Word Derivatives

Word derivatives or stems / roots can be defined as a part of a word that has its own meaning. These meanings are shared between words and languages, most commonly Greek and Latin. When people are able to learn and recognize stems, they may be able to decipher unfamiliar words.

Let's look at a few examples.

"Aqua" is a familiar stem that means "water".
"Mar" is a stem that means 'the sea'.
When both of these are combined, they create aquamarine. This can be seen as a bluish-green color, similar to what would be seen when one is looking at a sea of water.

The brand name Aquafina means good water.
An aquarium is a container that holds water.
A marine is a branch of the army that travels on water.

"Inter" means "between".
"Rupt" means to 'break'. If you interrupt a two people talking, you may be breaking between them.

Interdepartmental means between departments; we will have an interdepartmental meeting of Friday.

Oh no, I ruptured my appendix .

"Mal" means bad and is shared between languages.
Ca va mal in French means it's going badly.
Esta mal is Spanish also means it is going badly.

Also Maleficent, the Disney character, does not have a reputation for being good.

One reliable source to use to study word derivatives is the book *The Word Within the Word* by Michael Clay Thompson. You can access his lists my typing in the name of the book and adding List 1, 2, or 3 etc after it. Here you will discover 25 stems per lesson and their meanings.
A good way to study them is to make flashcards and memorize them. When you're ready to move on, try a Quizlet by typing the title of the book into Quizlet followed by the lesson number.
Example: Log on to Quizlet – then search *The Word Within the Word* Stem list 1.
You will find flashcards, games, and tests to try.