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dictionary

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pre·fect  (prē fĕkt')

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n.

1. A high administrative official or chief officer, as:
 - a. Any of several high military or civil officials in ancient Rome.
 - b. The chief of police of Paris, France.
 - c. A chief administrative official of a department of France.
 - d. The administrator in charge of discipline at a Jesuit school.
2. A student monitor or officer, especially in a private school.

[Middle English, from Old French, from Latin *praefectus*, from past participle of *praeficere*, to place at the head of : *prae-*, pre- + *facere*, to make; see **dhē-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

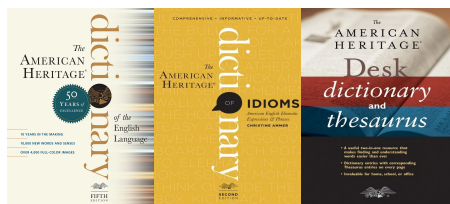
Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

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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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