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bea·con  (bē kən)

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n.

1.

a. A signal fire, especially one used to warn of an enemy's approach.

b. A signaling or guiding device that emits light, such as a lighthouse.

c. A radio transmitter that emits a characteristic guidance signal for aircraft.

d. A signaling device that emits a repeating sound; a pinger.

2. A source of guidance or inspiration: *a beacon of hope*.

tr. & intr.v. **bea·coned**, **bea·con·ing**, **bea·cons**

To provide with or signal as a beacon.

[Middle English *beken*, from Old English *bēacen*; see **bhā**⁻¹ [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

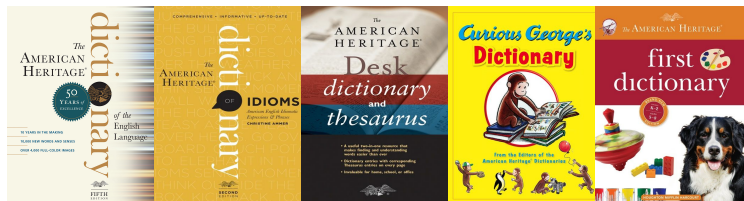
Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

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