

THE SUFFIX **-LESS**

In the article *An Insider's Guide to Teen-Speak*, the author refers to some of teenagers' **harmless** responses such as "Great," "Yeah," and "Okay" that can have a variety of meanings, depending on tone, duration and pitch.

Notice that the adjective **harmless** is formed by the noun **harm** and the suffix **-less**. The suffix **-less** is an adjective-forming suffix which means *without*. A **harmless** response is one *without* harm; a **cordless** telephone is one *without* a cord, an **endless** story is one that seems to never end.

Let's take a look at some other examples.

Kim said that at some beaches in France, the women don't wear the top part of their bathing suits. She said they're called **topless** beaches.

The students were **speechless** after they heard how difficult their final exam would be.

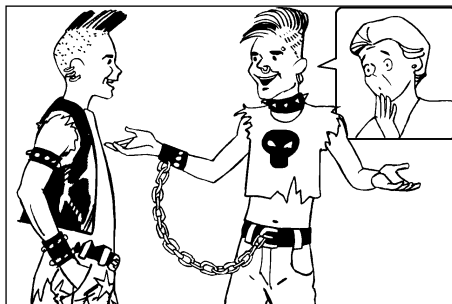
Every weekend, Greg volunteers to help the **homeless** people in his town.

Next time you come across an adjective which ends in **-less**, follow this hint:



The suffix **-less** is an adjective-forming suffix meaning *without*.

Take a look at one more example with the suffix **-less**.



"Did your mom see your new look?"
"Yeah. And she was **speechless**.
I guess she liked it so much that she
didn't know what to say."