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dictionary

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gem (jěm)

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n.

1. A piece of a valuable mineral or minerallike substance that has been cut, polished, or otherwise prepared for use as an ornament.

2.

a. Something that is valued for its beauty or perfection: *a little gem of a book.*

b. A beloved or highly prized person.

3. A muffin, especially a very small one.

tr.v. **gemmed**, **gem·ming**, **gems**

To adorn with gems.

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

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

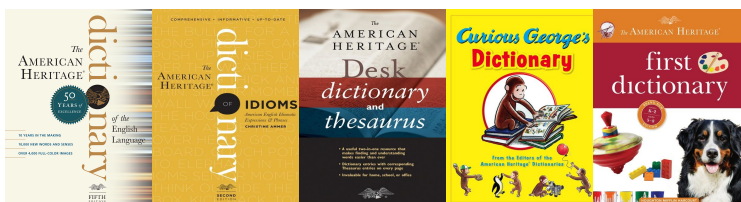
Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

[Indo-European Roots](#)

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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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