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AMERICAN
HERITAGE®

dictionary

of the
English
Language



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Some compound words (like *bus rapid transit*, *dog whistle*, or *identity theft*) don’t appear on the drop-down list when you type them in the search bar. For best results with compound words, place a quotation mark before the compound word in the search window.

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cap·tion  (kăp shən)

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n.

1. A title, short explanation, or description accompanying an illustration or a photograph.
2. A series of words superimposed on the bottom of television or motion picture frames that communicate dialogue to the hearing-impaired or translate foreign dialogue.
3. A title or heading, as of a document or article.
4. *Law* The heading of a pleading or other document that identifies the parties, court, term, and number of the action.

tr.v. **cap·tioned**, **cap·tion·ing**, **cap·tions**

To furnish a caption for.

[Middle English *capcioun*, arrest, from Old French *capcion*, from Latin *captiō*, *captiōn-*, from *captus*, past participle of *capere*, to seize; see **kap-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

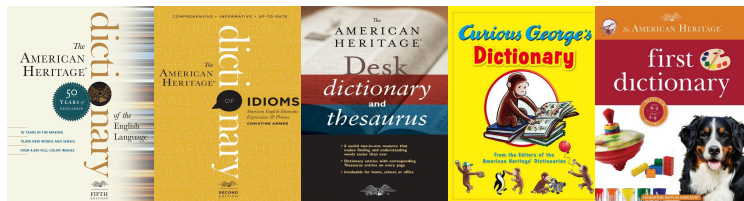
Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

[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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