What are root words?

Some words are made up of different parts, for example, **unemployment**

unemployment has a beginning (prefix), a middle (root word) and an ending (suffix).

unemployment

un	**employ**	**ment**
prefix	root word	suffix

The root word is the basic word and by adding prefixes and suffixes, we can change its meaning.

If we take the root word, **employ**, and add other suffixes we can make other words, such as **employ**ed, **employ**ee, **employ**er. Both the spelling and the meanings of the words are linked.

> **A root word is a real word and you can make new words from it by adding prefixes and suffixes.**

Where words are linked like this, they are called a **word family.**

> **Root words are helpful for learning both the meaning and the spelling of a word.**

Here are some more examples of root words and their word families:

use: **use**less, **us**able, **use**d, **us**ing, **use**r, mis**use**

friend: friendly, **friendship,** un**friend**ly, **friend**less

faith: **faith**ful, **faith**fully, un**faith**ful, un**faith**fully