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tures, and other apparatus of a water or sewage system in a building. **2.** The work or trade of a plumber.

plumb line ▶ *n.* A line from which a weight is suspended to determine verticality or depth.

plume (plūm) ▶ *n.* **1.** A feather, esp. a large and showy one. **2.** Something that resembles a long feather: *a plume of smoke*. ▶ *v.* **plumed, plum-ing** **1.** To decorate with or as if with plumes. **2.** To pride (oneself) in a self-satisfied way. [< Lat. *plūma*.]

plum-met (plūm'it) ▶ *v.* To fall or drop straight down. [< Lat. *plumbum*, lead.]

plump¹ (plūmp) ▶ *adj.* **-er, -est.** Well-rounded and full in form; chubby. ▶ *v.* To make or become plump. [Prob. < MLGer. *plomp*, thick.] — **plump'ness** *n.*

plump² (plūmp) ▶ *v.* **1.** To drop abruptly or heavily. **2.** To give full support or praise. ▶ *n.* **1.** A heavy or abrupt fall. **2.** The sound of such a fall. ▶ *adv.* **1.** With a heavy or abrupt drop. **2.** Straight down. [< MLGer. *plumpen*.]

plun-der (plūn'dər) ▶ *v.* To rob of goods by force, esp. in time of war; pillage. ▶ *n.* Property stolen by fraud or force. [< MLGer., household goods.] — **plun'der'er** *n.*

plunge (plūnj) ▶ *v.* **plunged, plung-ing** **1.** To thrust or throw forcefully into a substance or place. **2.** To enter or cast suddenly into a given state, situation, or activity. **3.** To descend steeply or suddenly. **4.** To speculate or gamble extravagantly. [< VLat. **plumbicare*, heave a sounding lead.] — **plunge** *n.*

plung-er (plūn'jər) ▶ *n.* **1.** A device consisting of a rubber suction cup attached to the end of a stick, used to unclog drains and pipes. **2.** A machine part that operates with a thrusting or plunging movement.

plunk (plūngk) ▶ *v.* **1.** To throw, place, or drop heavily or abruptly. **2.** To strum or pluck (a stringed instrument). **3.** To emit a hollow, twanging sound. [imit.] — **plunk** *n.*

plu-per-fect (plū-pūr'fikt) ▶ *adj.* Of or relating to a verb tense used to express action completed before a specified or implied past time. ▶ *n.* **1.** The pluperfect tense. **2.** A verb or form in this tense. [< Lat. *plūs quam perfectum*, more than perfect.]

plu-ral (plū-rāl) ▶ *adj.* Of or being a grammatical form that designates more than one of the things specified. ▶ *n.* **1.** The plural number or form. **2.** A word or term in the plural form. [ME *plurel* < OFr. < Lat. *plūralis* < *plūs, plūr-*, more.] — **plu'ral-ize** *v.* — **plu'ral-i-za'tion** *n.*

plu-ral-ism (plū-rāl'iz'əm) ▶ *n.* A condition of society in which numerous distinct ethnic, religious, or cultural groups coexist within one nation. — **plu'ral-ist** *n.* — **plu'ral-is'tic** *adj.*

plu-ral-i-ty (plū-rāl'i-tē) ▶ *n., pl. -ties* **1a.** In a contest of more than two choices, the number of votes cast for the winner if this number is not more than one half of the total votes cast. **b.** The number by which the vote of a winning choice in such a contest exceeds that of the closest opponent. **2.** The larger or greater part.

plus (plūs) ▶ *conj.* **1.** *Math.* Increased by: *Two plus two is four*. **2.** Added to; along with. ▶ *adj.* **1.** Positive or on the positive part of a scale. **2.** Added or extra: *a plus value*. ▶ *n., pl. plus-es* or **plus-ses** **1.** *Math.* A symbol (+) used to in-

vorable condition or factor. [Lat. *plūs*, more.]

Usage: When mathematical equations are pronounced as English sentences, the verb is usually in the singular: *Two plus two is (or equals) four*. • The use of *plus* introducing an independent clause, as in *She has a lot of talent, plus she is willing to work hard*, is limited chiefly to informal contexts.

plush (plūsh) ▶ *n.* A fabric having a thick, deep pile. ▶ *adj.* **-er, -est.** Luxurious. [< OFr. *peluchier*, pluck.] — **plush'i-ly, plush'ly** *adv.* — **plush'i-ness, plush'ness** *n.* — **plush'y** *adj.*

Plu-tarch (plū-tärk') ▶ *n.* A.D. 46?–120? Greek biographer and philosopher.

Plu-to (plū-tō) ▶ *n.* **1.** *Gk. Myth.* The god of the dead and the ruler of the underworld. **2.** The 9th and usu. farthest planet from the sun, 4.5 billion km (2.8 billion mi) distant at perihelion and 7.4 billion km (4.6 billion mi) at aphelion, with a diameter less than half that of Earth. [< Gk. *ploutos*, wealth.]

plu-toc-ra-cy (plū-tōk'rā-sē) ▶ *n., pl. -cies* **1.** Government by the wealthy. **2.** A wealthy class that controls a government. [Gk. *ploutos*, wealth + *-cracy*.] — **plu'to-crat'** (plū-tōkrät') *n.* — **plu'to-crat'ic, plu'to-crat'i-cal** *adj.*

plu-ton-ic (plū-tōn'ik) ▶ *adj.* Of deep igneous or magmatic origin: *plutonic rocks*.

plu-to-ni-um (plū-tō'nē-əm) ▶ *n.* *Symbol Pu* A naturally radioactive, silvery metallic element used as a reactor fuel and in nuclear weapons. At. no. 94. See table at **element**.

plu-vi-al (plū-vē-əl) ▶ *adj.* Of or caused by rain. [< Lat. *pluvia*, rain < *pluere*, to rain.]

ply¹ (plī) ▶ *v.* **plied** (plīd), **ply-ing** **1.** To join together, as by molding or twisting. **2.** To double over (e.g., cloth). ▶ *n., pl. plies* **1.** A layer, as of cloth or wood. **2.** One of the strands twisted together to make yarn, rope, or thread. [< Lat. *plicāre*, fold.]

ply² (plī) ▶ *v.* **plied** (plīd), **ply-ing** **1.** To use diligently; wield. **2.** To engage in (e.g., a trade); practice. **3.** To traverse or sail over regularly. **4.** To continue supplying: *plied their guests with food*. [< APPLY.]

Plym-outh (plīm'əth) **1.** A borough of SW England on **Plymouth Sound**, an inlet of the English Channel. Pop. 259,040. **2.** A town of SE MA on **Plymouth Bay**, an inlet of the Atlantic SE of Boston; founded (1620) by Pilgrims from the *Mayflower*. Pop. 45,608

ply-wood (plī'wōd') ▶ *n.* A structural material made of layers of wood glued together.

Pm ▶ The symbol for the element **promethium**.

P.M. also **p.m.** or **p.m.** ▶ *abbr.* post meridiem. See Usage Note at **ante meridiem**.

PMS ▶ *abbr.* premenstrual syndrome

p.n. or **P/N** ▶ *abbr.* promissory note

pneu-mat-ic (nū-māt'ik, nyū-) also **pneu-mat-i-cal** (-i-kəl) ▶ *adj.* **1.** Of or relating to air or other gases. **2.** Filled with or operated by compressed air. [< Gk. *pneuma*, wind.]

pneu-mo-coc-cus (nū-mō-kōk'əs, nyū-) ▶ *n., pl. -coc-ci* (-kōk'sī, -kōk'ī). A bacterium that causes pneumonia. [Gk. *pneuma*, breath + *-coccus*.] — **pneu'mo-coc'cal** *adj.*

pneu-mo-nia (nū-mōn'ya, nyū-) ▶ *n.* An acute or chronic disease marked by inflamma-