



The
AMERICAN
HERITAGE®

dictionary

of the
English
Language



HOW TO USE THE DICTIONARY

To look up an entry in *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, use the search window above. For best results, after typing in the word, click on the “Search” button instead of using the “enter” key.

Some compound words (like *bus rapid transit*, *dog whistle*, or *identity theft*) don’t appear on the drop-down list when you type them in the search bar. For best results with compound words, place a quotation mark before the compound word in the search window.

[guide to the dictionary](#)



THE USAGE PANEL

The Usage Panel is a group of nearly 200 prominent scholars, creative writers, journalists, diplomats, and others in occupations requiring mastery of language. Annual surveys have gauged the acceptability of particular usages and grammatical constructions.

[The Panelists](#)



AMERICAN HERITAGE DICTIONARY APP

The new American Heritage Dictionary app is now available for [iOS](#) and [Android](#).



THE AMERICAN HERITAGE DICTIONARY BLOG

The articles in our [blog](#) examine new words, revised definitions, interesting images from the fifth edition, discussions of usage, and more.

THE 100 WORDS®

See word lists from the best-selling 100 Words Series!

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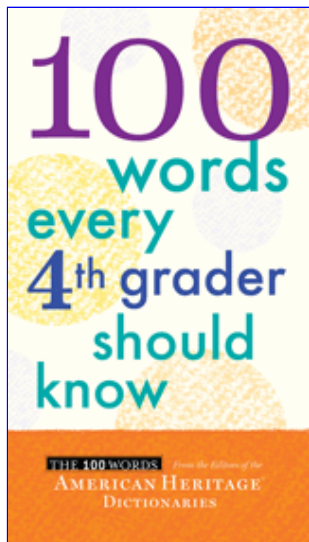


INTERESTED IN DICTIONARIES?

Check out the Dictionary Society of North America at <http://www.dictionariesociety.com>



100 Words



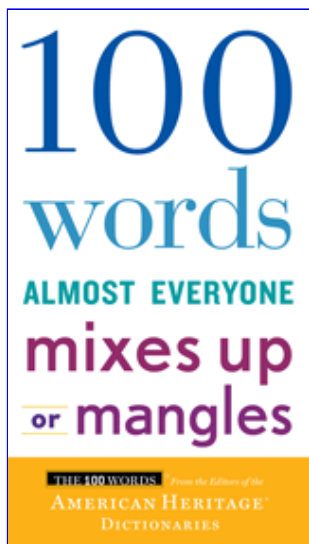
Ideal for students in the upper grades of elementary school, *100 Words Every Fourth Grader Should Know* is the latest book in the popular 100 Words series from the American Heritage® Dictionaries. This book includes one hundred words of varying degrees of difficulty, representing the kind of vocabulary students often encounter in their classes and in their reading. From *accommodate* to *zest*, with stops along the way at *frank*, *persuade*, and *vengeance*, the words are invariably intriguing and useful. Each entry includes the word's pronunciation, clear definitions of its various senses, and one or more short example sentences, along with a longer quotation from a classic or contemporary author showing how the word is used in a broader context.

Complete list of [100 Words Every Fourth Grader Should Know](#)



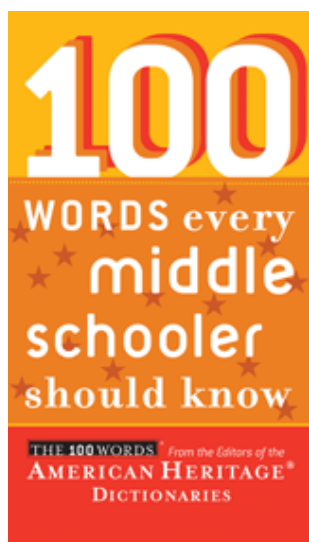
Ideal for juniors and seniors in high school as well as adults who want to see how their vocabulary skills stack up, *100 More Words Every High School Graduate Should Know* is the latest book in the popular 100 Words series from the American Heritage Dictionaries and a sequel to the original title in the series (published in 2002). This book includes one hundred words of varying degrees of difficulty, representing the kinds of words high school students encounter in their classes and on standardized tests. From *alacrity* to *zygote*, with stops along the way at *eponymous* and *lambent*, the words are invariably intriguing and useful. Each entry includes the definition, pronunciation, and etymology, and often one or more quotations from classical and contemporary authors showing how the word is used in context.

Complete list of [100 More Words Every High School Graduate Should Know](#)



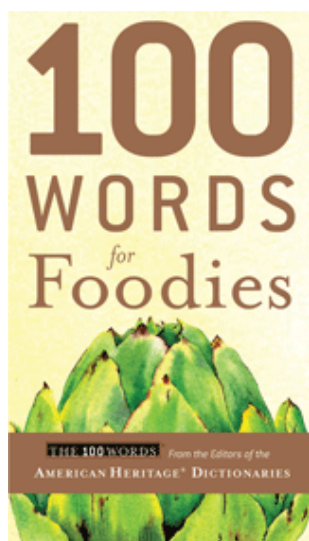
Do you know the difference between *phase* and *faze*? If asked, would you be able to keep *baleful* and *baneful* straight? If not, don't worry—you're in good company. From homophones to homographs to misheard sayings, speakers of the English language must confront a number of tricky exceptions and frustrating pitfalls. The next time you want to use a clever turn of phrase, rest assured that you won't have to wish it unsaid. Master some of the most common obstacles and avoid embarrassing missteps by taking your cue from *100 Words Almost Everyone Mixes Up or Mangles*.

Complete list of [100 Words Almost Everyone Mixes Up or Mangles](#)



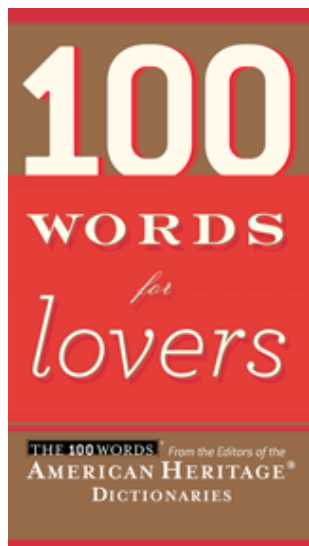
To do well as they move on in their school careers, middle school students must become able readers and convincing writers. This book presents 100 words that students are sure to encounter in middle school. The words have dictionary definitions and are shown in quotations from books that students read in school and include on their lists of favorites. Many of the most distinguished and popular young-adult authors are quoted, from Lois Lowry and Jerry Spinelli to J.K. Rowling and Wilson Rawls. Students will see why these authors chose these words, and why knowing these words can make such a difference!

Complete list of [100 Words Every Middle Schooler Should Know](#)



Americans love talking about food almost as much as they love eating it, and to describe it, the English language serves up an impressive spread of fascinating words. Each entry has a definition and pronunciation. Some entries are enhanced with recipes, and others have word history notes that tell surprising back-stories. Hip and informative, *100 Words for Foodies* is one delight you won't be able to resist. Take it to your next dinner party and you'll see smiles all around.

Complete list of [100 Words for Foodies](#)



100 Words for Lovers provides both would-be and experienced lovers with the right words to get in the mood. Words used by famous lovers and writers, such as *amorous* and *alluring*, *beguiling* and *bewitching*, show lovers showering attention, tortured by infatuation, star-crossed, and full of ardor. Illustrated by quotations from poetry, fiction, movie and television scripts, as well as private letters, *100 Words for Lovers* will seduce even the most reluctant and coldhearted.

Complete list of [100 Words for Lovers](#)



The latest in the best-selling 100 Words® series settles the score on 100 controversies and misconceptions about words with difficult or slippery pronunciations. Each word is presented in dictionary format, with a note explaining the pronunciation problem, how it arose, and why it is controversial. Both fun and informative, this book will appeal to those who don't want to be the center of attention for the wrong reason.

Complete list of [100 Words Almost Everyone Mispronounces](#)

You can hear many of these words pronounced on this [podcast](#).



A new addition to the best-selling 100 Words® series, this book showcases 100 words that some of our most important and beloved communicators have used to great effect in their efforts to make the world a better place. Informative entries and insightful quotations from people of many areas of human endeavor, past and present, work to make this volume a fascinating way to improve and reinforce a varied and versatile vocabulary.

Complete list of [100 Words to Make You Sound Great](#)

100 words — to make you SOUND SMART

THE 100 WORDS[®] From the Editors of the
AMERICAN HERITAGE[®]
DICTIONARIES

A popular title in the 100 Words[®] series, this book is an informative and entertaining resource that can help anyone be right on the money when looking for words that will make a point, seal the deal, or just keep folks listening. Chosen by the editors of the American Heritage[®] Dictionaries, these words will appeal to anyone who wants to be a more compelling communicator — as a worker, consumer, advocate, friend, dinner companion, or even as a romantic prospect.

Complete list of [100 Words to Make You Sound Smart](#)

100 Science Words Every College Graduate Should Know

THE 100 WORDS[®] From the Editors of the
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The fifth title in the popular 100 Words[®] series provides a fascinating look at the vocabulary of science and technology. Explained in nonscientific language and accompanied by expansive explanations, the words come from a wide variety of scientific fields of study. Most entries have boxed features containing fun facts and details demonstrating the significance of the word in science and everyday life. This book is sure to delight and inspire anyone interested in science and technology.

Complete list of [100 Science Words Every College Graduate Should Know](#)

100 words every word lover should know

THE 100 WORDS[®] From the Editors of the
AMERICAN HERITAGE[®]
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100 Words Every Word Lover Should Know is sure to please anyone who enjoys the variety and richness of American English. From *aesthetic* to *zenith* and *chortle* to *lagniappe*, the words herein have been specially chosen by the Editors of the American Heritage[®] Dictionaries for their unusual histories, interesting meanings, and appearance in literature.

Complete list of [100 Words Every Word Lover Should Know](#)

100 words

ALMOST EVERYONE
confuses
AND *misuses*

THE 100 WORDS From the Editors of the
AMERICAN HERITAGE
DICTIONARIES

The editors of the American Heritage® Dictionaries have selected one hundred of the most commonly confused and misused words in the English language as the basis for the third title in the popular 100 Words series. This common-sense guide to some of the most troublesome bugbears, pet peeves, and faux pas of written and spoken English features advice from the renowned American Heritage Usage Panel.

Complete list of [100 Words Almost Everyone Confuses and Misuses](#)

100 words

EVERY HIGH SCHOOL
Freshman
SHOULD KNOW

THE 100 WORDS From the Editors of the
AMERICAN HERITAGE
DICTIONARIES

Freshmen encounter many new things in high school—new teachers, new friends, new subjects, new responsibilities—and all are important to personal growth and success. But among the most challenging of these new experiences is the rapid growth of vocabulary, which will become increasingly sophisticated and complex in the years ahead. The best way to start high school is to be well prepared, and what better way to prepare than to have a varied and versatile vocabulary?

Complete list of [100 Words Every High School Freshman Should Know](#)

100 words

EVERY HIGH SCHOOL
GRADUATE
SHOULD KNOW

THE 100 WORDS From the Editors of the
AMERICAN HERITAGE
DICTIONARIES

When the editors of the American Heritage® Dictionaries assembled their list of *100 Words Every High School Graduate Should Know*, the response was overwhelming. The editors received so many requests to reproduce the list they decided to put it on the Houghton Mifflin Harcourt website. The site has since been visited by hundreds of thousands of curious minds.

Complete list of [100 Words Every High School Graduate Should Know](#)

Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

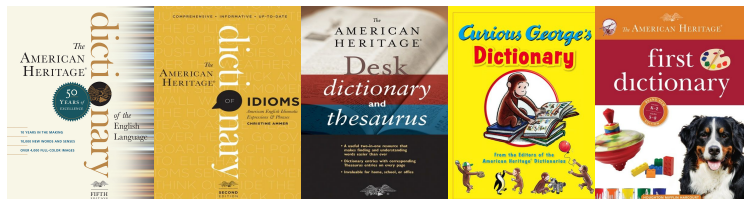
Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

[Indo-European Roots](#)

[Semitic Roots](#)

The Indo-European appendix covers nearly half of the Indo-European roots that have left their mark on English words. A more complete treatment of Indo-European roots and the English words derived from them is available in our [Dictionary of Indo-European Roots](#).

American Heritage Dictionary Products



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