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placare, to fold. See *plek-* in App.] —*plait'er n.*

plan (plān) *n.* 1. A scheme, program, or method worked out beforehand to accomplish an objective. 2. A tentative project or course of action. 3. A systematic arrangement of parts; a configuration or outline. 4. A drawing or diagram made to scale showing the structure or arrangement of something. 5. In perspective rendering, one of several imaginary planes perpendicular to the line of vision between the viewer and the object being depicted. 6. A program or policy stipulating a service or benefit: a *pension plan*. ♦ *v.* **planned**, **plan·ing**, **plans** —*tr.* 1. To form a scheme or program for the accomplishment or attainment of. 2. To have as a specific aim or purpose; intend. 3. To draw or make a graphic representation of. —*intr.* To make plans. [Fr., alteration of *plant*, ground plan, map < *planter*, to plant < Lat. *plantāre* < *planta*, sole of the foot.] —*plan'ner n.*

SYNONYMS *plan*, *blueprint*, *design*, *project*, *scheme*, *strategy* These nouns denote a method by which something is to be done or accomplished: *has no vacation plans*; a *blueprint for reorganization*; *social conventions of human design*; an *urban-renewal project*; a *scheme for conservation*; a *strategy for survival*.

plan- *pref.* Variant of *plano-*.

planar (plā'nār, -nār') *adj.* 1. Of, relating to, or situated in a plane. 2. Flat: a *planar surface*. 3. Having a two-dimensional quality. [Lat. *planāris*, flat < Lat. *planus*. See *PLAIN*.] —**planar'i·ty** (plā'nār'i-tē) *n.*

planar·ian (plā'nār'ē-ən) *n.* Any of various small, chiefly freshwater turbellarian flatworms of the order Tricladida, having soft broad ciliated bodies. [< NLat. *Planāria*, genus name < fem. of Lat. *planārius*, on level ground < *planus*, flat.]

plan·a·tion (plā-nā'shan) *n.* The process of erosion and deposition in which a level surface is produced, as by streams or wind. [Lat. *planum*, flat surface; see *PLANE* + *-ATION*.]

planch·et (plān'chēt) *n.* 1. A flat disk of metal ready for stamping as a coin; a coin blank. 2. A small shallow metal container in which a radioactive substance is deposited for measurement of its activity. [Dim. of *planch*, flat plate, slab < ME *planchche*, plank < OFr. *planche* < LLat. *planca* < fem. of Lat. *plancus*, flat.]

plan·chette (plān-shēt') *n.* A small triangular board supported by two casters and a vertical pencil that, when lightly touched by the fingertips, is said to spell out subconscious or supernatural messages. [Fr. < OFr., dim. of *planche*, board. See *PLANCHET*.]

Planck (plāngk), **Max Karl Ernst Ludwig** 1858–1947. German physicist who won a 1918 Nobel Prize.

Planck's constant (plāngks) *n.* Symbol *h* The constant of proportionality relating the energy of a photon to its frequency, equal to approx. 6.626×10^{-34} joule-seconds.

plane¹ (plān) *n.* 1. **Mathematics** A surface containing all the straight lines that connect any two points on it. 2. A flat or level surface. 3. A level of development, existence, or achievement. 4. An airplane or hydroplane. 5. A supporting surface of an airplane; an airfoil or wing. ♦ *adj.* 1. Being a figure lying in a plane: a *plane curve*. 2. Flat; level. [Lat. *planum*, flat surface < neut. of *planus*, flat. See *pela-* in App.] —**plane'ness n.**

plane² (plān) *n.* 1. A carpenter's tool with an adjustable blade for smoothing and leveling wood. 2. A trowel-shaped tool for smoothing the surface of clay, sand, or plaster in a mold. ♦ *v.* **planed**, **plan·ing**, **planes** —*tr.* 1. To smooth or finish with or as if with a plane. 2. To remove with a plane. —*intr.* 1. To work with a plane. 2. To act as a plane. [ME < OFr. < LLat. *plāna* < *planāre*, to plane < *planus*, flat. See *pela-* in App.]

plane³ (plān) *intr.v.* **planed**, **plan·ing**, **planes** 1. To rise partly out of the water, as a boat does at high speeds. 2. To soar or glide. 3. To travel by airplane. [ME *planen*, to glide, soar < OFr. *planer* < *plain*, flat, level. See *PLAIN*.]

plane⁴ (plān) *n.* The plane tree. [ME < OFr. < Lat. *platanus* < Gk. *platanos*, perh. < *platus*, broad.]

plane angle *n.* An angle formed by two straight lines in the same plane.

plane geometry *n.* The geometry of planar figures.

plane·load (plān'lōd') *n.* The load an airplane can carry.

plan·er (plā'nār) *n.* 1. One that planes, esp. a machine tool that is used to smooth or finish the surfaces of wood or metal. 2. Printing A smooth block of wood used to level a form of type.

planer tree *n.* A small, deciduous elmlike swamp tree (*Planera aquatica*) of the southern US, having small ribbed nutlike fruit. [After Johann Jacob Planer (1743–89), German botanist.]

plane·side (plān'sid') *n.* The area adjacent to an airplane.

plan·et (plān'it) *n.* 1a. In the traditional model of solar systems, a celestial body larger than an asteroid or comet, illuminated by light from a star, such as the sun, around which it revolves. b. A celestial body that orbits the sun, has sufficient mass to assume nearly a round shape, clears out dust and debris from the neighborhood around its orbit, and is not a satellite of another planet. 2. One of the seven celestial bodies, Mercury, Venus, the moon, the sun, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn, thought by ancient astronomers to revolve in the heavens about a fixed Earth and among fixed stars. 3. One of the seven revolving astrological celestial bodies that in conjunction with the stars are believed to influence human affairs. [ME < OFr. *planete* < LLat. *planēta* < Gk. *planētes*, var. of *planēs*, *planētē* < *planāsthai*, to wander. See *pela-* in App.]

USAGE NOTE In 2006, the International Astronomical Union voted to change the definition of *planet*, requiring that a celestial body must have enough mass to assume a round shape and "clear the neighborhood around its orbit" to qualify as a planet. This means that a planet cannot have other objects in or crossing its orbit except smaller objects that have been captured by its gravity, such as those that revolve around it as moons. Because Neptune's large mass has captured Pluto so that the two planets remain in orbits that cross, Pluto has not cleared its own orbit and was therefore demoted from planet status to that of a newly created category, *dwarf planet*. Although a dwarf planet orbits the sun, is round, and does not orbit a planet, it does not clear the neighborhood around its orbit and it may cross the paths of other objects orbiting the sun. Other dwarf planets include Ceres in the asteroid belt and Eris in the Kuiper belt. Although officially approved, this new scheme of the solar system remains controversial among astronomers and may well be revised.

plane table *n.* A portable surveying instrument consisting essentially of a drawing board and a ruler mounted on a tripod and used to sight and map topographic details.

plan·e·tar·i·um (plān'i-tār'ē-əm) *n.*, *pl. -iums* or *-ia* (-ē-ə) 1. An apparatus or model representing the solar system. 2a. An optical device for projecting images of celestial bodies and other astronomical phenomena onto the inner surface of a hemispherical dome. b. A building or room containing a planetarium, with seats for an audience.

plan·e·tar·y (plān'i-tēr'ē) *adj.* 1. Of, relating to, or resembling the physical or orbital characteristics of a planet or the planets. 2a. Of or relating to the earth; terrestrial or earthly. b. Of or affecting the entire world; global. 3. Wandering; erratic. 4. Being or relating to a gear train having a central gear with an internal ring gear and one or more pinions.

planetary nebula *n.* A nebula consisting of a hot blue-white central star surrounded by an envelope of expanding gas.

plan·e·tes·i·mal (plān'i-tēs'ē-māl) *n.* Any of innumerable small bodies thought to have orbited the sun and aggregated into the planets. [PLANET + (INFINIT)ESIMAL.]

plan·e·toid (plān'i-toid') *n.* Astronomy See *asteroid* 1. —*plan·e·toi'dal* (-toid'l) *adj.*

plan·e·tol·o·gy (plān'i-tōl'ō-jē) *n.* The branch of astronomy that deals with the planets of the solar system. —**plan·e·tol·og'i·cal** (plān'i-tōl'ōj'i-kāl) *adj.* —**plan·e·tol·o·gist n.**

plane tree *n.* Any of several trees of the genus *Platanus*, having ball-shaped fruit clusters and usu. outer bark that flakes off in patches. [PLANE + TREE.]

planet wheel *n.* A small gear wheel in an epicyclic train.

plan·gent (plān'jənt) *adj.* 1. Loud and resounding: *plangent bells*. 2. Expressing or suggesting sadness; plaintive. [Lat. *plangens*, *plangent-*, pr. part. of *plangere*, to strike, lament. See *plāk-* in App.] —**plan·gen·cy n.** —**plan·gent·ly adv.**

plan·im·e·ter (plā-nīm'ē-tər, plā-) *n.* An instrument that measures the area of a plane figure as a mechanically coupled pointer traverses the perimeter of the figure. —**plan·i·met·ric** (plā'nā-mēt'rik), **plan·i·met·ri·cal** (-rē-kāl) *adj.* —**plan·im·e·try n.**

plan·ish (plān'ish) *tr.v.* -ished, -ish·ing, -ish·es To smooth (metal) by rolling or hammering. [ME **planishen* < OFr. *planir*, *planiss-*, to make smooth < *plan*, level < Lat. *planus*. See *pela-* in App.] —**plan·ish·er n.**

plan·i·sphere (plā'nī-sfir') *n.* 1. A representation of a sphere or part of a sphere on a plane surface. 2. Astronomy A polar projection of half or more of the celestial sphere on a chart with an adjustable overlay to show the stars visible at a given time and place. —**plan·i·spher·ic** (-sfir'ik, -sfēr-) *adj.*

plank (plāngk) *n.* 1a. A piece of lumber cut thicker than a board. b. Planking. 2. A foundation; a support. 3. One of the articles of a political platform. ♦ *tr.v.* **planked**, **plank·ing**, **planks** 1. To furnish or cover with planks. 2. To bake or broil and serve (fish or meat) on a plank. 3. To put or set down, often emphatically or with force. [ME < ONFr. *planke* < LLat. *planca* < *plancus*, flat.]

plank·ing (plāng'king) *n.* 1. Planks considered as a group; plank. 2. An object or structure made of planks.

plank·ter (plāngk'tər) *n.* One of the minute organisms that collectively constitute plankton. [Gk. *planktēr*, wanderer < *planktos*, wandering. See *PLANKTON*.]

plank·ton (plāngk'tən) *n.* The collection of microscopic organisms, including algae, that float or drift in great numbers in fresh or salt water, esp. at or near the surface, and serve as food for larger organisms. [Ger. < Gk., neut. of *planktos*, wandering < *plazein*, to turn aside. See *plāk-* in App.] —**plank·ton'ic adj.**

Pla·no (plā'nō) A city of NE TX, N of Dallas. Pop. 222,000.

plano- or **plan-** or **plan-** *pref.* Flat: *planoconvex*. [< Lat. *planus*, flat. See *pela-* in App.]

plan·o·blast (plān'ō-blāst') *n.* The medusa of certain hydrozoans. [Gk. *planos*, wandering (< *planāsthai*, to wander; see *PLANET*) + *-BLAST*.]

plan·o·con·cave (plā'nō-kōn-kāv', -kōn'kāv') *adj.* Flat on one side and concave on the other: a *planoconcave lens*.

plan·o·con·vex (plā'nō-kōn-vēks', -kōn'vēks') *adj.* Flat on one side and convex on the other: a *planoconvex lens*.

plan·o·gam·ete (plān'ō-gām'ēt, -gā-mēt') *n.* A motile gamete,



plane²
carpenter's plane