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vain  (vān)

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adj. **vain·er, vain·est**

1. Not yielding the desired outcome; fruitless: *a vain attempt*.
2. Lacking substance or worth: *vain talk*.
3. Having or showing excessive pride in one's appearance or accomplishments; conceited.
4. *Archaic* Foolish.

Idiom:

in vain

1. To no avail; without success: *Our labor was in vain*.
2. In an irreverent or disrespectful manner: *took the Lord's name in vain*.

[Middle English, from Old French, from Latin *vānus*, empty; see **eu-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

vain **ly** *adv.*

vain **ness** *n.*

Synonyms: vain, empty, hollow, idle, otiose

These adjectives mean lacking value or substance: *vain regrets; empty pleasures; hollow threats; idle dreams; otiose theoretical discussions*. See Also Synonyms at [futile](#).

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

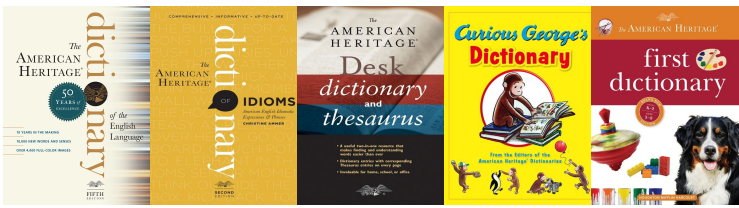
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