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Concise Oxford English Dictionary

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Cont

pit viper ▶ n. a venomous snake found in both America and Asia, distinguished by visible sensory pits on the head which can detect prey by heat. [Numerous genera and species, including the rattlesnakes.]

pity ▶ n. (pl. **pities**) **1** a feeling of sorrow and compassion caused by the sufferings of others. **2** a cause for regret or disappointment: *what a pity*. ▶ v. (**pities**, **pitying**, **pitied**) feel pity for.
– PHRASES **for pity's sake** informal used to express impatience or make an urgent appeal. **more's the pity** informal used to express regret.
– DERIVATIVES **pitying** adj. **pityingly** adv.
– ORIGIN ME: from OFr. *pite* 'compassion', from L. *pietas* 'piety'.

pityriasis /ˌpɪtɪˈrʌɪəsɪs/ ▶ n. Medicine a skin disease characterized by the shedding of fine flaky scales.
– ORIGIN C17: mod. L., from Gk *pituriasis* 'scurf'.

più mosso /pjuː ˈmɒsəʊ/ ▶ adv. & adj. Music more quickly.
– ORIGIN from Ital.

pivot ▶ n. **1** the central point, pin, or shaft on which a mechanism turns or oscillates. **2** a person or thing playing a central part in an activity or organization. ▪ (also **pivotman**) chiefly N. Amer. a player in a central position in a team sport. **3** the person or position from which a body of troops takes its reference point when moving or changing course. ▶ v. (**pivots**, **pivoting**, **pivoted**) **1** turn on or as if on a pivot. ▪ provide with or fix on a pivot. **2** (**pivot on**) depend on.
– DERIVATIVES **pivotable** adj.
– ORIGIN ME: from Fr., prob. from dial. *pue* 'tooth of a comb' and Sp. *pu(y)a* 'point'.

pivotal ▶ adj. **1** fixed on or as if on a pivot. **2** of crucial or central importance.

pixel /ˈpɪks(ə)l, -sɛl/ ▶ n. Electronics a minute area of illumination on a display screen, one of many from which an image is composed.
– ORIGIN 1960s: abbrev. of *picture element*.

pixelate /ˈpɪksəleɪt/ (also **pixellate** or **pixilate**) ▶ v. divide (an image) into pixels, typically for display or storage in a digital format. ▪ display (a person's image) as a small number of large pixels, typically in order to disguise their identity.
– DERIVATIVES **pixelation** n.

pixie (also **pixy**) ▶ n. (pl. **pixies**) a supernatural being in folklore, typically portrayed as small and human-like in form, with pointed ears and a pointed hat.
– DERIVATIVES **pixieish** adj.
– ORIGIN C17: of unknown origin.

pixilated (also **pixillated**) ▶ adj. bewildered; confused. ▪ informal, dated drunk.
– DERIVATIVES **pixilation** n.
– ORIGIN C19: var. of *pixie-led*, lit. 'led astray by pixies', or from **PIXIE**, on the pattern of words such as *elated*.

pizza /ˈpiːtsə, ˈpɪtsə/ ▶ n. a dish of Italian origin, consisting of a flat, round base of dough baked with a topping of tomatoes, cheese, and other ingredients.
– ORIGIN Ital., lit. 'pie'.

pizzazz (also **pizazz** or **pzazz**) ▶ n. informal an attractive combination of vitality and style.
– ORIGIN said to have been coined by Diana Vreeland, fashion editor of *Harper's Bazaar* in the 1930s.

pizzeria /ˌpiːtsəˈriːə, ˌpɪtsə-/ ▶ n. a place where pizzas are made, sold, or eaten.
– ORIGIN from Ital.

pizzicato /ˌpɪtsɪˈkɑːtəʊ/ Music ▶ adv. & adj. plucking the strings of a violin or other stringed instrument with one's finger. ▶ n. (pl. **pizzicatos** or **pizzicati** /-ti/) this

PL ▶ abbr. Poland (international vehicle registration).

pl. ▶ abbr. **1** (also **Pl.**) place. **2** plate (referring to illustrations in a book). **3** chiefly Military platoon. **4** pound.

PLA ▶ abbr. **1** People's Liberation Army. **2** (in the UK) Port of London Authority.

placable /ˈplakəb(ə)l/ ▶ adj. archaic easily calmed or placated.
– DERIVATIVES **placability** n.

placard /ˈplakɑːd/ ▶ n. a sign for public display, either posted on a wall or carried during a demonstration. ▶ v. /also plaˈkɑːd/ cover with placards.
– ORIGIN C15 (denoting a warrant or licence): from OFr. *placquart*, from *plaquier* 'to plaster, lay flat'.

placate /plaˈkeɪt, ˈplakeɪt, ˈpleɪ-/ ▶ v. calm, pacify, or appease.
– DERIVATIVES **placating** adj. **placatingly** adv. **placatory** adj.
– ORIGIN C17 (earlier (C16) as *placation*): from L. *placare* 'appease'.

place ▶ n. **1** a particular position or point in space; a location. ▪ informal a person's home. ▪ a point in a book reached by a reader at a particular time. **2** a portion of space available or designated for someone. ▪ a vacancy or available position: *a place at university*. ▪ the regular or proper position of something: *lay each slab in place*. **3** a position in a sequence or hierarchy. ▪ a person's rank or status. ▪ a specific role or position: *it's not my place to ask*. ▪ Brit. any of the first three or sometimes four positions in a race. ▪ N. Amer. the second position, especially in a horse race. **4** the position of a figure in a series indicated in decimal notation: *calculate the ratios to one decimal place*. **5** [in place names] a square or short street. ▶ v. **1** put in a particular position. **2** find an appropriate place or role for. ▪ arrange for the implementation of (an order, bet, etc.). ▪ order or obtain a connection for (a telephone call). ▪ dispose of (something, especially shares) by selling. **3** allocate or award a specified position in a sequence or hierarchy. ▪ (**be placed**) Brit. achieve a specified position in a race. ▪ be among the first three or four in a race (or the first three in the US). **4** remember the relevant background of: *she eventually said she couldn't place him*. **5** Rugby & American Football score (a goal) by a place kick.
– PHRASES **give place to** be succeeded or replaced by. **go places** informal **1** travel. **2** be increasingly successful. **in one's place** in one's appropriate (but inferior) position or status. **in place 1** working or ready to work; established. **2** N. Amer. on the spot; not traveling any distance. **in place of** instead of. **out of place** not in the proper position. ▪ in a setting where one is or feels inappropriate or incongruous. **put oneself in another's place** consider a situation from another's point of view. **put someone in their place** deflate or humiliate someone regarded as being presumptuous. **take place** occur. **take one's place** take up one's usual or recognized position. **take the place of** replace.
– DERIVATIVES **placeless** adj.
– ORIGIN ME: from OFr., from an alt. of L. *platea* 'open space', from Gk *plateia* (*hodos*) 'broad (way)'.

placebo /plaˈsiːbəʊ/ ▶ n. (pl. **placebos**) **1** a medicine or regime prescribed for the psychological benefit to the patient rather than for any physiological effect. ▪ a substance that has no therapeutic effect, used as a control in testing new drugs. **2** a measure designed merely to calm or humour another.
– ORIGIN C18: from L., lit. 'I shall be acceptable or pleasing', from *placere* 'to please'.

placebo effect ▶ n. a beneficial effect produced by a treatment, due to the patient's belief

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placenta … placentas
of pregna… maintaini…
2 Botany (in… ovules are…
– ORIGIN C… cake'.
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– ORIGIN C… praevius.
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