

level: two bee 

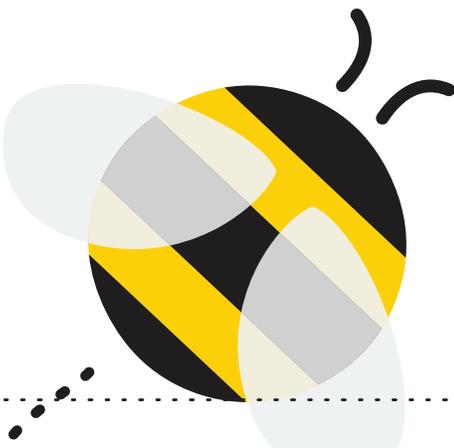
number roots from Greek and Latin

This year, the Scripps National Spelling Bee turns 100 years old! Did you know that there is a fancy word for that exact thing? You'll find it below! In fact, there are lots of words in English that communicate information about numbers.

You probably already know how many movies are in a **trilogy**, or how many musicians are in a **quartet**. All of this number information comes to the English language from Greek and Latin roots. Once you learn those roots, you'll be able to figure out a lot about words, even ones you don't already know.

number	Greek root	Latin root
1	mono-	uni-
2	di-/dy-	bi-
3	tri-	tri-
4	tetra-	quadri- / quart-
7	hept-	sept-
8	oct-	oct-
10	dec-	dec-
12	dodeca-	duodec-
100	hecato-	cente-

Take a look at the chart above – you can see that “**tri**” comes from Greek or Latin and means “three,” and “**quart**” (from Latin) means “four.” Turn to the next page and we'll see what we can find out using these roots.



Take a look at the definitions below – each of them has some number information in their definition. Look at the roots in the chart on the previous page and see if you can figure out which word from the word bank matches the root. (These words are all from the Two Bee part of Words of the Champions.) Then write the word into the right slot.

Let's do the first one together. Looking at the definition, we can tell we are looking for a word with a “one” root, because the definition refers to something only having one color. The Latin root is uni-, but there aren't any words in the bank that begin with “uni.” The Greek root is “mono” – is there a word that starts with “mono”? Yes! “Monochrome”!

Now, do the rest on your own, checking the table of roots as you go. Some will come from Greek roots and others from Latin.

number	word	definition
1	monochrome	only having a single color
2		differences between two individuals of the same type
3		a plant-eating dinosaur with three horns
4		a large muscle in the thigh with four parts
7		a group of seven
8		having eight eyes
10		occurring every ten years
12		a solid having twelve plane faces
100		a one-hundredth anniversary or its celebration

word bank

octonocular quadriceps heptad —monochrome— triceratops
 dimorphism centennial dodecahedron decennial

Some English words use Greek roots and others Latin, even for the same number – for example, “bifurcate” (from Latin) means to separate into two parts. What other words can you think of that use these number roots?