



# Learn

## Exceptional Expressions For Everyday Events

Schools are about learning—from peers as well as teachers. In class, students learn academic content, but they also learn about social relationships and life skills, such as the need for perseverance to complete tasks successfully.

To learn something is to gain knowledge about that idea or topic. Learning can occur in formal contexts, such as in a set of experiments about photosynthesis, or, informally, as students chat with one another about favorite books.

Many synonyms exist for the verb **to learn**, as well as numerous idioms and common phrases. There many ways to integrate these into everyday classroom and school events.

## Follow-Ups

- Can a person apprentice to become a carpenter? A writer? An actor? A surfer?
- How is absorbing information different from acquiring information?
- When people say they have mastered a subject, does that mean they have learned everything there is to know about it?

## The Spanish Connection

Some of the words related to **learn** have clear Spanish cognates, among them: **study/estudio** and **acquire/adquirir**. The word *aprender* in Spanish is not a cognate for **learn**. But it does have an English cognate—**apprehend**. Both Spanish and English words come from the Latin root *prehendere* that means “to grasp.” The English word **apprehend** has come to be associated with grasping or taking someone into custody. However, a second meaning of **apprehend** is “quick to learn or understand.”

## Word Changes

- **Learn** is used only as a verb. Some members of its morphological family, however, are nouns, such as **learning**. As a noun, **learning** means knowledge or the acquisition of knowledge.
- In education, there are many compound words that describe students’ learning processes. Some of these are in the illustration.
- The idioms and phrases reveal some of the nuances of words associated with learning. For example, a student who needs only to review previously learned material can “brush up” on the material. A person who spent many hours assembling a model plane, only to end up with extra pieces, “learned the hard way” the importance of reading instructions fully beforehand.



# Learn



**Learn as in  
to gain knowledge**

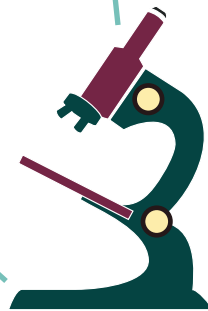
- acquire
- study
- attain
- absorb
- apprentice
  - learn
- apprehend

**Learn as in  
to know something  
very well**

- master
- memorize
- understand

**Learn as in  
to find out information**

- hear
- discover
- realize
- ascertain
- gather
- catch on
  - see
- uncover
  - find
  - out
- unearth
- stumble upon



## Learn

**IDIOMS**

- Learn the hard way
- Live and learn
- Learn the ropes
- Get the hang of
- Get the knack of
- Get it down pat
- Pick something up
- Hit the books
- Never too late to learn
- We must learn to walk before we can run

**THE SPANISH CONNECTION**

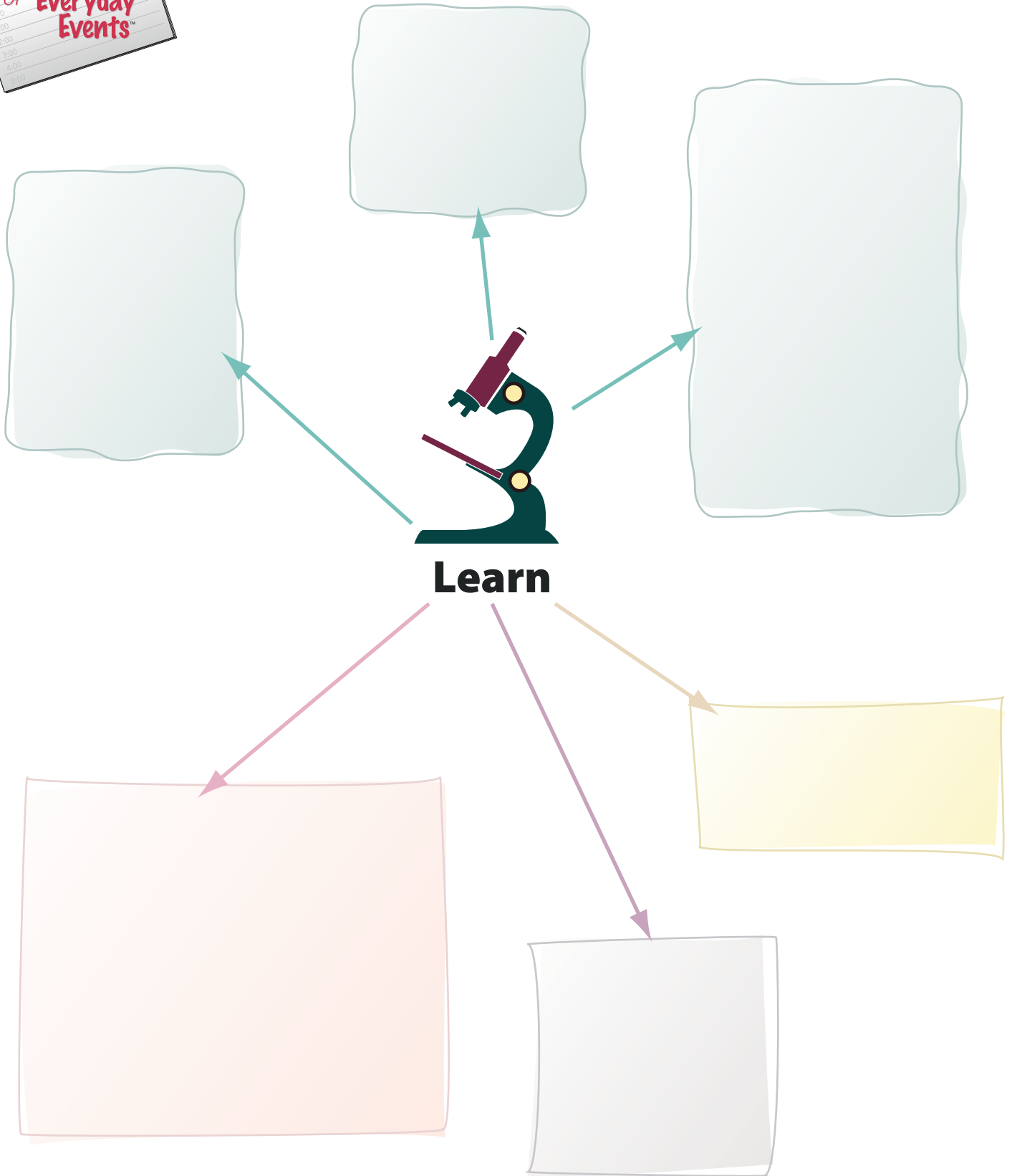
- study / estudio
- acquire / adquirir
- apprehend / aprender

**COMMON PHRASES**

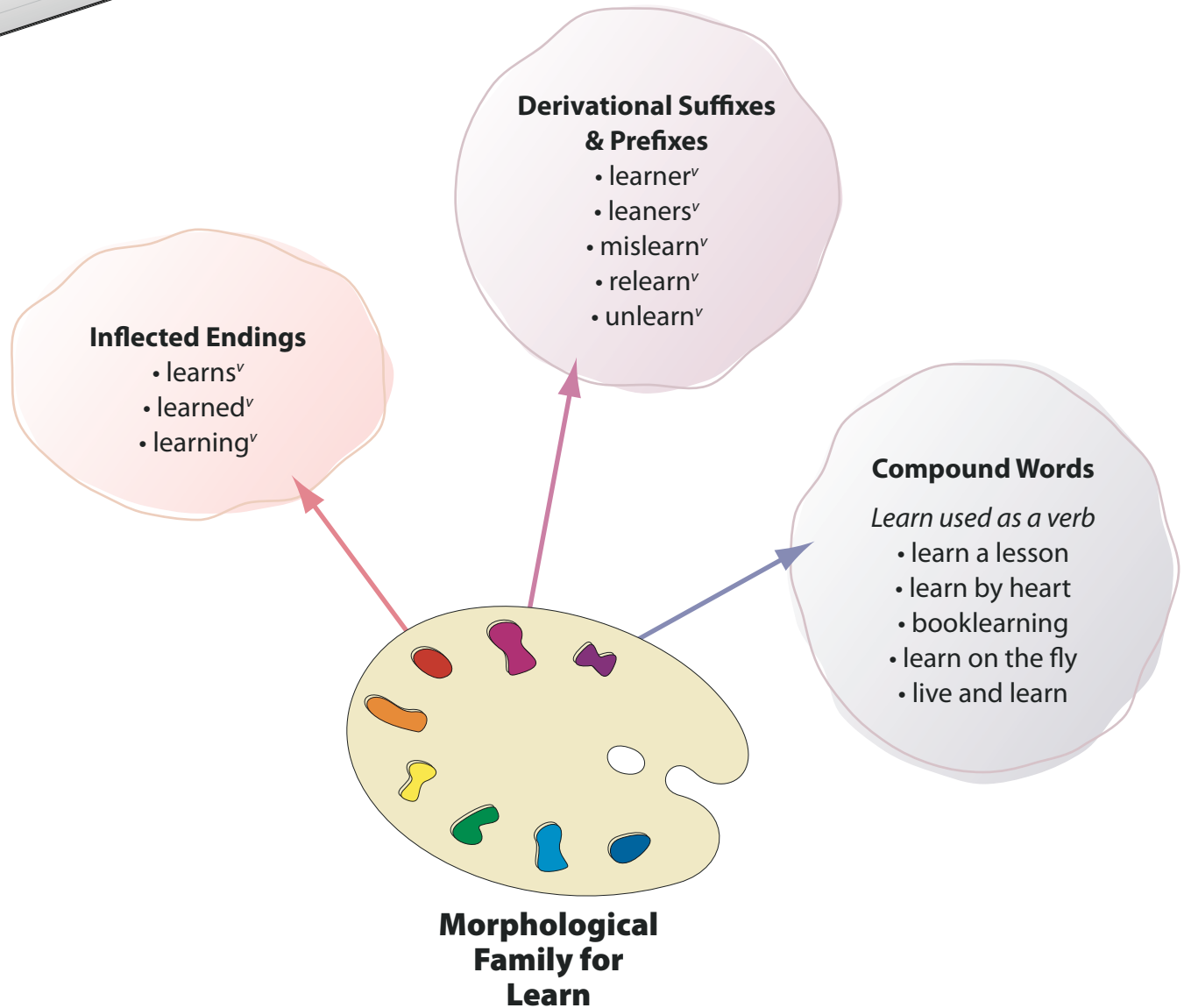
- Brush up on
- Crack the books
- Soak in
- Pore over
- Learn a thing or two
- Learn by heart



# Learn



# Learn



<sup>v</sup> Learn used as a verb



# Learn

