



THIRD COLLEGE • EDITION

---

# Webster's New World Dictionary

---

OF AMERICAN ENGLISH

---

**VICTORIA NEUFELDT**

Editor in Chief

**DAVID B. GURALNIK**

Editor in Chief Emeritus



---

Webster's New World

*Dedicated  
to David B. Guralnik  
lexicographical mentor  
and friend*

Webster's New World Dictionary, Third College Edition

Copyright © 1988 by Simon & Schuster, Inc.

This edition is a major revision of Webster's New World Dictionary, Second College Edition, copyright © 1986 and 1970, 1972, 1974, 1976, 1978, 1979, 1980, 1982, and 1984 by Simon & Schuster, Inc.

All rights reserved  
including the right of reproduction  
in whole or in part in any form

Published by Webster's New World Dictionaries  
A Division of Simon & Schuster, Inc.  
Gulf + Western Building  
One Gulf + Western Plaza  
New York, New York 10023

WEBSTER'S NEW WORLD and colophons are registered trademarks of Simon & Schuster, Inc.

Dictionary Editorial Offices: New World Dictionaries,  
850 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44114

DISTRIBUTED BY PRENTICE HALL TRADE

Database design and creation by Lexi-Comp, Inc., Hudson, Ohio.

The typefaces used are Century Schoolbook and Helvetica.

Manufactured in the United States of America

3 4 5 6 7 8 9

**Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Webster's New World dictionary of American English / Victoria E. Neufeldt, editor-in-chief. — 3rd college ed.

1. English language—Dictionaries. 2. Americanisms—Dictionaries.

I. Neufeldt, Victoria E.

PE1628.W5633 1988

88-1712

ISBN 0-13-947169-3 (thumb-indexed)

0-13-949280-1 (plain-edged)

0-13-949314-X (leatherkraft)



## REGIONAL DIALECTS IN THE UNITED STATES

This map, based on the findings of linguistic geographers, is intended to suggest the present spread of major geographical dialects in the United States, mainly by tinted areas, and the movement of dialects, mainly by colored arrows. For example, Northern speech moved west from New England and prevails along the eastern Great Lakes, so that dark blue arrows appear here within an area tinted blue. Farther west, dialects from New England penetrated areas where Midland now dominates, so that here dark blue arrows appear scattering within areas tinted medium to light blue. The map identifies with relative accuracy the cradle lands of American speech and the beginnings of the westward movement, since reliable studies abound for the Atlantic seaboard. Reports are available, also, for much of

the Middle West, for parts of the West Coast, and for random States, notably for Texas and Colorado, but many areas of the South and Far West, along with Alaska and Hawaii (here omitted), have not yet received detailed study, so that in these areas the map reflects, for the most part, informed guesses. Detail has been omitted throughout. For instance, most Eastern and Southern ports developed minor dialects that are not shown here, and the mingling of Highland and Coastal speech in the deep South is variously patterned, not blended as the map inevitably suggests. Northern influence in the San Francisco Bay area, brought by ship around Cape Horn, is sharply distinguishable, as indicated here by a medium blue tinge.

## PRONUNCIATION KEY

Symbol	Key Words	Symbol	Key Words
a	<u>asp</u> , <u>fat</u> , <u>parrot</u>	b	<u>bed</u> , <u>fable</u> , <u>dub</u> , <u>ebb</u>
ā	<u>ape</u> , <u>date</u> , <u>play</u> , <u>break</u> , <u>fail</u>	d	<u>dip</u> , <u>beadle</u> , <u>had</u> , <u>dodder</u>
ä	<u>ah</u> , <u>car</u> , <u>father</u> , <u>cot</u>	f	<u>fall</u> , <u>after</u> , <u>off</u> , <u>phone</u>
e	<u>elf</u> , <u>ten</u> , <u>berry</u>	g	<u>get</u> , <u>haggle</u> , <u>dog</u>
ē	<u>even</u> , <u>meet</u> , <u>money</u> , <u>flea</u> , <u>grieve</u>	h	<u>he</u> , <u>ahead</u> , <u>hotel</u>
i	<u>is</u> , <u>hit</u> , <u>mirror</u>	j	<u>joy</u> , <u>agile</u> , <u>badge</u>
ī	<u>ice</u> , <u>bite</u> , <u>high</u> , <u>sky</u>	k	<u>kill</u> , <u>tackle</u> , <u>bake</u> , <u>coat</u> , <u>quick</u>
ō	<u>open</u> , <u>tone</u> , <u>go</u> , <u>boat</u>	l	<u>let</u> , <u>yellow</u> , <u>ball</u>
ô	<u>all</u> , <u>horn</u> , <u>law</u> , <u>oar</u>	m	<u>met</u> , <u>camel</u> , <u>trim</u> , <u>summer</u>
oo	<u>look</u> , <u>pull</u> , <u>moor</u> , <u>wolf</u>	n	<u>not</u> , <u>flannel</u> , <u>ton</u>
ōō	<u>ooze</u> , <u>tool</u> , <u>crew</u> , <u>rule</u>	p	<u>put</u> , <u>apple</u> , <u>tap</u>
yōō	<u>use</u> , <u>cute</u> , <u>few</u>	r	<u>red</u> , <u>port</u> , <u>dear</u> , <u>purr</u>
yoo	<u>cure</u> , <u>globule</u>	s	<u>sell</u> , <u>castle</u> , <u>pass</u> , <u>nice</u>
oi	<u>oil</u> , <u>point</u> , <u>toy</u>	t	<u>top</u> , <u>cattle</u> , <u>hat</u>
ou	<u>out</u> , <u>crowd</u> , <u>plow</u>	v	<u>vat</u> , <u>hovel</u> , <u>have</u>
u	<u>up</u> , <u>cut</u> , <u>color</u> , <u>flood</u>	w	<u>will</u> , <u>always</u> , <u>swear</u> , <u>quick</u>
ur	<u>urn</u> , <u>fur</u> , <u>deter</u> , <u>irk</u>	y	<u>yet</u> , <u>onion</u> , <u>yard</u>
ə	a in <u>ago</u> e in <u>agent</u> i in <u>sanity</u> o in <u>comply</u> u in <u>focus</u>	z	<u>zebra</u> , <u>dazzle</u> , <u>haze</u> , <u>rise</u>
ər	<u>perhaps</u> , <u>murder</u>	ch	<u>chin</u> , <u>catcher</u> , <u>arch</u> , <u>nature</u>
		sh	<u>she</u> , <u>cushion</u> , <u>dash</u> , <u>machine</u>
		th	<u>thin</u> , <u>nothing</u> , <u>truth</u>
		th	<u>then</u> , <u>father</u> , <u>lathe</u>
		zh	<u>azure</u> , <u>leisure</u> , <u>beige</u>
		ŋ	<u>ring</u> , <u>anger</u> , <u>drink</u>
			[indicates that a following l or n is a syllabic consonant, as in <u>cattle</u> (kat'ʹl), <u>Latin</u> (lat'ʹn); see full explanation on p. xiii].

An abbreviated form of this key appears at the bottom of every right-hand page of the vocabulary.

## FOREIGN SOUNDS

**â** This symbol, representing the *a* in French *salle*, can best be described as intermediate between (a) and (ä).

**ë** This symbol represents the sound of the vowel cluster in French *cœur* and can be approximated by rounding the lips as for (ö) and pronouncing (e).

**ö** This symbol variously represents the sound of *eu* in French *feu* or of *ö* or *oe* in German *blöd* or *Goethe* and can be approximated by rounding the lips as for (ö) and pronouncing (ä).

**ô** This symbol represents a range of sounds between (ö) and (u); it occurs typically in the sound of the *o* in French *tonne* or German *korrekt*; in Italian *poco* and Spanish *torero*, it is almost like English (ô), as in *horn*.

**ü** This symbol variously represents the sound of *u* in French *duc* and in German *grün* and can be approximated by rounding the lips as for (ö) and pronouncing (ë).

**kh** This symbol represents the voiceless velar or uvular fricative as in the *ch* of German *doch* or Scots English *loch*. It can be approximated by placing the tongue as for (k) but allowing the breath to escape in a stream, as in pronouncing (h).

**H** This symbol represents a sound similar to the preceding but formed by friction against the forward part of the palate, as in German *ich*. It can be made by placing the tongue as for English (sh) but with the tip pointing downward.

**n** This symbol indicates that the vowel sound immediately preceding it is nasalized; that is, the nasal passage is left open so that the breath passes through both the mouth and nose in voicing the vowel, as in French *mon* (môn). The letter *n* itself is not pronounced unless followed by a vowel.

**r** This symbol represents any of various sounds used in languages other than English for the consonant *r*. It may represent the tongue-point trill or uvular trill of the *r* in French *reste* or *sur*, German *Reuter*, Italian *ricotta*, Russian *gorod*, etc.

' The apostrophe is used after final *l* and *r*, in certain French pronunciations, to indicate that they are voiceless after an unvoiced consonant, as in *lettre* (let'r'). In Russian words the "soft sign" in the Cyrillic spelling is indicated by (y'). The sound can be approximated by pronouncing an unvoiced (y) directly after the consonant involved, as in *Sevastopol* (se'väs tō'pəl y').

A fuller explanation of all the pronunciation symbols shown above will be found on pages xii-xiii of the Guide to the Use of the Dictionary.

## DICTIONARY STAFF

### *Editor in Chief*

Victoria Neufeldt (from January 1986)  
David B. Guralnik (to December 1985)

### *Editors*

Jonathan Goldman	Fernando de Mello Vianna, Senior Editor
Christopher T. Hoolihan, Editor and Pronunciation Editor (to January 1988)	†Paul B. Murry (to September 1982)
Andra I. Kalnins	James E. Naso
Ruth Kimball Kent (to June 1987)	Katherine Goidich Soltis
Thomas Layman, Senior Editor (to February 1987)	Andrew N. Sparks, Senior Editor, Supervising
†Clark C. Livensparger, Senior Editor, Supervising (to March 1985)	Donald Stewart, Editor and Database Administrator
	Stephen P. Teresi, Science Editor
	Anthony Wingo

### *Clerical, Data Processing, and Administrative Staff*

Laura J. Borovac  
Alisa Murray  
Cynthia M. Sadonick  
Betty Dziedzic Thompson

### *Citation Readers*

†Agnes Brdar (to February 1987)  
Dorothy Fitzgibbons  
Batya Jundef

### *Chief Etymologist*

William E. Umbach

### *Artist*

Anita S. Rogoff

### *Proofreading and Data Inputting*

Sona Blakeslee  
Elizabeth Catone  
Gail Grafchik  
Kristen Haskell  
Mary Ann Kehr  
Siobhain Kluiber  
Mark Kmetzko

Paulette Kovelan  
Richard Middleton  
Barbara Perkins  
Charles Rosenberg  
Wanda Simpson  
Linda Zinn

## SPECIAL CONSULTANTS AND CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

### **Aeronautics & Astronautics**

Walter T. Olson  
*Consultant and Distinguished Research Scientist,  
NASA Lewis Research Center, Cleveland*

### **Anthropology**

Melvin Ember  
*Professor of Anthropology  
Hunter College, City University of New York  
President, Human Relations Area Files, Inc.*

### **Astronomy**

Peter Pesch  
*Professor of Astronomy  
Case Western Reserve University*

### **Automotive Engineering**

Theodore Costantino  
*Editor, Bicycle Guide magazine  
Author and former editor, Automotive  
Editorial Dept., Chilton Book Co.*

### **Biochemistry**

Edward D. Harris  
*Professor of Biochemistry & Biophysics  
Texas A&M University*

### **Biophysics**

Harry D. Patton, Ph.D., M.D., LL.D.  
*Professor and Chairman Emeritus  
Dept. of Physiology and Biophysics  
University of Washington School of Medicine*

### **Biology**

Richard W. Pohl, Ph.D.  
*Distinguished Professor of Botany, Emeritus  
Iowa State University*  
Charles C. Davis  
*Professor Emeritus of Biology  
Memorial University of Newfoundland, Canada*

Frederick A. Aldrich, Ph.D., F.L.S.  
*Professor of Biology &  
Dean of Graduate Studies  
Memorial University of Newfoundland*

Dr. Thomas C. Emmel  
*Professor of Zoology and Director,  
Division of Lepidoptera Research  
University of Florida*

Richard T. Holmes  
*Professor of Biology  
Dartmouth College, N.H.*

Edward L. Medzon  
*Associate Professor  
Dept. of Microbiology and Immunology  
University of Western Ontario, Canada*

Dr. Gareth Nelson  
*Dept. of Ichthyology  
American Museum of Natural History, N.Y.*

Wayne A. Rowley  
*Professor of Entomology  
Iowa State University*

### **Chemistry**

Paul Fields  
*Associate Laboratory Director  
Argonne National Laboratory*

### **Dentistry**

Maynard K. Hine, D.D.S.  
*Chancellor Emeritus  
Indiana University-Purdue University at  
Indianapolis*

### **Law**

William Porter Marshall  
*Professor of Law  
Case Western Reserve University School of Law*  
Kent R. Markus, Attorney  
*Adjunct Professor of Law  
Cleveland Marshall College of Law*

### **Linguistics**

Alice C. Harris  
*Associate Professor of Linguistics  
Vanderbilt University*

### **Machinery**

Holbrook L. Horton  
*Editor and author of Machinery's Handbook  
Society of Manufacturing Engineers*

### **Mathematical Sciences**

Ralph Philip Boas, Jr.  
*Professor of Mathematics, Emeritus  
Northwestern University, Ill.*

James E. Householder  
*Professor of Mathematics  
Humboldt State University, Calif.  
(Statistics)*

Charles Wells  
*Professor of Mathematics  
Case Western Reserve University  
(Computer Science)*

### **Medicine**

George H. Goldsmith, Jr., M.D.  
*Associate Professor of Medicine  
Case Western Reserve University*

### **Meteorology**

Andrew Joel Heymsfield  
*Ph.D. Scientist  
National Center for Atmospheric Research  
Colorado*

### **Music**

Elaine Waxgiser Newman  
*Musicologist*  
Dr. Julius Drossin  
*Chairman Music Dept. (Retired)  
Cleveland State University;  
cellist with Cleveland Orchestra 1948-1957*

### **Oceanography**

Richard B. Lambert, Jr.  
*Associate Director  
Physical Oceanography Program  
National Science Foundation*

### **Philosophy**

Lloyd D. Easton  
*Duval Professor of Philosophy, Emeritus  
Ohio Wesleyan University*

**Photography**

Garie W. Crawford  
*Associate Professor of Photography*  
*Dept. of Graphic Communications*  
*Cuyahoga Community College, Cleveland*

**Physics**

Paul Fields  
*Associate Laboratory Director*  
*Argonne National Laboratory*  
*(Nuclear Physics)*  
 Thomas L. Jenkins  
*Professor of Physics*  
*Case Western Reserve University*

**Psychology & Psychiatry**

Joseph Rubinstein  
*Professor Emeritus of Psychological Sciences*  
*Purdue University*

**Sports**

Hal Lebovitz  
*Columnist: The Sporting News &*  
*Ingersoll Publications*  
*Sports Editor (retired), The Plain Dealer*

**Veterinary Medicine**

George C. Poppensiek, M.Sc., V.M.D.  
*James Law Professor of Comparative Medicine*  
*College of Veterinary Medicine*  
*Cornell University*

## ETYMOLOGY AND LANGUAGE CONSULTANTS

**Afroasiatic languages**

David L. Gold  
*Co-editor of the Jewish Language Review and*  
*President of the Association for the Study of*  
*Jewish Languages*  
*(Jewish-interest entries)*  
 Gene B. Gragg  
*Professor, Oriental Institute*  
*and Depts. of Near Eastern Languages*  
*and Civilizations and Linguistics*  
*University of Chicago*

**Altaic**

John R. Krueger  
*Professor of Uralic & Altaic Studies (retired)*  
*Indiana University*  
*Bloomington*

**Amerindian (including Eskimo-Aleut)**

Haruo Aoki  
*Professor of Oriental Languages*  
*University of California at Berkeley*

**Ives Goddard**

*Curator, Dept. of Anthropology*  
*Smithsonian Institution*  
*Linguistic Editor,*  
*Handbook of North American Indians*

**Terrence S. Kaufman**

*Professor of Linguistics*  
*University of Pittsburgh*

**Harriet E. Manelis Klein**

*Professor of Anthropology &*  
*Director of International Studies*  
*Montclair State College*

**Michael E. Krauss**

*Professor of Linguistics*  
*Alaska Native Language Center, Fairbanks*

**Austro-Asiatic**

Dinh-Hoa Nguyen, B.A., M.A., Ph.D.  
*Professor of Linguistics and*  
*Foreign Languages and Literatures*  
*Southern Illinois University at Carbondale*

**Austronesian languages**

Paul G. Chapin, Ph.D.  
*Program Director, Linguistics*  
*National Science Foundation*  
 Dr. John U. Wolff  
*Professor, Linguistics and Asian Studies*  
*Cornell University*

**English of Britain**

Patrick Drysdale  
*Formerly, Editor*  
*Gage Educational Publishing Limited, Toronto.*  
*Radley, Oxfordshire, England*

**English of Australia and New Zealand**

George W. Turner  
*Reader in English (retired)*  
*University of Adelaide*  
*Australia*

**Indo-European**

Dr. Paul G. Chapin (*Russian*)  
 Edgar C. Polomé  
*Christie and Stanley Adams Jr.*  
*Centennial Professor of Liberal Arts*  
*University of Texas at Austin*  
 P. K. Saha  
*Associate Professor of English & Linguistics*  
*Case Western Reserve University*

**Japanese**

Professor Haruo Aoki

**Sino-Tibetan**

Professor Dinh-Hoa Nguyen

**sub-Saharan Africa**

Professor Edgar C. Polomé

**Uralic**

Professor John R. Krueger

## FOREWORD

As this foreword is being written the final section of the Third College Edition of *Webster's New World Dictionary*, V–Z, is being sent to the printer. This marks the culmination of over six years of editorial work. It is a milestone in the history of the dictionary, not only because this edition is a major revision of its predecessor, but because it represents a leap from the old monotype method of composition in hot metal directly to a state-of-the-art computerized database and an automated typesetting program. In contrast to the solid metal type that was created anew for the changes made to produce even the latest biennial update of the Second College Edition, in 1986, the database that underlies this new dictionary is a fluid medium that will serve as a basis for all future revisions, major or minor, as well as a host of related lexicographical projects, both in print and on line, that are still little more than a dream.

Due to many unforeseen circumstances, not least of which were the problems encountered in the course of the charting of new ground in computerization, what had started out as a four-to-five-year project expanded into a mammoth, seemingly never ending venture which only on its completion has been seen to have been worth all the effort. The wonderful database envisioned by then editor-in-chief David Guralnik more than a decade ago has become a reality; and it has succeeded largely because of the expertise, determination, and creative talents of our programmer, Mr. Thury O'Connor. Using the highly sophisticated database management system of Information Dimensions, Inc. as a basis, he developed many subtle and delightful special applications to meet the unique demands for storage and retrieval of lexicographical information; in addition, he developed his own typesetting program, completely independent of the database and with many automatic features that greatly facilitated the enormous and in many respects mind-numbing task of getting all that lexicographical information into a printed book.

This new edition has a number of significant changes, some of style and presentation (with a resulting updated elegance of appearance for the dictionary page and an improvement in ease of use) and others of content. All categories of terms have been reviewed and in some areas an entirely new approach has been adopted, with a view to making the book more useful for the reader. For instance, the entries for plants and animals have been revised to allow the user to trace the complete taxonomy of all the specific plants and animals listed. See the *Guide to the Dictionary*, page xvi, for a full explanation and examples.

The syllabication of entry words has also been completely revised; the conventional midline dot is retained only for preferred syllable breaks for line-end hyphenation; other syllabic divisions, which should be avoided in line-end hyphenation, are indicated by a vertical hairline. The decisions on placement of hairlines were based on the appearance of a given word on the page; that is, use of the preferred breaks provides an assurance of the least disruption for the reader in the flow of print from one line to the next.

Many other areas have undergone significant changes of content, of a kind possible only in the course of a major revision; for instance, the new liturgical language that grew out of Vatican II in the early 1970's is now reflected in these pages; business and commerce, as well as computer science and technology, two of the most fruitful sources of linguistic invention today, have contributed notably to the swelling of the vocabulary coverage of this dictionary. The latest population figures available have been incorporated into the geographical entries. Metric units of measure have been used for all scientific data with the common units in parentheses. And so on, throughout the text of this book.

Many of the drawings in this edition were newly drawn by Anita Rogoff, and most of the rest were revised by her to clarify or correct and to standardize style. The new technical illustrations were drawn by Patrick Soltis.

This new dictionary has more usage labels to assist the reader in

the choice of language to fit the occasion. It must be remembered that these labels reflect not our editorial opinion of the comparative desirability of a given term, but rather our assessment and interpretation of how it is viewed in the speech community as a whole. It is not the lexicographer's mandate to pass editorial judgment, but only to describe as best he can, using innate and acquired linguistic sensitivity and lexicographical skills (plus a good up-to-date citation file), the language as it exists. Language cannot be separated from its environment and a large part of our most common vocabulary cannot be properly used without a knowledge of the way in which individual words are perceived within a given social context.

Terms that we know to be registered trademarks or service marks are identified as such at the individual entries. Such names are entered only if they have taken on lexical significance, beyond the identification of a maker or owner, and have come to be commonly used to refer to the things themselves. In this connection we wish to thank Russ Herman, trademark attorney in the Patent and Trademark Office of the U.S. Department of Commerce, for invaluable assistance over the years with information on current trademarks and service marks.

Any dictionary worthy of the name must include authoritative information about the language of many fields of knowledge far outside the ken of a small band of editors, however learned and dedicated. For this reason, an important constituent of such a project as this is the body of specialist consultants and contributors who provide us with the information we need and, often, the very definition. We are proud to be able to list the names of the people who have been our official consultants (see pages vii and viii); all are experts in their field and many also have a particular fondness for the analysis of language which has made this project, in their own words, a labor of love.

To all these people, as well as the numberless others, friends and strangers from every walk of life, who have patiently submitted to questioning about every conceivable subject, from the English pronunciation of French wine names to the names of woodworking tools, we extend our grateful thanks. Of course, we take full responsibility for any inadequacies, errors, or omissions anywhere in this dictionary.

New for this edition is an essay by John Algeo, Professor of English at the University of Georgia and former editor of *American Speech*. Users of this dictionary are urged to read this essay, entitled "The English Language: Variation, the Dictionary, and the User," beginning on page xvii, for an insight into the relationship between dictionaries and the language they attempt to describe. Another important source of information about language, especially as it relates to this dictionary, is the essay on etymology by William E. Umbach, retired Dean of Graduate Studies, University of Redlands. The essay, beginning on page xxv, describes the methods of etymological research and the importance of etymology for an understanding of the language of the present day.

Included in the back matter is a completely new section on current editorial style, written by Bernice Randall, author of the recently published *Webster's New World Guide to Current American Usage*.

The editorial and administrative staff is listed on page vi. Several of the people named there have been a part of this dictionary since the 1950's and 1960's when work was begun on the Second College Edition, and their expertise has been invaluable in the completion of this project. Also due a special mention is Philip Friedman, Associate Publisher, in the Reference Division of Simon & Schuster in New York for his support and faith in this enormous—and expensive—program of revision.

Victoria Neufeldt  
May, 1988

# THE NEW WORLD DICTIONARIES: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

by DAVID B. GURALNIK

All events have their antecedents. Nothing comes from nothing, and all present-day lexicographers of our language share an indebtedness, of one degree or another, to all those who preceded them, from Robert Cawdrey, whose *A Table Alphabeticall*, a slim vocabulary listing generally regarded as the first English dictionary, appeared in 1604, through the landmark works of Nathaniel Bailey (1721), Samuel Johnson (1755), and Noah Webster (1828) to James A. H. Murray and his successors, who compiled the monumental *Oxford English Dictionary*. But when Webster's *New World Dictionary of the American Language* appeared on the scene in the Encyclopedic Edition of 1951, it marked the first publication in many years of a dictionary that was neither an abridgment nor a revision of some other work. The staff of relatively young language scholars assembled a decade earlier, in 1941, set about to break through the conservatism that then existed in lexicographical circles and to produce a dictionary that would be truly reflective of its times.

Although by then most lexicographers had long since abandoned the belief that they had the responsibility for arbitrarily deciding what was good usage and what was bad usage, many dictionary publishers still promulgated, and the public generally accepted, the notion that "the dictionary" has absolute authority. The editors of this new dictionary were determined, as they stated in the Foreword to the First College Edition (1953), that it "was not to create the impression that it was authoritarian, laying down the law; it was to play, rather, the role of a friendly guide, pointing out the safe, well-traveled roads." Among its innovations were to be the introduction of the relaxed pronunciations used in ordinary conversation by cultivated speakers of the prevailing variety of the language, then known as General American. For example, they would avoid suggesting, as other dictionaries of that time did, that the vowel sound of *glass* differed from the one of *cat* in that dialect. Also, etymologies were to be expanded to include Indo-European bases and an indication of cognate relationships both among words in the language and with words in other Indo-European languages. And what was of most importance, definitions would be written in the language of the mid-twentieth century and in a relaxed style that would once and for all scotch Ambrose Bierce's definition of *dictionary* as "a malevolent device for cramping the growth of a language and making it hard and inelastic." Wherever necessary, additional connotative information about the words being defined would be given, even though it meant devoting considerable space to doing so. Moreover, special attention was to be paid to colloquialisms and slang terms and to the phrasal units and compounds and idiomatic phrases, all rich and characteristic features of our American language, but largely neglected by dictionaries of that time.

One hundred editors and assistants were involved in the preparation of the College Edition. The planning for this new dictionary was carried out under the editorial direction of Josephine McCarter. From 1944 to 1948, Joseph H. Friend served as General Editor. He was succeeded by David B. Guralnik, who then continued as Editor in Chief of the entire line of Webster's *New World Dictionaries* until his retirement in 1986. The highly acclaimed etymologies were researched and prepared by Harold E. Whitehall and William E. Umbach. The latter has continued to serve as chief etymologist through this present Third College Edition.

In the very first review of Webster's *New World Dictionary*, under the heading "A New High Standard in Lexicography," it was greeted as marking "a great advance in American lexicography. It is the first medium-size dictionary to build into its ground plan and defining techniques recent advances in semantics, general linguistics, and the psychology of language,

and to incorporate a truly scientific (i.e., quantitative) approach to the problems of pronunciation, usage, and etymology." The dictionary received immediate acceptance on college campuses and in a very short time became one of the leading dictionaries for use in the universities.

A program of regular maintenance was instituted following publication and at first annually, then later biennially, substantial updatings were brought out. After several years, however, it became apparent that such updatings, however extensive, could not keep pace with the vast changes occurring in the language. Rapid advances in the sciences and in technology brought with them countless new terms and new applications of established terms. The continuing evolution of the language was marked by changes in prevailing pronunciations and in the status of numerous terms. New information had been uncovered concerning many of the etymologies. And so work was begun on a total revision and resetting of the dictionary.

In 1970, the Second College Edition of Webster's *New World Dictionary* was published, again with innovations. The dictionary was the first of its kind to identify all Americanisms and the first to give the etymology of all American place names. Both of these aspects of the work were carried out under the supervision, and with the invaluable resources, of Mitford M. Mathews, the editor of the *Dictionary of Americanisms*, who joined the New World staff in 1955 as Special Consulting Editor and Editor, Americanisms. He continued to serve in that position until shortly before his death in 1985. By the mid-1970's, the Second College Edition had become the dictionary of first reference for most of the leading newspapers and news agencies in the United States and the one on which their style manuals had been based. It also became the first dictionary of its scope to be embossed in its entirety in Braille, by the American Printing House for the Blind.

The staff of Webster's *New World Dictionaries* has carried out its tasks over the period of nearly half a century under the aegis of several publishing houses, but the continuity, both of personnel and of place, has remained unbroken. In 1980, upon the acquisition of the dictionary line by Simon & Schuster, Inc., work was begun on the necessary Third College Edition. In addition to the changes that time had inevitably wrought in the lexis of the language, technology had created and refined new tools to aid the lexicographers in their labors. Although by then computers had been in use for a decade or longer in typesetting dictionaries, the state of the art had now reached the point where the lexicographer's dream, a complete self-contained database, could be constructed. With the invaluable aid of Thury L. O'Connor of Lexi-Comp, Inc., the editors proceeded to design such a database, which could serve as a permanent, though constantly growing and changing, information resource that would give the lexicographer immediate access to a vast body of data and would greatly facilitate the manipulation of that information and the ongoing analysis of our language. After centuries of performing our tasks of gathering, storing, and manipulating information in a never-changing manner, lexicographers have seen the science of lexicography, in one decade, take a giant step forward. The art of lexicography, however, that is to say, the writing of definitions and the evaluation of the elements in the lexis of the language, remains very much a human activity.

This Third College Edition of Webster's *New World Dictionary*, completed under the skillful editorship of Victoria Neufeldt, is, we believe, the successful synthesis of both the modern science and the traditional art of dictionary making. We trust it will continue to serve its users as faithfully as did its predecessors.

# GUIDE TO THE USE OF THE DICTIONARY

## I. THE MAIN ENTRY WORD

### A. Arrangement of Entries

All main entries, including single words, hyphenated and unhyphenated compounds, proper names, prefixes, suffixes, and abbreviations, are listed in strict alphabetical order and are set in large boldface type, extending slightly into the left margin.

**black** (blak) *adj.*...  
**Black** (blak), **Hugo** (La Fayette)...  
**black alder**...  
**black-and-blue** (-ən blō' ) *adj.*...  
**black-berry** (blak'ber'ē, -bərə) *n.*...  
**bldg**...  
**-ble** (bəl)...

Note that in the biographical entry only the last, or family, name (that part preceding the comma or the first sense number) has been considered in alphabetization. When two or more persons with the same family name are entered, they are dealt with in a single entry block, arranged in alphabetical order by first names. Biographical and geographical names that are identical in form are kept in separate entry blocks.

**Jack-son** (jak'sən) 1 **Andrew** (called *Old Hickory*) 1767-1845; U.S. general; 7th president of the U.S. (1829-37) 2 **Robert H(ough)wout** 1892-1954; U.S. jurist; associate justice, Supreme Court (1941-54) 3 **Thomas Jonathan** (called *Stonewall Jackson*) 1824-63; Confederate general in the Civil War

**Jack-son** (jak'sən) ¶ after A. JACKSON ¶ 1 capital of Miss., in the SW part on the Pearl River; pop. 203,000 (met. area 320,000) 2 city in W Tenn.; pop. 49,000 3 city in S Mich.; pop. 40,000

The name prefixes "Mac" and "Mc" are listed in strict alphabetical order.

**MacDowell**, **Edward Alexander**  
**mace**  
**MacLeish**, **Archibald**  
**make**  
**maser**  
**McCormack**, **John**  
**McKinley**, **William**

Strict alphabetical order is also followed for "Saint" and "St." when they appear as a part of proper names other than the names of canonized persons.

**Saint Bernard** (dog)  
**Saint-Gaudens**, **Augustus**  
**squint**  
**St. Clair** (river)  
**steel**  
**St. Helena** (island)

Canonized persons are alphabetized by their given names, which appear in boldface. The designation "Saint" follows in lightface type, either directly after a comma or, within a proper-name block, at the beginning of a numbered sense. Thus **Augustine**, the saint, will be found in the As, but **St. Augustine**, the city in Florida, will be found in the S's.

### B. Variant Spellings & Forms

When variant spellings of a word are some distance apart alphabetically, the definition for the word appears at the spelling known or judged to be the one most frequently used. Other spellings of the word are cross-referred to that spelling in small capitals, and unless such a cross-reference indicates that the variant is British, dialectal, slang, obsolete, or the like, each form given is as acceptable in standard American usage as the one carrying the definition, though usually not as commonly used.

**gay-ety**... *n. alt. sp. of GAIETY*  
**kerb**... *n. Brit. sp. of CURB (n. 5, 6 & vt. 3)*

If two variant spellings are alphabetically close to each other, they appear together as a joint boldface entry. In some such cases, usage is about evenly divided between them. In still others, the evidence of collected citations indicates a greater frequency of occurrence for the one given first. In no case is the first spelling considered "more correct" or the one necessarily to be preferred.

**the-a-ter** or **the-a-tre**... *n.*...  
 If one variant spelling, or several, are alphabetically close to the main-entry spelling and pronounced exactly like it but are somewhat or considerably less frequent in usage, such spellings are given at the end of the entry block in small boldface.

**Parchee'si**... also *sp. parche'si* or *parchi'si*

In some cases, the variants may involve diacritics, hyphens, or the like.

**co-op-er-ate** or **co-op-er-ate**... *vi.*...  
 Also **co-ōp-er-ate**

When words having exactly the same meaning would fall alphabetically next to or close to each other, the less frequently used word is given in small boldface at the end of the definition for the predominant word.

**laud[a-toi]ry**... *adj.*... Also **laud'a-tive**  
**-lep[si]**... Also **-lep'si-a**

### C. Cross-references

In all main entries that consist simply of a cross-reference to another entry of the same meaning, the entry cross-referred to is

in small capitals.

**gay-ety**... *n.*... *alt. sp. of GAIETY*  
**go-losh** or **go-loshe**... *n. Brit. sp. of GALOSH*  
**slap-bang**... *—adj. colloq. var. of SLAPDASH*  
**me-grim**... *n.*... *obs. var. of MIGRAINE*  
**yellow daisy** \***BLACK-EYED SUSAN**  
**\*ma-jor-ette**... *n. short for DRUM MAJORETTE*

### D. Homographs

Main entries that are spelled alike but are different in meaning and origin, as **bat** (a club), **bat** (the animal), and **bat** (to wink), in addition to being entered in separate blocks are marked by superscript numbers immediately following the boldface spellings.

**bat**<sup>1</sup>... *n.*...  
**bat**<sup>2</sup>... *n.*...  
**bat**<sup>3</sup>... *vt.*...

When these need to be referred to in etymologies, definitions, etc., the cross-reference is made to the numbered homograph.

Main entries that differ from others with the same spelling by having such markings as accents, hyphens, etc. or by being in italic type or capitalized are not considered homographs and are not marked with superscripts. Proper nouns, abbreviations, etc. with the same spelling are not marked with superscripts.

**Jack-son**... 1 **Andrew**...

**Jack-son**... 1 Capital of Miss.,...

### E. Americanisms

Words and phrases having their origin in the United States, as well as those senses of previously existing words or phrases that first came into use in this country, are marked as Americanisms by an open star (\*). (See the essay by John Algeo, beginning on p. xvii.)

If the star precedes the entry word, the word itself entered the language as an Americanism.

**\*las[so]**... *n.*... a long rope or leather thong with a sliding noose at one end, used to catch cattle or wild horses—*vt.*... to catch with a lasso—**\*las'so-er** *n.*

If the star precedes a particular part of speech, that part of speech entered the language as an Americanism.

**squid**... *n.*... —*vt.* **squid'ded**, **squid'ding** 1 to take on an elongated squidlike shape due to strong air pressure; said of a parachute 2 to fish for squid or with squid as bait

If the star precedes a single definition or subsense of a definition, only that definition or subsense is an Americanism.

**liverly**... *n.*... 4 a)... b)... c) **LIVERY STABLE**

**load**... *n.*... \*6 the amount of work carried by or assigned to a person, group, etc. /the course *load* of a teacher, the *caseload* of a social worker/

### F. Foreign Terms

Foreign words and phrases encountered with some frequency in English speech and writing but not completely naturalized are set in boldface italic type. The user of the dictionary is thus signaled that such terms are generally printed in italics or underlined in writing.

**au naturel**... [Fr.]...

Commonly used abbreviations for non-English terms are not set in boldface italic type. Their etymologies show the language of origin and the full, unabbreviated form of the term.

*i.e.* [L. *id est*] that is (to say)

**R.S.V.P.**, *r.s.v.p.* [Fr. *répondez s'il vous plaît*] please reply

### G. Prefixes, Suffixes, & Combining Forms

Prefixes and initial combining forms are indicated by a hyphen following the entry form.

**hem|**... *prefix* half [*hemisphere*]

Suffixes and terminal combining forms are indicated by a hyphen preceding the entry form.

**-la|try**... *combining form* worship of or excessive devotion to [*bibliolatriy*, *demonolatriy*]

The very full coverage given these forms, which are also given pronunciations when pronunciation in isolation is feasible, makes it possible for the reader to understand and pronounce countless complex terms not entered in the dictionary but formed with affixes and words that are entered.

### H. Word Division

At the end of a line of print or of other writing, it may be necessary, because no more space is available to carry over part of a word to the beginning of the next line. This breaking of a word into two parts is called word division (or syllabification).

Though every word (other than a monosyllable) can be divided into the parts (syllables) that make it up, careful printers and writers avoid making certain divisions of words at the end of lines.

In this dictionary, the parts of boldface entry words are separated either by a heavy centered period [·] or by a hairline [|].

The heavy centered period indicates one or more places where a word can be acceptably divided at the end of a line:

**des·sert**  
**mes·sen·ger**

The hairline indicates one or more places where, if possible, a word should not be divided at the end of a line:

**hon|ey·bee**  
**hon|ey·suck|le**

If the first or last syllable of a word consists of only one letter, the word should never be divided at that place:

**aglow**  
**cheerily**

The parts of a hyphenated term should, if possible, never be divided except at the hyphen itself:

**la|bor-in|ten|sive**  
**single-handed|ness**

If the last syllable of a word consists of only two letters, it is better not to divide the word at that place:

**dress|er**  
**dis|pos|al**

In this dictionary, a final syllable consisting of only two letters is usually, but not always, marked with the hairline. The syllable is generally not marked with a hairline if the word in which the syllable occurs has more than two syllables and one or more of the preceding syllables are also marked with hairlines. This is especially true if the additional syllable or syllables marked with hairlines are close to the final syllable of the word. Not marking the final two-letter syllable with a hairline is intended to indicate that it is better to divide the word at the two-letter syllable than to divide the word at one of the other places marked by the hairline.

A stress mark not immediately followed by a hairline is equivalent to a centered period. A word can be acceptably divided at the place where the stress mark appears:

**hap|pily**  
**re|as|sur|ance**

A stress mark immediately followed by a hairline indicates a place where, if possible, a word should not be divided:

**be|'a|tif|l|cal|ly**  
**cheer|'il|ness**

Words shown with stress marks, as in the examples above, are chiefly derived words that appear at the end of a main entry.

Where plurals, comparative forms, or the like are shown immediately after a main entry, the plurals and the like are often truncated, with a hyphen preceding the truncations.

A hyphen used before such truncations and not immediately followed by a hairline is equivalent to a centered period. A word can acceptably be divided at the place indicated by the hyphen:

**ar|is|to|cra|cy . . . n., pl. -cies**

A hyphen immediately followed by a hairline indicates a place where, if possible, a word should not be divided:

**par|ity|' . . . n., pl. -ties**

In addition to the general principles that have been indicated, certain other principles—some based on conventional printing practices, others largely judgmental—determine whether or not a word can be acceptably divided at one or more places within the word. The entry words in this dictionary have been divided with centered periods and hairlines in accordance with all these principles.

## II. PRONUNCIATION

### A. Introduction

The pronunciations given in this dictionary are those widely used by good speakers of American English.

Many words of the language occur in everyday speech and in newscasts, talks or discussions on radio or television, and in spoken recordings. Good speakers do not always pronounce these words in the same way. Because the various pronunciations are widely used by good speakers, however, the pronunciations must be considered as acceptable pronunciations.

To decide which pronunciations are most commonly in use by good speakers, the editors of this dictionary have for many years maintained a file of written transcriptions of pronunciations that they have heard or that they themselves use. The file is supplemented by pronunciation queries made to individuals in the sciences and in other specialized fields, so as to determine the pronunciations of terms that do not occur often in everyday speech. In addition, all available works on the pronunciation of English have been carefully studied and evaluated.

### B. Key to Pronunciation

Symbol	Key Words	Symbol	Key Words
ə	a neutral vowel sound, like a in ago, e in over, i in sanity, o in comply, u in focus	n	no, end, pan
a	at, carry, gas	ŋ	ring, anger, drink
ā	ate, day, tape	ō	own, tone, go
ā	ah, car, father	ō	horn, all, law
b	bed, able, tab	oo	look, pull, good
ch	chin, archer, march	oo	tool, crew, moo
d	dip, idea, wad	oi	oil, coin, toy
e	end, berry, ten	ou	out, how, our
ē	eve, be, me	p	put, open, tap
		r	red, part, far

f	fit, after, if	s	sell, cast, toss
g	get, angle, tag	sh	she, cushion, wash
h	he, ahead, hotel	t	top, meter, sat
i	is, hit, lid	th	thin, nothing, truth
i	ice, bite, high	th	the, father, scythe
j	joy, agile, edge	u	up, bud, cut
k	kid, oaken, take	u	urn, fur, cur
l	lid, elbow, sail	v	vat, over, have
m	met, amid, aim	w	will, away, wit
		y	yet, onion, yard
		z	zebra, lazy, haze
		zh	azure, leisure

### Explanatory Notes

The apostrophe: For the pronunciation transcription of English words, the apostrophe is used immediately before the symbol (l) or the symbol (n) to indicate that the l sound or the n sound is, in a syllable so transcribed, a syllabic consonant.

A syllabic consonant is a consonant pronounced in such a way as to form a complete syllable, or the main part of a syllable, entirely or almost entirely by itself, with little or no perceptible sound of a vowel in that syllable.

Words in which a syllabic l occurs are words like *cattle*, *ladle*, and *turtle*.

Words in which a syllabic n occurs are words like *button*, *hidden*, and *satin*.

When, in words like those just specified, the l or the n is not pronounced as a syllabic consonant, a spelled consonantal sound immediately preceding the spelled l or n typically begins the syllable. The syllable then continues with a vowel sound (distinct or neutral) and ends with the ordinary nonsyllabic sound of the l or n. The word *satin*, for example, is pronounced by some as *sa-tin* (rather than as *sat'n*).

Indication of only a syllabic l or n in words like *ladle* and *satin* is not meant to exclude the acceptability of an alternate nonsyllabic l or n in the pronunciation of such words.

The consonant m is sometimes pronounced as a syllabic consonant (as in *chasm*), but the occurrence of a syllabic m in American English is much less common than the occurrence of a syllabic l or a syllabic n.

Indication of only a nonsyllabic m in words like *chasm* and *prism* is not meant to exclude the acceptability of an alternate syllabic m in the pronunciation of such words.

In words like *apple* and *cabin*, the consonants l and n are sometimes pronounced as syllabic consonants, as they also are in certain other kinds of consonant combinations. But unless the consonants l and n are frequently pronounced as syllabic consonants (as they regularly are when following a stressed syllable ending in a d sound or a t sound), they are not transcribed as syllabic consonants in this dictionary.

Indication of only a nonsyllabic l or n in words like *apple* and *cabin* and in words involving certain other kinds of consonant combinations is not meant to exclude the acceptability of an alternate syllabic l or n in the pronunciation of such words.

a This symbol represents an indistinct, neutral vowel sound, without any stress, often used at the beginning, middle, or end of words. It is not clearly identifiable with any other vowel sound. It is the typical sound of the letter a in *ago*, of the letter e in *over*, of the letter i in *sanity*, etc.

Some speakers replace the neutral schwa sound with the distinct vowel sound of the spelled vowel. For example, some speakers pronounce the i of the word *sanity* with the distinct i that occurs in the word *hit*.

Indication of only a schwa for a vowel like the i in *sanity* is not meant to exclude the acceptability of an alternate distinct vowel in place of the schwa shown.

ā This symbol represents the usual sound in American English of the letter a in words like *ah*, *car*, *father*.

In words like *car* and *far*, some speakers use a sound between the sound of the a in *ah* and the sound of the a in *at*. The symbol (a) is meant to include this variation in the pronunciation of such words.

In words like *grass* and *path*, the usual sound in American English of the letter a is the same as the sound of a in *at*. In British English the usual sound of the letter a in many such words is the same as the sound of a in *ah*. Some American speakers pronounce such words with an a sound that lies between the sound of the a in *at* and the sound of the a in *ah*. To indicate these variations, many basic words like *grass* and *path* (but not derived forms like *grassy* and *pathway*) are shown with two successive transcriptions, one transcription using the symbol (a), the second transcription using the symbol (ā).

In words like *alms* and *hot*, the usual sound in American English of the letters a and o is the same as the sound of a in *ah*. Many speakers, however, use a sound that approaches or is

the same as the sound of the *o* in *horn*. Most such words are shown with a single transcription using the symbol (ā), though sometimes a second transcription using the symbol (ō) is added. Use of a single transcription with the symbol (ā) for words like *alms* and *hot* is not meant to exclude the acceptability of an alternate vowel sound that approaches or is the same as the sound of the *o* in *horn*.

- e This symbol represents the sound of the letter *e* in words like *end*, *berry*, and *ten*.

In words like *care* and *vary*, the sound of the letter *a* often ranges from the sound of the letter *e* in *ten* to the sound of the letter *a* in *at*. Some speakers pronounce the *a* in such words like the *a* in *tape*. The symbol (e) is meant to include all such variations. If one or more of the variations occur especially frequently in certain words of this kind, transcription of such words with the symbol (e) may be followed by transcriptions using the symbols (a) or (ā).

- ē This symbol represents the sound of the letter *e* in words like *eve*, *be*, and *me*.

In words like *lucky* and *pretty*, the usual sound in American English of the letter *y* is identical with or close to the sound of the initial letter *e* in *eve*. In British English the usual sound of the letter *y* in such words is identical or close to the sound of the letter *i* in *is*, as it also is in the pronunciation of a considerable number of American speakers. The symbol (ē) is meant to include such variations.

- i This symbol represents the sound of the letter *i* in words like *is*, *hit*, and *lid*.

The first syllables of words like *deny* and *review* often have a neutral vowel sound (the schwa: see above), as do the final syllables of words like *courage* and *goodness*. The symbol (i) is meant to include this variation; sometimes transcriptions using the schwa symbol are used in place of or in addition to transcriptions using the *i* symbol.

In words like *dear* and *mere*, some speakers use a vowel sound identical with or close to the sound of the *e* in *me*. The symbol (i) is meant to include this variation.

- ɪ This symbol represents the sound (a single sound, not two) of the two spelled letters *ng* in words like *bang*, *long*, and *ring*. Likewise, this symbol represents the same sound of the single spelled letter *n* in words like *pink*, *rank*, and *sunk*, as it also does in words like *angry*, *finger*, and *tangle*.

- ō This symbol represents the vowel sound generally used in words like *horn*, *all*, and *law*.

In words like *auto* and *lawn*, some speakers use a sound identical with or close to the sound of the letter *a* in *ah*. The symbol (ō) is meant to include this variation; if the variation is especially frequent, transcriptions of such words with the symbol (ō) may be followed by transcriptions using the symbol (ā).

In words like *glory* and *more*, a considerable number of speakers use a sound identical with or close to the sound of the letter *o* in *go*. The symbol (ō) is meant to include this variation.

- r This symbol represents the sound of the letter *r* in *red*, *part*, and *far*.

Most speakers in the United States and Canada regularly pronounce the *r* in most words spelled with *r* (wherever an *r* occurs in the spelling of a word).

All speakers of all varieties of English pronounce any spelled *r* that occurs as the first letter of a word (as in *red*) or that occurs immediately after a pronounced consonant (as in *bring*).

In words like *part* and *far*, however, the spelled *r* is usually not pronounced by speakers of standard British English, and it is likewise not usually pronounced by most native speakers of the varieties of American English typically occurring in much of the southern and extreme eastern parts of the United States.

In this dictionary the symbol (r) is regularly used for each occurrence of an *r* sound in a word, in accordance with the way the word is usually pronounced by most speakers in the United States and Canada. It is to be understood that speakers who normally do not pronounce the *r* of words like *part* and *far* will disregard the symbol (r) used in the transcription of such words.

- t This symbol represents the sound of the letter *t* in *top*, *meter*, and *sat*.

When the sound of the letter *t* occurs between two vowel sounds (as in *meter* or *later*), most speakers of American English use a sound identical with or close to the sound of the letter *d*. In words in which this *d*-like sound is typical in American English, the (t) symbol is joined to the symbol for the vowel sound immediately preceding this special sound of the (t) symbol. It is to be understood that speakers who normally pronounce the *t* of words like *meter* and *later* in the same way that they pronounce the *t* of *top* will carry the *t* sound wholly or almost wholly over to the immediately following syllable.

#### Foreign Sounds

The apostrophe: For the pronunciation transcription of some foreign words, the apostrophe is used immediately after one or two consonant symbols in certain words to indicate that the consonant sound or pair of sounds so marked is pronounced with little or no vibration of the vocal cords. The resulting sound is therefore very much like a whisper. For example, the pronunciation of a French word like *fille* is shown like this: fē'y'. A French word like *lettre* is pronounced like this: lē'tr'.

- ā This symbol represents a sound between the sound of the *a* in

*ah* and the sound of the *a* in *at*, very much like the sound some speakers of English use in the pronunciation of words like *grass* and *path* (compare (ā): Explanatory Notes). The sound occurs typically in the sound of the *a* in a French word like *salle*.

- ē This symbol represents a sound equivalent to the sound made by rounding the lips (as though to say "oh") and then, keeping the lips rounded, pronouncing the *e* of *get*. The sound is very much like the sound of the *u* in *fur*. It occurs typically in the sound of the *eu* (a single sound) in a French word like *auteur*.

- H This symbol represents a sound equivalent to the sound of *sh* in *ship*, but made with the tip of the tongue pointing downward. The sound occurs typically in the sound of the *ch* in a German word like *ich*.

- kh This symbol represents a sound equivalent to the sound made by drawing the tongue back in the mouth (as though to pronounce the letter *k*) and then, keeping the tongue that way, heavily forcing the breath over the tongue and out of the mouth. The sound occurs typically in the sound of the *ch* in a German word like *machen* or in the sound of the *ch* in a Scottish word like *loch*.

- n This symbol (an italicized *n*) represents a sound made by letting the voice pass both through the nose and through the mouth in pronouncing the vowel symbol immediately preceding the *n* symbol; no sound of the letter *n* itself should be heard (except, in a French phrase like *bon appétit*, with the following vowel). The sound occurs typically in French and, to a lesser extent, in Portuguese.

- ō This symbol represents a sound equivalent to the sound made by loosely rounding the lips (as though to say "horn") and then, keeping the lips so rounded, pronouncing the *u* of *up*. The sound occurs typically in the sound of the *o* in a French word like *tonne* or in the sound of the *o* in a German word like *korrekt*. In an Italian word like *poco* or in a Spanish word like *torrero* the sound of each *o* is almost the same as the sound of *o* in *horn*.

- ō This symbol represents a sound equivalent to the sound made by rounding the lips (as though to say "oh") and then, keeping the lips rounded, pronouncing the *a* of *ate*. The sound occurs typically in the sound of the *eu* (a single sound) in a French word like *feu*.

- r This symbol (an italicized *r*) represents the sound of *r* as that letter is pronounced in various foreign languages. The *r* is typically pronounced by vibrating the tip of the tongue, as in an Italian word like *bravo*. In some languages (especially in French) the *r* is often produced far back in the mouth, typically with a vibration of the uvula. In some foreign languages the sound of the *r* may often be similar to the sound of an English *r*.

- ū This symbol represents a sound equivalent to the sound made by rounding the lips (as though to say "oh") and then, keeping the lips rounded, pronouncing the *e* of *me*. The sound occurs typically in the sound of the *u* in a French word like *tu* and, with a somewhat less tense resonance, in the sound of the *ü* in a German word like *gemütlich*.

#### C. General Styling of Pronunciation

Pronunciations are given inside parentheses, immediately after the boldface main word being pronounced.

A single space is used between syllables.

A primary (strong) stress is indicated by a heavy stroke ['] immediately following the syllable so stressed.

A secondary (less strong) stress is indicated by a lighter stroke ['] immediately following the syllable so stressed.

Many main words have closely related words that are self-explanatory and that appear at the end of the main entry. If such closely related words do not require separate pronunciations, they are shown only with stress marks.

#### D. Truncation

Variant pronunciations are often truncated, with only that syllable or those syllables pronounced in which change occurs.

A hyphen after a truncated variant shows that the variation occurs in the first part of the word:

**ab-duct** (ab dukt', əb-)

A hyphen before a truncated variant shows that the variation occurs in the last part of the word:

**as-sume** (ə sūm', -sūm')

A hyphen before and after a truncated variant shows that the variation occurs within the word:

**am-pu-tate** (am'pyū tāt', -pyə-)

Truncations of variant pronunciations shown for a word that has different parts of speech typically appear like this:

**pre-ci-pi-tate** (for *v.*, prē sip' ə tāt', pri-; for *adj.* & *n.*, -tit, also -tāt')

Truncated pronunciations may be given for two or more words occurring in succession:

**ju-di-ca-ble** (joo'di kə bəl)

**ju-di-ca-tive** (-kāt'iv, -kə tiv)

**ju-di-ca-to-ry** (-kə tōr'ē)

**time-keeper** (tīm'kē pər)

**time-lapse** (-laps')

#### E. Order of Pronunciations

Two or more pronunciations are often given for the same word. One or more of the additional pronunciations may have a qualifying note (such as *also*, *often*, *occas.*, *chiefly Brit.*, or the like). If no such note is given, each pronunciation shown is equally accept-

able in American English, regardless of the order in which the pronunciations appear.

### III. PART-OF-SPEECH LABELS

Part-of-speech labels are given for main entry words (excluding most proper nouns) that are solid or hyphenated forms, but not for prefixes, suffixes, and abbreviations. The following labels for the parts of speech into which words are classified in traditional English grammar are used in this dictionary. They appear in boldface italic type following the pronunciations.

<b>n.</b>	noun	<b>prep.</b>	preposition
<b>vt.</b>	transitive verb	<b>conj.</b>	conjunction
<b>vi.</b>	intransitive verb	<b>pron.</b>	pronoun
<b>adj.</b>	adjective	<b>interj.</b>	interjection
<b>adv.</b>	adverb		

Among other labels also used are the following:

**n.pl.** plural noun  
**v.aux.** auxiliary verb  
**definite article**  
**n.fem.** feminine noun  
**n.masc.** masculine noun

When an entry word is used as more than one part of speech, long dashes introduce each different part of speech in the entry block and each part-of-speech label appears in boldface italic type.

**round** ... **adj.** ... **n.** ... **vt.** ... **vi.** ... **adv.** ... **prep.** ...

Two or more part-of-speech labels are given jointly for an entry when the definition or definitions, or the cross-reference, will suffice for both or all.

**lip-read** ... **vt.**, **vi.** ... to recognize (a speaker's words) by lip reading ...

**hallo** or **hal-loa** ... **vi.**, **vt.**, **interj.**, **n.** HALLOO

Part-of-speech labels are not used for names of persons and places, or for given names, figures in religion, mythology, literature, etc. However, usages have sometimes developed from these that can be classified as parts of speech and these are indicated.

**Aldon-is** ... *Gr. Myth.* a handsome young man loved by Aphrodite: he is killed by a wild boar — **n.** any very handsome young man ...

It is theoretically possible to use almost any word as whatever part of speech is required, although most such uses would be only for the nonce. Thus any transitive verb can conceivably be used absolutely as an intransitive verb, with the object understood (e.g., he *defined* the word; you must *define* discriminatively). Such absolute uses are entered only when they are relatively common. In the same way nouns used as adjectives (e.g., a *cloth* cover; a *family* affair) are indicated only for the most frequent uses.

### IV. INFLECTED FORMS

Regular inflected forms are normally not indicated. Those that are regarded as irregular or offering difficulty in spelling are entered in small boldface immediately following the part-of-speech labels. They are truncated where possible, to conserve space, and syllabified and pronounced where necessary.

#### A. Plurals of Nouns

Plurals formed regularly by adding *-s* to the singular (or *-es* after *s*, *x*, *z*, *ch*, and *sh*), as *bats*, *boxes*, are not shown.

Plurals are shown when formed irregularly, as for nouns with a *-y* ending that changes to *-ies*, and for those with an *-o* ending, those inflected by internal change, those having variant forms, those having different forms for different meanings, compound nouns, etc.

**city** ... **n.**, **pl.** **cit'ies** ...

**bo-le-ro** ... **n.**, **pl.** **-ros** ...

**tooth** ... **n.**, **pl.** **teeth** (têth) ...

**al-moe-ba** ... **n.**, **pl.** **-bas** or **-bae** (-bê) ...

**die**<sup>2</sup> ... **n.**, **pl.** for 1 & 2, **dice** (dis); for 3 & 4, **dies** (diz)

**son-in-law** ... **n.**, **pl.** **sons'-in-law** ...

If an irregular plural is so different in spelling that it would appear at some distance from the singular form, it is entered additionally in its proper alphabetical place.

**lice** ... **n.**, **pl.** of LOUSE

#### B. Principal Parts of Verbs

Verb forms regarded as regular and not normally indicated include:

a) present tenses formed by adding *-s* to the infinitive (or *-es* after *s*, *x*, *z*, *ch*, and *sh*), as *waits*, *searches*;

b) past tenses and past participles formed by simply adding *-ed* to the infinitive with no other changes in the verb form, as *waited*, *searched*;

c) present participles formed by simply adding *-ing* to the infinitive with no other change in the verb form, as *waiting*, *searching*.

Principal parts are given for irregular verbs including those in which the final *e* is dropped in forming the present participle, those which always or optionally repeat the final consonant in all principal parts, those in which *-y* changes to *-ie* in the past tense and past participle, and those inflected by internal change.

Where two inflected forms are given for a verb, the first is the form for the past tense and the past participle, and the second is the form for the present participle.

**make** ... **vt.** **made**, mak'ing ...

**sip** ... **vt.**, **vi.** **sipped**, sip'ping ...

Where three forms are given, separated from one another by commas, the first represents the past tense, the second the past participle, and the third the present participle.

**swim** ... **vi.** **swam**, swum, swim'ing ...

Where there are alternative forms for any of the principal parts, these are indicated as follows:

**travel** ... **vi.** **-eled** or **-elled**, **-eling** or **-el-ling** ...

**drink** ... **vt.** **drank**, drunk or now colloq.

**drank**, drink'ing ...

If a principal part of a verb is so different in spelling that it would appear at some distance from the infinitive form, it is entered additionally in its proper alphabetical place.

**said** ... **pt.** & **pp.** of SAY

#### C. Comparatives & Superlatives of Adjectives & Adverbs

Comparatives and superlatives formed by simply adding *-er* or *-est* to the base, as *taller*, *tallest*, are not indicated. Those formed irregularly, as by adding *-r* and *-st* (*rare*, *rarer*, *rarest*), by changing final *-y* to *-i* (*happy*, *happier*, *happiest*), or by some radical change in form (*good*, *better*, *best* or *well*, *better*, *best*), are indicated with the positive form.

The positive form is also noted at the comparative and superlative forms when these are entered and defined at some distance from it.

**best** ... **adj.** 1 **uperl.** of GOOD ... — **adv.** 1 **superl.** of WELL<sup>2</sup> ...

Archaic, obsolete, or dialectical inflected forms that are irregular in form and important enough to include in the dictionary are entered separately.

**spake** ... *archaic pt.* of SPEAK

### V. THE ETYMOLOGY

Etymology has been made a strong feature of this dictionary because it is believed that insights into the current usage of a word can be gained from a full knowledge of the word's history and that a better understanding of language generally can be achieved from knowing how words are related to other words in English and to words in other Indo-European languages. Particular attention is paid to showing these relationships as fully as possible and to carrying the etymologies back where possible (either directly or through cross-reference) to the Indo-European base.

Etymologies appear in entry blocks inside open double brackets that make them clearly distinguishable in their position before the definitions proper. The symbols, as < for "derived from," and the abbreviations of language labels, etc. used in the etymologies are dealt with in full in the Abbreviations and Symbols list on the inside back covers of this book.

The form and content of a typical etymology is demonstrated in the following entry for *life*.

**life** (lif) **n.**, **pl.** **lives** [ME < OE *lif*, akin to ON *lif*, life, Ger *leib*, body < IE base \**leibh-*, to LIVE<sup>1</sup>] 1 that property or quality of plants and animals that distinguishes them from ...

The first portion of this etymology, dealing with the history of the word within English itself, indicates that in Middle English the word is found in the same form and with the same meaning as in Modern English, and that this form derives from the Old English word *lif*. Cognate forms from other Germanic languages are next introduced by the words *akin to*, the first cognate, Old Norse *lif*, with the same meaning, "life," and the other, German *leib*, with an interestingly related meaning, "body." The word is then taken back to the reconstructed Indo-European base (its hypothetical character is indicated by \*) and its meaning, "to live." Thus we have traveled back in the history of an entry word across language barriers to the very root of the word.

Some words are etymologized by means of cross-references (in small capitals) to their component elements, which are dealt with separately in the dictionary.

**pro-to-ste-le** ... **n.** [PROTO- + STELE] ...

**si-lox-ane** ... **n.** [SILICON] + OX(YGEN) + -ANE] ...

**spurge** ... **n.** [echoic blend of SPL(ASH) + (S)URGE] ...

Note that in two of the etymologies above, the parentheses are used to set off parts dropped in telescoping the words that were used to form the entry word. It is always the whole word, however, that will be found in the dictionary.

No etymology is shown where one would be superfluous, as because the elements making up the word are immediately apparent to the user (e.g., **preconscious**) or because the definition that follows clearly explains the derivation (e.g., **bluebottle**).

Where no etymology can be ascertained and no reasonable conjecture can be made, that fact is indicated by the following: [< ?]

### VI. THE DEFINITIONS

#### A. Order of Senses

The senses have in general been arranged in historical order, from the etymology (usually the sense or senses of a word before modern English times or in the language or languages from which it came) through the original modern English senses (now often archaic or obsolete) to the most recent senses. Thus the most common present-day meaning of a word may appear near the end of an entry.

Semantic relationships between meanings is also taken into consideration and, in longer entries, will take precedence over a strictly historical ordering if the two do not coincide. It is also important to note that the exact historical development of the different mean-

ings are indicated by italicized letters after the pertinent numbered or labeled sense. The words "especially" or "specifically" (abbreviated "esp." and "specif.") are often used after an introductory definition to introduce such a grouping of related senses.

#### B. Numbering & Grouping Of Senses

Senses are numbered consecutively within any given part of speech in boldface numerals. Numeration is begun anew for each part of speech and for each idiomatic phrase.

**aim**...*vt.*...1...2...3...4...—*n.*...1...2...3...4...—**take aim** 1...2...

Where a primary sense of a word can easily be subdivided into several closely related meanings, this has been done; such meanings are indicated by italicized letters after the pertinent numbered or labeled sense. The words "especially" or "specifically" (abbreviated "esp." and "specif.") are often used after an introductory definition to introduce such a grouping of related senses.

**hack**<sup>2</sup>...*n.*...1 *a*) a horse for hire *b*) a horse for all sorts of work *c*) a saddle horse *d*) an old, worn-out horse **2** a person hired to do routine, often dull, writing; literary drudge...

**length**...**8** *Phonet.* *a*) the duration of the pronunciation of a vowel (the *i* in *bride* has greater length than the *i* in *bright*) *b*) popularly, the quality of a vowel

**trick**...*n.*...4 a clever or difficult act intended to amuse; specif., *a*) an act of jugglery or sleight of hand; also, an illusion of the kind created by legerdemain *b*) an action, feat, or routine performed by an animal as a result of training

Where a basic word has very many senses that can conveniently be arranged under a few major headings, such a division has been made (e.g., **go**, **time**). The sections, indicated by boldface Roman numerals, are then further subdivided into numbered senses.

#### C. Capitalization

If a main-entry word is capitalized in all its senses, the entry word itself is printed with a capital letter (e.g., **European**).

If a capitalized main-entry word has a sense or senses that are uncapitalized, these are marked with the corresponding small-boldface, lower-case letter followed by a short dash and enclosed in brackets.

**Pu-ri-tan**...*n.*...1...2 [p]...—*adj.* 1...2 [p]...

Conversely, capitalized letters are shown where pertinent with lower-case entries. In some instances these designations are qualified by the self-explanatory "usually," "often," "also," or "occas." in italics.

**north**...*n.*...1...2...3...4 [often N]...—*adj.* 1...2...3 [N]...

#### D. Plural Forms

In a singular noun entry, the designation "[pl.]" (or "[often pl.]," "[usually pl.]," etc.) before a definition indicates that it is (or often, usually, etc. is) the plural form of the entry word that has the meaning given in the definition.

**limb**...*n.*...1...2 [pl.] bounds; boundary lines...

**look**...*vt.*...—*n.* 1...2...3 [Colloq.] *a*) [usually pl.] appearance; the way something seems to be... *b*) [pl.] personal appearance, esp. of a pleasing nature...

If such a plural sense is construed as singular, the designation "[with sing. v.]" is added inside the brackets.

**bone**...*n.*...7 *a*) [pl.] flat sticks used as clappers in minstrel shows *\*b*) [pl. with sing. v.] an end man in a minstrel show...

The note "usually used in pl." at the end of a singular noun definition means that although the definition applies to the given singular form of the entry word, the word is usually used in the plural.

**lead**<sup>2</sup> (led) *n.*...1...2 anything made of this metal; specif., *a*)...*b*) any of the strips of lead used to hold the individual panes in ornamental windows (usually used in pl.)...

If a plural noun entry is construed as singular, the designation "[with sing. v.]" is placed after the *n.pl.* label or, in some cases, with the numbered sense to which it applies.

**\*geri-at-rics**...*n.pl.* [with sing. v.]...the branch of medicine that deals with the diseases and problems of old age...

**a-cous-tics**...*n.pl.* 1...2 [with sing. v.]...

#### E. Prepositions Accompanying Verbs

Where certain verbs are, in usage, invariably or usually followed by a specific preposition or prepositions, this has been indicated in the following ways: the preposition has been worked into the definition, italicized and usually enclosed in parentheses, or a note has been added after the definition indicating that the preposition is so used.

**strike**...—*vi.*...10 to come suddenly or unexpectedly; fall, light, etc. (on or upon) [to strike on the right combination]

**strike**...—*vt.*...17 *U.S. Navy* to be in training (for a rating)...

**fig**<sup>2</sup>...—*vt.*...to dress showily: with out or up...

**hit**...—*vi.*...3 to knock, bump, or strike: usually with against...

Such uses of verbs with specific prepositions should not be confused with verb sets consisting of a verb form with an adverb, which are entered as idiomatic phrases under the key verb (e.g., **make out**, **make over**, and **make up** at the entry **make**).

#### F. Objects of Transitive Verbs

In definitions of transitive verbs the specific or generalized objects of the verb, where given, are enclosed in parentheses since such objects are not part of the definition.

**ob-serve**...—*vt.*...1 to adhere to, follow, keep, or abide by (a law, custom, duty, rule, etc.) **2** to celebrate or keep (a holiday, etc.) according to custom **3** *a*) to notice or perceive (something) *b*) to pay special attention to...

In 3*b* above, it will be noted no object is shown; the definition is formulated so that it is apparent that the verb takes an object. In some cases the transitive verb can be defined jointly with the intransitive verb.

**chis|el**...—*vi.*, *vt.*...1 to cut or shape with a chisel...

#### G. Additional Information & Notes

Additional information or any note or comment on the definition proper is preceded by a colon, if a note applies to the preceding sense. If the note applies only to a preceding subsense, then it is enclosed in parentheses.

**at-mos-phere**...*n.*...1 the gaseous envelope (air) surrounding the earth to a height of c. 1000 km (c. 621 mi.): it is c. 21% oxygen, 78% nitrogen, and 1% other gases, and rotates with the earth, because of gravity

**clas-si-cal**...—*adj.*...*c*) designating or of art music of the European tradition, including such forms as the symphony, the opera, chamber music, the sonata, etc. (distinguished from folk or popular music or jazz)

**mature**...—*adj.*...4 due; payable: said of a note, bond, etc....

If the note or comment applies to the whole part of speech or to the entry word itself, it begins with a capital letter and no colon introduces it.

Where the explanatory material consists of a series of items, as in geographical and chemical definitions, the colon precedes the first item and the others are separated by semicolons (e.g., **hydro-gen**, **Ohio**).

#### H. Illustrative Examples of Entry Words in Context

Examples of usage have been liberally supplied, enclosed in light-face slant brackets, with the word that is being illustrated set in italics. These brief illustrative examples are helpful in clarifying meaning, discriminating a large stock of senses for a basic word, showing level of usage or special connotation, and supplying added information.

**com-mon**...—*adj.*...1 belonging equally to, or shared by, two or more or by all [the common interests of a group] **2** belonging or relating to the community at large; public [common carriers] **3** widely existing; general; prevalent [common knowledge] **4** widely but unfavorably known [a common criminal] **5** *a*) met with or occurring frequently; familiar; usual [a common sight] *b*) basic; simple; rudimentary [common courtesy]...

#### I. Internal Entry Words

Entry words occasionally occur within definitions in small bold-face type. In such cases, the meaning of the inserted entry word is made clear in the definition.

**cap**...*n.*...5 a little percussion cap for toy guns (**cap guns**)

#### J. Cross-references

Entry words (or tables, illustrations, etc.) to which the reader is being cross-referred are given in small capitals.

**ca-ta-b-o-lism**...*n.*...opposed to ANABOLISM

**ce-no-gen-e-sis**...*n.*...cf. PALINGENESIS

**fa**...*n.*...see SOLFEGGIO

**eu-sta-chi-an tube**...see EAR<sup>1</sup>, *illus.*

**natural law** 1...2...see LAW (sense 8*a*)...

**natural selection**...see also DARWINIAN THEORY

**sol**<sup>1</sup>...*n.*...See MONEY, *table*

## VII. USAGE LABELS & NOTES

It is generally understood that usage varies among groups of people according to locality, level of education, social environment, occupation, etc. More specifically, it must be remembered, usage varies for an individual in any given day depending upon the particular situation and the purpose his language must serve. The language that a scientist uses in preparing a report may be quite different from the language used in writing a letter to a friend. What is good usage in a literary essay may not be the best usage in the lyrics to a popular song or in casual conversation. None of the modes of using language in the cases cited is in an absolute sense more correct than any of the others. Each is right for its occasion and any attempt to interchange styles can result in inappropriate language.

Dictionaries can reasonably be expected to assign usage labels to those terms that the record shows are generally limited to informal or highly informal contexts. Such labels, if they are to be useful, must be conventional words that are clearly understood by the reader. The labels used in this dictionary are given below, with an explanation of each. If the label, which is placed in brackets (and in some cases abbreviated), occurs directly after a part-of-speech label or after a boldface entry term, it applies to all the senses given with that part of speech or that term; if it occurs after a numeral or letter, it applies only to the sense so numbered or lettered.

**Colloquial:** The term or sense is in widespread use and is generally characteristic of conversation and informal writing. It is not regarded as substandard or illiterate.

**Slang:** The term or sense is not generally regarded as conventional or standard usage but is used, even by the best speakers, in highly informal contexts or for special effect. A given slang vocabulary is often characteristic of the usage of a certain group (e.g. teenagers, musicians). Slang consists of both coined terms and new or extended meanings attached to established terms.

Usually slang terms either pass into disuse in time or come to have a standard status.

**Obsolete:** The term or sense is no longer used but occurs in earlier writings.

**Archaic:** The term or sense is rarely used today except in certain restricted contexts, as in church ritual, but occurs in earlier writings.

**Old Poetic:** The term or sense was never part of the everyday language, but was used chiefly in earlier poetry, or in prose where a poetic quality was desired.

**Dialect:** The term or sense is used regularly only in some geographical areas or in a certain designated area (*South, South-west, West*, etc.) of the United States.

**British:** The term or sense is restricted to the British Isles as a whole. The label "Brit., etc." indicates the term or sense is found generally throughout the English-speaking world outside the U.S. The label "Brit., etc. (exc. Cdn.\*)" indicates the term or sense is in general use throughout the English-speaking world except North America.

**Canadian (or Irish, Australian, etc.):** The term or sense is characteristic specifically of Canadian (or Irish, Australian, etc.) English.

**Historical:** The term or sense refers to something that no longer exists (a kind of object, institution, etc.) and to which no more current term applies.

**Old-fashioned:** The term or sense is not yet considered archaic but has an old-fashioned quality, as one used by an older generation of people, that has been superseded by another or other words.

**Rare:** The term or sense has never been common. "Now Rare" suggests it was once common but, although not archaic, is now not often used.

**Vulgar:** The term or sense may be an old one, but it is today regarded by most people as highly inappropriate usage in all or almost all social contexts. Many, but not all, such terms are also slang.

In addition to the above usage labels, supplementary information is often given after the definition, indicating whether the term or sense is generally regarded as vulgar, substandard, or derogatory, used with ironic, familiar, or hyperbolic connotations, etc. Where there are some objections to common usages, that fact is also indicated (e.g., *who, whom*).

The dictionary also contains a number of more extensive usage notes that go into greater detail in giving information that pertains to the entry rather than to a particular sense. These notes are introduced by **USAGE**—in boldface italic capitals at the left indented margin of an entry block. An example of such a usage note is the discrimination of the uses of *can* and *may* following the entry at **can**<sup>1</sup>.

## VIII. FIELD LABELS

Labels for specialized fields of knowledge and activity are used to help the user quickly identify a particular field of application when this is not readily apparent from the definition itself. A number of such senses within a single entry block are usually grouped together, arranged alphabetically by label.

**form**...*n.*...17 *Gram.*...18 *Linguis.*...19 *Philos.*...20 *Printing*...  
**hit**...*vt.*...14 *Baseball*...15 *Blackjack*...

## IX. SCIENTIFIC NAMES OF

### PLANTS & ANIMALS

When the name of an animal or plant is entered in this dictionary, its scientific name is included parenthetically in the definition.

All animals and plants have been given Modern Latin or Latinized names by biologists in accordance with rules prescribed by international codes of zoological and botanical nomenclature and have been systematically classified into certain categories, or taxa, that discriminate the similarities and differences among organisms.

Taxonomists are continuously studying and comparing basic materials in order to classify organisms more precisely or to modify, when necessary, current classifications. The taxonomic designations used in this dictionary reflect the most reliable information available from such constant scrutiny, including many recent revisions.

The highly respected publication *Synopsis and Classification of Living Organisms*, edited by Sybil P. Parker, organizes a complete modern set of classifications in two volumes. This reference work, which utilized the contributions of many experts, provided the foundations for the taxonomic classifications used in this dictionary.

The basic taxa are phylum or division, class, order, family, genus, and species. When these or any additional taxonomic names appear in this dictionary, they are enclosed in parentheses and, in conformity with the international codes, have an initial capital with the regular exception of the names of species and taxa ranking below species.

The scientific name of every species of animal or plant is an italicized binomial that consists of the capitalized name of the genus followed by the uncapitalized specific name or epithet.

The user of this dictionary can usually trace the complete tax-

onomy of a plant or animal by referring to key words in a series of related definitions. For example, one can link a complete taxonomy for a plant, as the turnip, or for an animal, as the cheetah:

**turnip**...*n.*...1 a) a biennial plant (*Brassica rapa*) of the crucifer family, ...  
**cruci-fer**...*adj.* designating a family (Brassicaceae, order Capparales) of dicotyledonous plants...  
**dicotyl-le/don**...*n.*...any plant belonging to a class (Magnoliopsida) of angiosperms...  
**angio-sperm**...*n.* any of a division (Magnoliophyta) of flowering plants...

**chee-tah**...*n.*...an extremely fast, doglike cat (*Acinonyx jubatus*)...

**cat**...*n.*...1 any of a family (Felidae) of carnivores,...

**car-ni-vore**...*n.*...1 any of an order (Carnivora) of fanged, flesh-eating mammals,...

**mam-mal**...*n.*...any of a large class (Mammalia) of warmblooded, usually hairy vertebrates,...

**ver-te-brate**...*n.* any of a large subphylum (Vertebrata) of chordate animals,...

**chord-ate**...*n.*...any of a phylum (Chordata) of animals...

In those taxa where a trinomial is used, as for a subspecies, the third term is uncapitalized and italicized. If a trinomial is used for a cultivated variety, the abbreviation "var." in roman type appears between the specific name and the third term:

\***Canada lynx** a North American lynx (*Lynx lynx canadensis*)...

**cab-bage**<sup>1</sup>...*n.*...1 a common vegetable (*Brassica oleracea* var. *capitata*) of the crucifer family,...

If a particular genus is named in an entry more than once, it is usually abbreviated:

\***purple-fringed orchis**...orchids (*Habenaria psycodes* and *H. fimbriata*)...

## X. IDIOMATIC PHRASES

Idiomatic phrases are run in on an entry block alphabetically after the definition or definitions of the main-entry word, each phrasal entry set in boldface with a dash preceding it. Such phrases have been entered wherever possible under the key word.

**business**...*n.*...—**business is business**...—**do business with**...—**give (or get) the business**...—**mean business**...

Alternative forms are indicated inside parentheses, as above in **give (or get) the business**. In the phrase (**at**) **full tilt** under the entry **tilt**, both the longer phrase, **at full tilt**, and the shorter, **full tilt**, are being recorded.

## XI. RUN-IN DERIVED ENTRIES

It is possible in English to form an almost infinite number of derived forms simply by adding certain prefixes or suffixes to the base word. It has been the purpose of the editors to include as run-in entries in boldface type only those words one might reasonably expect to encounter in literature or ordinary usage, and then only when the meaning of such derived words can be immediately understood from the meanings of the base word and the affix. Thus, **greatness**, **livelihood**, and **newness** are run in at the end of the entries for **great**, **lively**, and **new**, the meanings of the derived forms being clearly understood from the base word and the suffix **-ness**, which is found as a separate entry in this dictionary and means "state, quality, or instance of being." Many words formed with common suffixes such as **-able**, **-er**, **-less**, **-like**, **-ly**, **-tion**, etc. are similarly treated as run-in entries with the base word from which they are derived. All such entries are syllabified and either accented to show stress in pronunciation or, where necessary, pronounced in full or in part. Each run-in derived form is preceded by a dash.

If two synonymous run-in derived forms share a part-of-speech label, the more frequently used form appears first and the part-of-speech label is given after the second form. Note the plural form following the first run-in:

**practi-cal**...*adj.*...—**pract'i-cal'i-ty** (-kal'ə tē), *pl.* -**ties**, or **practi-cal-ness** *n.*

When a derived word has a meaning or meanings different from those which can be deduced from the sum of its parts, it has been entered in a block of its own, pronounced, and fully defined (e.g., **producer**).

## XII. THE SYNONYMY

The dictionary contains many short paragraphs in which synonyms are listed and discriminated. Each such synonymy is entered after that word in the group which may generally be considered the most basic or comprehensive. Although synonyms have similar or closely related meanings, they are not always interchangeable with one another. The subtle differences that distinguish them are of great importance to precision in language. These distinctions are briefly stated and typical examples of usage given where these will be helpful.

The abbreviation **SYN.** in boldface italic capitals at the left indented margin of an entry block introduces a synonymy for the main-entry word. Each of the words discriminated in the paragraph carries, at its own place of entry in the vocabulary, a cross-reference to that synonymy. Thus, following the entry for **guffaw**, there is a note "**—SYN.** see **LAUGH**."

In many cases antonyms are given at the end of the synonymy.

# THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE: VARIATION, THE DICTIONARY, AND THE USER

by JOHN ALGEO

The English language is full of variety—of alternative ways of expressing an idea. Books like *Webster's New World Dictionary* record that variety and offer advice about it to those who come to them for information and guidance. To take advantage of what the dictionary has to offer, a user must know something about the kinds of variation in language and about how to interpret the information the dictionary gives about that variation.

## VARIATION IN LANGUAGE

Language is not a Platonic idea abiding in a realm of archetypal truths. Rather it is a system we infer from the sounds that come out of the mouths of speakers and the marks that come from the hands of writers. "The" language is an abstraction from many particular language events—conversations and complaints, homilies and harangues, explanations and exhortations—all the varied uses to which language is put all over the world.

Variation within a language is of two main kinds. From one kind, we identify those who use the language: we infer where they come from, what groups they belong to, when they learned the language, and what they are like as individuals—their age, sex, education, and personality; such variation is called *dialect*. From the other kind, we identify the uses to which language is put: the subjects it treats, the circumstances in which it is used, the medium of its expression (for example, speech versus writing), the social relationships among its users, and the purposes of its use; such variation is called *register*.

## A Paradox: Diversity and Unity

Every human language is a diversity in unity. The diversity springs naturally from the way different human beings use the language. Each of us is unique—slightly different from every one of our fellows—and consequently we each use our language also in a slightly different way from anyone else. The unity comes from our use of language to communicate with one another. As long as we talk and write among ourselves, the language we use can vary only within understandable bounds; it has to be basically the same for all of us.

The paradox of diversity in unity is more apparent in English than in any other language spoken upon the face of the Earth. The more widely a language is used, the more potential it has for variation. English—in the number of persons who use it, the geographical spread of its use, and the variety of purposes for which it is used—is the most popular language in the world.

Three groups of people use English: (1) those who speak it as a mother tongue, the first language they learn and the main one they use; (2) those who live in a bilingual environment or for whom English is a second language in frequent use in addition to their mother tongue; and (3) those for whom English is a foreign language used for special purposes. Among those nations whose citizens speak English as their mother tongue, the United States is the most populous, followed by the United Kingdom and other English-speaking countries such as Australia, Ireland, New Zealand, and various Caribbean nations. Canada and South Africa have English as one of two native languages. Having English as an official or widely used second language are many African, Asian, and Oceanic countries: Cameroon, Fiji, Gambia, Ghana, India, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Uganda, Vanuatu, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. In other nations such as China, Egypt, Japan, most European countries, and indeed throughout the world, English is a widely studied and used foreign language, even if it does not have domestic use among the citizens of those nations.

Perhaps as much as 15 percent of the world's population uses English in one of those three ways. Moreover, those users of English (the most widely distributed of human languages) are scattered all over the world. In addition, English is used more widely for more purposes than any other language: by speakers of many other languages when dealing with science, technology, business, travel, and literature. It is the language of international confer-

ences, negotiations, business, and aviation, and is sometimes used in lands where it is not native for dealings with foreigners, whatever their native languages may be.

Because of that variety of persons, places, and purposes in its use, English is also among the most varied of languages. However, its worldwide popularity also depends upon the basic unity of the language—wherever, by whomever, and whenever used. And so English is also one language, despite all its varieties.

## World Englishes: Language and Dialect

The varieties of English include most noticeably those forms of the language used as a mother tongue in independent nations around the globe. They are the most inclusive regional dialects of the language. In population, the chief national variety is American English or the "American language," an expression that does not imply the United States uses a different language from the United Kingdom and other English-speaking countries, but only that the English of America has its own standards, as independent of those of its sister nations as the governments of those countries are from one another.

The difference between a language and a dialect is to some extent arbitrary. Linguists say that if two persons, using their mother tongues, can communicate with each other, they speak the same language, although differences in pronunciation, word use, or grammar are signs of different dialects of the language. Politically considered, however, national boundaries often make a difference in what is considered to be the same language or different ones. Swedish and Norwegian are treated as separate languages because they are used in independent nations, although they are mutually comprehensible for the most part. On the other hand, Chinese is considered one language because of political unity and a shared system of ideographic writing, although a native of Canton and a native of Beijing may find that they cannot talk together.

Political boundaries are not always decisive, however. The existence of a conventional written form for Catalan reinforces its claim to be regarded as a separate language from standard Spanish. Present-day English, like the Spanish of Spain and Latin America, on the other hand, is usually thought of as one language that exists in a number of distinct national varieties. English is a world language used by many nations in somewhat different ways. Each country has its own standards for the English language, and so those national varieties are dialects of "the" English language.

## Historical Varieties

Our existing dialects are the result of a long history. In the fifth century, various Germanic tribes invaded the British Isles, bringing with them their varied but closely related speechways, which became the language of several independent kingdoms in what are now England and Scotland. That variety of language, called Old English or Anglo-Saxon, was, by the criterion of mutual comprehensibility, a different language from the one we use today. The opening lines of the Anglo-Saxon epic poem *Beowulf* are incomprehensible to a present-day reader:

Hwaet we Gar-Dena/in geardagum/theodcýnginga  
/þrym gefrunon/hu tha aethelings/ellen fremedon.

Listen! We have learnt of the glory of the kings of the Spear-Danes in days of yore, how the princes did deeds of valor.

Although we cannot understand that language without special study, it (or a variety very much like it) was the ancestor of the English we speak. It gradually changed over the centuries until by about 1100 we speak of it as a different historical variety, Middle English. That lasted until about 1500, when we begin calling it Modern English—recognizably the same as our English in sound and writing.

The early forms of English were subject to strong foreign influences, especially from successful invasions by Scandinavians and French-speaking Normans, but also from the cultural influence of Latin, the language of the medieval Church. Despite such influences, English survived and developed along its own lines