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dictionary

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Language



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char·i·ty  (chărr ĭ-tē)

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n. pl. char·i·ties

1. Provision of help or relief to the poor; almsgiving.
2. Something given to help the needy; alms.
3. An institution, organization, or fund established to help the needy.
4. Benevolence or generosity toward others or toward humanity.
5. Indulgence or forbearance in judging others. See Synonyms at [mercy](#).
6. often **Charity** *Christianity* The theological virtue defined as love directed first toward God but also toward oneself and one's neighbors as objects of God's love.

[Middle English *charite*, from Old French, Christian love, from Latin *cāritās*, affection, from *cārus*, dear; see [kā-](#) [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

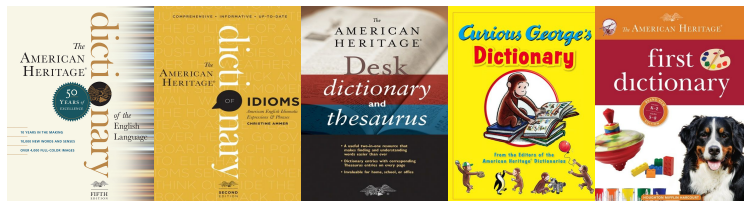
Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

[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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