

21ST
CENTURY
REFERENCE

The
AMERICAN
HERITAGE[®]

dic·tion·ar·y

ALL-
NEW
FOURTH
EDITION

OVER 70,000 ENTRIES

THOROUGHLY REVISED AND UPDATED

1,000 NEW WORDS AND MEANINGS

OVER 400 PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

EXPERT GUIDANCE ON CORRECT USAGE



FOURTH EDITION

Based on the Best-selling *American Heritage[®] Dictionary
of the English Language, Fourth Edition*

The
AMERICAN
HERITAGE[®]
dic·tion·ar·y

FOURTH EDITION



Delta
Trade Paperbacks

A Delta Book

Published by
Dell Publishing
a division of
Random House, Inc.
1540 Broadway
New York, New York 10036

Words included in this book that are known to have current trademark registrations are shown with an initial capital and are also identified as trademarks. No investigation has been made of common-law trademark rights in any word, because such investigation is impracticable. The inclusion of any word in this book is not, however, an expression of the Publisher's opinion as to whether or not it is subject to proprietary rights. Indeed, no definition in this book is to be regarded as affecting the validity of any trademark.

American Heritage® and the eagle logo are registered trademarks of Forbes Inc. Their use is pursuant to a license agreement with Forbes Inc.

Copyright © 2001 by Houghton Mifflin Company

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without the written permission of the Publisher, except where permitted by law. For information address: Reference Permissions, Houghton Mifflin Company, 222 Berkeley Street, Boston, MA 02116.

Delta® is a registered trademark of Random House, Inc.

ISBN: 0-385-33576-8

Reprinted by arrangement with Houghton Mifflin Company

Manufactured in the United States of America

Published simultaneously in Canada

July 2001

10 9 8 7 6 5

- 1.** A druggist; pharmacist. **2.** See **pharmacy**.
2. [*< Gk. apothēkē, storehouse.*]
- ap•o•thegm** (ăp'ə-thēm') ▶ *n.* A proverb; maxim. [*Gk. apophthegma < apophthengesthai, speak plainly.*] — **ap'•o•theg•mat'ic** (-thēg-măt'ik) *adj.*
- ap•o•them** (ăp'ə-thēm') ▶ *n.* The perpendicular distance from the center of a regular polygon to any of its sides. [*apo-*, off + *Gk. thema, something set down.*]
- a•poth'e•o•sis** (ə-pōth'ē-ō'sis, ăp'ə-thē'ə-sis) ▶ *n., pl. -ses* (-sēz') **1.** Exaltation to divine rank or stature; deification. **2.** An exalted or glorified example. [*< Gk. apotheoun, deify.*] — **a•poth'e•o•size'** *v.*
- app** (ăp) ▶ *n. Informal* A computer application.
- Ap•pa•la•chi•a** (ăp'ə-lă'chē-ə, -chă, -lăch'ē-ə, -lăch'ə) A region of the E US including the Appalachian Mts.
- Ap•pa•la•chi•an Mountains** (ăp'ə-lă'chē-ən, -chən, -lăch'ē-ən, -lăch'ən) A mountain system of E North America extending SW from E Canada to central AL.
- ap•pall** (ə-pôl') ▶ *v.* To fill with horror or dismay. [*< OFr. apalir, grow pallid, faint.*] — **ap•pall'ing•ly** *adv.*
- ap•pa•loo•sa** (ăp'ə-lōō'sə) ▶ *n.* A horse having a spotted rump. [?]
- ap•pa•rat•us** (ăp'ə-răt'əs, -răt'əs) ▶ *n., pl. -us* or **-us•es** **1a.** The means by which a function or task is performed. **b.** A political organization or movement. **2a.** A machine or machinery. **b.** A group of materials or devices used for a particular purpose: *dental apparatus*. See **Syns** at **equipment**. **3.** A system. [*< Lat. apparatus, prepare.*]
- ap•par•el** (ə-păr'əl) ▶ *n.* Clothing, esp. outer garments. ▶ *v. -eled, -el•ing* or **-elled, -el•ing.** To clothe or dress. [*< OFr. appareillier, prepare.*]
- ap•par•ent** (ə-păr'ənt, -păr'-) ▶ *adj.* **1.** Readily seen; visible. **2.** Readily understood; obvious. **3.** Appearing as such but not necessarily so. [*< Lat. apparere, appear.*] — **ap•par'ent•ly** *adv.*
- Syns:** *apparent, clear, clear-cut, distinct, evident, manifest, obvious, patent, plain* *adj.*
- ap•pa•ri•tion** (ăp'ə-rish'ən) ▶ *n.* **1.** A ghost. **2.** A sudden or unusual sight. [*< Lat. apparere, appear.*] — **ap'pa•ri'tion•al** *adj.*
- ap•peal** (ə-pēl') ▶ *n.* **1.** An earnest request. **2.** An application to a higher authority: *an appeal to reason*. **3. Law a.** The transfer of a case from a lower to a higher court for a new hearing. **b.** A request for a new hearing. **4.** The power of attracting interest: *a city with appeal for tourists*. ▶ *v.* **1.** To make an earnest request, as for help. **2.** To have recourse. **3. Law** To make or apply for an appeal. **4.** To be attractive. [*< Lat. appellare, entreat.*] — **ap•peal'•a•ble** *adj.* — **ap•peal'er** *n.* — **ap•peal'ing•ly** *adv.*
- ap•pear** (ə-pîr') ▶ *v.* **1.** To become visible. **2.** To come into existence. **3.** To seem. See **Syns** at **seem**. **4.** To seem likely. **5.** To come before the public. **6. Law** To present oneself before a court. [*< Lat. apparere.*]
- ap•pear•ance** (ə-pîr'əns) ▶ *n.* **1.** The act of appearing. **2.** Outward aspect: *an untidy appearance*. **3.** A pretense.
- ap•pease** (ə-pēz') ▶ *v. -peased, -peas•ing* **1.** To satisfy or relieve: *appease one's thirst*. **2.** To pacify (an enemy) by granting concessions
- [*< OFr. apesier.*] — **ap•peas'•a•ble** *adj.* — **ap•peas'ment** *n.* — **ap•peas'er** *n.*
- ap•pel•lant** (ə-pēl'ənt) ▶ *adj.* Appellate. ▶ *n.* One who appeals a court decision.
- ap•pel•late** (ə-pēl'it) ▶ *adj.* Empowered to hear judicial appeals and review court decisions. [*< Lat. appellare, entreat.*]
- ap•pel•la•tion** (ăp'ə-lă'shən) ▶ *n.* A name or title. [*< Lat. appellare, entreat.*]
- ap•pend** (ə-pënd') ▶ *v.* **1.** To add as a supplement. **2.** To attach. [*Lat. appendere, hang upon.*]
- ap•pend•age** (ə-pēn'dij) ▶ *n.* **1.** Something attached to a larger entity. **2. Biol.** A subordinate external body part or organ, as an arm or tail.
- ap•pen•dec•to•my** (ăp'ən-dēk'tō-mē) ▶ *n., pl. -mies.* Surgical removal of the vermiform appendix.
- ap•pen•di•ci•tis** (ə-pēn'dī-sī'tis) ▶ *n.* Inflammation of the vermiform appendix.
- ap•pen•dix** (ə-pēn'diks) ▶ *n., pl. -dix•es* or **-dix•es** (*-dī-sēz'*) **1.** Supplementary material at the end of a book. **2. Anat.** The vermiform appendix. [*Lat. < appendere, hang upon.*]
- ap•per•tain** (ăp'ər-tān') ▶ *v.* To belong as a part. [*< LLat. appertinere, pertain.*]
- ap•pe•tite** (ăp'i-tīt') ▶ *n.* **1.** A desire for food or drink. **2.** A strong wish or urge. [*< Lat. appetere, strive after.*] — **ap'pe•ti'tive** *adj.*
- ap•pe•tiz•er** (ăp'i-tī'zər) ▶ *n.* A food or drink served before a meal.
- ap•pe•tiz•ing** (ăp'i-tī'zīng) ▶ *adj.* Stimulating the appetite. — **ap'pe•tiz'ing•ly** *adv.*
- ap•plaud** (ə-plôd') ▶ *v.* To express approval (of), esp. by clapping hands. — **ap•plaud'•a•ble** *adj.* — **ap•plaud'er** *n.*
- Syns:** *applaud, cheer, root* *v.*
- ap•plause** (ə-plôz') ▶ *n.* Approval expressed esp. by the clapping of hands. [*< Lat. applaudere, applaus-, applaud.*]
- ap•ple** (ăp'əl) ▶ *n.* **1.** A deciduous tree having alternate white or pink flowers. **2.** Its firm, edible, usu. rounded fruit. — **idiom:** **apple of (one's) eye** One that is treasured: *Her son is the apple of her eye.* [*< OE æppel.*]
- ap•ple•jack** (ăp'əl-jăk') ▶ *n.* Brandy distilled from hard cider.
- ap•ple•sauce** (ăp'əl-sôs') ▶ *n.* **1.** Apples stewed to a pulp. **2. Slang** Nonsense.
- ap•plet** (ăp'līt') ▶ *n.* A computer application with limited features and memory requirements. [*APPL(ICATION) + -ET.*]
- ap•pli•ance** (ə-plī'əns) ▶ *n.* A device, esp. one operated by gas or electricity, designed for household use. [*< APPLY.*]
- ap•pli•ca•ble** (ăp'lī-kə-bəl, ə-plīk'ə-) ▶ *adj.* That can be applied; appropriate. — **ap'pli•ca•bil'i•ty** *n.* — **ap'pli•ca•bly** *adv.*
- ap•pli•cant** (ăp'lī-kənt) ▶ *n.* One who applies.
- ap•pli•ca•tion** (ăp'lī-kă'shən) ▶ *n.* **1.** The act of applying. **2.** Something applied. **3.** The act of putting something to a special use. **4.** The capacity of being usable; relevance. **5.** Close attention; diligence: *shows application to her work*. **6a.** A request, as for employment. **b.** The form on which such a request is made. **7. Comp. Sci.** A computer program with a user interface. ▶ *adj.* also **applications** *Comp. Sci.* Of or being a program designed for a specific task.
- ap•pli•ca•tor** (ăp'lī-kă'tər) ▶ *n.* An instrument for applying something

- pro•duc•tive** (prə-dūk'tiv, prō-) ▶ *adj.* **1.** Producing or capable of producing. **2.** Producing abundantly. See Syns at **fertile**. — **pro•duc•tive•ly** *adv.* — **pro•duc•tiv/i•ty** (prō'dūk-tiv'i-tē, prōd'ək-) *n.* — **pro•duc•tive•ness** *n.*
- pro•em** (prō'ēm) ▶ *n.* An introduction; preface. [*< Gk. prooimion.*]
- pro•fane** (prō-fān', prō-) ▶ *adj.* **1.** Marked by contempt or irreverence for what is sacred. **2.** Nonreligious; secular. **3.** Vulgar; coarse. ▶ *v.* — **-faned, -fan•ing** **1.** To treat with irreverence. **2.** To put to an improper, unworthy, or degrading use; abuse. [*< Lat. profanus.*] — **pro•fa•na'tion** (prōf'ə-nā'shən) *n.* — **pro•fan'a•to'ry** (-fān'ə-tōr'ē, -tōr'ē) *adj.* — **pro•fane'ness** *n.*
- pro•fan•i•ty** (prō-fān'i-tē, prō-) ▶ *n., pl. -ties* **1.** The condition or quality of being profane. **2.** Obscene or irreverent language.
- pro•fess** (prə-fēs', prō-) ▶ *v.* **1.** To affirm openly; declare. **2.** To make a pretense of. **3.** To claim skill in or knowledge of. **4.** To affirm belief in. [*< Lat. profiteri.*] — **pro•fess'ed•ly** *adv.*
- pro•fes•sion** (prə-fēsh'ən) ▶ *n.* **1.** An occupation requiring training and specialized study. **2.** The body of qualified persons in an occupation or field: *the teaching profession*. **3.** An act of professing; declaration. **4.** An avowal of faith or belief.
- pro•fes•sion•al** (prə-fēsh'ə-nəl) ▶ *adj.* **1.** Of or engaged in a profession. **2.** Engaging in a given activity as a source of livelihood. ▶ *n.* A person following a profession. — **pro•fes•sion•al•ly** *adv.*
- pro•fes•sion•al•ism** (prə-fēsh'ə-nəl-iz'əm) ▶ *n.* Professional status, methods, character, or standards.
- pro•fes•sion•al•ize** (prə-fēsh'ə-nəl-iz') ▶ *v.* — **-ized, -iz•ing.** To make professional. — **pro•fes•sion•al•i•za'tion** *n.*
- pro•fes•sor** (prə-fēs'ər) ▶ *n.* **1.** A college or university teacher of the highest rank. **2.** A teacher or instructor. — **pro•fes•so'ri•al** (prōf'i-sōr'ē-əl, -sōr'-, prōf'i-) *adj.* — **pro•fes•so'ri•al•ly** *adv.* — **pro•fes•sor•ship** *n.*
- pro•fer** (prōf'ər) ▶ *v.* To offer for acceptance. [*< OFr. profir.*] — **pro•ffer** *n.*
- pro•fi•cient** (prə-fish'ənt) ▶ *adj.* Expert in an art, vocation, or area of learning. [*< Lat. proficere, progress.*] — **pro•fi•cien•cy** *n.*
- pro•file** (prō'fil') ▶ *n.* **1.** A side view of an object or a structure, esp. of the human head. **2.** An outline; silhouette. See Syns at **outline**. **3.** Degree of exposure to public notice; visibility: *kept a low profile*. **4.** A brief biographical essay. [*< Ital. profilare, draw in outline.*] — **pro•file** *v.*
- pro•fit** (prōf'it) ▶ *n.* **1.** An advantageous gain or return; benefit. **2.** often **profits** The return received on an investment or a business undertaking after all charges or expenses have been paid. ▶ *v.* **1.** To make a gain or profit. **2.** To derive advantage; benefit. See Syns at **benefit**. [*< Lat. profectus.*] — **pro•fit'a•bil'i•ty** *n.* — **pro•fit'a•ble** *adj.* — **pro•fit'a•bly** *adv.*
- pro•fit•eer** (prōf'i-tēr') ▶ *n.* One who makes excessive profits on goods in short supply. — **pro•fit•eer'** *v.*
- pro•fli•gate** (prōf'li-gīt, -gāt') ▶ *adj.* **1.** Given over to immorality; dissolute. **2.** Recklessly wasteful; extravagant. ▶ *n.* A profligate person. [*< Lat. profligare, to ruin.*] — **pro•fli•ga•cy** (-gə-sē) *n.*
- pro for•ma** (prō fōr'mə) ▶ *adj.* Done as a formality; perfunctory. [*< NLat. pro forma.*]
- pro•found** (prə-found', prō-) ▶ *adj.* — **-er, -est** **1.** Extending to or coming from a great depth; deep. **2.** Coming as if from the depths of one's being: *profound contempt*. **3.** Thoroughgoing; far-reaching. **4.** Penetrating beyond what is superficial or obvious. **5.** Unqualified: *a profound silence*. [*< Lat. profundus.*] — **pro•found'ly** *adv.* — **pro•fun'di•ty** (fūn'di-tē) *n.*
- pro•fuse** (prə-fyūs', prō-) ▶ *adj.* **1.** Plentiful; copious. **2.** Giving or given freely and abundantly; extravagant. [*< Lat. profusus, p.part. of profunderē, pour forth.*] — **pro•fuse'ly** *adv.* — **pro•fuse'ness** *n.* — **pro•fu'sion** (-fyūs'zhən) *n.*
- Syns:** *profuse, exuberant, lavish, lush, luxuriant, prodigal, riotous* **Ant:** *spare* *adj.*
- pro•gen•i•tor** (prō-jén'i-tər) ▶ *n.* **1.** A direct ancestor. See Syns at **ancestor**. **2.** An originator of a line of descent. **3.** An originator; founder. [*< Lat. progenitor.*]
- prog•e•ny** (prōj'ə-nē) ▶ *n.* Offspring or descendants. [*< Lat. progeniēs.*]
- pro•ges•ter•one** (prō-jēs'tə-rōn') ▶ *n.* A steroid hormone secreted by the ovary before implantation of the fertilized ovum. [*PRO-¹ + GES(TATION) + STER(OL) + -one, suff.*]
- prog•na•thous** (prōg'nə-thəs, prōg-nā'-) ▶ *adj.* Having jaws that project forward to a marked degree. [*< PRO-² + Gk. gnathos, jaw.*] — **prog'na•thism** *n.*
- prog•no•sis** (prōg-nō'sis) ▶ *n., pl. -ses* (-sēz). A prediction, esp. of the probable course and outcome of a disease. [*< Gk.*]
- prog•nos•tic** (prōg-nōs'tik) ▶ *adj.* Of or useful in prognosis. ▶ *n.* **1.** A forecast or prediction. **2.** A portent; omen. [*< Gk. prognōstikos, foreknowing.*]
- prog•nos•ti•cate** (prōg-nōs'ti-kāt') ▶ *v.* — **-cat•ed, -cat•ing.** To predict according to present indications or signs; foretell. — **prog•nos'ti•ca'tion** *n.* — **prog•nos'ti•ca'tor** *n.*
- pro•gram** (prō'grām', -grəm) ▶ *n.* **1a.** A listing of the order of events and other information for a public presentation. **b.** The presentation itself. **2.** A scheduled radio or television show. **3.** An ordered list of events or procedures to be followed; schedule. **4. Comp. Sci.** A set of coded instructions that enables a machine, especially a computer, to perform a desired sequence of operations. ▶ *v.* — **-grammed, -gram•ming** or **-gramed, -gram•ing** **1.** To include or schedule in a program. **2.** To design a program for. **3.** To provide (a computer) with a set of instructions. [*< Gk. programma, public notice : PRO-² + graphein, write.*] — **pro'gram'ma•ble** *adj.* — **pro'gram'mat'ic** (-grə-māt'ik) *adj.*
- pro•gramme** (prō'grām', -grəm) ▶ *n. & v.* *Chiefly Brit.* Var. of **program**.
- pro•gram•mer** or **pro•gram•er** (prō-grām'ər) ▶ *n.* One who programs, esp. one who writes computer programs.
- pro•gram•ming** language (prō'grām'ing, -grə-ming) ▶ *n.* An artificial language that can be translated into machine language and executed by a computer.
- prog•ress** (prōg'rēs', -rəs, prō'grēs') ▶ *n.* **1.** Movement, as toward a goal. **2.** Development