teacher in our Oct-Nov SWI on-line course.

I've received a number of lovely notes sharing great orthographic questions/investigations since our first session. I'm sharing this particular message from Sandi as it does such a great job of reinforcing a key concept in our first session that informs all orthographic investigation.

I'm doing little editing to the correspondence. I begin with just her email (and photo) so you can have your own opportunity to consider what orthographic concepts from our first session are getting in Sandi's way. After, you'll see I embed my comments in hers.

It starts with a joyous description of what is already going on in her school

Hi Pete -

I thought you might enjoy seeing what happened to my Wonder Wall after the second word sum lesson where we discovered: that the "ie before e" rule isn't a rule, digraphs can make pronunciation an inconsistent way to spell, we have questions about the letter <w>, and other wonderings galore!! The kids were leaping form their seats with new words to explore!!

Now, can you help me with the word <exclusion>?

exclude (v.)
mid-14c., from Latin
excludere
 "keep
 out, shut out, hinder,"
 from *ex*
 "out" + *claudere*
 "to
 close, shut"

excludes ex + clude + s --> excludes
excluding ex + clude/ + ing --> excluding
exclusion . ??????

Sorry to be so dense about this, but I am having such hard time determining some of the roots.

Thank you,
Sandi

Hey Sandi,

This is such great stuff.

See my comments below...

Now, can you help me with the word <exclusion>?

I don't want to give this yet - even though they are asking - because I DO NOT want them to try to go to -sion after I just told them the suffix is -ion!!

Well, it would be fine if they *try* an analysis with *<-sion>. Because they would have to construct this word sum:

ex + clu + sion —> exclusion

And then they would not have evidence for a *<clu> base.

That doesn't get to a <clude> base either…

So what is the root? Not <clude> which I thought from *exclud(ere),* so cludo?? I'm very confused again with the Latin. I took four years of Latin in high school and LOVED it, but that was 50 years ago!!!!

Let's go back to the etymology you found. Looks like you've got what you needed. Here is Etymonline.

exclude (v.)
mid-14c., from Latin *excludere* "keep out, shut out, hinder," from *ex*"out" (see **ex-**) + *claudere* "to close, shut" (see **close** (v.)). Related: *Excluded*; *excluding*.

So I follow the link to "close"...

close (v.)
(klōz), c. 1200, "to shut, cover in," from Old French *clos-* (past participle stem of *clore* "to shut, to cut off from"), 12c., from Latin *clausus*, past participle of *claudere* "to shut, close; to block up, make inaccessible; put an end to; shut in, enclose, confine" (always *-clusus*, *-cludere* in compounds), from PIE root ***klau-** "hook," also "peg, nail, pin," all things used as locks or bolts in primitive structures.

Like you, the deepest written root you find is the Latin *claudere* for "close, block, confine". Like you, I would use the parentheses to show that Latin structure *clud(ere).*

The source of your confusion is not your fault — you are dealing with decades of misinformation about "bases and

roots". You don't drop that in a day! Look at what you wrote…

 So what is the root? Not <clude> which I thought from *exclud(ere),* so cludo??

Can you see that you are conflating the "root" and "base"?

You ask what the root is, and then you dismiss the **base** <clude> that you have correctly analyzed with these word sums:

ex + clude + s —> excludes
ex + clude/ + ing —> excluding

The key to remember is that — regardless what the world does — we are going to

1) Restrict our use of the term "root" to *only refer to historical word origins* — not English words or word structures.

2) Restrict our use of the term "base" to only refer to the indivisible present day English morpheme that caries the main meaning in a word.

So look at your etymological information — where we can find the ultimate written root for our present day English word <exclude>:

exclude (v.)
mid-14c., from Latin
excludere
 "keep
 out, shut out, hinder,"
 from *ex*
 "out" + *claudere*
 "to
 close, shut"

Like you, the deepest written root we see here is the Latin *claud(ere)* for "close, shut"

You now have three present day English words that you have identified as deriving from that Latin root: <excludes>, <excluding>, and <exclusion>.

So far then, we have evidence that these three words are *etymological* relatives. They are part of the same "extended family." From the information we have so far, we cannot draw any conclusions about which of these words are in the same present day English morphological family. Once you ask about a the possibility of a common "base" you are saying this:

OK. I know these words are in the same "extended family" because they all share the same ancestor — the Latin root *claud(ere).* But which of these, if any are also the same "immediate" family. Which ones share a **base element**?

(Note: the term "element" in this linguistic context denotes a "*written"* morpheme. An "element" is a written morpheme.)

To investigate that question, you did exactly what you needed to do — you analyzed words from the same etymological family with word sums to see which of those words could be coherently analyzed to find a base with the same spelling. Words that meet that criterion are by definition in the same orthographic morphological family (can be represented in the same matrix). If you can't analyze one of those etymological relatives with a word sum to end up at the same **base element**, this is NOT a failure. It just means you have evidence that those words are etymological relatives (share a root), but you don't have evidence that allows you to conclude that they are orthographic morphological relatives (share a base element).

 The confusion of etymology (roots) and morphology (bases) kept you from being able to confidently interpret the evidence you found.

Look what you have here:

excludes
ex + clude + s --> excludes
excluding
ex + clude/ + ing --> excluding
exclusion
. ??????

This is PERFECT scientific evidence.

You made coherent word sums linking <excludes> and <excluding> showing that they can be analyzed with a base spelled <clude>. Since they also share the Latin root *claud(ere).* You have evidence that these words are definitively in the same morphological family.

You show that you could not find any evidence of how <exclusion> could be analyzed with a base spelled <clude>. There is no word sum that could make that analysis work. That is not a failure. It is a success!

All you need to understand is that this means, as of this moment, with this evidence, you can conclude that <exclusion> is in the etymological family of <excludes> and <excluding>, but not in the same morphological family.

This excellent work of yours is going to nail down a key message that will help you with all of your future orthographic inquires. Many (if not most) roots can be the source of multiple present day base elements!

Since you can't analyze <exclusion> with a <clude> base, you can now try to analyze it to find out how its base is actually spelled!

You already know about the <ex-> prefix and the <-ion> suffix. That sounds like a good place to begin your morphological analysis of this word.

I will draw your attention to a detail in the Etymonline entry:

from Latin *clausus*, past participle of *claudere*

Notice that this is NOT a "from" between the roots *claus(us)* and *claud(ere)*. Instead it shows us that the Latin word *claud(ere)* has a "past participle" *claus(us)*.

There will be more to learn about this over time. For the moment, I thought pointing it out may inform your analysis of words like <exclusion>.

I also recommend that you take the lead from our session the other day and take that infinitive root *claudere* and paste it into the search engine of Etymonline to see what you find.

Most if not all of the words that you find will be etymological relatives. (Remember that <climax> taught us that you need to actually check the entries carefully!)

When you look at the words that come up, I think you and your students will find evidence for more still more English base elements in this etymological family.

But there was one word that came up that I think will help guide you in your analysis of <exclusion>.

Note this word and its entry that confirms we are in the same etymological family.

recluse (n.)
c. 1200, "person shut up from the world for purposes of religious meditation," from Old French *reclus* (fem. *recluse*) "hermit, recluse," also "confinement, prison; convent, monastery," noun use of *reclus*(adj.) "shut up," from Late Latin *reclusus*, past participle of *recludere* "to shut up, enclose" (but in classical Latin "to throw open"), from Latin *re-*, intensive prefix, + *claudere* "to shut" (see **close** (v.)).

Sorry to be so dense about this, but I am having such hard time determining some of the roots.

Thanks and hope I'm not driving you batty and annoying you! I know you're busy!

Actually, this is wonderful. You have just provided the perfect opportunity to revisit the key concepts of our first session. Would you be OK if I share your email and this discussion in a message to the group? This would be so helpful to everyone.

Cheers,

Pete

From Sandi's next response..

Thanks for the clarification about roots and bases. I think this is one of my biggest stretches. When it isn't really evident, I freeze and doubt my thinking. It helps to hear that by shifting one part of it, I might be better able to continue and lean into it with more boldness.

Sandi,

Real Spelling is always emphasizing that confusion regarding morphology (roots) and etymology (bases) is one of the deepest issues for everyone in this community. Even once you are totally solid with the using the terms "base" and "roots" in a rigorously valid way, there are more subtle ways this confusion continues. But your work here is going to help all of us nail down this issue.

The point is, far from being embarrassed about this confusion, our crew should be thankful that you shared your confusion so that we can reduce that confusion in all of our thinking.

You write:

Here's another option you might consider…

1) Show your students how you find the Latin root *claudere* by searching <exclude> and then following the link to <close>.

2) Put that root *claudere* in the search engine of Etymonline and just scroll through some of the words that you find.

3) From the list that comes up, you could present a subset such as these:

   exclude, preclude, seclude, claustrophobia, conclusive, include, recluse, closure, closet, conclude, close,

   Whichever words you choose, you would need to discuss them to make sure the class is comfortable with the sense and meaning of these words.

4) Go through word sum analysis to show that <exclude> and <include> to share a base

   ex + clude —> exclude
   in + clude —> include

5) Now that you have shown that from the etymological relatives selected (due to their common root), you can conclude (little joke there) that one English base that derives from the Latin *claud(ere)* is the bound base <clude>.

   Their job is to now do word sum analysis to see — *from the etymological relatives listed* — which can be analyzed to a base with the spelling <clude>.

6. Challenge: Can they find any other bases that build more than one word in your list. Hint, you are guiding them to find <cluse> in <conclusive> and <recluse> and <close> in <close> and <closure> and even <closet> (It's structure is <close/ + et>. To see that you need to know the diminutive suffix <-et>.)

A path something like this will help you and your students nail down this point that multiple bases can grow from a single root!

See what you think, and thanks for letting me share your great work!

Pete

After sending that message, I realize that I want to emphasize that this suggestion is just one possible way forward. Sandi may have good reason to believe that this is too much for her students at this moment.

However, if she -- and the rest of our crew -- has a go at that process, you may find that you deepen your understanding of the distinction between morphology, etymology, and how they interrelate.

Thanks to Sandi for such great provocation for all of our learning!

Pete Bowers
Oct 11, 2018