

# Moving toward Numbers

The root *mot* as in *motion* means “to move, to do.” The root *numer* as in *numeral* means “number.” All of the following key words start with either the root *mot* or the root *numer*. In each key word, circle the root.

### Key Words

motel

motivate

motor

numerical

motionless

motive

numerator

numerous

## Using ROOT CLUES

The roots *mot* (move) and *numer* (number) give you clues about meaning. When you spot one of these roots in a word, you have a key to the word’s meaning. Use the underlined root clues to help you match the following columns:

- |                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| 1. _____ <u>motive</u>     | A. a <u>number</u> in a fraction                         |
| 2. _____ <u>numerator</u>  | B. the reason that <u>moves</u> a person to do something |
| 3. _____ <u>motionless</u> | C. a large <u>number</u> of                              |
| 4. _____ <u>numerous</u>   | D. without <u>moving</u>                                 |

The root clues did not give you complete definitions as the following dictionary listings will. But they got you started by giving you *part* of the meaning. Sometimes that *part* helps you to figure out the word.

**MOT** (from the Latin word *movere*, *motus* meaning "to move, do, act")

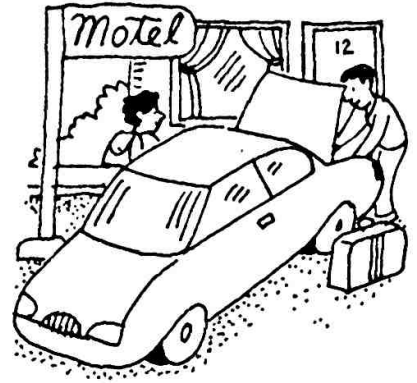
Familiar Words  
with Root MOT

motion  
motioned  
motioning  
motions

1. **motel** (mō tel' )

n. A hotel or a group of cabins by the road for motorists.

After a long day of riding in the car, we were glad to get into our room at the motel.



**NOTA BENE**

The word *motel* combines the beginning of the word *motorist* (a person driving a car) with the ending of the word *hotel*. Our language sometimes adds new words by combining old words. The word *smog* is a combination of *smoke* and *fog*. A meal eaten late in the morning is called *brunch* because it is after *breakfast* and before *lunch*. New words come into our language in many ways, but one of the handiest ways is by combining.

2. **motionless** (mō' shən lis)

adj. Not moving at all, still.

From a distance the surface of the lake looked as motionless as a pane of glass.

3. **motivate** (mō' tə vāt)

v. To move a person to action, to make a person eager to do something.

A love of science motivated the young woman to become an astronaut.



4. **motive** (mō' tiv)

n. The reason or cause someone does something.

Helene's motive for babysitting is to earn money for the school trip to Washington, D.C.

Challenge Words  
with Root MOT

motivation  
motorist  
promote  
promotion  
remote

**5. motor** (mō' tər)

n. A machine that uses some form of power, like electricity or gas, to make something move.

Maggie used pliers and a screwdriver to make a simple repair on the motor.

**NUMER** (from the Latin word *numerus* meaning "number")

Familiar Words  
with Root **NUMER**

numeral  
numerals

**6. numerator** (nü' mə rā tər)

n. The number that is above the line, or to the left of the line, in a fraction.

In the fraction  $\frac{3}{8}$ , the numerator is 3.

**7. numerical** (nü mer' i kəl)

adj. Related to numbers, or a series of numbers.

Our teacher told us to list our spelling test scores in numerical order from the lowest to the highest.

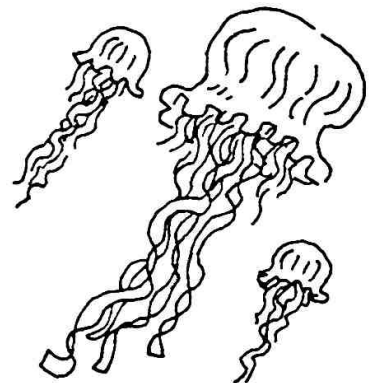
Challenge Words  
with Root **NUMER**

enumerate  
innumerable

**8. numerous** (nü' mə rəs)

adj. Many, a large number of.

Jellyfish were so numerous at the beach that we decided not to go in the water.





EXERCISE A: SYNONYMS

Write the letter of the best SYNONYM (the word with the meaning most nearly the same as the word in bold-faced type).

1. \_\_\_\_\_ seeing **numerous** animals

- a. wild                      b. lost                      c. sick                      d. many

2. \_\_\_\_\_ the **motor** in the fan

- a. air                      b. heat                      c. machine                      d. blades

3. \_\_\_\_\_ a **motel** near the highway

- a. car                      b. sign                      c. picnic                      d. building

4. \_\_\_\_\_ as **motionless** as a statue

- a. still                      b. hard                      c. carved                      d. beautiful



EXERCISE B: MEANING IN CONTEXT

Use these words to fill in the blanks in the following paragraph.

**numerators**

**motive**

**numerical**

**motivate**

Eddie has always loved numbers. When he first learned to count, he painted numbers on his toy cars. Then he lined them up in

- (1) \_\_\_\_\_ order from one to five. Now he enjoys learning about fractions and working with (2) \_\_\_\_\_ and denominators. Eddie's (3) \_\_\_\_\_ for always doing his math homework first is simple enjoyment. Perhaps his love of numbers will later (4) \_\_\_\_\_ him to become a mathematician or an accountant.



## EXERCISE C: EXTEND YOUR VOCABULARY

The adjective suffix *-less*

The key word *motionless* ends in the suffix *-less*. Words ending in *-less* are usually adjectives. Adjectives describe people, places, and things. Examples: *helpless* babies, *cloudless* skies, *useless* junk. When the suffix *-less* is added to a word, the meaning of the word changes.

*Less* can also stand alone. Then, it is a word meaning “fewer; a smaller amount.” You can say, “After dogs shed, they have *less* hair,” or “If you would talk *less*, you might learn more.” In these sentences, *less* is a word, not a suffix.

Make new words by adding the suffix *-less* to each of these words. Write the new word on the line.

1. care \_\_\_\_\_

2. worth \_\_\_\_\_

3. fear \_\_\_\_\_

4. thought \_\_\_\_\_

5. sleep \_\_\_\_\_

6. Look at the five words you wrote. What meaning does the suffix *-less* have in these words? Circle your answer.

A. without

B. full of

C. against

7. Write a sentence using the adjective *motionless*.

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