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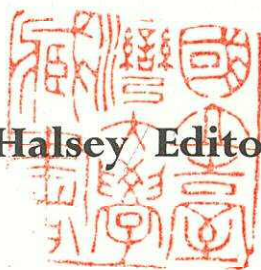
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# Dic tion ary

L to Z

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**William D. Halsey** Editorial Director



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**mis-state** (mis stāt') -stat-ed, -stat-ing. *v.t.* to state incorrectly or falsely. —**mis-state'ment**, *n.*

**mis-step** (mis step') *n.* 1. wrong or careless step. 2. mistake in conduct; improper act.

**mis-sus** (mis'əz) *n.* Informal. missis.

**miss-y** (mis'ē) *pl.*, **miss-ies**. *n.* Informal. miss.

**mist** (mist) *n.* 1. suspension of water in the air, at or near the earth's surface, consisting of tiny droplets that are finer than those occurring in fog and therefore permitting greater visibility. 2. water vapor condensed on and clouding a surface: *All the windows in the steamy room were covered with a thin mist.* 3. something resembling mist, as a thin cloud of smoke or a fine spray from a pressurized can. 4. cloudiness or filminess before the eyes that blurs the vision. 5. something that dims, clouds, or obscures: *times . . . half-shrouded in the mist of legend* (Freeman, 1869). —*v.i.* 1. to be or become covered with or clouded by mist: *The young girl's eyes misted over with tears.* 2. to rain in very fine drops; drizzle. —*v.t.* to cover or cloud with mist. [Old English *mist* darkness.]

**mis-tak-a-ble** (mis tā'kə bəl) *adj.* capable of being mistaken or misunderstood. —**mis-tak'a-bly**, *adv.*

**mis-take** (mis tāk') *n.* error in action, thought, judgment, or perception. —*v.t.*, -took, -tak-en, -tak-ing. 1. to regard, identify, or recognize (a person or thing) incorrectly; take (someone or something) to be another (often with *for*): *Tyrants often mistake fear for respect.* 2. to make an error in understanding or interpreting: *You must have mistaken my intentions.* —*v.i.* to make a mistake; err. [Old Norse *mistaka* to take in error.]

**Syn. *n.*** Mistake, error, blunder mean a wrong or inaccurate act or speech. Mistake is applied to a wrong action or statement arising from faulty judgment or inadequate knowledge: *The boy made a few mistakes in his first attempt to read the poem.* Error refers to an infraction of an accepted code, guide, or pattern arising from faulty reasoning or ignorance: *The typist has made several errors in copying the manuscript.* Blunder refers to a gross or stupid mistake resulting from mental confusion or lack of foresight and care: *The general's tactical blunder cost many lives.*

**mis-tak-en** (mis tā'kən) *adj.* 1. based on error or misjudgment; wrong: *a mistaken belief, a mistaken viewpoint.* 2. wrong in action, thought, judgment, or perception. —**mis-tak'en-ly**, *adv.*

**mis-teach** (mis tēch') -taught, -teach-ing. *v.t.* to teach (a subject) poorly or incorrectly.

**mis-ter** (mis'tər) *n.* 1. Mister. form of address used before a man's name, usually written *Mr.*: *Mr. Smith. Mr. Chairman.* 2. also, Mister. form of address used in place of a man's name: *Want a paper, mister?* [Form of MASTER.]

**mis-time** (mis tīm') -timed, -tim-ing. *v.t.*

1. to say or do at an inappropriate or wrong time. 2. to misjudge the time of.

**mis-tle-toe** (mis'əl tō') *n.* 1. any of a large group of parasitic plants that live on the branches of various trees and have yellowish-green leaves and small, round fruits, as *Phoradendron flavescens*, the best-known U.S. species. 2. sprig of such a plant, often used for Christmas decoration. [Old English *misteltān* the plant.]

**mis-took** (mis took') past tense of **mis-take**.

**mis-tral** (mis'trəl, mis träl') *n.* cold, dry wind, often of great intensity, that blows from the north or northwest toward the Mediterranean coast of France. [French *mistral*, from Provençal *mistrāl* literally, masterly wind, from Latin *magistrālis* relating to a master, from *magister* master.]

**mis-trans-late** (mis'trans lāt', -tranz-, mis trans'lāt, -tranz'-) -lat-ed, -lat-ing. *v.t.* to translate incorrectly. —**mis'trans-la'tion**, *n.*

**mis-treat** (mis trēt') *v.t.* to treat badly or abusively. —**mis-treat'ment**, *n.*

**mis-tress** (mis'tris) *n.* 1. woman in a position of authority or control, as the head of a household or estate. 2. woman who owns an animal or, formerly, the female owner of a slave. 3. woman having complete control over something: *Her beauty made her mistress of men's hearts.* 4. also, Mistress. something that is thought of as female and has authority or control over something else: *England's mighty navy made her mistress of the high seas.* 5. woman who has a continued sexual relationship with a man to whom she is not married. 6. woman who has mastered an art or skill. 7. Mistress. Archaic. title of address used before the name of a woman. 8. Archaic. sweetheart. 9. British. female schoolteacher. [Old French *maistress*, feminine of *maistre* one in charge, chief. See MASTER.]

**mis-tri-al** (mis trī'al) *n.* Law. 1. trial that is invalid because of some

error in the proceedings. 2. inconclusive trial in which the jury fails to agree on a verdict.

**mis-trust** (mis trust') *n.* lack of trust or confidence. —*v.t.* to regard with suspicion or doubt. —*v.i.* to be suspicious or wary. —**mis-trust'ful**, *adj.*

**mist-y** (mis'tē) **mist-i-er**, **mist-i-est**. *adj.* 1. of, resembling, or characterized by mist: *a misty spring morning.* 2. clouded or obscured by or as by mist: *misty mountains in the distance.* 3. blurred or clouded with a mist of tears; tearful. 4. lacking clarity; vague; indistinct: *a misty recollection.* —**mist'i-ly**, *adv.* —**mist'i-ness**, *n.*

**mis-un-der-stand** (mis'un dər stand') -stood, -stand-ing. *v.t.*, *v.i.* to understand incorrectly or fail to understand; misinterpret.

**mis-un-der-stand-ing** (mis'un dər stan'ding) *n.* 1. failure to understand; error in interpretation. 2. disagreement; quarrel.

**mis-un-der-stood** (mis'un dər stood') *adj.* 1. incorrectly understood. 2. not properly appreciated.

**mis-us-age** (mis ū'sij, -zij) *n.* 1. wrong or improper use or application, as of words. 2. bad treatment; abuse.

**mis-use** (*n.*, mis ūs'; *v.*, mis ūz') *n.* wrong or improper use; misapplication: *the misuse of a word, misuse of funds.* —*v.t.*, -used, -us-ing. 1. to use wrongly or improperly; misapply. 2. to treat badly or abusively: *Who misuses a dog would misuse a child* (Tennyson, 1884).

**mis-word** (mis wurd') *v.t.* to word incorrectly or poorly.

**Mitch-ell, Mount** (mich'əl) highest mountain in the eastern United States, in western North Carolina.

**mite**<sup>1</sup> (mit) *n.* any of a group of tiny arachnids, order Acarina, having piercing, sucking mouth parts. Mites often damage stored foods or infest plants or animals. [Old English *mīte* any tiny insect.]

**mite**<sup>2</sup> (mīt) *n.* 1. very small amount, object, or creature. 2. very small sum of money or contribution. 3. coin of very small value. [Middle Dutch *mīte* coin of small value.]

**mi-ter** (mī'tər) also, **mi-tre**. *n.* 1. liturgical head-dress worn by bishops and other prelates, consisting of a tall, peaked cap that can be folded flat, with two fringed strips of material hanging from the back. 2. official headdress of the ancient Jewish high priest, wrapped in folds around the head. 3. miter joint. 4. beveled edge on either of the pieces used to form a miter joint. —*v.t.* 1. to bestow a miter upon. 2. to join with a miter joint. 3. to cut or shape for forming a miter joint; cut to a miter. [Latin *mītra* cap, from Greek *mītra* headband.]

**miter box**, device with slotted sides used to guide a saw when making miter joints.

**miter joint**, joint formed by two pieces of wood or other material, whose joined edges have been beveled to form angles.

**miter square**, device having a blade set at a 45-degree angle or an adjustable blade, used to mark the angles of miter joints.

**Mith-ra-ism** (mith'rə iz'əm) *n.* ancient Persian religion based on the worship of Mithras. —**Mith-ra-ic** (mith rā'ik), **Mith'ra-is'tic**, *adj.* —**Mith'ra-ist**, *n.*, *adj.*

**Mith-ras** (mith'ras) also, **Mith-ra** (mith'rə). *n.* Persian god of light and truth, associated with the sun.

**Mith-ri-da-tes VI** (mith'rə dā'tēz) c.132–63 B.C., king of Pontus from 120 to 63 B.C. and bitter opponent of Rome.

**mit-i-gate** (mit'ə gāt') -gat-ed, -gat-ing. *v.t.* to make milder or less severe, intense, or painful: *to mitigate anger, to mitigate suffering.* [Latin *mītigātus*, past participle of *mītigāre* to make soft, calm.] —**mit-i-ga-ble** (mit'i gə bəl), *adj.* —**mit'i-ga'tion**, **mit'i-ga'tor**, *n.*

**mit-i-ga-tive** (mit'ə gā'tiv) *adj.* tending to mitigate. Also, **mit-i-ga-to-ry** (mit'i gə tōr'ē).

**mi-to-chon-dri-a** (mī'tə kon'drē ə, mit'ə-) *sing.*, -dri-on (-drē ən). *n.pl.* Biology. minute rods, filaments, or granules found in the cytoplasm of nearly all cells. They serve as centers of cellular respiration and the sites of energy production. [From Greek *mitos* thread + *chondrion* small grain.] —**mi'to-chon'dri-al**, *adj.*

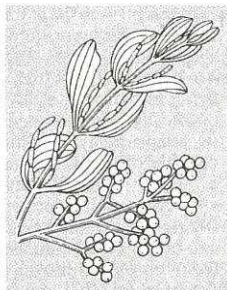
**mi-to-sis** (mī tō'sis, mi-) *n.* process of cell division in which the nucleus of a cell normally divides into two identical nuclei, and the cell itself usually divides equally, separating into two new cells, each with the same number of chromosomes as the parent cell. [Modern Latin *mitosis*, from Greek *mitos* thread.] —**mi-tot-ic** (mī tot'ik), *adj.* —**mi-tot'i-cal-ly**, *adv.*

**mi-tral** (mī'trəl) *adj.* 1. of, relating to, or resembling a miter. 2. of or relating to a mitral valve.

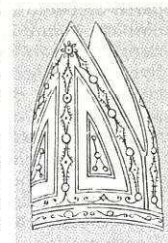
**mitral valve**, heart valve consisting of two flaps, located between the left atrium and left ventricle.

**mi-tre** (mī'tər) *n.* miter. —*v.t.*, **mi-tred**, **mi-tring**. to miter.

**mitt** (mit) *n.* 1. baseball glove, esp. that worn by the catcher. 2. mitten (*def. 1*). 3. woman's glove, often of lace, that may cover the



Mistletoe



Miter



from Greek *historia* inquiry, information, account. Doublet of HISTORY.] —Syn. 3. see account.

**sto-ry**<sup>2</sup> (stôr'ē) *pl.*, *-ries*. *also*, **sto-rey**. *n.* 1. one of the horizontal structural divisions of a building, comprising the area between two successive floors. 2. set of rooms on the same floor level of a building. 3. any of a series of horizontal divisions, stages, or levels. [Possibly from Medieval Latin *historia* picture, section of a building decorated with pictures, story of a building, from Latin *historia* narrative of past events. See STORY<sup>1</sup>.] —Syn. 1. see floor.

**sto-ry-book** (stôr'ē book') *n.* book containing a story or stories, esp. for children. —*adj.* occurring in or resembling the style of a storybook; romantic: *a storybook marriage*.

**sto-ry-tell-er** (stôr'ē tel'er) *n.* 1. one who tells or writes stories. 2. *Informal*. liar; fibber. —**sto'ry-tell'ing**, *adj.*, *n.*

**stoup** (stōp) *n.* 1. basin containing holy water at or near the entrance of a church. 2. *Archaic*. drinking vessel, as a cup, flagon, or tankard. [Old Norse *stauþ* cup.]

**stout** (stout) *adj.* 1. having a thick, bulky figure; thickset; fat. 2. valiant; brave; courageous. 3. having strength and vigor; physically strong; robust: *stout laborers*. 4. solid in structure, substance, or material: *a stout ship, a stout meal*. —*n.* strong, very dark, heavy ale. [Old French *estout* bold, fierce, insolent; of Germanic origin.] —**stout'ly**, *adv.* —**stout'ness**, *n.* —Syn. *adj.* 1. see fat.

**stout-heart-ed** (stout'här'tid) *adj.* valiant; brave; courageous. —**stout'-heart'ed-ly**, *adv.* —**stout'-heart'ed-ness**, *n.*

**stove**<sup>1</sup> (stōv) *n.* 1. kitchen appliance that uses gas or electricity and consists of burners, an oven, and sometimes a storage compartment, used for cooking. 2. any of various heating or cooking devices that uses wood, coal, gas, oil, or electricity. 3. heated room or box used for some special purpose, as a hothouse or kiln. [Middle Dutch *stove* heated chamber.]

**stove**<sup>2</sup> (stōv) *past tense and past participle of stove*.

**stove-pipe** (stōv'pīp') *n.* 1. pipe, usually of sheet metal, used to convey smoke, fumes, and noxious gases from a stove. 2. *Informal*. tall silk hat.

**stow** (stō) *v.t.* 1. to put or pack away, esp. in a neat, compact manner. 2. to fill by packing; load. 3. (of a space or receptacle) to have room or space for; accommodate; hold. 4. *Slang*. to stop; cease. —*v.i.* to stow away, to be a stowaway. [Middle English *stowen* to place, from *stowe* a place, from Old English *stōw*.]

**stow-age** (stō'ij) *n.* 1. act or manner of stowing; being stowed. 2. room or space for stowing goods or other items. 3. that which is stowed or to be stowed. 4. charge for stowing goods.

**stow-a-way** (stō'ə wā') *n.* one who conceals himself on a ship or airplane, esp. in order to obtain free passage.

**Stowe, Harriet Bee-cher** (stō; bē'chər) 1811–96, U.S. author. **St. Paul**, capital of Minnesota, in the southeastern part of the state, on the Mississippi opposite Minneapolis. Pop. (1970), 309,980.

**St. Pe-ters-burg** (pē'tərz burg') 1. see Leningrad. 2. city in west-central Florida on the Gulf of Mexico. Pop. (1970), 216,232.

**str.** 1. steamer. 2. strait.

**stra-bis-mus** (strə biz'məs) *n.* abnormality of vision in which both eyes cannot be focused on the same point at the same time. [Modern Latin *strabismus*, from Greek *strabismos* squinting.] —**stra-bis'mal**, *adj.*

**Strabo** (strā'bō) *n.* c.63 B.C.–A.D. c.21, Greek geographer and historian.

**strad-dle** (strad'al) *-dled*, *-dling*. *v.t.* 1. to sit, stand, or walk with one leg on each side of: *to straddle a fence, to straddle a horse*. 2. to appear to favor both sides of (an issue). 3. to spread (the legs) wide apart. —*v.i.* 1. to sit, stand, or walk with the legs wide apart. 2. to appear to favor both sides of an issue. 3. (of the legs) to be wide apart. —*n.* 1. act of straddling. 2. distance between the two legs of one who straddles. [STRIDE + -LE.] —**strad'dler**, *n.*

**Strad-i-var-i, An-to-nio** (strad'ə vār'ē, -vār'ē; än tō'nyō) c.1644–1737, Italian violin maker.

**Strad-i-var-i-us** (strad'ə vār'ē əs) *n.* violin, viola, or cello made by Stradivari.

**strafe** (sträf) *strafed*, *straf-ing*. *v.t.* to attack (troops, ships, or the like) with machine-gun or rocket fire from low-flying aircraft. —*v.i.* to attack with machine-gun or rocket fire from low-flying aircraft. [From the German expression (used in World War I) *Gott strafe England* God punish England.] —**straf'er**, *n.*

**strag-gle** (strag'al) *-gled*, *-gling*. *v.i.* 1. to wander or move about in an irregular, rambling manner. 2. to stray from or lag behind the main course or body. [Of uncertain origin.] —**strag'gler**, *n.*

**strag-gly** (strag'lē) *-gli-er*, *-gli-est*. *adj.* spread out or scattered in an irregular, rambling manner.

**straight** (strāt) *adj.* 1. proceeding in the same direction without curve, bend, or angularity: *a straight line*. 2. not curly, wavy, or kinky: *straight hair*. 3. not crooked or stooping; erect: *to stand with a straight back*.

4. in proper arrangement, order, or condition: *She tried to keep her room straight. I couldn't keep the twins' names straight*. 5. frank; candid: *a straight answer*. 6. without interruption; unbroken; continuous: *She spoke for three hours straight*. 7. marked by adherence to truth, fairness, and honesty; upright. 8. strictly adhering to or supporting the platform, policy, and candidates of a particular political party: *He voted a straight Democratic ticket*. 9. not mixed, altered, or diluted, as an alcoholic liquor. —*adv.* 1. in a straight line or course: *Go straight down Main Street*. 2. all the way to the end; continuously. 3. without delay; immediately: *I went straight home after the movie*. 4. **straight off** (or away). without delay; immediately. 5. **to go straight**. to reform after having engaged in criminal activities. —*n.* 1. something straight, as a line or part. 2. straight part of a race course between the last turn and the finish line. 3. *Poker*. hand consisting of five cards in sequence. [Middle English *streight* not crooked, direct, past participle of *strecchen* to extend, from Old English *streccan*.] —**straight'ly**, *adv.* —**straight'ness**, *n.*

**straight angle**, angle of 180 degrees.

**straight-arm** (strāt'ärm') *v.t.* *Football*. to ward off (a potential tackler) by holding one's arm out straight.

**straight-a-way** (strāt'ə wā') *adv.* at once; immediately. —*adj.* extending in a straight line or course. —*n.* straight course or part, esp. of a race course.

**straight-edge** (strāt'ej') *n.* ruler (def. 2).

**straight-en** (strāt'an) *v.t.*, *v.i.* 1. to make or become straight (often with *up* or *out*). 2. to restore or be restored to the proper order, arrangement, or condition (usually with *up* or *out*). 3. to make or become honest or respectable (usually with *out*). —**straight'en-er**, *n.*

**straight face**, face that shows or betrays no emotion.

**straight-faced** (strāt'fäst') *adj.* showing no emotion.

**straight flush**, hand in poker consisting of a sequence of five cards in the same suit.

**straight-for-ward** (strāt'fōr'wōrd) *adj.* 1. honest; frank; sincere. 2. proceeding or directed straight ahead. —*adv.* *also*, **straight'-for'-wards**. in a straightforward manner or course. —**straight'for'-ward-ly**, *adv.* —**straight'for'-ward-ness**, *n.*

**straight jacket**, strait jacket.

**straight man**, entertainer who assists a comedian, as by feeding him lines or serving as the butt of his jokes.

**straight-way** (strāt'wā') *adv.* at once; immediately.

**strain**<sup>1</sup> (strān) *v.t.* 1. to draw or pull tight; stretch: *The weight of the cargo strained the ropes*. 2. to injure, weaken, or impair by excessive stretching or overexertion: *to strain a muscle*. 3. to exert to the utmost: *She strained her voice to be heard above the noise of the engine*. 4. to stretch beyond proper, normal, or legitimate limits: *The judge strained the law when passing sentence*. 5.a. to press or pour through a strainer, sieve, or other filtering device. b. to separate or remove by filtration. 6. to change (a material body) in size or shape by the application of stress. —*v.i.* 1. to make violent and continuous effort to do or achieve something; exert oneself to the utmost: *She strained to reach her goal*. 2. to pull forcibly (with *at*): *The horse strained at the rope*. 3. to be subjected to great pressure or force: *The awning strained under the heavy snow*. 4. to admit of being strained, as a liquid. —*n.* 1. extreme physical force or pressure. 2. injury or impairment caused by excessive stretching or overexertion. 3. extreme mental or emotional pressure or tension: *He broke under the strain of combat*. 4. act of straining; being strained. 5. change in the size and shape of a material body resulting from the application of stress. [Old French *estraindre* to grip, writing, press tightly, from Latin *stringere* to draw tight.] —Syn. *n.* 3. see stress.

**strain**<sup>2</sup> (strān) *n.* 1.a. line of descent; ancestry; stock. b. descendants of a common ancestor collectively. 2. group of animals or plants having distinguishing characteristics and forming a small part or subdivision of a larger group. 3. inherited or characteristic quality or tendency: *a strain of nobility*. 4. manner, style, or tone of expression. 5. *also*, strains. musical passage; tune. [Old English *strēon* gain, product.]

**strain-er** (strā'nər) *n.* 1. any of various utensils or devices, as a colander or sieve, through which liquids are passed to separate them from solids. 2. one who or that which strains.

**strait** (strāt) *n.* 1. narrow waterway or channel connecting two larger bodies of water. 2. *also*, straits, position or circumstance of difficulty, distress, or need: *to be in desperate financial straits*. —*adj.* *Archaic*. 1. narrow or confining. 2. righteous or strict. [Anglo-Norman *estreit* narrow, strict, from Latin *strictus* tight, severe, past participle of *stringere* to draw tight. Doublet of STRICT.]

**strait-en** (strāt'an) *v.t.* 1. to cause to be in need or difficulty, esp. financially. 2. to make narrow or confining.

**strait jacket** *also*, straight jacket. jacketlike canvas garment with elongated sleeves that wrap around the body, used to confine the arms of a violent patient or prisoner.

**strait-laced** (strāt'läst') *adj.* excessively strict or rigid in morals or manners; prudish.



## strake / stray

**strake** (strāk) *n.* continuous line of planking or plating extending along the side of a ship from the bow to the stern.

**stra-mo-ni-um** (strā mō'nē əm) *n.* drug prepared from the dried leaves and seed of the jimsonweed, used as a sedative. [Modern Latin *stramonium*; of uncertain origin.]

**strand**<sup>1</sup> (strand) *v.t., v.i.* 1. to drive or run (a boat or ship) aground. 2. to leave or be left in a difficult or helpless position, esp. in a strange or isolated place. —*n.* land bordering a body of water; shore or beach. [Old English *strand* land bordering a body of water.]

**strand**<sup>2</sup> (strand) *n.* 1. one of the threads, wires, or fibers twisted together to form a rope, cord, or other line. 2. any single thread, hair, or other stringlike structure: *a strand of spaghetti, strands of hair*. 3. string of things joined together by twisting, twining, or threading: *a strand of pearls*. [Of uncertain origin.]

**strange** (strānj) **strang-er, strang-est.** *adj.* 1. differing from the usual or ordinary; remarkable or odd: *That was a strange thing for her to do*. 2. not previously known, seen, or experienced; unfamiliar: *That part of town is strange to me*. 3. ill at ease; uncomfortable: *I would feel strange asking him such a favor*. 4. unaccustomed to or inexperienced in (with to): *I'm strange to this work*. [Old French *estrange* foreign, from Latin *extrāneus* external, foreign, from *extrā* outside. Doublet of *EXTRANE-ous*.] —**strange'ly, adv.** —**strange'ness, n.**

**Syn.** 1. *Strange, odd, peculiar* mean varying markedly from what is ordinary, usual, or expected. *Strange* is applied to what is new, novel, or foreign and implies fear or curiosity: *The strange object seen last night has not yet been identified*. *Odd* is applied to what stands out as inconsistent, irregular, or otherwise unrelated to others of the same group or type, often arousing amusement or interest: *That's an odd question—I just don't know how to answer it*. *Peculiar* is applied to what is distinctive about something and therefore may not be easily categorized: *She has a peculiar way of talking*.

**stranger** (strān'jər) *n.* 1. person with whom one is not acquainted or familiar. 2. foreigner, outsider, or newcomer. 3. one who is ignorant of, unacquainted with, or unaccustomed to something specified (with to): *He's no stranger to political intrigue*.

**strangle** (strāng'gəl) **-gled, -gling.** *v.t.* 1.a. to kill or attempt to kill by squeezing the throat to stop the breath; throttle. b. to suffocate or choke in any manner. 2. to hold back; stifle: *to strangle a laugh*. 3. to prevent or inhibit the growth, development, or functioning of: *a bill intended to strangle foreign trade*. —*v.i.* to become strangled. [Old French *estrangler* to choke, from Latin *strangulāre*, from Greek *strangalān*.] —**stran'gler, n.**

**strangle-hold** (strāng'gəl hōld') *n.* 1. illegal wrestling hold that chokes an opponent. 2. any force or influence that hinders, restricts, or stifles freedom or progress.

**strangle-gu-late** (strāng'gyə lāt') **-lat-ed, -lat-ing.** *v.t.* 1. to strangle. 2. to obstruct, compress, or constrict (a bodily part) so as to prevent circulation or the passage of fluid. [Latin *strangulātus*, past participle of *strangulāre* to choke. See *STRANGLE*.]

**strangle-gu-la-tion** (strāng'gyə lā'shən) *n.* 1. act of strangling; being strangled. 2. obstruction, compression, or constriction of a bodily part so as to prevent circulation or the passage of fluid.

**strap** (strap) *n.* 1. long, narrow, flexible strip of leather, cloth, or other material, often having a buckle or other fastener, for securing or holding things together or in position. 2. loop of metal, leather, or other material, grasped by the hand and used to steady oneself in a moving vehicle. 3. shoulder strap. 4. narrow metal band used to fasten or hold things together or in position. 5. strop. —*v.t.*, **strapped, strap-ping.** 1. to fasten, secure, or support with a strap. 2. to beat with a strap. 3. to sharpen on a strop. [Form of *STROP*.]

**strap-hang-er** (strap'hang'ər) *n.* *Informal.* standing passenger on a bus or subway who holds onto an overhead strap or other support.

**strapped** (strapt) *adj.* *Informal.* having little or no money; broke.

**strap-ping** (strap'ping) *adj.* *Informal.* tall and sturdy; robust: *a strap-ping young man*.

**Stras-bourg** (stras'burg', strāz'boorg') *n.* city in northeastern France, on the Rhine. Pop. (1968), 249,396.

**stra-ta** (strā'tə, strat'ə, strā'tə) *a plural of stratum.*

**strat-a-gem** (strat'ə jəm) *n.* 1. scheme or maneuver designed to outwit, deceive, or surprise an enemy. 2. scheme or trick used to achieve a goal or obtain an advantage. [French *stratagème*, from Latin *stratē-gēma*, from Greek *stratēgēma*, from *stratēgos* general. See *STRATEGY*.]

**stra-te-gic** (strā tē'jik) *adj.* 1. of or relating to strategy. 2. important or essential to strategy, esp. military strategy. 3. trained or intended to destroy the communications, industry, and transportation of an enemy in order to lessen his ability to fight. Also, **stra-te'gi-cal**. —**stra-te'gi-cal-ly, adv.**

**strat-e-gist** (strat'ə jist) *n.* one who is trained or skilled in strategy, esp. military strategy.

**strat-e-gy** (strat'ə jē) *pl., -gies. n.* 1. art or science of planning and directing large-scale military operations and campaigns. Distinguished

from *tactics*. 2. skillful use of planning, as in business, politics, or social relations. 3. plan or device designed to achieve a specific goal or advantage. [Greek *stratēgiā* generalship, command, from *stratēgos* general, from *stratos* army + *agein* to lead.]

**Strat-ford-on-A-vo-n** (strat'fōrd ōn ā'vən, -av'ən, -on-) *n.* town in central England, on the Avon River, noted as the birthplace, home, and burial place of William Shakespeare. Pop. (1963 est.), 17,000. Also, **Strat'ford**.

**strat-i-fi-ca-tion** (strat'ə fi kā'shən) *n.* 1. act or process of stratifying; being stratified. 2. stratified structure or formation, as of rock.

**strat-i-fy** (strat'ə fī') **-fied, -fy-ing.** *v.t.* 1. to form or arrange in layers or strata. 2. to divide into social groups or classes, as according to common social or economic characteristics. —*v.i.* to form strata. [French *stratifier* to arrange in layers or strata, from Medieval Latin *stratificare* to form strata, from Latin *strātum* covering + *facere* to make.]

**stra-tig-ra-phy** (strā tig'rə fē) *n.* branch of earth science dealing with the formation, composition, and age of rock strata. [STRATUM + -GRAPHY.] —**strat-i-graph-ic** (strat'ə graf'ik); also, **strat'i-graph'i-cal, adj.**

**stra-to-cu-mu-lus** (strā'tō kū'myə ləs, strat'ō-) *pl., -li (-lī') or -lus. n.* mass of low-lying, watery clouds spread out against the sky in a layer of puffy rolls. [STRAT(US) + CUMULUS.]

**strat-o-sphere** (strat'ə sfēr') *n.* layer of the atmosphere, above the troposphere and below the mesosphere, extending from about twelve to about thirty-five miles above the earth's surface. Ozone formed in the upper part of this region protects the earth from ultraviolet radiation from the sun. [STRAT(UM) + (ATM)OSPHERE.] —**strat-o-spher-ic** (strat'ə sfer'ik); also, **strat'o-spher'i-cal, adj.**

**stra-tum** (strā'təm, strat'əm, strā'təm) *pl., stra-ta or stra-tums. n.* 1. horizontal layer of material, esp. one of several parallel layers placed or lying one on top of the other. 2. social group or class distinguished by certain common social or economic characteristics. 3. *Geology.* a. rock formation consisting of a number of layers of rock of approximately the same material. b. single layer of sedimentary rock. [Modern Latin *stratum*, from Latin *strātum* covering; literally, something spread out, from *sternere* to spread out.]

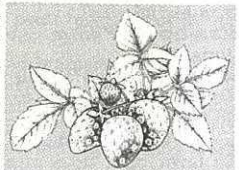
**stratus** (strā'təs, strat'əs) *pl., stra-ti* (strā'tī, strat'tī) or **stra-tus. n.** low-lying, grayish, watery cloud having a uniform horizontal base and a foglike appearance. [Modern Latin *stratus*, from Latin *strātus*, past participle of *sternere* to spread out.]

**Strauss** (straws, shtraws) 1. **Jo-hann** (yō'hän). 1804–49, Austrian composer. 2. **Johann**. 1825–99, his son; Austrian composer. 3. **Richard** (rich'ərd, rikH'ärt). 1864–1949, German composer.

**Stra-vin-sky, I-gor Feo-do-ro-vich** (strā vin'skē, ē'gōr fyō'də rō'vich) 1882–1971, Russian composer.

**straw** (strō) *n.* 1. long slender tube, as of paper or plastic, used for sucking up a liquid. 2. dry stalks or stems of any of various grains, as rye, oats, wheat, or barley, after they have been threshed. Straw is used esp. as bedding for livestock and for making hats, baskets, and other woven products. 3. a single one of such stalks or stems. 4. something of little value or significance; trifle. 5. **to clutch** (or **catch** or **grasp**) **at a straw** (or **straws**). to use any means that offers even the slightest possibility of being helpful. —*adj.* 1. made of straw: *a straw hat*. 2. of or resembling straw. 3. of little value or significance; trifling. 4. yellowish in color. [Old English *strēaw* stalks of certain grains.]

**straw-ber-ry** (strō'ber'ē) *pl., -ries. n.* 1. edible, sweet, juicy red fruit of any of a group of plants, genus *Fragaria*, of the rose family. 2. low-growing plant bearing this fruit, having many slender stalks and grown in temperate regions of the world.



Strawberries

**strawberry blond** also, **strawberry blonde.** person having reddish-blond hair.

**straw-board** (strō'bōrd') *n.* coarse cardboard made of straw, used for boxes, book covers, and the like.

**straw boss** *Informal.* assistant foreman, esp. of a work crew.

**straw man** 1. bundle of straw made to resemble the figure of a man. 2. weak argument deliberately set up by a person so that he may easily refute it. 3. one who is weak or unimportant. 4. person who disguises the activities of another, esp. one who serves as a front in a fraudulent activity.

**straw poll**, unofficial poll taken to determine the trend of public opinion, as on a particular issue or political candidate. Also, **straw vote**.

**stray** (strā) *v.i.* 1. to wander from a given course or group or beyond proper limits. 2. to wander or move about idly or without direction; rove. 3. to turn from a course that is considered morally right or good; err. 4. to digress or become easily distracted from the matter at hand: *His thoughts strayed*. —*adj.* 1. wandering, lost, or homeless: *a stray*



sheep. 2. found or occurring randomly or occasionally; scattered or isolated: *There were a few stray hairs on her coat.* 3. deviating from the proper or intended course: *An innocent bystander was hit by a stray bullet.* —*n.* lost or homeless animal or person. [Old French *estraier* to rove, go astray, going back to Latin *extrā* beyond + *vagārī* to wander.]

**streak** (strēk) *n.* 1. long, thin irregularly shaped mark, line, or band differing in color or texture from the material or surface of which it forms a part: *to have streaks of gray in one's hair.* 2. slight trace or tendency: *a streak of genius, a streak of madness.* 3. temporary run; brief period: *a streak of bad luck.* 4. unbroken series: *a winning streak of ten consecutive games.* —*v.t.* to mark with a streak or streaks; form streaks on or in. —*v.i.* 1. to form a streak or streaks. 2. to become streaked. 3. to move, run, or go at great speed. [Old English *strica* mark, line.]

**streak-y** (strē'kē) **streak-i-er**, **streak-i-est**, *adj.* 1. marked with, characterized by, or occurring in streaks. 2. of variable or uneven quality or character; inconsistent: *a streaky hockey player.* —**streak'i-ly**, *adv.* —**streak'i-ness**, *n.*

**stream** (strēm) *n.* 1. body of running water, esp. a small river. 2. force, volume, or direction of the current in a body of water. 3. steady flow or current of any fluid: *a stream of air.* 4. any continuous, uninterrupted movement, emission, or succession: *a stream of people, a stream of words.* 5. ray or beam of light. —*v.i.* 1. to flow or issue in a stream: *Tears streamed down her face. Light streamed into the room when I parted the curtains.* 2. to pour forth or emit a stream (often with *with*): *The runner came off the track streaming with sweat.* 3. to move along steadily or smoothly; flow: *The audience streamed out of the auditorium.* 4. to wave, float, or extend outward: *The banners streamed in the wind.* 5. to hang or fall loosely: *Her hair streamed over her shoulders.* —*v.t.* to pour out, discharge, or emit in a stream. [Old English *strēam* current, flowing water, river.]

**stream-er** (strē'mər) *n.* 1. long, narrow flag or banner. 2. any long, narrow strip of material. 3. newspaper headline that extends across the entire page.

**stream-let** (strēm'lit) *n.* little stream.

**stream-line** (strēm'lin') **-lined**, **-lin-ing**, *v.t.* 1. to design or construct so that there is the least possible resistance to air or water: *to streamline an automobile.* 2. to make more modern or efficient: *to streamline the administration of government.* —*adj.* streamlined.

**stream-lined** (strēm'līnd') *adj.* 1. designed or constructed so as to offer the least possible resistance to air or water. 2. efficient and modern. 3. neat, trim, and having few curves.

**stream of consciousness** 1. the conscious experience of an individual regarded as a series of events or experiences flowing continuously onward, rather than as separate, disconnected occurrences. 2. literary device that presents the dramatic action of a novel through the spontaneous flow of the thoughts, feelings, and emotions of a character.

**street** (strēt) *n.* 1. public way in a city or town, usually with sidewalks and buildings on one or both sides: *a tree-lined street, a street of shops.* 2. that part of such a roadway for vehicles, excluding the sidewalks and buildings: *Be careful crossing the street.* 3. people who live, work or gather in a street: *The whole street went to the meeting.* [Old English *stræt* paved way, road, from Late Latin *strāta* (via) paved (way), from Latin *sternere* to spread out, pave.]

**street Arab**, homeless child that wanders about the streets.

**street-car** (strēt'kär') *n.* public passenger vehicle that operates on rails in city streets by electricity. Also, **trol'ley**, **trolley car**.

**strength** (strengkth, strength) *n.* 1. state or quality of being strong; physical power or energy: *He lifted heavy weights to build up his strength.* 2. power to sustain or resist attack, force, strain, or stress without breaking or yielding: *to test the strength of a rope.* 3. power or ability to act, command, enforce obedience, or make decisions: *His strength as a general lay in his ability to gain the respect of his men.* 4. firmness of mind, character, will, or purpose; moral courage: *It took great strength to resist the pressure of the authorities.* 5. legal, moral, or intellectual power, influence, or effectiveness: *the strength of an argument.* 6. vigor or vehemence, as of feeling or conviction: *the strength of his devotion.* 7. degree of intensity, as of light, sound, or color: *the strength of an electric current.* 8. degree of concentration or effectiveness: *the strength of a wine, the differing strengths of a drug.* 9. concentration of available force or backing: *The strength of the party is among the liberal and urban elements of the nation.* 10. military power derived as from numbers, equipment, or resources. 11. one who or that which strengthens; source of power or force. 12. **on the strength of**, based or depending on: *He was convicted on the strength of the witness's evidence.* [Old English *strengthu* quality of being strong, power.]

**strength-en** (strengk'than, streng'-) *v.t., v.i.* to make or become strong or stronger. —**strength'en-er**, *n.*

**stren-u-ous** (stren'ü əs) *adj.* 1. requiring or characterized by great

effort or exertion: *a strenuous task.* 2. very active or ardent; vigorous; energetic: *strenuous opposition.* [Latin *strēnuus* vigorous, active.] —**stren'u-ous-ly**, *adv.* —**stren'u-ous-ness**, *n.*

**strep throat** (strep) serious infection of the throat caused by a streptococcus and characterized by fever and the presence of pus in the throat.

**strep-to-coc-cal** (strep'tə kok'al) *adj.* of, relating to, or caused by streptococci. Also, **strep-to-coc-cic** (strep'tə kok'sik).

**strep-to-coc-cus** (strep'tə kok'əs) *pl., -coc-ci* (-kok'sī) *n.* any of a genus of spherical bacteria that multiply by dividing in one direction only, forming chains. Such diseases as scarlet fever, rheumatic fever, and strep throat are caused by various species of streptococcus. [Modern Latin *streptococcus*, from Greek *streptos* twisted chain + *kok-kos* berry, seed.]

**strep-to-my-cin** (strep'tō mī'sin) *n.* powerful antibiotic prepared from a type of fungus, effective against tuberculosis, typhoid fever, certain types of meningitis, and other bacterial infections. [Greek *streptos* twisted + *mykēs* fungus + *-in*.]

**stress** (stres) *n.* 1.a. mental or emotional tension or pressure. b. problem or situation causing this; constraining influence. 2. special significance, emphasis, or importance attached to something (with *on* or *upon*): *Father always put a lot of stress on good table manners.* 3. relative emphasis given to a particular sound, syllable, or word in speech. In the word *employ*, the stress is on the second syllable. 4. relative emphasis given to a particular word or syllable marking the rhythm of verse, usually occurring at fixed intervals. 5. *Music.* emphasis given to certain notes or chords. 6. *Physics.* a. externally applied force or pressure that tends to strain or deform a material body. b. internal resistance of a material body to such force or pressure. c. intensity of such force or pressure, usually measured in pounds per square inch. —*v.t.* 1. to place special significance, emphasis, or importance on: *The magazine article stressed the need for conservation of natural resources.* 2. to pronounce (a syllable, word, or words) with a particular stress. 3. to subject (a material body) to stress. [Partly shortened from *DISTRESS*; partly from Old French *estrece* narrowness, oppression, going back to Latin *strictus*, past participle of *stringere* to draw tight.]

**Syn. n.** 1.b. **Stress, pressure, strain** refer to the factor producing a condition of unrest or disturbance. **Stress** suggests a specific or clearly defined problem or adverse circumstance: *He was under great financial stress.* **Pressure** implies a less vague and more pervasive influence that cannot be easily resolved or withstood: *The pressure to conform was evident in everything the group did.* **Strain** suggests that the intense effort and exertion required in dealing with a problem is itself damaging and destructive: *The strain of working overtime every night sent him to bed.* 2. see **emphasis**.

**stretch** (stretch) *v.t.* 1. to straighten or spread out to full length or width (often with *out*): *He stretched his legs out into the aisle.* 2. to hold out; put forth (often with *out*): *He stretched his hand out to shake mine.* 3. to cause to extend from one place to another or across a given area: *to stretch a clothesline across a yard.* 4. to draw or pull tight: *to stretch a canvas over a frame.* 5. to strain; pull: *to stretch a muscle.* 6. to extend beyond proper, natural, or legitimate limits: *to stretch a point in an argument, to stretch the rules.* 7. to widen, lengthen, or pull out of shape by force: *to stretch a sweater.* 8. to extend in time; prolong (often with *out*): *to stretch a visit out for two weeks.* 9. to use or exert to the utmost. —*v.i.* 1. to lie down and extend the body to full length (often with *out*): *He stretched out on the couch.* 2. to straighten or spread out one's body or limbs to full length. 3. to extend from one place to another or across a given area: *The road stretches for another thirty miles.* 4. to become widened, lengthened, or pulled out of shape. 5. to extend over a period of time: *The experiment stretched over a period of two years.* —*n.* 1. unbroken space or area: *We flew over a stretch of desert.* 2. unbroken period of time: *She was out of the country for a stretch of two years.* 3. act of stretching; being stretched. 4. straight part of a race course, esp. the part between the last turn and the finish line. 5. *Informal.* last part of any contest or activity: *The election campaign is now coming into the stretch.* 6. *Informal.* period or term of imprisonment. —*adj.* made of material having elastic qualities: *stretch gloves, stretch pants.* [Old English *streccan* to extend.]

**stretch-er** (stretch'ər) *n.* 1. bedlike structure consisting of a piece of canvas or similar material stretched across a frame, used for carrying a sick, injured, or dead person. 2. any of various devices used to widen, lengthen, or shape a material or garment, as the wooden frame on which an artist's canvas is spread. 3. one who or that which stretches.

**strew** (strō) **strewed**, **strewed** or **strewn**, **strew-ing**, *v.t.* 1. to spread or throw about at random or in various places: *to strew hay on a barn floor.* 2. to cover with something spread or thrown about in this way: *The floor was strewn with scraps of paper and other litter.* 3. to be scattered over (a surface): *Confetti strewn the floor.* [Old English *strēowan* to scatter.]