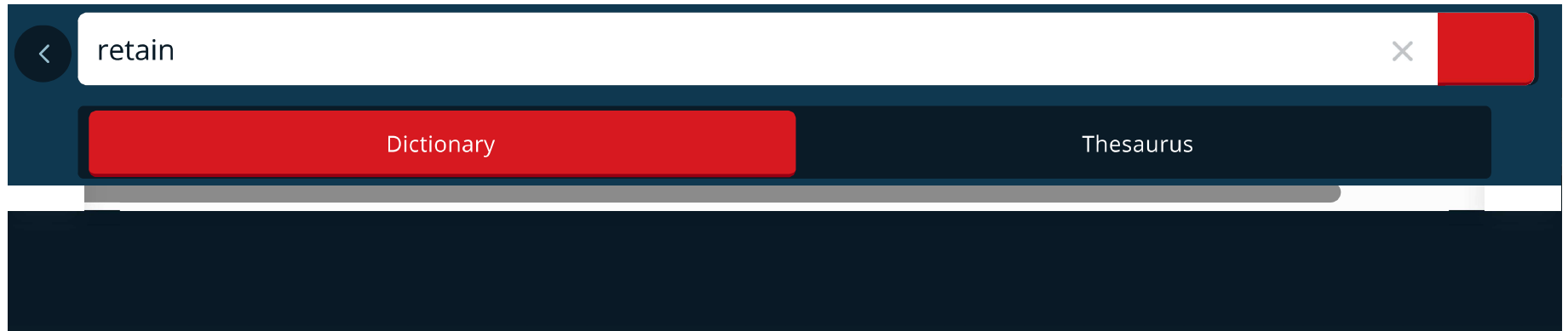




retain verb

re·tain (ri-'tān ◀▶)

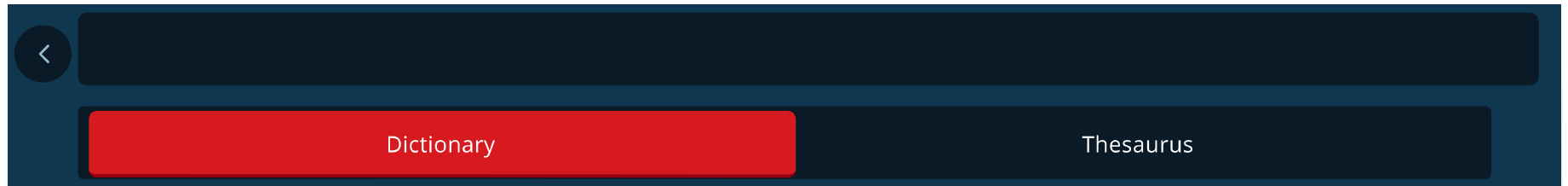
retained; retaining; retains

[Synonyms of retain >](#)

transitive verb

- 1 a** : to keep in possession or use
- b** : to keep in one's pay or service
specifically : to employ by paying a [retainer](#)
- c** : to keep in mind or memory : **REMEMBER**
- 2** : to hold secure or intact





[See all Synonyms & Antonyms in Thesaurus >](#)

Choose the Right Synonym for *retain*

KEEP, RETAIN, DETAIN, WITHHOLD, RESERVE mean to hold in one's possession or under one's control.

KEEP may suggest a holding securely in one's possession, custody, or control.

| *keep* this while I'm gone

RETAIN implies continued keeping, especially against threatened seizure or forced loss.

| managed to *retain* their dignity even in poverty

DETAIN suggests a delay in letting go.

| *detained* them for questioning

WITHHOLD implies restraint in letting go or a refusal to let go.



WORD OF THE DAY

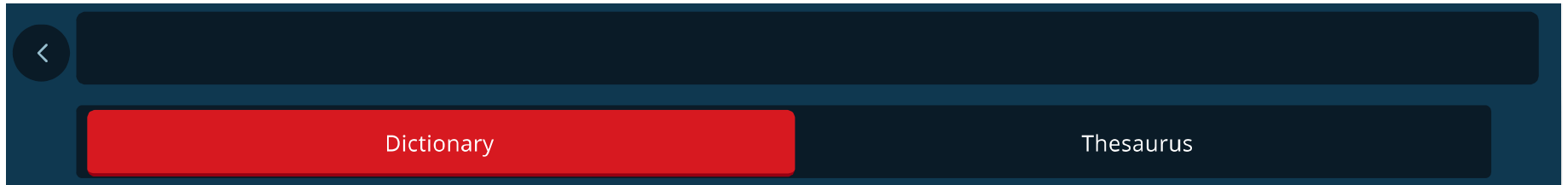
encroach

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Examples of *retain* in a Sentence

A landlord may **retain** part of your deposit if you break the lease.

They insisted on **retaining** old customs.

You will **retain** your rights as a citizen.

The TV show has **retained** its popularity for many years.

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Recent Examples on the Web

 Examples are automatically compiled from online sources to show current usage. [Read More](#)

In 2025, consumers expect and demand more from their favorite brands, and companies will have to rethink their strategies to align with the former's expectations to **retain** loyalty and boost business.



Dictionary

Thesaurus

charm.

— Nate Jones, *Vulture*, 23 Jan. 2025

Thomas has seemingly had nine lives in the organization, but Tremble is four years younger than Thomas and the easy choice if the Panthers plan to **retain** one of the TEs.

— Joseph Person, *The Athletic*, 23 Jan. 2025

While his future in Los Angeles is uncertain, the Chargers would love to **retain** the veteran linebacker.

— Raul A. Reyes, *Newsweek*, 23 Jan. 2025

[See all Example Sentences for retain >](#)

Word History

Etymology



Dictionary

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15th century, in the meaning defined at [sense 1a](#)

Time Traveler

The first known use of *retain* was in the 15th century

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Dictionary Entries Near *retain*

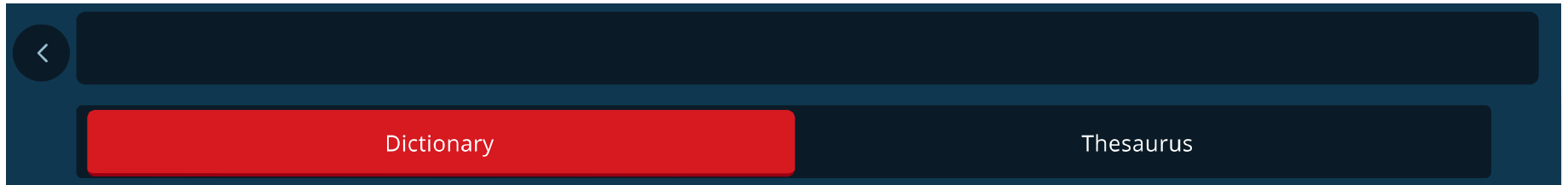
[retail store](#)

retain

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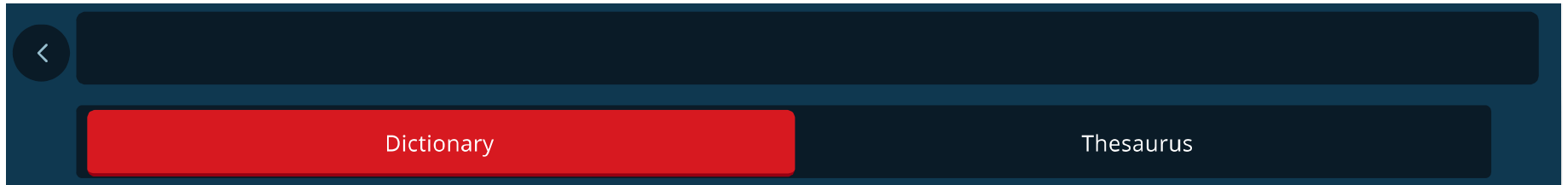
Kids Definition

retain verb

re·tain ri-'tān ◀▶

1 a : to keep in possession or use

| you will *retain* your rights as a citizen



I can't *retain* phone numbers

2 : to hold secure or unchanged

land *retains* heat longer than water

Medical Definition

retain transitive verb

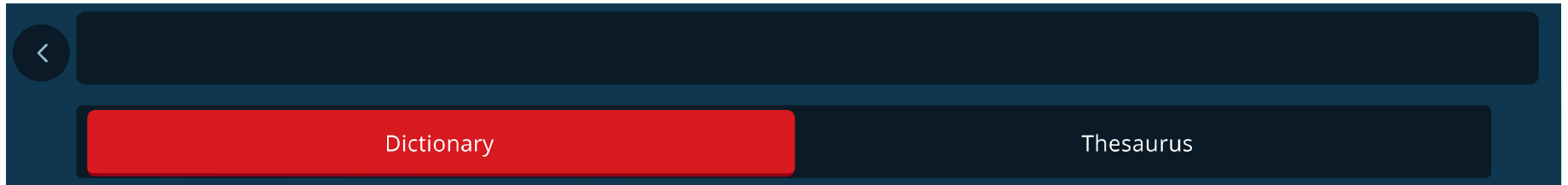
re·tain ri-'tān

1 : to hold or keep in

retain fluids

2 : to keep in mind or memory

Legal Definition



- 2 : to keep in one's pay or service
specifically : to employ (as a lawyer) by paying a retainer

• More from Merriam-Webster on *retain*

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