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ing. 2 criticize severely. 3 peel off (skin, bark, peel, etc.).

F layer /éf layər/ *n.* the highest and most strongly ionized region of the ionosphere.

flea /fleə/ *n.* a small wingless jumping insect of the order Siphonaptera, feeding on blood. □ a **flea in one's ear** a sharp reproof.

flea-bag /fleəbæg/ *n. sl.* a shabby or unattractive place or thing.

flea-bit-ten *adj.* 1 bitten by or infested with fleas. 2 shabby.

flea col-lar *n.* an insecticidal collar for dogs and cats.

flea mar-ket *n.* a market selling secondhand goods, etc.

fleck /fleɪk/ *n. & v. • n.* 1 a small patch of color or light (eyes with green flecks). 2 a small particle or speck. 3 a spot on the skin; a freckle. • *v. tr.* mark with flecks.

fled *past and past part.* of FLEE.

fledge /fleɪdʒ/ *v.* 1 *intr.* (of a bird) grow feathers. 2 *tr.* provide (an arrow) with feathers. 3 *tr.* bring up (a young bird) until it can fly. 4 *tr.* (as **fledged adj.**) a able to fly. b independent; mature. 5 *tr.* deck or provide with feathers or down.

fledg-ling /flējɪŋ/ *n.* 1 a young bird. 2 an inexperienced person.

flee /fleə/ *v. (past and past part. fled /fled/)* 1 *intr.* (often foll. by *from, before*) a run away. b seek safety by fleeing. 2 *tr.* run away from; leave abruptly; shun (*fled the room; fled his attentions*). 3 *intr.* vanish.

fleece /flees/ *n. & v. • n.* 1 a the woolly covering of a sheep or a similar animal. b the amount of wool sheared from a sheep at one time. 2 something resembling a fleece, esp.: a a woolly or rough head of hair. b a soft warm fabric with a pile, used for lining coats, etc. c a white cloud, a blanket of snow, etc. • *v. tr.* 1 (often foll. by *of*) strip (a person) of money, valuables, etc.; swindle. 2 remove the fleece from (a sheep, etc.); shear. 3 cover as if with a fleece (*a sky fleeced with clouds*). □ **fleeced adj.** (also in *comb.*).

fleec-y /flēeseɪ/ *adj.* (**fleecier, fleeciest**) 1 of or like a fleece. 2 covered with a fleece. □ **fleec-i-ness** *n.*

fleet¹ /fleɪt/ *n.* 1 a a number of warships under one commander. b (prec. by *the*) all the warships and merchant ships of a nation. 2 a number of ships, aircraft, buses, trucks, taxis, etc., operating together or owned by one proprietor.

fleet² /fleɪt/ *adj.* swift; nimble. □ **fleet-ly** *adv.* **fleet-ness** *n.*

Fleet Ad-mi-ral *n.* an admiral of the highest rank in the US Navy.

fleet-ing /flēɪtɪŋ/ *adj.* transitory; brief. □ **fleet-ing-ly** *adv.*

Flem-ing /flēmɪŋ/ *n.* 1 a native of medieval Flanders in the Low Countries. 2 a member of a Flemish-speaking people inhabiting N. and W. Belgium (see also **WALLOON**).

Flem-ish /flēmɪʃ/ *adj. & n. • adj.* of or relating to Flanders. • *n.* the language of the Flemings.

flesh /flesh/ *n. & v. • n.* 1 a the soft substance consisting of muscle and fat found between the skin and bones of an animal or a human. b plumpness; fat (*has put on flesh*). c *archaic* meat, esp. excluding poultry, game, and offal. 2 the body as opposed to the mind or the soul, esp. considered as sinful. 3 the pulpy substance of a fruit or a plant. 4 a the visible surface of the human body. b (also **flesh col-or**) a yellowish pink color. 5 animal or human life. • *v. tr.* embody in flesh. □ **flesh out** make or become substantial. in **the flesh** in bodily form; in person. **the way of all flesh** experience common to all humankind. □ **flesh-less** *adj.*

flesh and blood *n. & adj. • n.* 1 the body or its substance. 2 humankind. 3 human nature, esp. as being

fallible. • *adj.* actually living, not imaginary or supernatural. □ **one's own flesh and blood** near relatives; descendants.

flesh-ly /flēʃlee/ *adj.* (**fleshier, fleshiest**) 1 (of desire, etc.) bodily; sensual. 2 mortal; not divine. 3 worldly.

flesh-pots /flēʃpɒts/ *n. pl.* places providing luxurious or hedonistic living.

flesh-y /flēʃee/ *adj.* (**fleshier, fleshiest**) 1 plump; fat. 2 of flesh; without bone. 3 (of plant or fruit tissue) pulpy. 4 like flesh. □ **flesh-i-ness** *n.*

fleur-de-lis /flōrdəleɪs/ *n.* (also **fleur-de-lys**) (*pl.* **fleurs-pronunc. same**) 1 the iris flower. 2 *Heraldry* a a lily composed of three petals bound together near their bases. b the former royal arms of France.

flew *past* of FLY¹.

flex /fleɪks/ *v.* 1 *tr. & intr.* bend (a joint, limb, etc.) or be bent. 2 *tr. & intr.* move (a muscle) or (of a muscle) be moved to bend a joint.

flex-i-ble /flēksɪbəl/ *adj.* 1 able to bend without breaking; pliable. 2 manageable. 3 adaptable; variable (*works flexible hours*). □ **flex-i-bil-i-ty** *n.* **flex-i-bly** *adv.*

flex-ile /flēksəl, -sɪl/ *adj. archaic* 1 supple; mobile. 2 tractable; manageable. 3 versatile. □ **flex-i-l-i-ty** /-sɪlɪtee/ *n.*

flex-i-time /flēksɪtɪm/ *n.* var. of FLEXITIME.

flex-or /flēksər/ *n.* (in full **flexor muscle**) a muscle that bends part of the body (cf. **EXTENSOR**).

flex-time /flēkstɪm/ *n.* 1 a system of working a set number of hours with the starting and finishing times chosen within agreed limits by the employee. 2 the hours worked in this way.

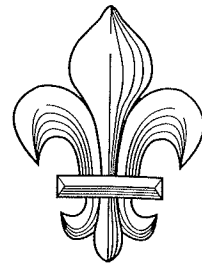
flick /flɪk/ *n. & v. • n.* 1 a a light, sharp blow with a whip, etc. b the sudden release of a bent finger or thumb, esp. to propel a small object. 2 a sudden movement or jerk. 3 a quick turn of the wrist in playing games, esp. in throwing or striking a ball. 4 a slight, sharp sound. 5 *colloq.* a a movie. b (in *pl.*; prec. by *the*) the movies. • *v.* 1 *tr.* (often foll. by *away, off*) strike or move with a flick (*flicked the ash off his cigar*). 2 *tr.* give a flick with (a whip, towel, etc.). 3 *intr.* make a flicking movement or sound.

flick-er¹ /flɪkər/ *v. & n. • v. intr.* 1 (of light) shine unsteadily. 2 (of a flame) burn unsteadily, alternately flaring and dying down. 3 a (of a flag, a reptile's tongue, an eyelid, etc.) move or wave back and forth; quiver; vibrate. b (of the wind) blow lightly and unsteadily. 4 (of hope, etc.) increase and decrease unsteadily. • *n.* a flickering movement, light, thought, etc.

flick-er² /flɪkər/ *n.* any woodpecker of the genus *Colaptes*, a ground-feeder native to N. America.

flier /flɪər/ *n.* (also **fly-er**) *colloq.* 1 an airman or airwoman. 2 a thing that flies in a specified way (*a poor flier*). 3 a fast-moving animal or vehicle. 4 an ambitious or outstanding person. 5 (usu. **fly-er**) a small handbill. 6 a speculative investment. 7 a flying jump.

flight¹ /flaɪt/ *n.* 1 a the act or manner of flying through the air (*studied swallows' flight*). b the movement or passage of a projectile, etc., through the air (*the flight of an arrow*). 2 a a journey made through the air or in space. b a timetable journey made by an airline. c a military air unit of two or more aircraft. 3 a a flock of birds, insects, etc. b a migration. 4 (usu. foll. by *of*) a series, esp. of stairs between floors, or of hurdles across a race track. 5 a mental or verbal excursion or sally (of wit, etc.) (*a flight of fancy*). 6 the trajectory and pace of a ball in games. 7 the distance that a bird, aircraft, or missile can fly. 8 (usu. foll. by *of*) a volley (*a flight*



fleur-de-lis

to the flames). **4 tr.** esp. *Law* urge or represent esp. *def-*
entially (*that, I submit, is a misrepresentation*). □ **sub-**
mitter *n.*
sub-mul-ti-ple /sʊbmʊltɪpl̩/ *n.* & *adj.* ● *n.* a number
 that can be divided exactly into a specified
 number. ● *adj.* being such a number.
sub-nor-mal /sʊbnɔːrml̩/ *adj.* **1** (esp. as regards intel-
 ligence) below normal. **2** less than normal. □ **sub-nor-**
mal-i-ty /-máilíteel/ *n.*
sub-nu-cle-ar /sʊbnʊkleeər, -nyʊ- / *adj.* *Physics* oc-
 curring in or smaller than an atomic nucleus.
sub-or-bit-al /sʊbɔːrbɪt̩l̩/ *adj.* **1** situated below the or-
 bit of the eye. **2** (of a spaceship, etc.) not complet-
 ing a full orbit of the earth.
sub-or-der /sʊbɔːrdər/ *n.* a taxonomic category below
 an order.
sub-or-di-nate *adj., n., & v.* ● *adj.* /səbɔːrdɪˈneɪt/ (usu.
 foll. by *to*) of inferior importance or rank; secondary;
 subservient. ● *n.* /səbɔːrdɪˈneɪt/ a person working un-
 der another. ● *v. tr.* /səbɔːrdɪˈneɪt/ (usu. foll. by *to*)
1 make subordinate; treat or regard as of minor im-
 portance. **2** make subservient. □ **sub-or-di-na-tion**
 /-náyshən/ *n.*
sub-or-di-nate clause *n.* a clause serving as an ad-
 jective, adverb, or noun in a main sentence because of
 its position or a preceding conjunction.
sub-orn /səbɔːrn/ *v. tr.* induce by bribery, etc., to com-
 mit perjury or any other unlawful act.
sub-phy-lum /sʊbfɪləm/ *n.* (*pl.* *subphyla* /-lə/) *Biol.* a
 taxonomic category below a phylum.
sub-plot /sʊbplɒt/ *n.* a subordinate plot in a play, etc.
sub-poe-na /səpeɪnə/ *n.* & *v.* ● *n.* a writ ordering a per-
 son to appear in court. ● *v. tr.* (*past* and *past part.* *sub-*
poenaed or *subpoena'd*) serve a subpoena on.
sub-ro-ga-tion /sʊbrəgəʃhən/ *n.* *Law* the substitution
 of one party for another as creditor, with the transfer
 of rights and duties. □ **sub-ro-gate** /sʊbrəgeɪt/ *v. tr.*
sub-ro-sa /sʊbrɔːzə/ *adj.* & *adv.* in secrecy or con-
 fidence.
sub-rou-tine /sʊbrʊuteɪn/ *n.* *Computing* a routine de-
 signed to perform a frequently used operation within
 a program.
sub-scribe /səbskraɪb/ *v.* **1 tr.** & *intr.* (usu. foll. by *to, for*)
 contribute (a specified sum) or make or promise a con-
 tribution to a fund, project, charity, etc., esp. regular-
 ly. **2 intr.** (usu. foll. by *to*) express one's agreement with
 an opinion, resolution, etc. (*cannot subscribe to that*).
sub-scrib-er /səbskraɪbər/ *n.* **1** a person who subscribes.
2 a person paying for the renting of a telephone line,
 television cable connection, etc.
sub-script /sʊbskrɪpt/ *adj.* & *n.* ● *adj.* written or print-
 ed below the line. ● *n.* a subscript number or symbol.
sub-scrip-tion /səbskrɪpʃhən/ *n.* **1 a** the act or an in-
 stance of subscribing. **b** money subscribed. **2 a** an
 agreement to take and pay for usu. a specified num-
 ber of issues of a newspaper, magazine, etc. **b** the mon-
 ey paid by this.
sub-sec-tion /sʊbsekʃhən/ *n.* a division of a section.
sub-se-quent /sʊbsɪkwənt/ *adj.* (usu. foll. by *to*) fol-
 lowing a specified event, etc., in time, esp. as a conse-
 quence. □ **sub-se-quent-ly** *adv.*
sub-ser-vi-ent /səbsərveɪənt/ *adj.* **1** cringing; obsequi-
 ous. **2** (usu. foll. by *to*) instrumental. **3** (usu. foll. by
to) subordinate. □ **sub-ser-vi-ence** *n.*
sub-set /sʊbset/ *n.* **1** a secondary part of a set. **2 Math.**
 a set all the elements of which are contained in another
 set.
sub-side /səbsɪd/ *v. intr.* **1** become tranquil; abate (*ex-*
citement subsided). **2** (of water, suspended matter, etc.)
 sink. **3** (of the ground) cave in; sink. **4** (of a building,
 ship, etc.) sink lower in the ground or water. **5** (of a

swelling, etc.) become less. **6** usu. *joc.* (of a person)
 sink into a sitting, kneeling, or lying posture.
sub-sid-i-ar-i-ty /səbsɪdeəriəteɪ/ *n.* (*pl.* *-ties*) **1** the
 quality of being subsidiary. **2** the principle that a cen-
 tral authority should perform only tasks which cannot
 be performed effectively at a local level.
sub-sid-i-ar-y /səbsɪdeəriə/ *adj.* & *n.* ● *adj.* **1** serving
 to assist or supplement. **2** (of a company) controlled
 by another. ● *n.* (*pl.* *-ies*) **1** a subsidiary thing or per-
 son. **2** a subsidiary company.
sub-sid-ize /sʊbsɪdaɪz/ *v. tr.* **1** pay a subsidy to. **2** reduce
 the cost of by subsidy (*subsidized lunches*). □ **sub-si-**
di-za-tion *n.*
sub-sid-y /sʊbsɪdeɪ/ *n.* (*pl.* *-dies*) **1** money granted by
 the government or a public body, etc., to keep down
 the price of commodities, etc. (*housing subsidy*).
2 money granted to a charity or other undertaking held
 to be in the public interest. **3** any grant of money.
sub-sist /səbsɪst/ *v. intr.* **1** (often foll. by *on*) keep one-
 self alive (*subsists on vegetables*). **2** remain in being; ex-
 ist. **3** (foll. by *in*) be attributable to (*its excellence sub-*
sists in its freshness). □ **sub-sist-ent** *adj.*
sub-sist-ence /səbsɪstəns/ *n.* **1** the state or an instance
 of subsisting. **2 a** the means of supporting life; a live-
 lihood. **b** a minimal level of existence or the income
 providing this (*a bare subsistence*).
sub-sist-ence farm-ing *n.* farming which directly sup-
 ports the farmer's household without producing a
 significant surplus for trade.
sub-soil /sʊbsoɪl/ *n.* soil lying immediately under the
 surface soil.
sub-son-ic /sʊbsɒnɪk/ *adj.* relating to speeds less than
 that of sound.
sub-spe-cies /sʊbspeʃheɪz, -seɪz/ *n.* (*pl.* *same*) *Biol.*
 a taxonomic category below a species, usu. a fairly per-
 manent geographically isolated variety. □ **sub-spe-cif-**
ic /-spəsɪfɪk/ *adj.*
subst. *abbr.* **1** substantive. **2** substitute.
sub-stance /sʊbstəns/ *n.* **1 a** the essential material
 forming a thing (*the substance was transparent*). **b** a par-
 ticular kind of material having uniform properties (*this*
substance is salt). **2 a** reality; solidity (*ghosts have no sub-*
stance). **b** seriousness or steadiness of character (*there*
is no substance in him). **3** addictive drugs or alcohol,
 etc. (*problems of substance abuse*). **4** the theme or sub-
 ject of a work of art, argument, etc. (*prefer the substance*
to the style). **5** the real meaning or essence of a thing.
6 wealth and possessions (*a woman of substance*).
sub-stand-ard /sʊbstændərd/ *adj.* **1** of less than the re-
 quired or normal quality or size; inferior. **2** (of lan-
 guage) not conforming to standard usage.
sub-stan-tial /səbstəntʃəl/ *adj.* **1 a** of real importance
 or validity (*made a substantial contribution*). **b** of large
 size or amount (*awarded substantial damages*). **2** of sol-
 id material or structure (*a substantial house*). **3** com-
 mercially successful. **4** true in large part (*substantial*
truth). **5** having substance. □ **sub-stan-tial-i-ty**
 /-ʃheɪlíteɪ/ *n.* **sub-stan-tial-ly** *adv.*
sub-stan-ti-ate /səbstəntʃeɪt/ *v. tr.* prove the truth of
 (a charge, statement, claim, etc.); give good grounds
 for. □ **sub-stan-ti-a-tion** /-əɪʃhən/ *n.*
sub-stan-tive /sʊbstəntɪv/ *adj.* & *n.* ● *adj.* (also
 /səbstəntɪv/) **1** having separate and independent exist-
 ence. **2 Gram.** expressing existence. **3 Mil.** (of a rank,
 etc.) permanent, not acting or temporary. ● *n. Gram.*
 = NOUN.
sub-stan-tive verb *n.* the verb 'to be'.
sub-sta-tion /sʊbstəʃhən/ *n.* a subordinate station,
 esp. one reducing the high voltage of electric power
 transmission to that suitable for supply to consumers.
sub-sti-tu-ent /səbstɪtʃʊənt/ *adj.* & *n. Chem.* ● *adj.* (of
 a group of atoms) replacing another atom or group in
 a compound. ● *n.* such a group.