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Editorial and
Guide to the
Dictionary of
Picture Credits

Bible
Calendar
Currency
Elements
Measurements

fire tower ► *n.* A tower in which a lookout for fires is posted.

fire-trap (fir'trăp') ► *n.* A building that can catch fire easily or is difficult to escape from in the event of fire.

fire-wall (fir'wôl) ► *n.* 1. A fireproof wall used as a barrier to prevent the spread of fire. 2. *Comp. Sci.* A security scheme that prevents unauthorized users from accessing a network.

fire-water (fir'wô'tar, -wô'tər) ► *n.* Slang Strong liquor, esp. whiskey. [Translation of Ojibwa *ishkodewaqbooo*, whiskey.]

fire-wood (fir'wôd') ► *n.* Wood used as fuel.

fire-works (fir'wûrks') ► *pl.n.* 1. Explosives and combustibles set off to generate colored lights, smoke, and noise for amusement. 2a. A spectacular display, as of musical virtuosity. b. A fiery verbal attack.

fire-ing line (fir'ing) ► *n.* 1. The line of positions from which fire is directed at a target. 2. The forefront of an activity; vanguard.

firing pin ► *n.* The part of the bolt of a firearm that strikes the primer and detonates the charge of a projectile.

firm¹ (fûrm) ► *adj.* -er, -est 1. Resistant to externally applied pressure. 2. Marked by the tone and resiliency of healthy tissue: *firm muscles*. 3. Securely fixed in place. 4. Indicating determination or resolution. 5. Constant; steadfast. 6. Fixed and definite: *a firm offer*. 7. Strong and sure: *a firm grasp*. ► *v.* To make or become firm. ► *adv.* -er, -est. Resolutely: *stand firm*. [*< Lat. firmus.*] —**firm'ly** *adv.* —**firm'ness** *n.*

firm² (fûrm) ► *n.* A commercial partnership of two or more persons, esp. when unincorporated. [*< Med.Lat. firmare, ratify by signature, ult. < Lat. firmus, firm.*]

firm-a-ment (fûr'mə-mənt) ► *n.* The vault or expanse of the heavens; the sky. [*< Lat. firmamentum, support.*]

firm-ware (fûrm'wâr') ► *n.* *Comp. Sci.* Instructions that are stored in ROM.

first (fûrst) ► *n.* 1. The ordinal number matching the number 1 in a series. 2. The one coming, occurring, or ranking first. 3. The beginning; outset: *from the first*. 4. The lowest forward gear in a motor vehicle. 5. The winning position in a contest. ► *adj.* 1. Coming before all others in order or location. 2. Prior to all others in time; earliest. 3. Ranking above all others; foremost. ► *adv.* 1. Before or above all others in time, order, rank, or importance. 2. For the first time. 3. Rather; preferably: *would die first*. 4. To begin with: *First we need to make sure of our facts*. [*< OE fyrst.*]

first aid ► *n.* Emergency treatment administered to an injured or sick person before professional medical care is available. —**first'-aid'** *adj.*

first base ► *n.* Baseball The first base to be reached by a runner. —**first baseman** *n.*

first-born (fûrst'bôrn') ► *adj.* First in order of birth. —**first'born'** *n.*

first class ► *n.* 1. The first, highest, or best group in a system of classification. 2. The most expensive class of accommodations. 3. A class of mail sealed against inspection. —**first'-class'** *adj.* & *adv.*

first cousin ► *n.* See **cousin 1**.

first-de-gree burn (fûrst'di-grē') ► *n.* A mild burn that produces redness of the skin but no blistering.

first-gen-er-a-tion (fûrst'jĕn'ə-rā'shən) ► *adj.*

1. Of or relating to an immigrant to another country. 2. Of or relating to one whose parents are immigrants.

first-hand (fûrst'hând') ► *adj.* Received from the original source. —**first'hand'** *adv.*

first-in, first-out (fûrst'in' fûrst'out') ► *n.* A method of inventory accounting in which the oldest remaining items are assumed to have been the first sold.

first lieutenant ► *n.* A rank, as in the US Army, above second lieutenant and below captain.

first-ly (fûrst'lē) ► *adv.* To begin with.

first mate ► *n.* An officer on a merchant ship ranking immediately below the captain.

first person ► *n.* The form of a verb or pronoun designating the speaker of the sentence in which it appears.

first-rate (fûrst'rāt') ► *adj.* Foremost in quality, rank, or importance. ► *adv.* Informal Very well; excellently.

first sergeant ► *n.* 1. A rank in the US Army and Marine Corps below sergeant major. 2. Any of three senior noncommissioned ranks in the US Air Force.

first strike ► *n.* The initial use of strategic nuclear weapons against a nuclear-armed adversary. —**first'-strike'** *adj.*

first-string (fûrst'string') ► *adj.* Of or being a regular member of a team rather than a substitute. —**first'-string'er** *n.*

firth (fûrth) ► *n.* Scots A long narrow inlet of the sea. [*< ON fjörðr.*]

fis-cal (fis'kəl) ► *adj.* 1. Of or relating to government expenditures, revenues, and debt. 2. Of finance or finances. [*< Lat. fiscus, treasury.*] —**fis'cal-ly** *adv.*

fiscal year ► *n.* A 12-month period for which an organization plans the use of its funds.

fish (fish) ► *n., pl. fish or fish-es* 1. Any of numerous cold-blooded aquatic vertebrates having fins, gills, and a streamlined body. 2. The edible flesh of a fish. ► *v.* 1. To catch or try to catch fish. 2. To grope: *fished in both pockets for a coin*. 3. To seek something indirectly: *fish for compliments*. [*< OE fisc.*] —**fish'er** *n.* —**fish'ing** *n.*

fish-bowl (fish'bôl') ► *n.* 1. A transparent bowl in which live fish are kept. 2. Informal A place or situation lacking in privacy.

fish-er-man (fish'ər-mən) ► *n.* 1. One who fishes as an occupation or for sport. 2. A commercial fishing vessel.

fish-er-y (fish'ə-rē) ► *n., pl. -ies* 1. The industry devoted to the catching, processing, or selling of fish. 2. A fishing ground. 3. A hatchery for fish.

fish-eye (fish'ī) ► *adj.* Of or being a camera lens that covers an angle of about 180°.

fish hawk ► *n.* See **osprey**.

fish-hook (fish'hôok') ► *n.* A barbed metal hook for catching fish.

fishing rod ► *n.* A rod used with a line for catching fish.

fish ladder ► *n.* A steplike series of pools by which fish can pass around a dam.

fish-meal (fish'mēl') ► *n.* Ground dried fish used as animal feed and fertilizer.

fish-net (fish'nēt') ► *n.* 1. Netting used to catch fish. 2. A large-mesh fabric.

fish story ► *n.* Informal A boastful and implau-

sible or highly exaggerated
fish-wife (fish'wif') ► *n.*

fish. 2. A woman regarded as abusive.

fish-y (fish'ē) ► *adj.* -i-
bling or suggestive of fishing doubt or suspicion
—**fish'i-ness** *n.*

fis-sile (fis'al, -il') ► *adj.*
Phys. Fissionable, esp. by fission. [*< Lat. findere, fiss-, (fī-sil'ī-tē) n.*]

fis-sion (fis'hən) ► *n.* 1. Splitting into parts. 2. A process in which an atomic nucleus generating from 100 million electron volts of asexual reproductive process. 3. A process in which a cellular organism divides independently maturing cells. —**fis'sion-a-ble** *adj.*

fis-sure (fis'hər) ► *n.* A cleft. [*< Lat. fissura < fiss-*]

fist (fist) ► *n.* The hand clenched with the fingers bent against the palm.

fist-ight (fist'it') ► *n.* A fight.

fist-ful (fist'fûl') ► *n., pl. fist-fuls*

fist-cuffs (fis'ti-kûfs') ► *n., pl.*

fis-tu-la (fis'chə-lə) ► *n., pl. fis-tu-las*

An abnormal duct or passage through a hollow organ to the body surface or another hollow organ. [*< Lat.*]

fit¹ (fit) ► *v.* **fit-ted** or **fit**, **fit-ting**

To be the proper size and shape for something; appropriate to; suit. 3. To

Syns at **adapt**. 4. To equate or compare.

fit² (fit) ► *v.* **fit-ting** or **fit**, **fit-ting**

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To be the proper size and shape for something; appropriate to; suit. 3. To

Syns at **adapt**. 4. To equate or compare.

fit-ful (fit'fûl') ► *adj.* Inter-
—**fit'ful-ly** *adv.* —**fit'ful-**

fit-ness (fit'nīs) ► *n.* The state of being fit, esp. as the result of proper nutrition.

fit-ting (fit'ing) ► *adj.* Suitable; appropriate.

fit-ting-ly *adv.* —**fit'ting-ly** *adv.*

Fitz-ger-ald (fits-jēr'ôld), Amer. singer.

Fitzgerald, Francis See **Fitzgerald, Francis**

1940. Amer. writer.

Fitzgerald, Edward, 1809 and translator.

five (fiv) ► *n.* 1. The cardinal number 5. 2. The 5th in a set or series.

—**five** *adj.* & *pron.* —**five-and-ten** (fiv'ən-tēn') ► *n.* A game of selling a wide variety of in-