



# Guess

**Guessing** is a part of the educational process for students. As students learn new material, they try to apply it to the things they are learning, or even to other areas of knowledge. For example, a student may have just learned that all plants need sunlight, air, water, and soil to live. When asked which might be more important, the student may **guess** that sunlight, air, and water are more important than soil because they know that some plants live on tree bark, like orchids.

Within narrative texts, characters may experience the same educational process of **guessing** as students in the classroom do; although, the context may not be within a classroom. For example, a character may **guess** what is for dinner or **guess** which road is the safer road to travel on, neither use of **guessing** takes place at a school.

**Guess** can be used as both as noun and as a verb. As a verb, to **guess** means to form an opinion or answer to a question or situation that the person isn't sure of. For example, a princess may say, "I'm guessing this apple is poisonous and I will not eat it."

**Guess** used as a noun in a reply is used to show that the person isn't sure of their answer. For example, a prince may say, "I guess we should take this road because it looks like the safer road to travel on."

## Follow-Ups

- How is guessing on a test question different from knowing the answer?
- When a person says, "I'm guessing it's 3pm," how likely is it that it's 3pm?

## The Spanish Connection

The word **guess** comes from the Middle Dutch word *gisse*. The Spanish word for the verb **guess** is *adivinar*. **Guess** and *adivinar* are not cognates, but there are synonyms and related words that have Spanish cognates. For example, *conjetura* is the Spanish word for conjecture.

## Word Changes

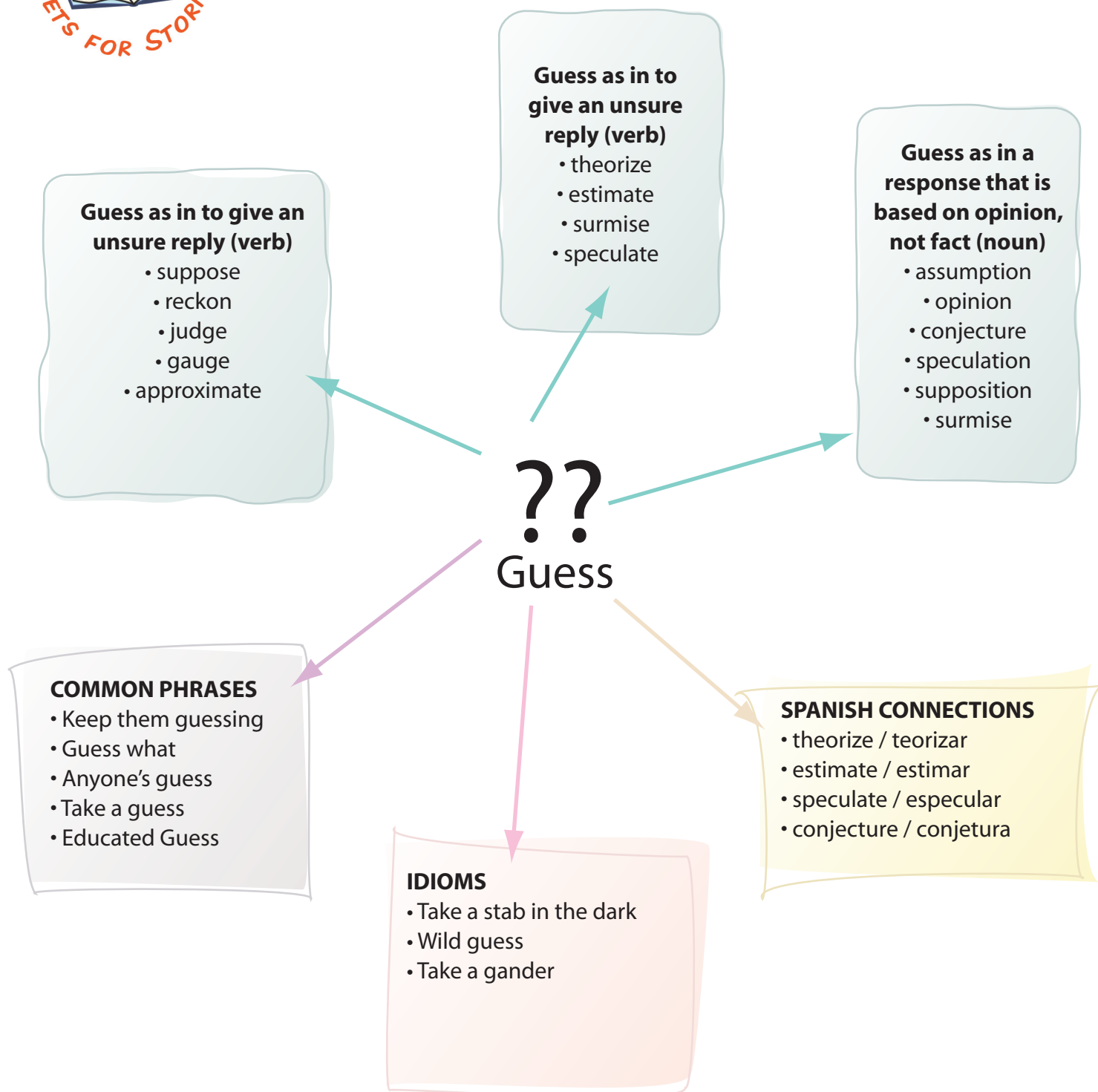
When scientists and other professionals make a **guess** in their work they do so with thought and consideration. That is because most often scientists and other professionals may be asked to explain their **guess**.

An interesting thing to note is that some synonyms of the verb **guess** are morphological or derivational family members of synonyms of the noun **guess**. For example, a person can speculate on an experiment's outcome, or a person can form a speculation on an experiment's outcome—speculate and speculation are derivational family members.

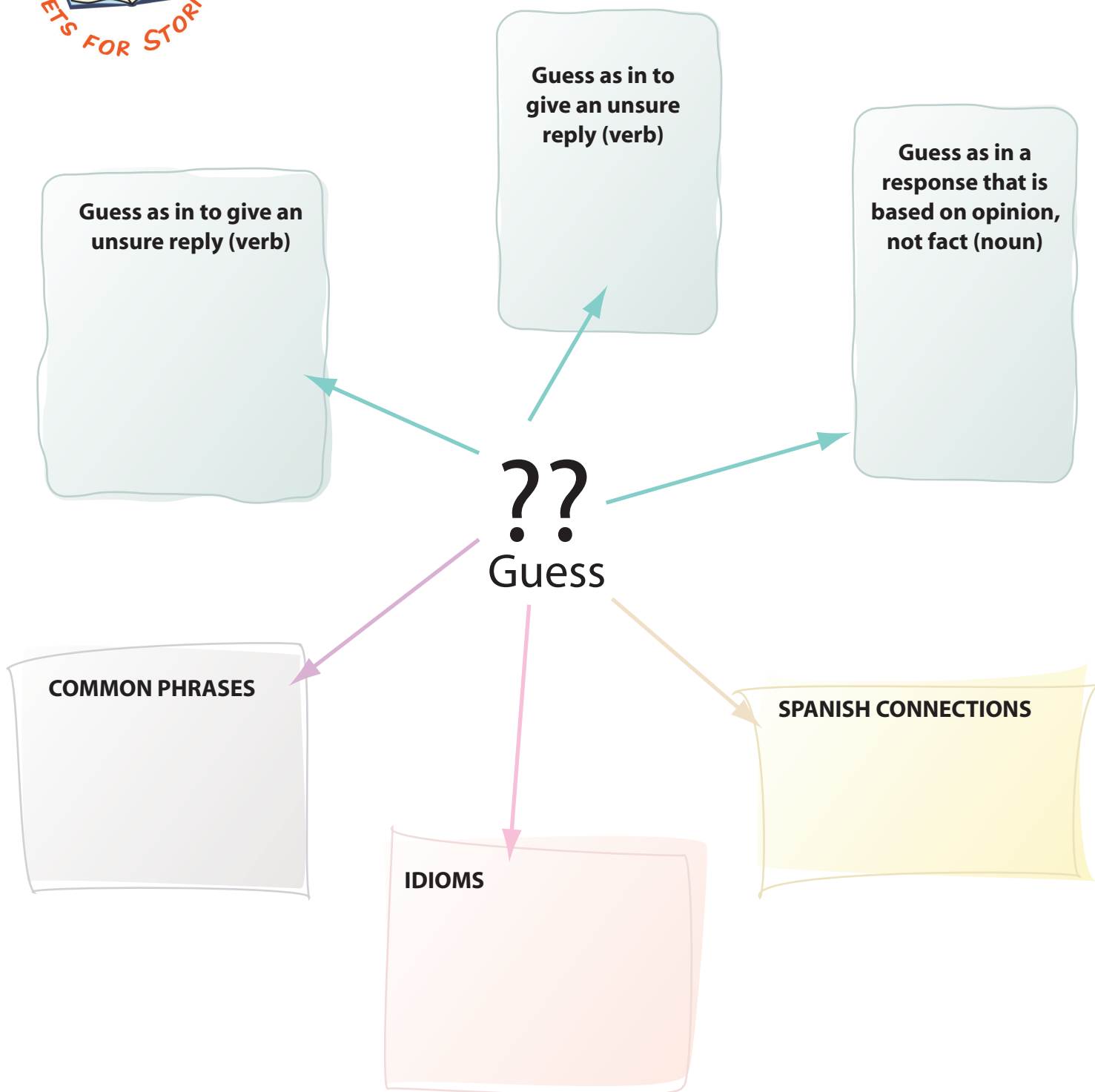
"To take a stab (in the dark)" is guess when you have no idea of the accurate answer. It was first used in an American magazine in 1895 to mean, "to make a blind attempt to answer a question." The meaning is still the same today. The mental image is that of a person in a dark room bumping into furniture and walls to find something they can't see.



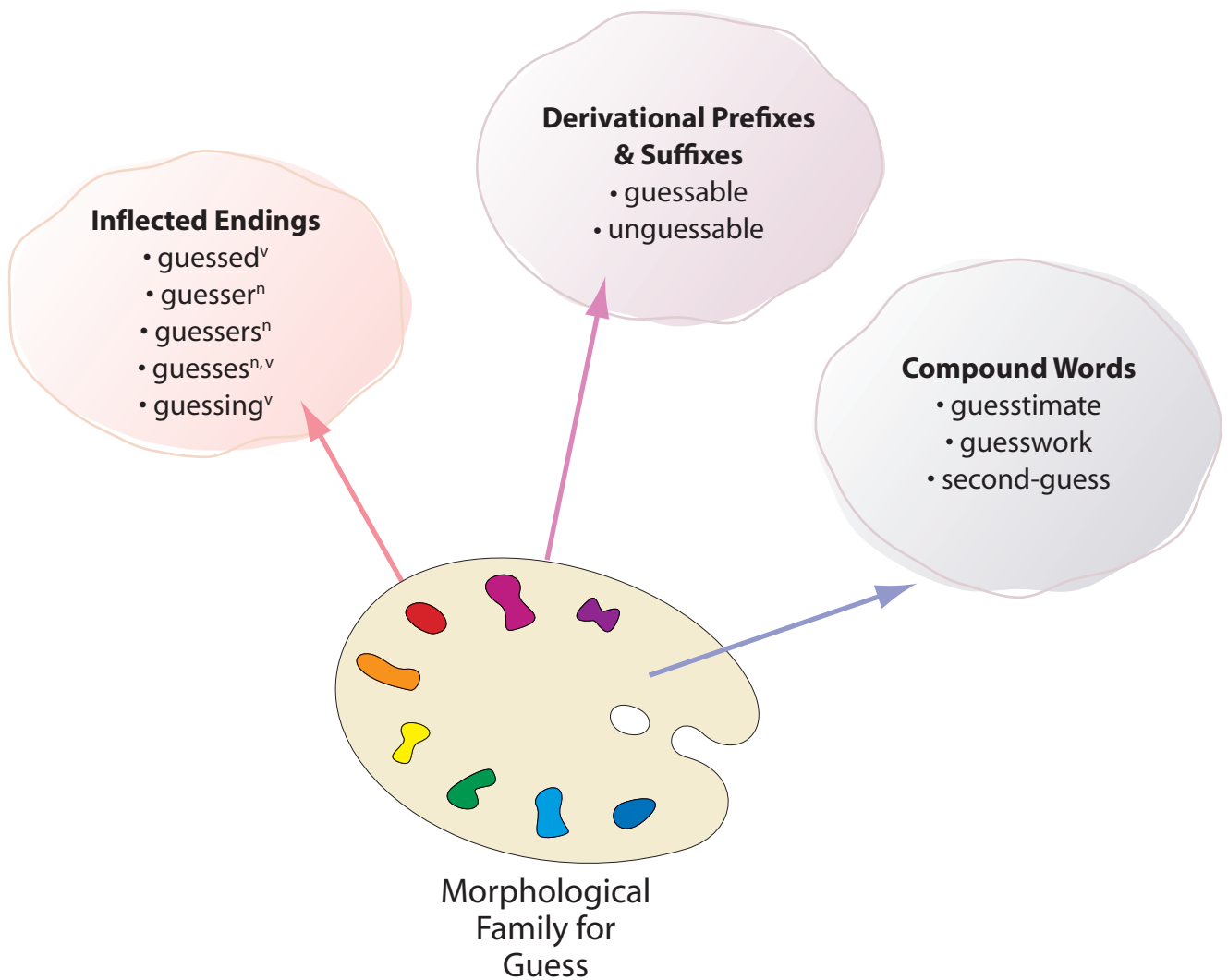
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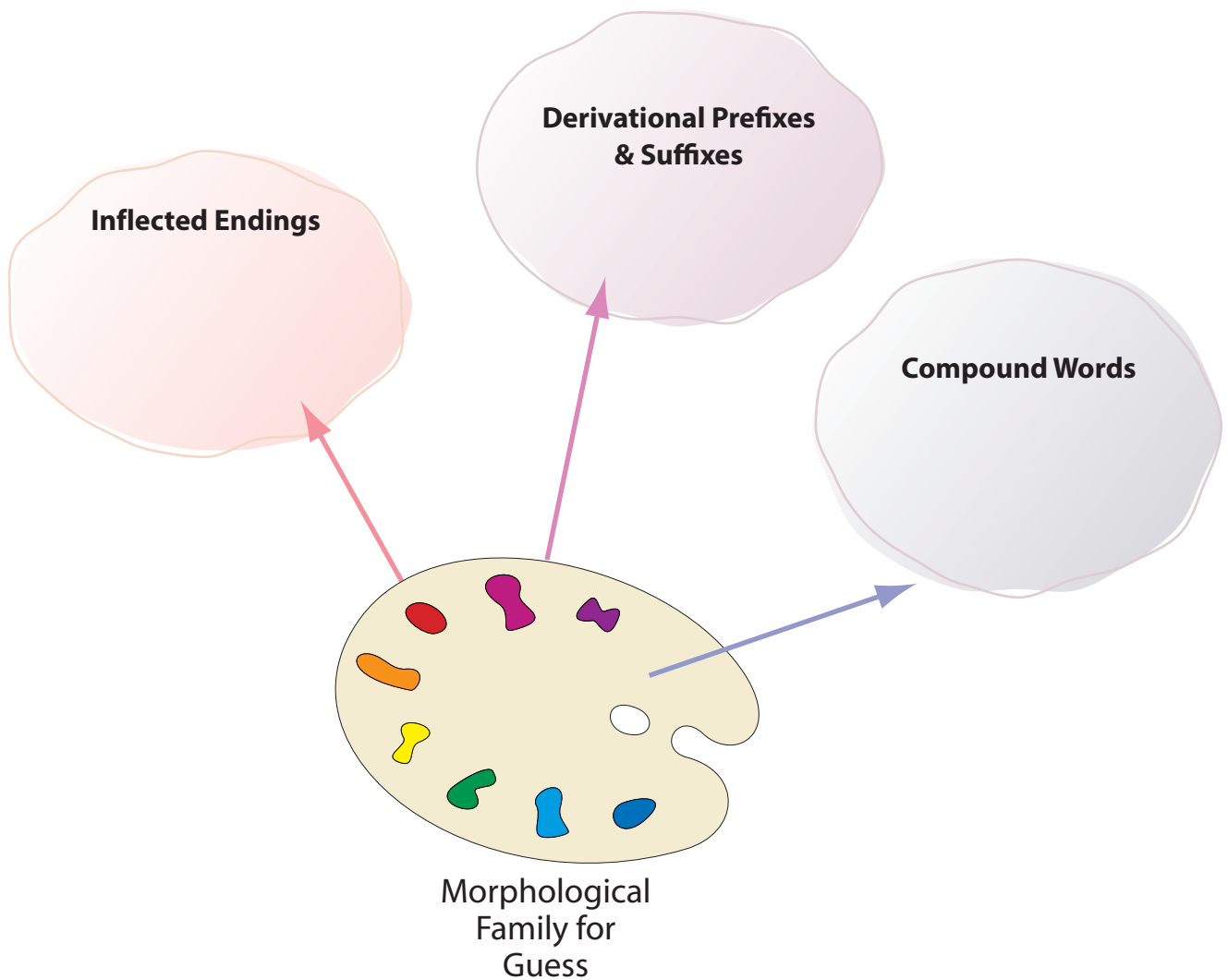


<sup>n</sup> Guess used as a noun

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



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