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cat·e·go·ry  (kăt ĭ-gô'rĕ)

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n. pl. **cat·e·go·ries**

1. A specifically defined division in a system of classification; a class.
2. A general class of ideas, terms, or things that mark divisions or coordinations within a conceptual scheme, especially:
 - a. Aristotle's modes of objective being, such as quality, quantity, or relation, that are inherent in all things.
 - b. Kant's modes of subjective understanding, such as singularity, universality, or particularity, that organize perceptions into knowledge.
 - c. A basic logical type of philosophical conception in post-Kantian philosophy.
3. *Linguistics*
 - a. A property or structural unit of a language, such as a part of speech or a type of phrase.
 - b. A specific grammatical defining property of a linguistic unit or class, such as number or gender in the noun and tense or voice in the verb.
4. *Mathematics* A class of objects, together with a class of morphisms between those objects, and an associative composition rule for those morphisms. Categories are used to study a wide variety of mathematical constructions in a similar way.

[French *catégorie*, from Old French, from Late Latin *catēgoria*, class of predicables, from Greek *katēgoriā*, accusation, charge, from *katēgorein*, to accuse, predicate : *kat-*, *kata-*, down, against; see [CATA-](#) + *agoreueîn*, *ēgor-*, to speak in public (from *agorā*, marketplace, assembly; see **ger-** in the Appendix of Indo-European roots).]

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

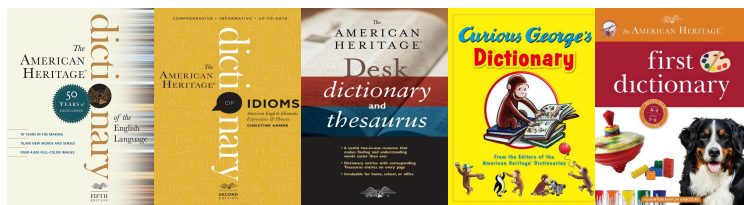
Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

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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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