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de·cap·i·tate  (dĭ-kăp ĭ-tăt')

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tr.v. **de·cap·i·tat·ed, de·cap·i·tat·ing, de·cap·i·tates**

1. To cut off the head of; behead.
2. To destroy or incapacitate (a government or organization, for example) by killing or removing its leader or leaders.

[Late Latin *dēcapitāre*, *dēcapitāt-* : Latin *dē-*, *de-* + Latin *caput*, *capit-*, head; see **kaput-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots](#).]

de·cap'i·ta tion *n.*

de·cap i·ta'tor *n.*

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Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

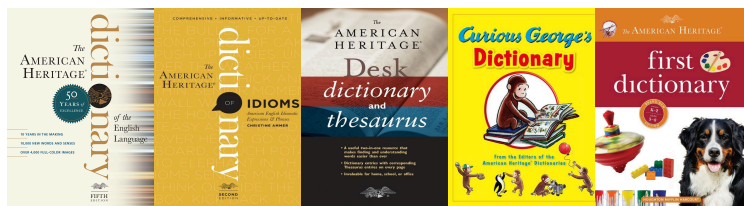
Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

[Indo-European Roots](#)

[Semitic Roots](#)

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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