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AMERICAN  
HERITAGE®

dictionary

of the  
English  
Language


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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.

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**ar·son**  (är sən)

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*n.*

1. The crime of intentionally and illegally setting fire to a building or other structure.
2. An instance of this crime: *a rash of arsons.*

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[Anglo-Norman, from Late Latin *ārsiō*, *ārsiōn*-, from Latin *ārsus*, past participle of *ārdēre*, to burn; see **as-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots.](#)]

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**ar son·ist** *n.*

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## Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

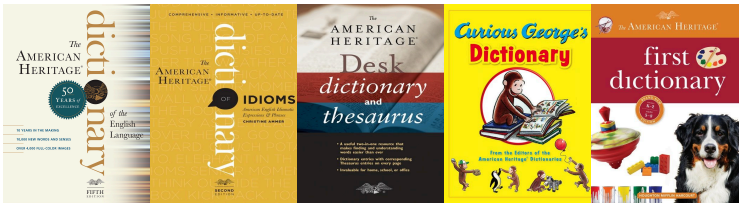
Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

[Indo-European Roots](#)

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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](#).

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