• one purpose of this class is to learn to use the dictionary fully and effectively
  – especially, the etymologies [often in braces]

**pilgrim, n.** [Fr. *pelerin*; It. *pellegrino*, from L. *peregrinus*, a wanderer, a traveler in foreign parts; a foreigner; *per*, through, and *ager*, land.]
  1. a wanderer, a sojourner.
  2. a person who travels to a shrine or holy place.
Latin and Greek Elements in English
Chapter 1: Dictionaries

- **ETYMOLOGY**: “the origin and analysis of a word as shown by breaking it down into its constituent historical elements”
  - literally, “the study of the true or real (meanings of words)”

  - Grk *etumos*: “real, actual, precise”
  - *-ologia*: “study of”
Latin and Greek Elements in English
Chapter 1: Dictionaries

• the dictionary is essentially the answer key for all the exercises and tests in this class

• the best dictionaries to buy for this class
  – any of Webster’s large dictionaries
    • Third New International Unabridged
    • New Universal Unabridged
  – the definitive dictionary for etymology: Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology

• check the etymologies in the dictionary you’re considering buying and see if they’re substantial
Latin and Greek Elements in English
Chapter 2: Definitions

• **DEFINITION**: “the explanation or description of what a thing is; or what a word or phrase means or has meant”

  – precision is very important in forming definitions
  – hence FOUR rules for forming definitions

  • your answers on tests and quizzes will be evaluated (i.e. given credit) based on your adherence to these rules
Latin and Greek Elements in English
Chapter 2: Definitions

• **RULE #1**: Define a word with an equivalent grammatical form
  – i.e. a noun with a noun, a verb with a verb, etc.
  – “assimilate” = verb
    • **WRONG**: “alike” (adjective); “a thing alike” (noun)
    • **RIGHT**: “to make alike”
  – in context, it’s easy to tell whether the grammatical form of the definition is equivalent to the word being defined
    • Will the definition substitute for the word?
Latin and Greek Elements in English
Chapter 2: Definitions

• **RULE #2:** Stick to the essence of the word
  – do not describe, dilate or render judgment on the word
  – e.g., evolution
    • WRONG: “Darwin’s folly”
    • RIGHT: “the act of unfolding (literally, ‘rolling out’) over time”
  – e.g., time
    • WRONG: “nature’s way of keeping everything from happening all at once”
Latin and Greek Elements in English
Chapter 2: Definitions

• **RULE #3**: Do not use a word (or any part of it) to define the word itself
  – instead, use a synonym
  – e.g. uncontrollable

  • WRONG: “unable to be controlled” or “out of control”
  • RIGHT: “incapable of being managed”
Latin and Greek Elements in English
Chapter 2: Definitions

• **RULE #4**: whenever possible, avoid **negative definitions**
  
  – e.g., woman
  
  • WRONG: “not a man”
  
  • RIGHT: “a female human being”
  
  – n.b. apostate is *not* the opposite of prostate!
  
  – exception: words which have a negative element within them

  • usually a negative prefix: a-, un-, in-, anti-

  • e.g. *un*controllable, *in*adequate
Go to page 34 (Ayers), Exercise IV
Latin and Greek Elements in English
Chapter 2: Latin Bases

• **ROOT/BASE**: “the central element of a word which is left after the removal of all affixes”
  – e.g. MOV- = the base of removal

• BASES should always be written in CAPITAL letters, with a dash after the BASE
  – e.g. FIRM- = the base of affirmative

• n.b. in English, -e has been added to some Latin BASES
  – e.g. re-MOV-e
  – but this is not part of the BASE ÷ ignore it!
    • this “silent -e” is a convention of English spelling
Latin and Greek Elements in English
Chapter 2: Latin Bases

• often there are two forms of Latin BASES
  – nominative form
    • e.g. HOMO-, as in homo sapiens
  – base form
    • e.g. HOMIN-, as in hominid
    • this form is more important
      – more pervasive in English derivatives
      – over 90% of English derivatives use the base form
      – often Ayers gives only the base form
Latin and Greek Elements in English
Chapter 2: Latin Bases

• Latin vs. Old French BASES (doublets)
  – often a Latin BASE has entered English twice
    • once from Latin directly: either during Roman times or after
      the seventeenth century
    • once through French: during the Middle Ages
    • e.g. reCEPTion vs. reCEIVE
  – thus, Ayers often cites BASES in two forms: Latin and
    Old French
    • e.g. CEPT- [CEIV-]
    • n.b. brackets for French forms!
Latin and Greek Elements in English
Chapter 2: The Latin Verb Suffix -ate/-ite

• -ate/-ite: “to . . .”
  – simply signifies that the word is a verb
  – in exercises, call it a “verb suffix”
    • and then be sure to define the word as a verb, if -ate/-ite is the final suffix!
  – learn this suffix!
  – linguistically, it is equivalent to English “-ed”
    • but used very widely and for a variety of purposes in Latin
    • for instance, it may also be used to form adjectives (Ayers, Chapter X) and nouns (Ayers, Chapter XV)