



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!

[Find out more!](#)



INTERESTED IN DICTIONARIES?

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

teach  (tēch)

Share: [Tweet](#)

v. **taught** (tôt), **teach·ing**, **teach·es**

v.tr.

1. To impart knowledge or skill to: *teaches children.*
2. To provide knowledge of; instruct in: *teaches French.*
3. To condition to a certain action or frame of mind: *teaching youngsters to be self-reliant.*
4. To cause to learn by example or experience: *an accident that taught me a valuable lesson.*
5. To advocate or preach: *teaches racial and religious tolerance.*
6. To carry on instruction on a regular basis in: *taught high school for many years.*

v.intr.

To give instruction, especially as an occupation.

n.

Slang

A teacher.

[Middle English *techen*, from Old English *tācan*; see **deik-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

Synonyms: **teach**, **instruct**, **educate**, **train**, **school**¹, **discipline**, **drill**¹

These verbs mean to impart knowledge or skill. *Teach* is the most widely applicable: *taught the child to draw; taught literature at the college.* *Instruct* often suggests training in some special field or skill: *instructed the undergraduates in music theory.* *Educate* often implies formal instruction but especially stresses the development of innate capacities: *"We are educated by others ... and this cultivation, mingling with our innate disposition, is the soil in which our desires, passions, and motives grow"* (Mary Shelley).

Train suggests concentration on particular skills intended to fit a person for a desired role: *trained the vocational students to be computer technicians.* *School* often implies an arduous training process: *"He took young Deanie under his wing and schooled him in the art of ambidextrous gunplay"* (T.J. English).

Discipline usually refers to the teaching of control, especially self-control: *disciplined myself to exercise every day.*

Drill implies rigorous instruction or training, usually by repetition: *drilled the students by having them recite the multiplication tables.*

The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition copyright ©2022 by HarperCollins Publishers. All rights reserved.

Teach  (tēch) also **Thatch** (thăch), **Edward** Known as **Black-beard** (blăk bîrd') Died 1718.

Share: [Tweet](#)

English pirate who preyed on shipping off the coast of the American colonies and in the Caribbean until he was killed by British naval forces.



(click for a larger image)

Edward Teach

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



[The American Heritage Dictionary, 5th Edition](#) [The American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms](#) [The American Heritage Roget's Thesaurus](#) [Curious George's Dictionary](#) [The American Heritage Children's Dictionary](#)

- **CONTACT US**
- [Customer Service](#)
- [Make Me An Author](#)
- [Ebooks Help with Glose Reader](#)
- **ABOUT US**
- [Company Profile](#)
- [Leadership Team](#)
- [Corporate Social Responsibility](#)
- [HarperCollins Careers](#)
- [HarperCollins Imprints](#)
- [HarperGreen](#)
- [Social Media Directory](#)
- [Accessibility](#)
- **FOR READERS**
- [Browse Reading Guides](#)
- **FOR AUTHORS**
- [Submit a Manuscript](#)

- [Report Piracy](#)
- [Agent Portal](#)
- **MEDIA**
- [Publicity Contacts](#)
- [Press Room](#)
- **SERVICES**
- [HarperCollins Speakers Bureau](#)
- [Library Services](#)
- [Academic Services](#)
- [Desk & Exam Copies](#)
- [Review Copies](#)
- [OpenBook API](#)
- [Marketing Partnerships](#)
- **COVID-19 RESOURCES & PERMISSIONS**
- [Permissions for Adult Online Readings](#)

- [Permissions for Kids Online Readings](#)
- **SALES & RIGHTS**
- [Booksellers & Retailer Ordering](#)
- [HarperCollins Catalogs](#)
- [Permissions](#)
- [Subsidiary Rights](#)
- [Media Rights and Content Development](#)
- **GLOSE APP**
- [iPhone](#)
- [Android](#)
-
-
-
- **GLOBAL DIVISIONS**
- [HarperCollins US](#)
- [HarperCollins Canada](#)

- [HarperCollins Christian](#)
- [HarperCollins Australia](#)
- [HarperCollins India](#)
- [HarperCollins UK](#)



News Corp

[Terms of Use](#) • [Terms of Sale](#) • [Your Ad Choices](#) • [Privacy Policy](#) • [California Privacy Policy](#)
[Do Not Sell My Personal Information](#)

Copyright 2022 HarperCollins Publishers All rights reserved.

*This website is best viewed in Chrome, Firefox, Microsoft Edge, or Safari. Some characters in pronunciations and etymologies cannot be displayed properly in Internet Explorer.