Mixed Word Formation

CEFR C2 · Integrated derivation: morphology, corpus, register and style

WS1 Derivational Networks · WS2 Corpus, Blocking & Productivity · WS3 Coinage & Register Across Classes · WS4 Scholarly Analysis & Writing · Answer Key

Worksheet 1: Derivational Networks

Name: _____ *Date:* _____ *Level: C2 (CEFR)*

Reference: The Word Family as a Network

A root sits at the centre of a **derivational network** whose nodes are filled or gapped, regular or suppletive, and often register-split. Mastery is navigating the whole network: selecting the exact node, respecting **blocking** and **allomorphy**, and knowing which nodes are lexical gaps (**stealer*) filled by suppletion (*thief*).

Root	Noun(s)	Verb	Adjective(s)	Adverb
analyse	analysis / analyst	analyse	analytic(al)	analytically
strong	strength	strengthen	strong	strongly
deceive	deceit / deception	deceive	deceptive / deceitful	deceptively
proof / prove	proof	prove	proven / provable	provably
long	length	lengthen	long / lengthy	at length

Part A – Fill the Network (note gaps & suppletion)

#	Noun(s)	Verb	Adjective(s)	Adverb
1	deceit / deception			
2	proof			
3	length			

Part B – Identify the Gap or Suppletion

State what fills the slot and why the regular form is blocked.

1. person who steals → _____
2. adverbial of "good" (manner) → _____
3. noun of "maintain" → _____

Score: ____ / 20

Worksheet 2: Corpus, Blocking & Productivity

Name: _____ Date: _____ Level: C2 (CEFR)

Reference: What Governs the Choice

Which derivative occurs is governed by **productivity** (which affixes coin freely), **blocking** (an existing word bars a rival), **Latinate stratal restrictions** (-ity/-ation prefer Latinate bases), and **register-corpus distribution** (academic prose favours -tion/-ity nominalizations; speech favours -ness and conversion). A C2 user predicts the attested form and explains the constraint.

Constraint	Effect	Example
Productivity	which affix coins now	-ness, -ise, conversion high; -th frozen
Blocking	existing word bars rival	glory blocks *gloriousness-as-default
Latinate restriction	-ity/-ation on Latinate	curiosity ✓; *curiousity-from-native rare
Register	corpus favours some forms	academic: nominalization dense

Part A – Predict & Justify the Attested Form

#	Base + slot	Attested form + constraint
1	curious → abstract noun	
2	strong → abstract noun	
3	arrive → act noun	
4	decide → abstract noun	

Part B – Blocking & Rivalry

Say which form wins and what blocks the rival.

1. *strongness vs strength → _____
2. *arrivement vs arrival → _____
3. *stealer vs thief → _____

Part C – Register-Corpus Map

Place each derivative in its most likely corpus: *problematise · doability · nowness · notwithstanding · optimisation*

Corpus	Forms
Academic / scientific	
Formal / legal	
Informal / social media	
Business / policy jargon	

Score: _____ / 25

Worksheet 3: Coinage & Register Across Classes

Name: _____ *Date:* _____ *Level: C2 (CEFR)*

Reference: Coining Across the Four Classes

Advanced coinage ranges over all four classes: converting nouns to verbs (*to platform*), verbs to nouns (*a big ask*), nouns to adjectives via *-y/-ish/-esque* (*Kafkaesque*), and adjectives to adverbs freely. Each coinage carries register and stance; mastery is producing forms a reader accepts and diagnosing when a coinage enlivens or obscures.

Direction	Coinage	Register/effect
noun → verb (conversion)	to platform, to gaslight	current; can be jargon
verb → noun (conversion)	a big ask, a fail, a reveal	informal, punchy
noun → adjective	Kafkaesque, on-brand, scrolly	evocative / informal
adj → adverb (nonce)	bigly, adorkably	playful / marked
-ise / -ify neologism	to gamify, to problematise	technical / academic

Part A – Interpret the Cross-Class Coinage

1. "That's a big ask." (verb → noun) _____
2. "The whole thing felt very on-brand." (noun → adj) _____
3. "They problematised the framework." (-ise) _____
4. "It was an epic reveal." (verb → noun) _____

Part B – Coin Across Classes with Control

Coin the form named and state the process.

1. (noun "sunset" → verb, 'phase out') → _____
2. (verb "ask" → noun) → _____
3. (name "Orwell" → adjective) → _____

Part C – Enlivening or Obscuring?

Judge each coinage, then recast the ones that obscure.

#	Coinage	Enlivens / obscures + recast
1	"We'll operationalise the ask."	
2	"a very Kafkaesque process"	
3	"Let's ideate and then action it."	

Score: _____ / 30

Worksheet 4: Scholarly Analysis & Writing

Name: _____ Date: _____ Level: C2 (CEFR)

Part A – Critical Text Analysis

Derivation is the great economiser of the lexicon. From a single root, English spins a whole network of forms — a nominalization here, a denominal verb there, an adverb almost as an afterthought — and each node carries not merely a meaning but a register. To write well is, in part, to choose among these nodes with a discrimination that feels effortless: to know that strength blocks strongness, that arrival forecloses arrivement, and that operationalise, however impeccably formed, will read to half one's audience as an evasion. The morphology licenses; usage disposes.

1. Identify every derived form and classify it by class and process (suffixation, prefixation, conversion, nominalization).
2. "strength blocks strongness" and "arrival forecloses arrivement" — explain blocking with these two cases.
3. "The morphology licenses; usage disposes." Reconstruct the claim and evaluate it against the operationalise example.
4. Assess how the passage's own derivational choices enact its thesis about effortless discrimination.

Part B – Extended Scholarly Writing

Write the opening two paragraphs (220–260 words) of a scholarly essay on: "Derivational choice is where grammatical possibility and stylistic judgement meet." Requirements — include and underline: (1) one **nominalization** retaining argument structure; (2) one **denominal verb** (conversion) you justify; (3) one **rival-derivative** pair distinguished precisely; (4) one **blocked form** named as such; (5) one precise **metalinguistic term** (blocking, allomorphy, productivity, conversion, Latinate, suppletion) used correctly; (6) two **epistemic hedges** calibrated to each claim.

#	Line
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	

Features: _____ / 6 Word count: _____ Score: _____ / 35

Answer Key & Teacher Notes

For teacher use only — C2 Level, Mixed Word Formation

Worksheet 1 – Part A

deceit/deception → deceive / deceptive (deceitful) / deceptively · proof → prove / proven (provable) / provably · length → lengthen / long (lengthy) / at length (lengthily)

Worksheet 1 – Part B (model)

1 thief (suppletion; *stealer blocked by the established noun). · 2 well (suppletive adverb of good; *goodly is archaic/blocked). · 3 maintenance (irregular; *maintainment blocked).

Worksheet 2 – Part A (model)

1 curiosity — -ity on a Latinate base (curious). · 2 strength — suppletive/irregular; -ness blocked. · 3 arrival — -al lexicalised; -ment blocked. · 4 decision — -sion nominalization with base allomorphy (decide→decis-).

Worksheet 2 – Part B (model)

1 strength wins; the irregular noun blocks the regular -ness form. · 2 arrival wins; the established -al noun blocks -ment. · 3 thief wins; suppletion blocks the -er agent noun.

Worksheet 2 – Part C

Academic: optimisation, problematise. · Formal/legal: notwithstanding. · Informal/social: nowness, doability. · Business/policy: problematise/optimisation (accept with justification — several straddle).

Worksheet 3 – Part A (model)

1 verb→noun conversion; "ask" nominalised = a demanding request; informal. · 2 noun→adjective; "on-brand" = consistent with an identity; marketing register. · 3 -ise coinage; "problematise" = treat as a problem; academic. · 4 verb→noun; "reveal" = a moment of disclosure; media/informal.

Worksheet 3 – Part B (model)

1 to sunset (conversion) · 2 an ask (conversion, verb→noun) · 3 Orwellian (-ian).

Worksheet 3 – Part C (model)

1 obscures — "operationalise the ask" stacks two jargon coinages; recast: "carry out the request." · 2 enlivens — "Kafkaesque" is precise and evocative. · 3 obscures — "ideate … action it" → "come up with ideas and then act on them." Accept reasoned judgements.

Worksheet 4 – Part A (model)

1 derivation/nominalization (—), economiser (-ise→-er), denominal (de-+nominal), verb (conversion refs), strength (suppletive noun), strongness (blocked), arrival/arrivement (-al vs -ment), operationalise (-ise), discrimination (-tion), evasion (-sion). Classify each by process. · 2 Blocking: an established lexical item pre-empts a regularly-derivable rival — strength (irregular) occupies the "quality of strong" slot, so *strongness is blocked; arrival (lexicalised -al) occupies the act-noun slot, so *arrivement is blocked. · 3 The morphology may generate a well-formed word (operationalise is impeccably built), but whether it is used/accepted is decided by usage and register — grammaticality ≠ acceptability; sound, and the operationalise case shows a licensed form can still fail pragmatically. · 4 Self-exemplifying: the passage deploys nominalizations (discrimination, evasion), a coined economiser, and the very rival pairs it discusses, enacting the effortless discrimination it praises — persuasive as illustration though not proof.

Worksheet 4 – Part B: Marking Rubric

Criterion	Descriptor at C2	Marks
Nominalization	Argument structure retained	0–5
Denominal verb	Conversion justified	0–5
Rival-derivative pair	Distinguished precisely	0–5
Blocking + metalanguage	Blocked form named; term correct	0–5
Epistemic calibration	Two hedges matched to claims	0–5
Argument & length	220–260 words; contestable claim developed	0–5

The C2 benchmark is integrated control: a student who navigates the whole derivational network — choosing the attested node, respecting blocking, and matching register — and can justify each choice has demonstrated mastery across all four word classes at once.