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duke  (d k, dy k)

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n.

1. A nobleman with the highest hereditary rank, especially a man of the highest grade of the peerage in Great Britain.
2. A sovereign prince who rules an independent duchy in some European countries.
3. Used as the title for such a nobleman.
4. **dukes** *Slang* The fists: *Put up your dukes!*
5. *Botany* A type of cherry intermediate between a sweet and a sour cherry.

intr.v. **duked**, **duk-ing**, **dukes**

To fight, especially with fists: *duking it out.*

[Middle English, from Old French *duc*, from Latin *dux*, *duc-*, leader, from *dūcere*, to lead; see **deuk-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#). *N.*, sense 4, short for *Duke of Yorks*, rhyming slang for *forks*, fingers.]

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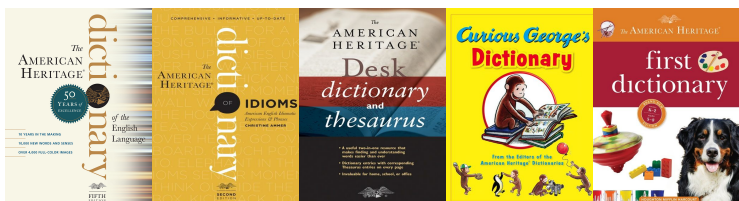
Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

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