

Words I Read, Heard, or Spoke

(Some New, Others Unique, And **Why Latin is Foundational**)
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Definitions from New Oxford American Dictionary

February 2023 (84 words)

1. **mel·lif·lu·ous** | mə'liflŭwəs | adjective (of a voice or words)

sweet or musical; pleasant to hear: *the voice was mellifluous and smooth.*

DERIVATIVES **mellifluously** adverb **mellifluousness** noun

ORIGIN late 15th century: from late Latin **mellifluus** (from **mel** 'honey' + **fluere** 'to flow') + **-ous**.

2. **car·a·vel** | 'kerəvel | (also **carvel** | 'kärvel |) noun *historical*

a small, fast Spanish or Portuguese sailing ship of the 15th–17th centuries.

ORIGIN early 16th century: from French **caravelle**, from Portuguese **caravela**, diminutive of **caravo**, via Latin from Greek **karabos** 'horned beetle' or 'light ship'.

3. **poop (deck)** ¹ | pōōp | noun (also **poop deck**)

the aftermost and highest deck of a ship, especially in a sailing ship

where it typically forms the roof of a cabin in the stern: *there on the poop stood Captain Meech.*

verb [*with object*] (usually **be pooped**) (of a wave) break over the stern of (a ship), sometimes causing it to capsize: *carrying a high sea, we were badly pooped.*

ORIGIN late Middle English: from Old French **pupe**, from a **variant of Latin *puppis*** 'stern'.

4. **fore·cas·tle** | 'fōks(ə)l, 'fōr,kas(ə)l | noun

the forward part of a ship below the deck, traditionally used as the crew's living quarters.

• *historical* a raised deck at the bow of a ship.

5. **e·nor·mi·ty** | i'nôrmədē | noun (plural **enormities**)

1 (the enormity of) the great or extreme scale, seriousness, or extent of something perceived as bad or morally wrong: *a thorough search disclosed the full enormity of the crime.* • (in neutral use) large size or scale: *I began to get a sense of the enormity of the task.*

2 a grave crime or sin: *the enormities of the regime.*

ORIGIN late Middle English: via Old French from Latin **enormitas**, from **enormis**, from **e-** (variant of **ex-**) 'out of' + **norma** 'pattern, standard'.

The word originally meant 'deviation from legal or moral rectitude' and 'transgression'. Current senses have been influenced by **enormous**.

USAGE **Enormity** traditionally means 'the extreme scale or seriousness of something bad or morally wrong,' as in *they were struggling to deal with the enormity of the crime.* Today, however, a more neutral sense as a synonym for **hugeness** or **immensity**, as in *he soon discovered the enormity of the task,* is common. Some people regard this use as wrong, arguing that **enormity** in its original sense meant 'an extreme wickedness' and should therefore continue to be used only of contexts in which a negative moral judgment is implied.

Nevertheless, the sense of 'greatsize' is now broadly accepted in standard English, although it generally relates to something difficult, such as a task, challenge, or achievement.

6. **pir·ou·ette** | ,pɪrə'wet | noun *mainly Ballet*

an act of spinning on one foot, typically with the raised foot touching the knee of the supporting leg.

- a movement performed in advanced dressage and classical riding, in which the horse makes a circle by pivoting on a hind leg, while cantering.

verb [*no object*] perform a pirouette: *she pirouetted and made a bow.*

ORIGIN mid 17th century: from French, literally 'spinning top', of unknown ultimate origin.

7. **des·ic·cate** | 'desə,kāt | verb [*with object*]

remove the moisture from (something); cause to become completely dry: *both the older growth and the new vegetation were desiccated by months of relentless sun | years of drought have desiccated the soil.*

DERIVATIVES **desiccative** | 'desə,kādiv | adjective ORIGIN late 16th century: from Latin **desiccāt-** 'made thoroughly dry', from the verb **desiccare**.

8. **sen·tient** | 'sen(t)SH(ē)ənt | adjective

able to perceive or feel things: *she had been instructed from birth in the equality of all sentient life forms.*

DERIVATIVES **sentience** | 'sen(t)SH(ē)əns | noun **sentiently** noun **sentiently** adverb ORIGIN early 17th century: from Latin **sentient-** 'feeling', from the verb **sentire**.

9. **in·ter·loc·u·tor** | ,ɪn(t)ər'läkyədər | noun *formal*

a person who takes part in a dialogue or conversation.

DERIVATIVES **interlocution** | ,ɪn(t)ər,lɔ'kyōdSH(ə)n | noun ORIGIN early 16th century: modern Latin, from Latin **interlocut-** 'interrupted (by speech)', from the verb **interloqui**, from **inter-** 'between' + **loqui** 'speak'.

10. **chat·tel** | 'CHadl | noun (in general use)

a personal possession.

- *Law* an item of property other than real estate. See also [goods and chattels](#).

ORIGIN Middle English: from Old French **chatel**, from medieval Latin **capitale**, from Latin **capitalis**, from **caput** 'head'. Compare with [capital](#) and [cattle](#).

11. **foist** | foist | verb [*with object*] (**foist someone/something on**)

impose an unwelcome or unnecessary person or thing on: *don't let anyone foist inferior goods on you.*

ORIGIN mid 16th century (in the sense 'palm a false die, so as to produce it at the right moment'):

from Dutch dialect **vuisten** 'take in the hand', from **vuist** (see [fist](#)).

12. **aph·o·rism** | 'afə,rɪzəm | noun

a pithy observation that contains a general truth, such as, "if it ain't broke, don't fix it.": *the old aphorism "the child is father to the man" | [mass noun] : the debate begins and ends at the level of aphorism, with commentators saying that something must be done.*

- a concise statement of a scientific principle, typically by an ancient classical author: *the opening sentence of the first aphorism of Hippocrates.*

DERIVATIVES **aphorist** noun **aphoristic** | ,afə'ristɪk | adjective **aphoristically** | ,afə'ristɪk(ə)lē | adverb

ORIGIN early 16th century: from French *aphorisme* or late Latin *aphorismus*, from Greek *aphorismos* 'definition', from *aphorizein* 'define'.

13. **sep·ul·cher** | 'sepəlkər | (*British sepulchre*) noun

a small room or monument, cut in rock or built of stone, in which a dead person is laid or buried.

verb [*with object*] *literary* lay or bury in or as if in a sepulcher: *tomes are soon out of print and sepulchered in the dust of libraries.*

• serve as a burial place for: *when ocean shrouds and sepulchers our dead.*

ORIGIN Middle English: via Old French from Latin *sepulcrum* 'burial place', from *sepelire* 'bury'.

14. **bou·ton·nière** | ,bōōtn'ir | noun

a spray of flowers worn in a buttonhole.

ORIGIN late 19th century: French, 'buttonhole', from *bouton* 'button'.

15. **re·me·di·a·tion** | ,rēmēdē'āSH(ə)n | noun the action of remedying something, in particular of reversing or stopping environmental damage. • the giving of remedial teaching or therapy.

ORIGIN early 19th century: from Latin *remedio(n-)*, from *remediare* 'heal, cure' (see [remedy](#)).

16. **pu·gi·list** | 'pyōōjələst | noun *dated or humorous*

a boxer, especially a professional one. DERIVATIVES **pugilistic** | ,pyōōjəl'istik | adjective ORIGIN mid 18th century: from Latin *pugil* 'boxer' + *-ist*.

17. **new·fan·gled** | 'nōō,fəNGg(ə)ld | adjective *derogatory*

different from what one is used to; objectionably new: *I've no time for such newfangled nonsense.*

ORIGIN Middle English: from *newfangle* (now dialect) 'liking what is new', from the adverb [new](#) + a second element related to an Old English word meaning 'to take'.

18. **pif·fle** | 'pif(ə)l | noun *informal*

nonsense: *it's absolute piffle to say that violence is ok.* ORIGIN late 19th century: from *piffle* (verb) 'talk nonsense', probably imitative.

19. **en·twine** | ən'twīn, en'twīn | verb [*with object*]

wind or twist together; interweave: *they lay entwined in each other's arms* | *figurative*: *the nations' histories were closely entwined.*

20. **pan·de·mo·ni·um** | ,pəndə'mōnēəm | noun

wild and noisy disorder or confusion; uproar: *pandemonium broke out.*

ORIGIN mid 17th century: modern Latin (denoting the place of all demons, in Milton's *Paradise Lost*), from [pan-](#) 'all' + Greek *daimōn* 'demon'.

21. **gaud·y**¹ | 'gôdē | adjective (**gaudier**, **gaudiest**)

extravagantly bright or showy, typically so as to be tasteless: *silver bows and gaudy ribbons*.

DERIVATIVES **gaudily** | 'gôdələ, 'gädələ | adverb **gaudiness** | 'gôdēnəs, 'gädēnəs | noun ORIGIN late 15th century: probably from [gaud](#) + [-y](#)¹.

22. **kitsch** | kiCH | noun

art, objects, or design considered to be in poor taste because of excessive garishness or sentimentality, but sometimes appreciated in an ironic or knowing way: *the lava lamp is an example of sixties kitsch*.

adjective considered to be in poor taste but appreciated in an ironic or knowing way: *the front room is stuffed with kitsch knickknacks, little glass and gilt ornaments | she offers kitsch interpretations of classic British dress, including a range of tartan mini-kilts*.

ORIGIN 1920s: German.

23. **mod·i·cum** | 'mädekəm | noun [*in singular*] a small quantity of a particular thing, especially something considered desirable or valuable: *his statement had more than a modicum of truth*. ORIGIN late 15th century: from Latin, neuter of **modicus** 'moderate', from **modus** 'measure'.

24. **acumen** | ə'kyōmən, 'akyəmən, 'akyə,mən | noun

the ability to make good judgments and quick decisions, typically in a particular domain: *business acumen*.

ORIGIN late 16th century: from Latin, 'sharpness, point', from **acuere** 'sharpen' (see [acute](#)).

25. **tac·i·turn** | 'tasə,tərn | adjective (of a person)

reserved or uncommunicative in speech; saying little: *after such gatherings she would be taciturn and morose*.

DERIVATIVES **taciturnity** | ,tasə'tərnədə | noun **taciturnly** | 'tasə,tərnlē | adverb

ORIGIN late 18th century: from Latin **taciturnus**, from **tacitus** (see [tacit](#)).

26. **nox·i·ous** | 'näSHəs | adjective

harmful, poisonous, or very unpleasant: *they were overcome by the noxious fumes*.

DERIVATIVES **noxiously** adverb **noxiousness** noun

ORIGIN late 15th century: from Latin **noxius** (from **noxa** 'harm') + **-ous**.

27. **zeit·geist** | 'zīt,gīst | noun [*in singular*]

the defining spirit or mood of a particular period of history as shown by the ideas and beliefs of the time: *the story captured the zeitgeist of the late 1960s*.

ORIGIN mid 19th century: from German **Zeitgeist**, from **Zeit** 'time' + **Geist** 'spirit'.

28. **cre·dence** | 'krēdn̩s | noun

1 belief in or acceptance of something as true: *psychoanalysis finds little credence among laymen*.

• the likelihood of something being true; plausibility: *being called upon by the media as an expert lends credence to one's opinions*.

2 [*usually as modifier*] a small side table, shelf, or niche in a church for holding the elements of the Eucharist before they are consecrated: *a credence table*.

PHRASES **give credence to** accept as true.

ORIGIN Middle English: via Old French from medieval Latin **credentia**, from Latin **credent-** 'believing', from the verb **credere**.

29. **vogu·ish** | 'vōgiSH | adjective

popular or in fashion at a particular time: *he wore the costume of an art dealer from some voguish New York hangout of the late sixties* | *mermaid chic is very voguish this season*.

DERIVATIVES **voguishness** noun

30. **sub·ter·fuge** | 'səbtər,fyōj | noun

deceit used in order to achieve one's goal: *he had to use subterfuge and bluff on many occasions* | [*count noun*]: *I hated all the subterfuges, I hated lying to you*.

ORIGIN late 16th century: from French, or from late Latin **subterfugium**, from Latin **subterfugere** 'escape secretly', from **subter-** 'beneath' + **fugere** 'flee'.

31. **sur·rep·ti·tious** | ,sərəp'tiSHəs | adjective

kept secret, especially because it would not be approved of: *they carried on a surreptitious affair*.

DERIVATIVES **surreptitiousness** noun

ORIGIN late Middle English (in the sense 'obtained by suppression of the truth'): from Latin **surreptitius** (from the verb **surripere**, from **sub-** 'secretly' + **rapere** 'seize') + **-ous**.

32. **os·ten·ta·tion** | ,äst(ə)n'tāSH(ə)n | noun

pretentious and vulgar display, especially of wealth and luxury, intended to impress or attract notice: *the office was spacious, but without any trace of ostentation*.

ORIGIN late Middle English: via Old French from Latin **ostentatio(n-)**, from the verb **ostentare**, frequentative of **ostendere** 'stretch out to view'.

33. **du·bi·ous** | 'dōōbēəs | adjective

1 hesitating or doubting: *Alex looked dubious, but complied*.

2 not to be relied upon; suspect: *extremely dubious assumptions*.

- morally suspect: *time-sharing has been brought into disrepute by dubious sales methods*.
- of questionable value: *she earned the dubious distinction of being the lowest-paid teacher in the nation*.

DERIVATIVES **dubiousness** | 'dōōbēəsənəs | noun ORIGIN mid 16th century (in **dubious** (sense 2)):

from Latin **dubiosus**, from **dubium** 'a doubt', neuter of **dubius** 'doubtful'.

34. **cu·pid·i·ty** | kyōō'pidədē | noun

greed for money or possessions: *new wealth, however tainted by cupidity and egoism, tends to be favorable for the arts*.

ORIGIN late Middle English: from Old French **cupidite** or Latin **cupiditas**, from **cupidus** 'desirous', from **cupere** 'to desire'. Compare with **covet**.

35. **av·a·rice** | 'avərəs | noun

extreme greed for wealth or material gain: *he was rich beyond the dreams of avarice*. ORIGIN Middle English: from Old French, from Latin **avaritia**, from **avarus** 'greedy'.

36. **ca·dre** | 'kadrē, 'kādrē, 'kad,rā, 'kād,rā | noun

a small group of people specially trained for a particular purpose or profession: *a small cadre of scientists*.

- a group of activists in a communist or other revolutionary organization.
- a member of an activist group.

ORIGIN mid 19th century: from French, from Italian *quadro*, from Latin *quadrus* 'square'.

37. **hid·e·ous** | 'hidēəs | adjective

ugly or disgusting to look at: *his smile made him look more hideous than ever*.

- extremely unpleasant: *the whole hideous story*.

DERIVATIVES **hideousness** | 'hidēəsənəs | noun

ORIGIN Middle English: from Old French *hidōs*, *hideus*, from *hide*, *hisde* 'fear', of unknown origin.

38. **bump·tious** | 'bəm(p)ʃHəs | adjective

self-assertive or proud to an irritating degree: *these bumptious young boys today*.

DERIVATIVES **bumptiously** | 'bəm(p)ʃHəslē | adverb **bumptiousness** | 'bəm(p)ʃHəsənəs | noun

ORIGIN early 19th century: humorously from [bump](#), on the pattern of *fractious*.

39. **deft·ly** | 'def(t)lē | adverb

in a way that is neatly skillful and quick in movement: *her fingers moved deftly, quickly parting the grass* | *Lizzy deftly weaves her way through the crowd*.

- in a clever way: *he has deftly handled the flak he's received* | *the show's writers deftly balance humor and grief*.

DERIVATIVES **deftness** | 'def(t)nəs | noun

ORIGIN Middle English: variant of [daft](#), in the obsolete sense 'meek'.

40. **a·tro·cious** | ə'trōʃHəs | adjective

horrifyingly wicked: *atrocious cruelties*.

- of a very poor quality; extremely bad or unpleasant: *he attempted an atrocious imitation of my English accent* | *atrocious weather*.

DERIVATIVES **atrociously** | ə'trōʃHəslē | adverb **atrociousness** | ə'trōʃHəsənəs | noun

ORIGIN mid 17th century: from Latin *atrox*, *atroc*- 'cruel'+ *-ious*.

41. **ad·ju·di·cate** | ə'jōdə,kāt | verb [no object]

make a formal judgment or decision about a problem or disputed matter: *the Committee adjudicates on all betting disputes* | [with object]: *the case was adjudicated in the Supreme Court*.

- act as a judge in a competition: *we asked him to adjudicate at the local flower show*.
- [with object and complement] pronounce or declare judicially: *he was adjudicated bankrupt*.

DERIVATIVES **adjudicative** | ə'jōdə,kādiv | adjective

ORIGIN mid 17th century: from Latin *adjudicat*- 'awarded judicially', from the verb *adjudicare* (see [adjudge](#)).

The noun *adjudication* dates from the late 16th century.

42. **al·tru·ism** | 'al,trō,izəm | noun

the belief in or practice of disinterested and selfless concern for the well-being of others: *some may choose to work with vulnerable elderly people out of altruism*.

• *Zoology* behavior of an animal that benefits another at its own expense: *reciprocal altruism*.

DERIVATIVES **altruist** | 'al, trōōəst | noun

ORIGIN mid 19th century: from French **altruisme**, from Italian **altrui** 'somebody else', from Latin **alteri huic** 'to this other'.

43. **hu·bris** | '(h)yōōbrəs | noun

excessive pride or self-confidence: *the self-assured hubris among economists was shaken in the late 1980s*.

• (in Greek tragedy) excessive pride toward or defiance of the gods, leading to nemesis.

ORIGIN Greek.

44. **con·cu·pis·cence** | kən'kyōōpəs(ə)ns, ,känG'kyōōpəs(ə)ns | noun *formal*

strong sexual desire; lust: *St. Anthony's battle with concupiscence*. ORIGIN Middle English: via Old French from late Latin **concupiscentia**, from Latin **concupiscent-** 'beginning to desire', from the verb **concupiscere**, from **con-** (expressing intensive force) + **cupere** 'to desire'.

45. **dys·pep·sia** | dis'pəpsēə, dis'pəpSHə | noun

indigestion. ORIGIN early 18th century: via Latin from Greek **duspepsia**, from **duspeptos** 'difficult to digest'.

46. **fas·tid·i·ous** | fa'stidēəs | adjective

very attentive to and concerned about accuracy and detail: *he chooses his words with fastidious care*.

• very concerned about matters of cleanliness: *the child seemed fastidious about getting her fingers sticky or dirty*.

DERIVATIVES **fastidiously** | fa'stidēəslē | adverb **fastidiousness** | fa'stidēəsnəs | noun

ORIGIN late Middle English: from Latin **fastidiosus**, from **fastidium** 'loathing'. The word originally meant 'disagreeable', later 'disgusted'. Current senses date from the 17th century.

47. **ped·ant·ry** | 'ped(ə)ntrē | noun

excessive concern with minor details and rules: *to object to this is not mere pedantry*.

ORIGIN Middle English (denoting an architectural decoration projecting downwards): from Old French, literally 'hanging', present participle of the verb **pendre**, from Latin **pendere**.

48. **pro·pi·tious** | prə'piSHəs | adjective

giving or indicating a good chance of success; favorable: *the timing for such a meeting seemed propitious*.

• *archaic* favorably disposed toward someone: *there were points on which they did not agree, moments in which she did not seem propitious*.

DERIVATIVES **propitiously** | prə'piSHəslē, prō'piSHəslē | adverb **propitiouslyness** | prə'piSHəsənəs | noun

ORIGIN late Middle English: from Old French **propicius** or Latin **propitius** 'favorable, gracious'.

49. **ca·pri·cious** | kə'priSHəs, kə'prēSHəs | adjective

given to sudden and unaccountable changes of mood or behavior: *it's terrible to feel our livelihood hinges on a capricious boss | a capricious climate*.

DERIVATIVES **capriciously** | kə'priSHəslē, kə'prēSHəslē | adverb **capriciousness** | kə'priSHəsənəs, kə'prēSHəsənəs | noun

ORIGIN early 17th century: from French *capricieux*, from Italian (see [capriccioso](#)).

50. **co·erce** | kō'ərs | verb [*with object*] persuade (an unwilling person) to do something by using force or threats: *they were coerced into silence*. • obtain (something) by using force or threats: *their confessions were allegedly coerced by torture*. DERIVATIVES **coercer** noun **coercible** | kō'ərsəb(ə)l | adjective ORIGIN late Middle English: from Latin *coercere* 'restrain', from *co-* 'together' + *arcere* 'restrain'.

51. **e·quiv·o·ca·tion** | i,kwivə'kāSH(ə)n | noun

the use of ambiguous language to conceal the truth or to avoid committing oneself; prevarication: *I say this without equivocation*.

ORIGIN late Middle English (in the sense 'use a word in more than one sense'): from late Latin *aequivocat-* 'called by the same name', from the verb *aequivocare*, from *aequivocus* (see [equivocal](#)).

52. **pos·it** | 'pāzət | verb (**posits, positing, posited**)

1 [*with object*] assume as a fact; put forward as a basis of argument: *the Confucian view posits a perfectible human nature* | [*with clause*]: *he posited that the world economy is a system with its own particular equilibrium*.

• (**posit something on**) base something on the truth of (a particular assumption): *these plots are posited on a false premise about women's nature as inferior*.
2 [*with object and adverbial*] put in position; place: *the Professor posits Cohen in his second category of poets*.
noun *Philosophy* a statement which is made on the assumption that it will prove to be true.

ORIGIN mid 17th century: from Latin *posit-* 'placed', from the verb *ponere*.

53. **on·to·log·i·cal** | ˌän(t)ə'lājək(ə)l | adjective

1 relating to the branch of metaphysics dealing with the nature of being: *ontological arguments*.

2 showing the relations between the concepts and categories in a subject area or domain: *an ontological database* | *an ontological framework for integrating and conceptualizing diverse forms of information*.

DERIVATIVES **ontologically** | -tə'lɒdʒɪk(ə)li | adverb

54. **vo·li·tion·al** | vō'liSH(ə)n(ə)l | adjective

relating to the use of one's will: *acceptance is a volitional act*.

DERIVATIVES **volitionally** adverb

early 17th century (denoting a decision or choice made after deliberation): from French, or from medieval Latin *volitio(n-)*, from *volo* 'I wish'.

55. **soph·ist·ry** | 'sāfəstrē, 'sōfəstrē | noun (plural **sophistries**)

the use of fallacious arguments, especially with the intention of deceiving: *trying to argue that I had benefited in any way from the disaster was pure sophistry*.

• a fallacious argument.

ORIGIN mid 16th century: via Latin from Greek *sophistēs*, from *sophizesthai* 'devise, become wise', from *sophos* 'wise'.

56. **fal·la·cious** | fə'lāSHəs | adjective

based on a mistaken belief: *fallacious arguments*.

DERIVATIVES **fallaciously** | fə'lāSHəslē | adverb **fallaciousness** | fə'lāSHəsənəs | noun

ORIGIN late 15th century: from Old French *fallacieux*, from Latin *fallaciosus*, from *fallacia* (see [fallacy](#)).

57. **ob·liv·i·ous** | ə'blivēəs | adjective

not aware of or not concerned about what is happening around one: *she became absorbed, oblivious to the passage of time* | *the women were oblivious of his presence*.

DERIVATIVES **obliviously** | ə'blivēəslē | adverb **obliviousness** | ə'blivēəsənəs | noun

ORIGIN late Middle English: from Latin *obliviosus*, from *oblivio(n-)* (see [oblivion](#)).

58. **dire** | 'dī(ə)r | adjective

(of a situation or event) extremely serious or urgent: *dire consequences*.

• (of a warning or threat) presaging disaster: *dire warnings about breathing the fumes*.

DERIVATIVES **direly** | 'dī(ə)rlē | adverb **direness** | 'dīrnəs | noun

ORIGIN mid 16th century: from Latin *dirus* 'fearful, threatening'.

59. **chutz·pah** | 'hʊɔ̃tspə, 'KHʊɔ̃tspə | (also chutzpa or hutzpah or hutzpa) noun *informal*

extreme self-confidence or audacity: *love him or hate him, you have to admire Cohen's chutzpah*.

ORIGIN late 19th century: Yiddish, from Aramaic *hu spā*.

60. **in·ex·tri·ca·ble** | ,inɛk'strikəb(ə)l, ,inik'strikəb(ə)l, ,in'ekstrəkəb(ə)l | adjective

impossible to disentangle or separate: *the past and the present are inextricable*.

• impossible to escape from: *an inextricable situation*.

DERIVATIVES **inextricability** | ,inɛk'strikə'bilədē | noun

ORIGIN mid 16th century: from Latin *inextricabilis*, from *in-* 'not' + *extricare* 'unravel' (see [extricate](#)).

61. **smid·gen** | 'smijən | (also smidgeon or smidgin) noun *informal*

a small amount of something: *add a smidgen of cayenne*.

ORIGIN mid 19th century: perhaps from Scots *smitch* in the same sense.

62. **spu·ri·ous** | 'spyɔ̃rēəs | adjective

• not being what it purports to be; false or fake: *separating authentic and spurious claims*.

• (of a line of reasoning) apparently but not actually valid: *this spurious reasoning results in nonsense*. • *archaic* (of offspring) illegitimate.

DERIVATIVES **spuriously** | 'spyɔ̃rēəslē | adverb **spuriousness** | 'spɔ̃rēəsənəs | noun

ORIGIN late 16th century (in the sense 'born out of wedlock'): from Latin *spurius* 'false' + *-ous*.

63. **flag·el·la·tion** | ˌflæjəˈlɑːʃən | noun

flogging or beating, either as a religious discipline or for sexual gratification: *pursuing the path of penance and flagellation.*

ORIGIN early 17th century: **from Latin *flagellat-* ‘whipped’, from *flagellare*.**

64. **com·plic·it** | kəmˈplɪsət | adjective

involved with others in an illegal activity or wrongdoing: *all of these people are **complicit** in some criminal conspiracy.*

ORIGIN mid 19th century: back-formation from [complicity](#).

65. **in·del·i·ble** | ɪnˈdeləb(ə)l | adjective

(of ink or a pen) making marks that cannot be removed: *an indelible marker pen.*

- not able to be forgotten or removed: *his story made an indelible impression on me.*

DERIVATIVES **indelibility** | -,deləˈbɪlɪtē | noun

ORIGIN late 15th century (as *indeleble*): from French, or **from Latin *indelebilis*, from *in-* ‘not’ + *delebilis* (from *delere* ‘efface, delete’).** The ending was altered under the influence of [-ible](#).

66. **cre·du·li·ty** | krəˈdʊlədē | noun

a tendency to be too ready to believe that something is real or true: *moneylenders prey upon their credulity and inexperience.*

ORIGIN late 16th century (in the general sense ‘inclined to believe’):

from Latin *credulus* (from *credere* ‘believe’) + *-ous*.

67. **for·tu·i·tous** | fɔːˈtʊədəs | adjective

- happening by accident or chance rather than design: *the similarity between the paintings may not be simply fortuitous.*

- happening by a lucky chance; fortunate: *from a cash standpoint, the company's timing is fortuitous.*

DERIVATIVES **fortuitousness** | fɔːˈtʊədəsənəs | noun ORIGIN mid 17th century: from

Latin *fortuitus*, from *forte* ‘by chance’, from *fors* ‘chance, luck’.

dec·i·mate | ˈdesəˌmɑːt | verb [*with object*]

1 kill, destroy, or remove a large percentage or part of: *the project would decimate the fragile wetland wilderness | the American chestnut, a species decimated by blight.*

- drastically reduce the strength or effectiveness of (something): *plant viruses that can decimate yields.*

2 historical kill one in every ten of (a group of soldiers or others) as a punishment for the whole group: *the man who is to determine whether it be necessary to decimate a large body of mutineers.*

DERIVATIVES **decimator** | -,mɑːtər | noun ORIGIN late Middle English: **from Latin *decimat-* ‘taken as a tenth’, from the verb *decimare*, from *decimus* ‘tenth’.**

In Middle English the term *decimation* denoted the levying of a tithe, and later the tax imposed by Cromwell on the Royalists (1655).

USAGE Historically, the meaning of the word **decimate** is 'kill one in every ten of (a group of people).' This sense has been superseded by the later, more general sense 'kill or destroy a large percentage or part of,' as in *the virus has decimated the population*. Some traditionalists argue that this and other later senses are incorrect, but it is clear that these extended senses are now part of standard English. It is sometimes also argued that **decimate** should refer to people and not to things or animals such as weeds or insects. It is generally agreed that **decimate** should not be used to mean 'defeat utterly.'

68. **rem·i·nisce** | ,remə'nɪs | verb [no object]

indulge in enjoyable recollection of past events: *they reminisced about their summers abroad*.

DERIVATIVES **reminiscer** noun ORIGIN early 19th century: back-formation from [reminiscence](#).

69. **ful·mi·na·tion** | ,fʌlmə'nāʃhən | noun (usually **fulminations**)

- an expression of vehement protest: *the fulminations of media moralists*.
 - a violent explosion or a flash like lightning.
-

70. **cat·e·chet·i·cal** | ,kədə'kedək(ə)l | adjective

- relating to religious instruction given to a person in preparation for Christian baptism or confirmation.
- relating to religious teaching by means of questions and answers.

DERIVATIVES **catechetic** | ,kədə'kedɪk | adjective **catechetically** | -ɪk(ə)lē | adverb

ORIGIN early 17th century: from ecclesiastical Greek *katēkhētikos*, from *katēkhētēs* 'catechist', from *katēkhein* 'instruct orally' (see [catechize](#)).

71. **im·per·cep·ti·ble** | ,ɪmpər'septəb(ə)l | adjective

- impossible to perceive: *his head moved in an almost imperceptible nod*.

DERIVATIVES **imperceptibility** | ,ɪmpər'septə'bilədē | noun

ORIGIN late Middle English: from French, or from medieval Latin **imperceptibilis**, from *in-* 'not' + *perceptibilis*, from the verb *percipere* (see [perceive](#)).

72. **ma·trix** | 'mātrɪks | noun (plural **matrices** | 'mātrə,sēz | or **matrixes**)

1 an environment or material in which something develops; a surrounding medium or structure: *free choices become the matrix of human life*.

2 a mass of fine-grained rock in which gems, crystals, or fossils are embedded: *nodules of secondary limestone set in a matrix of porous dolomite* | [mass noun]: *such fossils will often be partly concealed by matrix*.

- *Biology* the substance between cells or in which structures are embedded: *the lipid matrix of olfactory cells*.
- fine material used to bind together the coarser particles of a composite substance: *the matrix of gravel paths is raked regularly*.

3 a mold in which something, such as a record or printing type, is cast or shaped: *her two duets with Isobel Baillie were never issued and the matrices were destroyed*.

4 *Mathematics* a rectangular array of quantities or expressions in rows and columns that is treated as a single entity and manipulated according to particular rules: *this formula applies for all square matrices*.

5 an organizational structure in which two or more lines of command, responsibility, or communication may run through the same individual: *[as modifier]* : *matrix structures are said to foster greater flexibility.*

ORIGIN late Middle English (in the sense 'womb'): from Latin, 'breeding female', later 'womb', from *mater, matr-* 'mother'.

73. **con·vulse** | kən'vʌlz | verb

1 *[no object]* (of a person) suffer violent involuntary contraction of the muscles, producing contortion of the body or limbs: *she convulsed, collapsing to the floor with the pain.*

• *[with object]* (of an emotion, laughter, or physical stimulus) cause (someone) to make sudden, violent, uncontrollable movements: *she rocked backward and forward, convulsed with helpless mirth* | *Carlos was convulsed by a second bout of sneezing.*

2 *[with object]* throw (a country) into violent social or political upheaval: *a wave of mass strikes convulsed the Ruhr, Berlin, and central Germany.*

ORIGIN mid 17th century: from Latin *convuls-* 'pulled violently, wrenched', from the verb *convellere*, from *con-* 'together' + *vellere* 'to pull'.

74. **en·dem·ic** | en'demik | adjective

1 (of a disease) regularly occurring within an area or community. Compare with [epidemic](#), [pandemic](#): *areas where malaria is endemic.*

• *[attributive]* denoting an area in which a particular disease is regularly found: *the persistence of infection on pastures in endemic areas.*

• (of something bad) regularly found among particular people or in a certain area: *complacency is endemic in industry today* | *the endemic problems of the economy.*

2 (of a plant or animal) native and restricted to a certain place: *a marsupial endemic to northeastern Australia.*

noun

an endemic plant or animal: *there are three types of island endemics.*

DERIVATIVES **endemically** | en'demək(ə)lē | adverb **endemicity** | ,endə'misədē | noun USAGE On the difference between **endemic**, **epidemic**, and **pandemic**, see [usage at epidemic](#).

ORIGIN mid 17th century (as a noun): from French *endémique* or modern Latin *endemicus*, from Greek *endēmios* 'native' (based on *dēmos* 'people').

75. **pan·zer** | 'panzər | noun

• a German armored vehicle, especially a tank used in World War II: *[as modifier]* : *panzer divisions.*

ORIGIN from German *Panzer*, literally 'coat of mail'.

76. mal·ice| 'maləs |

noun

- the intention or desire to do evil; ill will: *I bear no malice toward anybody.*
- Law wrongful intention, especially as increasing the guilt of certain offenses.

ORIGIN Middle English: via Old French from Latin *malitia*, from *malus* 'bad'.

77. an·ni·hi·late| ə'nīə,lāt |

verb [with object]

destroy utterly; obliterate: *a simple bomb of this type could annihilate them all | a crusade to annihilate evil.*

- defeat utterly: *the stronger force annihilated its opponent virtually without loss.*
- Physics convert (a subatomic particle) into radiant energy.

DERIVATIVES **annihilator** | ə'nīə,lādər | noun

ORIGIN late Middle English (originally as an adjective meaning 'destroyed, annulled'): from late Latin *annihilatus* 'reduced to nothing', from the verb *annihilare*, from *ad-* 'to' + *nihil* 'nothing'. The sense 'destroy utterly' dates from the mid 16th century.

78. fi·du·ci·ar·y| fə'dōōSHē,erē, fə'dōōsē,erē |

adjective

Law involving trust, especially with regard to the relationship between a trustee and a beneficiary: *the company has a fiduciary duty to shareholders.*

- archaic held or given in trust: *fiduciary estates.*
- Finance (of a paper currency) depending for its value on securities (as opposed to gold) or the reputation of the issuer.

noun (plural **fiduciaries**)

a trustee.

ORIGIN late 16th century (in the sense 'something inspiring trust; credentials'): from Latin *fiduciarius*, from *fiducia* 'trust', from *fidere* 'to trust'.

79. in·cin·er·ate| in'sinə,rāt |

verb [with object]

- destroy (something, especially waste material) by burning: *such garbage must be incinerated at the hospital.*

ORIGIN

late 15th century: from medieval Latin *incinerat-* 'burnt to ashes', from the verb *incinerare*, from *in-* 'into, towards' + *cinis, ciner-* 'ashes'.

80. ac·COST| ə'kōst, ə'käst | verb [with object]

approach and address (someone) boldly or aggressively: *reporters accosted him in the street | he was accosted by a thief, demanding his money or his life.*

ORIGIN late 16th century (originally in the sense 'lie or go alongside'): from French *accoster*, from Italian *accostare*, from Latin *ad-* 'to' + *costa* 'rib, side'.

81. **con·gen·ial** | kən'jɛnyəl | adjective (of a person)

- pleasant because of a personality, qualities, or interests that are similar to one's own: *his need for some congenial company.*
- (of a thing) pleasant or agreeable because suited to one's taste or inclination: *he went back to a climate more **congenial to** his cold stony soul.*

DERIVATIVES **congeniality** | kən,jɛnē'alədē | noun **congenially** adverb

82. **ap·o·plec·tic** | ,apə'plektik | adjective *informal*

- overcome with anger; extremely indignant: *Mark was **apoplectic with** rage at the decision.*
- *dated* relating to or denoting apoplexy (stroke): *an apoplectic attack.*

DERIVATIVES **apoplectically** | -ik(ə)lē | adverb

ORIGIN early 17th century: from French **apoplectique** or late Latin **apoplecticus**, from Greek **apoplēktikos**, from **apoplēssein** 'disable by a stroke'.

83. **dop·pel·gang·er** | 'däpəl,gaNGər | noun

- an apparition or double of a living person: *he has been replaced by an evil doppelganger.*

ORIGIN mid 19th century: German **doppelgänger**, literally 'double-goer'.

84. **im·pen·e·tra·ble** | im'penətrəb(ə)l | adjective

1 impossible to pass through or enter: *a dark, impenetrable forest.* • *Physics* (of matter) incapable of occupying the same space as other matter at the same time.

2 impossible to understand: *her expression was impenetrable | impenetrable jargon.*

DERIVATIVES **impenetrability** | im,penətrə'bilədē | noun **impenetrably** | im'penətrəblē | adverb **impenetrableness** noun

ORIGIN late Middle English: via French from Latin **impenetrabilis**, from **in-** 'not' + **penetrabilis** 'able to be pierced', from the verb **penetrare** (see [penetrate](#)).
