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AMERICAN
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dictionary

of the
English
Language



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he·red·i·ty  (hə-rĕd ĭ-tē)

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n. pl. he·red·i·ties

1. The genetic transmission of characteristics from parent to offspring.
2. The sum of characteristics and associated potentialities transmitted genetically to an individual organism.

[French *hérédité*, from Old French *hereditē*, inheritance, from Latin *hērēditās*, from *hērēs*, *hērēd-*, heir; see **ghē-** [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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