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materials, especially the prevention of metallic ion precipitation from solution by formation of a coordination compound with a phosphate.

se-ques-trum (sē-kwēs'trəm) *n.*, *pl.* -tra (-trə). A fragment of dead bone separated from healthy bone as a result of injury or disease. [Latin, deposit, from neuter of *sequester*, depository, sequestrator. See *seque-* in Appendix.]

se-quin (sē'kwīn) *n.* 1. A small shiny ornamental disk, often worn on cloth; a spangle. 2. A gold coin of the Venetian Republic. In this sense, also called *zecchino*. —**sequin** *tr.v.* -quined, -quining. To affix sequins to (a garment, for example). [*vech*, from Old French, Venetian coin, from Italian *zecchino*, from *zecca*, mint, from Arabic *sikkah*, coin die.]

se-quoi-a (sē'kwōi'ə) *n.* 1. See **redwood** (sense 1). 2. Giant sequoia. [New Latin *Sequoia*, genus name, after SEQUOYA.]

Se-quoy-a or **Se-quoy-ah** (sē'kwōi'ə). Also called **George** (1770?–1843). Cherokee scholar who developed a system of writing the Cherokee language.

ser- *abbr.* 1. Serial. 2. Series. 3. Sermon.

ser- (*sir'*) *n.* A plural of **serum**.

ser- (*sir'*) *n.* A large pointed mass of ice in a glacier created by intersecting crevasses. [French, cottage cheese, *sérac*, from Vulgar Latin **séraceum*, whey, from Latin *serum*.]

seraglio (sə-rā'l'yō, -rāl'-) *n.*, *pl.* -gios. 1. A large harem. 2. A sultan's palace. [Italian *serraglio*, enclosure, *seraglio*, probably partly from Vulgar Latin **serraculum*, enclosure (from **ser-*, to lace up, from Latin *serare*, from *sera*, door-bar), and partly from Turkish *saray*, palace (from Persian *sarāi*, inn; see *SAVANSARY*).]

ser- (*sir'*) *adj.* Of or relating to an ecological sere: a *seral* community, a *seral* community.

ser- (*sir'*) *adj.* Also **sa-ra-pe** (sə-rā'pē, -rāp'ē) *n.* A long blanket shawl, often brightly colored and fringed at the ends, worn especially by Mexican men. [American Spanish *sarape*.]

seraph (sēr'af) *n.*, *pl.* -aphim (-ə-fīm) or -aphs. 1. A celestial being having three pairs of wings. 2. Theology. One of the highest order of angels. [Back-formation from *pl. seraphim*, from Middle English *seraphin*, from Old English, from Late Latin *seraphin*, from Greek *seraphim*, from Hebrew *serāpīm*, *pl.* of *sārāp*.] —**seraphic** (sə-rāf'ik), **seraphical** (-i-kal) *adj.* —**seraphically** *adv.*

serapis (sə-rā'pīs) *n.* *Mythology.* An ancient Egyptian god of the lower world, also worshiped in ancient Greece and Rome.

Serb (sərb) *n.* A member of a southern Slavic people that is the principal ethnic group of Serbia and adjacent regions of Yugoslavia. [Serbian *Srb*.]

Serbia (sərb'ē-ə) *n.* A historical region and former kingdom of modern Yugoslavia. Serbs settled in the region in the 6th to the 7th century and formed an independent kingdom in the 13th to the 14th century but then fell under Turkish domination, which ended formally in 1878. The new kingdom of Serbia was an important Balkan power until the onset of World War I, precipitated in part by the assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand by a Serbian nationalist. Serbia was later a major constituent of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, which formed the nucleus of modern-day Yugoslavia.

Serbian (sərb'ē-an) *n.* 1. A native or inhabitant of Serbia; a Serb. 2. Serbo-Croatian as spoken in Serbia and adjacent regions of Yugoslavia, written in a Cyrillic alphabet. —**Serbian** *adj.* Of or relating to Serbia or its people, language, or culture.

Serbo-Croatian (sərb'ō-kro-ā'shan) *n.* 1. The Slavic language of the Serbs and the Croats. 2. A native speaker of Serbo-Croatian. —**Serbo-Croatian** *adj.* Of or relating to Serbo-Croatian or those who speak it.

Sere also **sear** (*sir*) *adj.* Withered; dry: *sere vegetation* at the edge of the desert. [Middle English, from Old English *sēar*.]

Sere (*sir*) *n.* The entire sequence of ecological communities successively occupying an area from the initial stage to the climax. [from *SERIES*.]

Sere-nade (sēr'ə-nād', sēr'ə-nād') *n.* 1. *Music.* A complimentary performance given to honor or express love for someone. 2. *South Atlantic U.S.* See **shivaree**. See *Regional Note* at **shivaree**. 3. *Music.* An instrumental composition written for a small ensemble and having characteristics of the suite and the sonata. —**serenade** *v.* -naded, -nading, -nades. *Music.* —*tr.* To perform a serenade for. —*intr.* To perform a serenade. [French *serenade*, from Italian *serenata*, from *sereno*, calm, clear, the open sky, from Latin *serenus*. See **SERENE**.] —**serenader** *n.*

Seren-dip-i-ty (sēr'an-dīp'i-tē) *n.* The faculty of making fortunate discoveries by accident. [From the characters in the Persian fairy tale *The Three Princes of Serendip*, who made such discoveries, from Persian *Sarandip*, Sri Lanka, from Arabic *Sarandīb*.] —**serendipitous** *adj.* —**serendipitously** *adv.*

WORD HISTORY: We are indebted to the English author Horace Walpole for coining the word *serendipity*. In one of his 3,000 or so letters, on which his literary reputation primarily rests, and specifically in a letter of January 28, 1754, Walpole says that "this discovery, indeed, is almost of that kind which I call Serendipity, a very expressive word." Perhaps the word itself came to him by *serendipity*. Walpole formed the word on an old name for Sri Lanka, *Serendip*. He explained that this name was part of the title of

"a silly fairy tale, called *The Three Princes of Serendip*: as their highnesses traveled, they were always making discoveries, by accidents and sagacity, of things which they were not in quest of. . . . One of the most remarkable instances of this *accidental sagacity* (for you must observe that no discovery of a thing you are looking for, comes under this description) was of my Lord Shaftsbury [Anthony Ashley Cooper], who happening to dine at Lord Chancellor Clarendon's [Edward Hyde], found out the marriage of the Duke of York [later James II] and Mrs. Hyde [Anne Hyde, Clarendon's daughter], by the respect with which her mother [Frances Aylesbury Hyde] treated her at table."

se-re-ne (sə-rēn') *adj.* 1. Unaffected by disturbance; calm and unruffled. See *Synonyms* at **calm**. 2. Unclouded; fair: *serene skies* and a *bright blue sea*. 3. Often **Serene**. Used as a title and form of address for certain members of royalty: *Her Serene Highness; His Serene Highness*. [Middle English, from Latin *serenus*, serene, clear.] —**serenely** *adv.* —**serenity** *n.*

Ser-en-get-i Plain (sēr'an-gēt'ē). An area of northern Tanzania bordering on Kenya and Lake Victoria. It is noted for its extensive wildlife preserve.

se-ren-i-ty (sə-rēn'i-tē) *n.* The state or quality of being serene; tranquillity. See *Synonyms* at **equanimity**.

serf (sūrf) *n.* 1. A member of a servile, feudal class of people in Europe, bound to the land and owned by a lord. 2. A person in servitude. [Middle English, from Old French, from Latin *servus*, slave.] —**serfdom** *n.*

serge (sūrg) *n.* A twilled cloth of worsted or worsted and wool, often used for suits. [Middle English *sarge*, from Old French, from Vulgar Latin **sārica*, from Latin *sērica* (*vestis*), silken (clothing), feminine of *sēricus*, silken, from Greek *sērikos*, of the Seres, silken, from *Sēres*, a people of Eastern Asia.]

ser-geant (sār'jant) *n.* *Abbr.* **Sgt.** 1. *a.* Any of several ranks of noncommissioned officers in the U.S. Army, Air Force, or Marine Corps. *b.* One who holds any of these ranks. 2. *a.* The rank of police officer next below a captain, lieutenant, or inspector. *b.* A police officer holding this rank. 3. See **sergeant at arms**. [Middle English *sergeante*, a common soldier, from Old French *sergent*, from Medieval Latin *serviens*, *servient-*, servant, soldier, from Late Latin, public official, from Latin, present participle of *servire*, to serve, from *servus*, slave.] —**sergeancy**, **sergeantship** *n.*

sergeant at arms *n.*, *pl.* **sergeants at arms**. An officer appointed to keep order within an organization, such as a legislative, judicial, or social body. Also called **sergeant**.

sergeant first class *n.*, *pl.* **sergeants first class**. *Abbr.* **SFC** 1. A noncommissioned rank in the U.S. Army that is above staff sergeant and below master sergeant. 2. One who holds this rank.

sergeant fish *n.* 1. See **cobia**. 2. See **snook**.

sergeant major *n.*, *pl.* **sergeants major** or **sergeant majors**. 1. *Abbr.* **Sgt. Maj.**, **SM** *a.* Used as a title for a noncommissioned officer serving as chief administrative assistant of a headquarters unit of the U.S. Army, Air Force, or Marine Corps. *b.* One who holds this title. 2. *Chiefly British.* A noncommissioned officer of the highest rank. 3. A small damselfish (*Abudefduf saxatilis*) of warm seas, having a flattened body with dark vertical stripes. In this sense, also called **cow pilot**.

se-ri-al (sēr'ē-əl) *adj.* *Abbr.* **ser.** 1. Of, forming, or arranged in a series. 2. *a.* Published or produced in installments, as a novel or television drama. *b.* Relating to such publication or production. 3. *Music.* Relating to or based on a 12-tone row. 4. *Computer Science.* *a.* Of or relating to the sequential transmission of all the bits of a byte over one wire: a *serial port*; a *serial printer*. *b.* Of or relating to the sequential performance of multiple operations: *serial processing*. —**serial** *n.* *Abbr.* **ser.** A literary or dramatic work published or produced in installments. —**serially** *adv.*

se-ri-al-ism (sēr'ē-əl-iz'm) *n.* *Music.* 1. Serial composition. 2. The theory or composition of serial music. —**serialist** *n.*

se-ri-al-ize (sēr'ē-əl-iz') *tr.v.* -ized, -izing, -izes. To write or publish in serial form. —**serialization** (-ə-lī-zā'shan) *n.*

serial killer *n.* A person who attacks and slays more than three victims one by one during a relatively short period of time. Also called **serial murderer**. —**serial killing** *n.*

serial number *n.* A number that is one of a series and is used for identification, as of a machine, weapon, or motor vehicle.

se-ri-ate (sēr'ē-āt', -it) *adj.* Arranged or occurring in a series or in rows. —**seriate** *adv.*

se-ri-a-tim (sēr'ē-āt'im, -āt'im) *adv.* One after another; in a series. [Medieval Latin *seriatim*, from Latin *seriēs*, series. See **SERIES**.]

se-ri-ceous (sēr'ish'əs) *adj.* 1. Silky. 2. *Botany.* Covered with soft, silky hairs. [Latin *sēricus*, silken, alteration of *sēricus*. See **SERGE**.]

ser-i-cin (sēr'i-sīn) *n.* A viscous, gelatinous protein that forms on the surface of raw-silk fibers. [Latin *sēricus*, silken; see **SERGE** + **-IN**.]

ser-ic-te-ri-um (sēr'ik-tēr'ē-əm) *n.*, *pl.* -te-ri-a (-tēr'ē-ə). The silk-producing gland or glands of an insect, especially a silkworm. [New Latin *sericterium*, from Greek *sērikon*, silk, from neuter of *sērikos*, silken, from *Sēres*, a people of East Asia.]



Sequoia



serape

ā pat	oi boy
ā pay	ou out
ār care	ōō took
ā father	ōō boot
ē pet	ū cut
ē be	ūr urge
ī pit	th thin
ī pie	th this
īr pier	hw which
ō pot	zh vision
ō toe	ā about, item
ō paw	♦ regionalism

Stress marks: ' (primary);
' (secondary), as in
dictionary (dīk'shə-nēr'ē)