The

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dic·tion·ar·y

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di·chro·mate (dī-krō′māt′, dī′krō-) *n.* A compound containing the divalent negative ion, Cr_2O_7, usually having a characteristic orange-red color. Also called *bichromate.*

di·chro·mat·ic (dī′krō-māt′ĭk) *adj.* **1.** Possessing or exhibiting two colors. **2.** *Zoology.* Having two distinct color phases not associated with season, sex, or age, as do certain species of birds. **3.** *Pathology.* Of or relating to dichromatism.

di·chro·ma·tism (dī-krō′mə-tĭz′əm) also **di·chro·mism** (-mĭz′əm) *n.* **1.** The quality or condition of being dichromatic. **2.** *Pathology.* A form of colorblindness in which only two of the three fundamental colors can be distinguished due to a lack of one of the cone pigments.

di·chro·mic (dī-krō′mĭk) *adj.* **1.** *Pathology.* Dichromatic. **2.** *Chemistry.* Containing two chromium atoms per molecule.

dichromic acid *n.* An acid, $H_2Cr_2O_7$, known only in solution.

di·chro·mism (dī-krō′mĭz′əm) *n.* Variant of **dichromatism.**

dick[1] (dĭk) *n. Slang.* A detective. [Shortening and alteration of DETECTIVE.]

dick[2] (dĭk) *n.* **1.** *Chiefly British.* A fellow; a guy. **2.** *Vulgar Slang.* A penis. [From *Dick,* nickname for *Richard.*]

Dick (dĭk), **George Frederick.** 1881–1967. American medical researcher who teamed with his wife, **Gladys Henry Dick** (1881–1963), to isolate the germ that causes scarlet fever. They developed a serum for the disease (1923) and the Dick test for susceptibility (1924).

Charles Dickens

dick·cis·sel (dĭk-sĭs′əl, dĭk′sĭs′-) *n.* A sparrowlike bird *(Spiza americana)* native to southern Ontario and the central United States, of which the male has a yellow breast marked with a small black bib on the throat. [Imitative of its song.]

dick·ens (dĭk′ənz) *n. Informal.* **1.** A severe reprimand or expression of anger: *gave me the dickens for being late.* **2.** Used as an intensive: *What in the dickens is that?* [Perhaps from the name *Dickens,* from diminutive of *Dick.* See DICK[2].]

Dick·ens (dĭk′ĭnz), **Charles John Huffam.** Pen name Boz. 1812–1870. British writer known for his tales of Victorian life and times. Immensely popular both then and now, his works include *The Pickwick Papers* (1836–1837), *Oliver Twist* (1837–1838), and *David Copperfield* (1849–1850). **—Dick·en′si·an** (dĭ-kĕn′zē-ən) *adj.*

dick·er (dĭk′ər) *intr.v.* **-ered, -er·ing, -ers.** To bargain; barter. **—dicker** *n.* The act or process of bargaining. [Probably from *dicker,* a quantity of ten, ten hides, from Middle English *diker,* perhaps from Old English **dicor,* from Latin *decuria,* set of ten, from *decem,* ten. See **dekm** in Appendix.]

WORD HISTORY: Perhaps a desire to see history repeat itself has been at work in the case of an etymology suggested for the verb *dicker,* first recorded in 1802 with reference to horse trading and the haggling that accompanies it. In a work published in 1848 James Fenimore Cooper used the word with reference to frontier trade. This use would support a connection with the noun *dicker,* which denotes a quantity of ten and was a common unit used in trading hides or furs. If the verb *dicker* originated in the fur trade, a parallel would exist with the noun *dicker.* The noun may have come into the Germanic languages and hence to English by way of trade or tribute in furs between the Germanic peoples and the Roman Empire, with the Germanic word coming from the Latin word *decuria,* "a group of ten men," which in Late Latin was used as a measure of skins. The difficulty with this parallel is that no existing evidence proves conclusively the derivation of the verb *dicker* from the noun *dicker.*

Emily Dickinson
Only known extant photograph, taken at age 16

dick·ey also **dick·ie** or **dick·y** (dĭk′ē) *n., pl.* **-eys** also **-ies. 1.a.** A woman's blouse front worn under a suit jacket or low-necked garment. **b.** A man's detachable shirt front. **c.** A collar for a shirt. **d.** A child's bib or pinafore. **2.** A donkey. **3.** A small bird. **4.a.** The driver's seat on a carriage. **b.** A rear seat for servants on a carriage. [From diminutive of *Dick,* nickname for *Richard.*]

Dick·ey (dĭk′ē), **James Lafayette.** Born 1923. American writer, especially of poetry, although he is perhaps best known for his novel *Deliverance* (1970).

Dick·in·son, Emily Elizabeth (dĭk′ĭn-sən). 1830–1886. American poet who was virtually a recluse at her home in Amherst, Massachusetts, where she wrote more than a thousand verses infused with emotional depth and subtlety. The first volume of her poetry was not published until 1890.

Dickinson, John. 1732–1808. American Revolutionary politician and pamphleteer who became the leading conservative voice of opposition to Great Britain through his *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania* (1767–1768).

Dick test *n.* A skin test used to determine immunity or susceptibility to scarlet fever. [After George Frederick DICK and Gladys Henry DICK.]

dick·y[1] (dĭk′ē) *n.* Variant of **dickey.**

dick·y[2] (dĭk′ē) *adj. Informal.* Impaired; faulty; weak: *"'I've got this dicky heart,' he'd say to the fool"* (John le Carré). [Origin unknown.]

di·cli·nous (dī-klī′nəs) *adj. Botany.* Having stamens and pistils in separate flowers: *a diclinous plant.* [DI–[1] + Greek *klinē,* bed, couch; see **klei-** in Appendix + –OUS.] **—di′cli′ny** (dī′-klī′nē) *n.*

di·co·fol (dī-kō′fôl, -fōl, -fŏl) *n.* A pesticide, $C_{14}H_9Cl_5O$, containing a small percentage of DDT and used primarily to control mites on crops. [Origin unknown.]

di·cot·y·le·don (dī′kŏt′l-ēd′n) also **di·cot** (dī′kŏt′) *n.* A flowering plant with two cotyledons that usually appear at germination. **—di′cot′y·le′don·ous** (-lēd′n-əs) *adj.*

di·cro·tism (dī′krə-tĭz′əm) *n.* A condition in which the pulse is felt as two beats per single heartbeat. [From Greek *dikrotos,* double-beating : *di-,* two; see DI–[1] + *krotos,* rattling noise.] **—di·crot′ic** (-krŏt′ĭk) *adj.*

dict. *abbr.* **1.** Dictation. **2.** Dictionary.

dic·ta (dĭk′tə) *n.* A plural of **dictum.**

Dic·ta·phone (dĭk′tə-fōn′). A trademark used for an apparatus that records and reproduces dictation for transcription. This trademark sometimes occurs in print in lowercase: *"the master himself, alone and hunched over his dictaphone far into the night"* (New Republic). *"There's a dictaphone in the lab, so we're talking as we work"* (Chicago Tribune).

dic·tate (dĭk′tāt′, dĭk-tāt′) *v.* **-tat·ed, -tat·ing, -tates.** —*tr.* **1.** To say or read aloud to be recorded or written by another: *dictate a letter.* **2.a.** To prescribe with authority; impose: *dictated the rules of the game.* **b.** To control or command: *"Foreign leaders were . . . dictated by their own circumstances, bound by the universal imperatives of politics"* (Doris Kearns Goodwin). —*intr.* **1.** To say or read aloud material to be recorded or written by another: *dictated for an hour before leaving for the day.* **2.** To issue orders or commands. **—dictate** (dĭk′tāt′) *n.* **1.** A directive; a command. **2.** A guiding principle: *followed the dictates of my conscience.* [Latin *dictāre, dictāt-,* frequentative of *dīcere,* to say. See **deik-** in Appendix.]

SYNONYMS: *dictate, decree, impose, ordain, prescribe.* The central meaning shared by these verbs is "to set forth expressly and authoritatively": *victors dictating the terms of surrender; confiscation of alien property decreed by the legislature; impose obedience; a separation seemingly ordained by fate; taxes prescribed by law.*

dic·ta·tion (dĭk-tā′shən) *n. Abbr.* **dict. 1.a.** The act or process of dictating material to another for transcription. **b.** The material so dictated. **2.** An authoritative command or order.

dic·ta·tor (dĭk′tā′tər, dĭk-tā′-) *n.* **1.a.** An absolute ruler. **b.** A tyrant; a despot. **2.** An ancient Roman magistrate appointed temporarily to deal with an immediate crisis or emergency. **3.** One who dictates: *These initials are those of the dictator of the letter.*

dic·ta·to·ri·al (dĭk′tə-tôr′ē-əl, -tōr′-) *adj.* **1.** Tending to dictate; domineering. **2.** Of, relating to, or characteristic of a dictator or dictatorship; autocratic. **—dic′ta·to′ri·al·ly** *adv.* **—dic′ta·to′ri·al·ness** *n.*

SYNONYMS: *dictatorial, authoritarian, dogmatic, doctrinaire, imperious, overbearing.* These adjectives mean asserting or tending to assert one's authority or to impose one's will on other persons. *Dictatorial* stresses the inclination to exercise authority in the highhanded, peremptory manner characteristic of a dictator: *The hostess indicated where the guests were to sit in her usual dictatorial manner. Authoritarian* implies the expectation of unquestioning obedience: *the timid, compliant child of authoritarian parents. Dogmatic* suggests the imposing of one's will or opinion as though these were beyond challenge: *"When people are least sure, they are often most dogmatic"* (John Kenneth Galbraith). *Doctrinaire* implies the imposition of one's theories, beliefs, or doctrines: *"They didn't know the facts . . . and I don't think it would've mattered in the slightest if they had. Very doctrinaire"* (George V. Higgins). *Imperious* suggests the arrogant manner of one accustomed to commanding: *She dismissed my opinion with an imperious wave of her hand. Overbearing* implies a tendency to be oppressively or rudely domineering: *His behavior toward the waiter was insufferably overbearing.*

dic·ta·tor·ship (dĭk-tā′tər-shĭp′, dĭk′tā′-) *n.* **1.** The office or tenure of a dictator. **2.** A state or government under dictatorial rule. **3.** Absolute or despotic control or power.

dic·tion (dĭk′shən) *n.* **1.** Choice and use of words in speech or writing. **2.** Degree of clarity and distinctness of pronunciation in speech or singing; enunciation. [Middle English *diccion,* a saying, word, from Old French, from Latin *dictiō, dictiōn-,* rhetorical delivery, from *dictus,* past participle of *dīcere,* to say, speak. See **deik-** in Appendix.] **—dic′tion·al** *adj.* **—dic′tion·al·ly** *adv.*

SYNONYMS: *diction, wording, vocabulary, phraseology, phrasing.* These nouns denote choice of words and the way in which they are used. *Diction* is the selection and arrangement of words in relation to effective expression: *very poor diction in the essay; a new poetic diction. Wording* stresses style or manner of expression: *writing in which the wording takes on a regional flavor. Vocabulary* is the aggregate of words a person understands or uses: *the general vocabulary of an educated native speaker of English. Phraseology* and *phrasing* include vocabulary, characteristic style, and the way in which words are grouped: *the abstruse phraseology of physics; a composition marked by elegant phrasing.*

dic·tion·ar·y (dĭk′shə-nĕr′ē) *n., pl.* **-ies.** *Abbr.* **dict. 1.** A reference book containing an alphabetical list of words, with information given for each word, usually including meaning, pro-

nunciation, and etymology. **2.** A book listing the words of a language with translations into another language. **3.** A book listing words or other linguistic items in a particular category or subject with specialized information about them: *a medical dictionary.* **4.** *Computer Science.* **a.** A list of words stored in machine-readable form for reference as by spelling-checking software. **b.** An electronic spelling checker. [Medieval Latin *dictiōnārium,* from Latin *dictiō, dictiōn-,* diction. See DICTION.]

dic·tum (dĭk′təm) *n., pl.* **-ta** (-tə) or **-tums.** **1.** An authoritative, often formal, pronouncement: *"He cites Augustine's dictum that 'If you understand it, it is not God' "* (Joseph Sobran). **2.** *Law.* See **obiter dictum** (sense 1). [Latin, from neuter past participle of *dīcere,* to say. See **deik-** in Appendix.]

dic·ty·o·some (dĭk′tē-ə-sōm′) *n. Botany.* The Golgi apparatus in plant cells. [Greek *diktuon,* net (from *dikein,* to throw; see **deik-** in Appendix) + -SOME[3].]

did (dĭd) *v.* Past tense of **do[1].**

di·dact (dī′dăkt′) *n.* A didactic person. [Back-formation from DIDACTIC.]

di·dac·tic (dī-dăk′tĭk) also **di·dac·ti·cal** (-tĭ-kəl) *adj.* **1.** Intended to instruct. **2.** Morally instructive. **3.** Inclined to teach or moralize excessively. [Greek *didaktikos,* skillful in teaching, from *didaktos,* taught, from *didaskein, didak-,* to teach, educate.] **—di·dac′ti·cal·ly** *adv.* **—di·dac′ti·cism** (-tĭ-sĭz′əm) *n.*

di·dac·tics (dī-dăk′tĭks) *n. (used with a sing. or pl. verb).* Instruction; teaching; pedagogy.

di·dap·per (dĭ′dăp′ər) *n.* A small grebe, such as the dabchick. [Middle English *didopper,* alteration of *divedap* : from Old English *dūfedoppa,* pelican : *dūfan,* to dive; see DIVE[1] + *-doppa,* a kind of bird.]

did·dle[1] (dĭd′l) *v.* **-dled, -dling, -dles.** **—diddle** *tr.v.* **1.** *Slang.* To cheat; swindle: *"The Swiss have special laws for people who diddle hotels"* (John le Carré). **2.** *Computer Science.* To fabricate, change, or otherwise manipulate (data) illegally. [Perhaps akin to Old English *dydrian,* to deceive, or from variant of dialectal *doodle,* fool, simpleton; akin to Low German *dudeldopp.*] **—did′dler** *n.*

did·dle[2] (dĭd′l) *v.* **-dled, -dling, -dles.** *—tr.* **1.** To jerk up and down or back and forth. **2.** *Vulgar Slang.* **a.** To have intercourse with (a woman). **b.** To practice masturbation upon. *—intr.* **1.** To shake rapidly; jiggle. **2.** *Slang.* To play with: *The children diddled with the knobs on the television all afternoon.* **3.** *Slang.* To waste time: *diddled around all morning.* [Probably alteration of dialectal *didder,* to quiver, tremble, from Middle English *dideren,* variant of *daderen, doderen,* perhaps from Low German.]

did·dly (dĭd′lē) *n. Slang.* A small or worthless amount: *His advice wasn't worth diddly to me.* [Short for *diddlyshit.* See DIDDLYSQUAT.]

did·dly·squat (dĭd′lē-skwŏt′) *n. Slang.* Diddly. [Alteration of *diddlyshit* : *diddly* (alteration of DOODLE) + SHIT.]

Di·de·rot (dē′də-rō′, dē-drō′), **Denis.** 1713–1784. French philosopher and writer whose supreme accomplishment was his work on the *Encyclopédie* (1751–1772), which epitomized the spirit of Enlightenment thought.

did·n't (dĭd′nt). Did not.

di·do (dī′dō) *n., pl.* **-dos** or **-does.** A mischievous prank or antic; a caper. [Origin unknown.]

Di·do (dī′dō) *n. Roman Mythology.* The founder and queen of Carthage, who fell in love with Aeneas and killed herself when he abandoned her.

Did·rik·son (dĭd′rik-sən), **Mildred Ella.** In full Mildred Ella Didrikson Zaharias. Known as "Babe." 1914–1956. American athlete who excelled in basketball, baseball, and track, winning two gold medals at the 1932 Summer Olympics. She later took up golf and won the U.S. (1946) and British (1947) amateur titles and the U.S. Open (1948, 1950, and 1954).

didst (dĭdst) *v. Archaic.* Second person singular past tense of **do[1].**

di·dym·i·um (dĭ-dĭm′ē-əm) *n.* **1.** *Symbol* **Di** A metallic mixture, once considered an element, composed of neodymium and praseodymium. **2.** A mixture of rare-earth elements and oxides used chiefly in manufacturing and coloring various forms of glass. [From Greek *didumos,* twin, double. See **dwo-** in Appendix.]

did·y·mous (dĭd′ə-məs) *adj.* Arranged or occurring in pairs; twin. [From Greek *didumos,* twin. See **dwo-** in Appendix.]

di·dyn·a·mous (dī-dĭn′ə-məs) *adj. Botany.* Having four stamens in two pairs of unequal length. [From New Latin *Didynamia,* former class name : DI-[1] + Greek *dunamis,* power; see DYNAMIC.]

die[1] (dī) *intr.v.* **died, dy·ing** (dī′ĭng), **dies.** **1.** To cease living; become dead; expire. **2.** To cease existing, especially by degrees; fade: *The sunlight died in the west.* **3.** To experience an agony or suffering suggestive of that of death: *nearly died of embarrassment.* **4.** *Informal.* To desire something greatly: *I am dying for a box of chocolates. She was dying to see the exhibit.* **5. a.** To cease operation; stop: *If your vehicle dies, stay with it.* **b.** To be destroyed, as in combat: *could see the remains of two aircraft that had died in the attack.* **—*phrasal verbs.*** **die back.** *Botany.* To be affected by dieback. **die down.** To lose strength; subside: *The winds died down.* **die off.** To undergo a sudden, sharp decline in population: *Rabbits were dying off in that county.* **die out.** To cease living completely; become extinct: *tribes and tribal customs that died out centuries ago.* **—*idiom.*** **die hard.** **1.** To take a long time in passing out of existence: *racial prejudices that die hard.* **2.** To resist against overwhelming, hopeless odds: *radicalism that dies hard.* [Middle English *dien,* probably from Old Norse *deyja.* See **dheu-[2]** in Appendix.]

die[2] (dī) *n., pl.* **dies** or **dice** (dīs). **1.** *pl.* **dies.** A device used for cutting out, forming, or stamping material, especially: **a.** An engraved metal piece used for impressing a design onto a softer metal, as in coining money. **b.** One of several component pieces that are fitted into a diestock to cut threads on screws or bolts. **c.** A part on a machine that punches shaped holes in, cuts, or forms sheet metal, cardboard, or other stock. **d.** A metal block containing small conical holes through which plastic, metal, or other ductile material is extruded or drawn. **2.** *pl.* **dies.** *Architecture.* The dado of a pedestal, especially when cube-shaped. **3.** *pl.* **dice.** *Games.* **a.** A small cube marked on each side with from one to six dots, usually used in pairs in gambling and in various other games. **b. dice.** *(used with a sing. verb).* A game of chance using dice. **—die** *tr.v.* **died, die·ing, dies.** To cut, form, or stamp with or as if with a die. **—*idioms.*** **load the dice.** **1.** To make an outcome highly probable; predetermine a result: *"These factors merely load the dice, upping the odds that a household will fall into a certain . . . income distribution"* (Thomas G. Exter). **2.** To put another at a distinct disadvantage, as through prior maneuver: *The dice were loaded against the defendant before the trial.* **no dice.** **1.** Of no use; futile. **2.** Used as a refusal to a request. **the die is cast.** The decision has been made and is irrevocable. [Middle English *de,* gaming die, from Old French, from Latin *datum,* from neuter past participle of *dare,* to give. See **dō-** in Appendix.]

die·back (dī′băk′) *n. Botany.* The gradual dying of plant shoots, starting at the tips, as a result of various diseases or climatic conditions.

di·e·cious (dī-ē′shəs) *adj. Botany.* Variant of **dioecious.**

Die·fen·ba·ker (dē′fən-bā′kər), **John George.** 1895–1979. Canadian politician who served as prime minister (1957–1963).

dief·fen·bach·i·a (dē′fən-bä′kē-ə, -băk′ē-ə) *n.* Any of several plants of the genus *Dieffenbachia* native to tropical America, having stout, jointed stems and large, variegated leaves and widely cultivated as an indoor plant. Also called *dumb cane, dumb plant.* [New Latin, genus name, after Ernst *Dieffenbach* (1811–1855), German naturalist.]

die-hard also **die·hard** (dī′härd′) *—adj.* Stubbornly resisting change or clinging to a seemingly hopeless or outdated cause. *—n.* One who stubbornly resists change or tenaciously adheres to a seemingly hopeless or outdated cause: *rebel die-hards who refused to surrender.* **—die′-hard′ism** *n.*

diel·drin (dēl′drĭn) *n.* A chlorinated hydrocarbon, $C_{12}H_8Cl_6O$, used as an insecticide and in mothproofing. [From *Diel(s-A)ld(e)r (reaction),* after Otto Paul Hermann DIELS and Kurt ALDER.]

di·e·lec·tric (dī′ĭ-lĕk′trĭk) *n.* A nonconductor of electricity, especially a substance with electrical conductivity less than a millionth (10^{-6}) of a siemens. [DI(A)- + ELECTRIC.] **—di′e·lec′tric** *adj.* **—di′e·lec′tri·cal·ly** *adv.*

dielectric constant *n. Physics.* See **permittivity.**

dielectric heating *n.* The heating of electrically nonconducting materials by a rapidly varying electromagnetic field.

Diels (dēlz, dēls), **Otto Paul Hermann.** 1876–1954. German chemist. He shared a 1950 Nobel Prize for discoveries concerning the structure of organic matter.

Di·em (dē-ĕm′, dyĕm), **Ngo Dinh.** 1901–1963. Vietnamese political leader who became president of South Vietnam in 1954. He was assassinated in a military coup d'état.

Dien Bien Phu (dyĕn′ byĕn′ fōō′). A town of northwest Vietnam near the Laos border. The French military base here fell to Vietminh troops on May 7, 1954, after a 56-day siege, leading to the end of France's involvement in Indochina.

di·en·ceph·a·lon (dī′ĕn-sĕf′ə-lŏn′, -lən) *n.* The posterior part of the forebrain that connects the mesencephalon with the cerebral hemispheres, encloses the third ventricle, and contains the thalamus and hypothalamus. Also called *betweenbrain, interbrain, thalamencephalon.* [DI(A)- + ENCEPHALON.] **—di·en·ce·phal′ic** (-sə-făl′ĭk) *adj.*

die-off (dī′ôf′, -ŏf′) *n.* The elimination of a species, population, or community of plants or animals as a result of natural causes.

Di·eppe (dē-ĕp′, dyĕp). A city of northeast France on the English Channel north of Rouen. It is a port for channel steamers and a beach resort. Allied forces led a disastrous commando attack on the city (August 19, 1942) to test the strength of German defenses. Population, 35,957.

di·er·e·sis or **di·aer·e·sis** (dī-ĕr′ĭ-sĭs) *n., pl.* **-ses** (-sēz′). **1.** *Linguistics.* **a.** A mark (¨) placed over the second of two adjacent vowels to indicate that they are to be pronounced as separate sounds rather than a diphthong, as in *naïve.* **b.** A mark (¨) placed over a vowel, such as the final vowel in *Brontë,* to indicate that the vowel is not silent. **2.** *Poetry.* A break or pause in a line of verse that occurs when the end of a word and the end of a metric foot coincide. [Late Latin *diaeresis,* from Greek *diairesis,* from *diairein,* to divide : *dia-,* apart; see DIA- + *hairein,* to take.]

die·sel (dē′zəl, -səl) *n.* **1.** A diesel engine. **2.** A vehicle powered by a diesel engine.

Die·sel (dē′zəl), **Rudolf.** 1858–1913. German engineer who devised and patented (1892) an internal-combustion engine.

Babe Didrikson

ă pat	oi boy
ā pay	ou out
âr care	o͝o took
ä father	o͞o boot
ĕ pet	ŭ cut
ē be	ûr urge
ĭ pit	th thin
ī pie	*th* this
îr pier	hw which
ŏ pot	zh vision
ō toe	ə about, item
ô paw	◆ regionalism

Stress marks: ′ (primary); ″ (secondary), as in **dictionary** (dĭk′shə-nĕr′ē)