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dic·tate  (dĭk tāt', dĭk-tāt)

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v. **dic·tat·ed**, **dic·tat·ing**, **dic·tates**

v.tr.

1. To say or read aloud to be recorded or written by another: *dictate a letter*.

2.

a. To prescribe with authority; impose: *dictated the rules of the game*.

b. To control or command: *"Foreign leaders were ... dictated by their own circumstances, bound by the universal imperatives of politics" (Doris Kearns Goodwin)*.

v.intr.

1. To say or read aloud material to be recorded or written by another: *dictated for an hour before leaving for the day*.

2. To issue orders or commands.

n. (dĭk tāt')

1. A directive; a command.

2.

a. An underlying constraint: *"These men make numerous decisions affecting how they organize their lives according to the dictates of time and place" (William Marsiglio)*.

b. A guiding principle: *followed the dictates of my conscience*.

[Latin *dictāre*, *dictāt-*, frequentative of *dīcere*, to say; see **deik-** in the Appendix of Indo-European roots.]

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

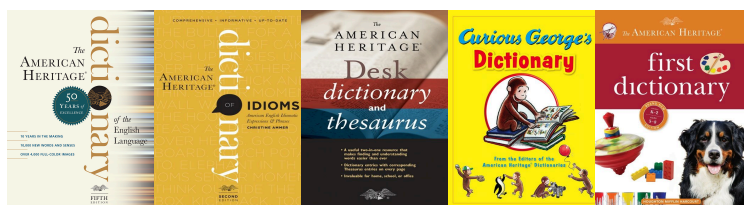
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The Indo-European appendix covers nearly half of the Indo-European roots that have left their mark on English words. A more complete treatment of Indo-European roots and the English words derived from them is available in our [Dictionary of Indo-European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

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