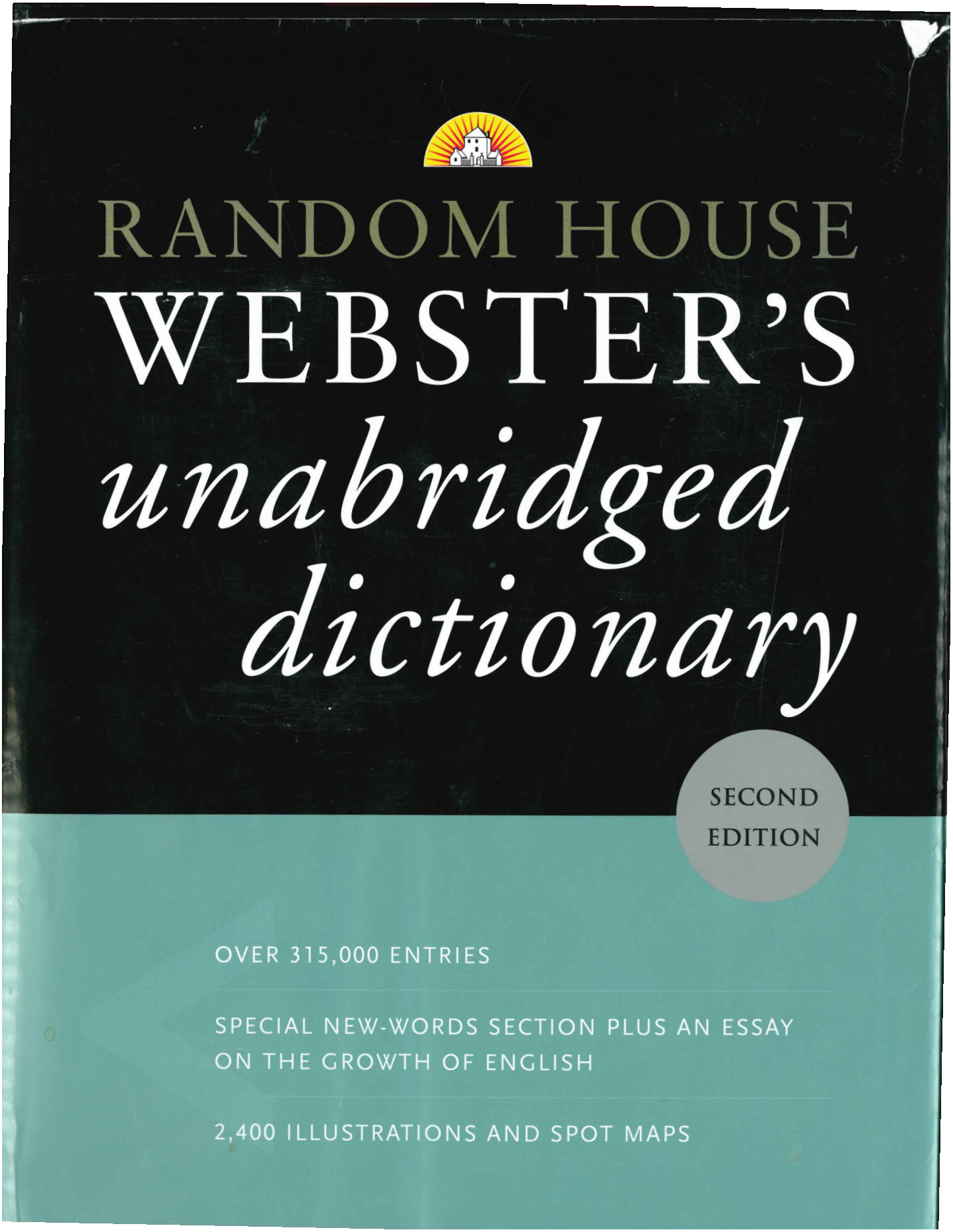

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SECOND EDITION

RANDOM HOUSE
REFERENCE

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pri•ma•ri•ly (pri mâr′ə lē, -mer′-; pri′mer ə lē, -mər ə-), *adv.* **1.** essentially; mostly; chiefly; principally: *They live primarily from farming.* **2.** in the first instance; at first; originally: *Primarily a doctor, he later became a lawyer.* [1610–20; PRIMARY + -LY]

pri•ma•ry (pri′mer ē, -mə rē), *adj., n., pl.* **-ries.** —*adj.* **1.** first or highest in rank or importance; chief; principal: *his primary goals in life.* **2.** first in order in any series, sequence, etc. **3.** first in time; earliest; primitive. **4.** of, pertaining to, or characteristic of primary school: *the primary grades.* **5.** constituting or belonging to the first stage in any process. **6.** of the nature of the ultimate or simpler constituents of which something complex is made up: *Animals have a few primary instincts.* **7.** original; not derived or subordinate; fundamental; basic. **8.** immediate or direct, or not involving intermediate agency: *primary perceptions.* **9.** *Sociol.* (of social values or ideals) conceived as derived from the primary group and culturally defined as being necessary to the welfare of the individual and society. **10.** *Ornith.* pertaining to any of the set of flight feathers situated on the distal segment of a bird's wing. **11.** *Elect.* noting or pertaining to the circuit, coil, winding, or current that induces current in secondary windings in an induction coil, transformer, or the like. **12.** *Chem.* **a.** involving or obtained by replacement of one atom or group. **b.** noting or containing a carbon atom united to no other or to only one other carbon atom in a molecule. **13.** *Gram.* **a.** (of a derivative) having a root or other unanalyzable element as the underlying form. **b.** (of Latin, Greek, Sanskrit tenses) having reference to present or future time. Cf. **secondary** (def. 9). —*n.* **14.** something that is first in order, rank, or importance. **15.** *U.S. Politics.* **a.** Also called **primary election.** a preliminary election in which voters of each party nominate candidates for office, party officers, etc. Cf. **closed primary, direct primary, indirect primary, open primary. b.** a meeting of the voters of a political party in an election district for nominating candidates for office, choosing delegates for a convention, etc.; caucus. **16.** See **primary color. 17.** *Ornith.* a primary feather. **18.** *Elect.* a winding in a transformer or the like that carries a current and that induces a current in secondary windings. **19.** *Astron.* **a.** a body in relation to a smaller body or smaller bodies revolving around it, as a planet in relation to its satellites. **b.** the brighter of the two stars comprising a double star. Cf. **companion**[1] (def. 6). [1425–75; late ME (adj.) < L *primārius* of the first rank. See PRIME, -ARY] —**pri′•ma•ri•ness,** *n.*

—**Syn. 1.** main, prime. **3.** original; primeval. **5.** beginning, opening. See **elementary.** —**Ant. 1, 2.** last. **2.** final.

pri′mary ac′cent, the principal or strongest stress of a word. Also called **primary stress.**

pri′mary beam′, *Physics.* See under **secondary beam.**

pri′mary care′ medical care by a physician, or other health-care professional, who is the patient's first contact with and who provides access to the health-care system. [1970–75] —**pri′mary-care′,** *adj.*

pri′mary cell′, *Elect.* a cell designed to produce electric current through an electrochemical reaction that is not efficiently reversible, so that the cell when discharged cannot be efficiently recharged by an electric current. [1900–05]

pri′mary col′or, 1. *Art.* a color, as red, yellow, or blue, that in mixture yields other colors. Cf. **complementary color** (def. 1), **secondary color, tertiary color. 2.** *Optics.* any of a set of monochromatic colors, as red, green, and blue, that are added to match or specify the chromaticity of a stimulus or sample. [1605–15]

pri′mary con′tact, *Sociol.* a communication or relationship between people that is characterized by intimacy and personal familiarity. Cf. **secondary contact.**

pri′mary de′viance, *Sociol.* the violation of a norm or rule that does not result in the violator's being stigmatized as deviant. Cf. **secondary deviance.**

pri′mary elec′tion, primary (def. 15a). [1785–95]

pri′mary gain′, *Psychiatry.* the removal of emotional conflict or relief of anxiety that is the immediate benefit of a defense mechanism or neurotic symptom. Cf. **secondary gain.**

pri′mary group′, *Sociol.* a group of individuals living in close, intimate, and personal relationship. Cf. **secondary group.** [1890–95]

pri′mary in′dustry, an industry, as agriculture, forestry, or fishing, that deals in obtaining natural materials. [1945–50]

pri′mary inten′tion, *Logic.* See under **intention** (def. 5a).

pri′mary let′ter, *Print.* a lowercase character having neither a descender nor an ascender, as *a, c, e, i, m, n, o, r, s, u, v, w, x, z.*

pri′mary mem′ory, *Computers.* See **main storage.**

pri′mary met′al, metal derived directly from ore rather than from scrap. Also called **virgin metal.** Cf. **secondary metal.**

pri′mary op′tical a′rea, *Graphic Design.* a point in or toward the upper left-hand corner of a printed page, advertisement, or the like, looked at first in reading. *Abbr.:* POA

pri′mary phlo′em, *Bot.* phloem derived directly from the growth of an apical meristem.

pri′mary proc′ess, *Psychoanal.* the generally unorganized mental activity characteristic of the unconscious and occurring in dreams, fantasies, and related processes. Cf. **secondary process.**

pri′mary produc′er, *Biol.* any green plant or any of various microorganisms that can convert light energy or chemical energy into organic matter. [1925–30] —**pri′mary produc′tion.**

pri′mary qual′ity, *Epistemology.* any of the qualities inherent in an object, namely quantity, extent, figure, solidity, and motion or rest. Cf. **secondary quality.** [1650–60]

pri′mary rain′bow, the most commonly seen rainbow, formed by light rays that undergo a single internal reflection in a drop of water. Cf. **secondary rainbow.** [1785–95]

pri′mary root′, *Bot.* the first root produced by a germinating seed, developing from the radicle of the embryo. [1885–90]

pri′mary school′, 1. a school usually covering the first three or four years of elementary school and sometimes kindergarten. **2.** See **elementary school.** [1795–1805]

pri′mary sex′ characteris′tic, *Anat.* any of the body structures directly concerned in reproduction, as the testes, ovaries, and external genitalia. Also called **pri′mary sex′ char′acter.**

pri′mary spermat′ocyte, *Cell Biol.* See under **spermatocyte.** [1895–1900]

pri′mary stress′. See **primary accent.** [1950–55]

pri′mary syph′ilis, *Pathol.* the first stage of syphilis, characterized by the formation of a chancre at the site of infection. [1900–05]

pri′mary tis′sue, *Bot.* any tissue resulting directly from differentiation of an apical meristem. [1870–75]

pri′mary type′, *Biol.* a specimen used in the original description or illustration of a species.

pri′mary wave′. *Seismol.* See **P wave.** [1915–20]

pri′mary xy′lem, *Bot.* xylem derived directly from the growth of an apical meristem.

pri•mate (pri′māt *or, esp. for 1,* prī′mit), *n.* **1.** *Eccles.* an archbishop or bishop ranking first among the bishops of a province or country. **2.** any of various omnivorous mammals of the order Primates, comprising the three suborders Anthropoidea (humans, great apes, gibbons, Old World monkeys, and New World monkeys), Prosimii (lemurs, loris, and their allies), and Tarsioidea (tarsiers), esp. distinguished by the use of hands, varied locomotion, and by complex flexible behavior involving a high level of social interaction and cultural adaptability. **3.** *Archaic.* a chief or leader. [1175–1225; ME *primat* dignitary, religious leader < LL *primāt-* (s. of *primās*), n. use of L *primās* of first rank, deriv. of *primus* first (see PRIME); (def. 2) taken as sing. of NL *Primates* PRIMATES, as if ending in -ATE[1]] —**pri•ma′tal,** *adj., n.* —**pri•ma′tial** (prī mā′shəl), **pri•mat•i•cal** (prī mat′i kəl), *adj.*

Pri′mate of All′ Eng′land (prī′mit), *Ch. of Eng.* a title of the archbishop of Canterbury. [1350–1400; ME]

Pri′mate of Eng′land, *Ch. of Eng.* a title of the archbishop of York. [1350–1400; ME]

Pri•ma•tes (prī mā′tēz), *n.* the order comprising the primates. [1765–75; < NL, pl. of L *primās* one of the first, chief, principal. See PRIMATE]

pri•mate•ship (prī′mit ship′, -māt-), *n.* primacy (def. 2). [1625–35; PRIMATE + -SHIP]

pri•ma•tol•o•gy (prī′mə tol′ə jē), *n.* the branch of zoology dealing with the primates. [1940–45; PRIMATE + -O- + -LOGY] —**pri•ma•to•log•i•cal** (prī′mə tl oj′i kəl), *adj.* —**pri′ma•tol′o•gist,** *n.*

pri•ma•ve•ra[1] (prē′mə vâr′ə), *n.* **1.** a central American tree, *Cybistax donnell-smithii,* of the bignonia family, having showy, tubular yellow flowers. **2.** Also called **white mahogany.** the hard, yellowish-white wood of this tree, used for making furniture. [1890–95; < Sp: lit., spring; so called from its early flowering; see PRIMAVERAL]

pri•ma•ve•ra[2] (prē′mə vâr′ə; *It.* prē′mä ve′rä), *adj. Italian Cookery.* prepared with a variety of chopped or minced vegetables: *pasta primavera.* [appar. ellipsis from It *alla primavera* in the style of springtime; see PRIMAVERAL]

pri•ma•ve•ral (prī′mə vēr′əl), *adj.* of, in, or pertaining to the early springtime: *primaveral longings to sail around the world.* [1815–25; < Sp or It *primaver(a)* spring (also Pg, Pr, Catalan; cf. L *primō vēre* in the early spring; Rom *-vera* prob. orig. neut pl. construed as fem., or re-formation as fem. n.) + -AL[1]]

prime (prim), *adj., n., v.,* **primed, prim•ing.** —*adj.* **1.** of the first importance; demanding the fullest consideration: *a prime requisite.* **2.** of the greatest relevance or significance: *a prime example.* **3.** of the highest eminence or rank: *the prime authority on Chaucer.* **4.** of the greatest commercial value: *prime building lots.* **5.** first-rate: *This ale is prime!* **6.** (of meat, esp. of beef) noting or pertaining to the first grade or best quality: *prime ribs of beef.* **7.** first in order of time, existence, or development; earliest; primitive. **8.** basic; fundamental: *the prime axioms of his philosophy.* **9.** *Math.* (of any two or more numbers) having no common divisor except unity: *The number 2 is prime to 9.*

—*n.* **10.** the most flourishing stage or state. **11.** the time of early manhood or womanhood: *the prime of youth.* **12.** the period or state of greatest perfection or vigor of human life: *a man in his prime.* **13.** the choicest or best part of anything. **14.** (esp. in the grading of U.S. beef) a grade, classification, or designation indicating the highest or most desirable quality. **15.** the beginning or earliest stage of any period. **16.** the spring of the year. **17.** the first hour or period of the day, after sunrise. **18.** *Banking.* See **prime rate. 19.** *Eccles.* the second of the seven canonical hours or the service for it, originally fixed for the first hour of the day. **20.** *Math.* **a.** See **prime number. b.** one of the equal parts into which a unit is primarily divided. **c.** the mark (′) indicating such a division: *a, a′.* **21.** *Fencing.* the first of eight defensive positions. **22.** *Music.* **a.** unison (def. 2). **b.** (in a scale) the tonic or keynote. **23.** *Ling.* any basic, indivisible unit used in linguistic analysis. **24.** *Metall.* a piece of tin plate free from visible defects.

—*v.t.* **25.** to prepare or make ready for a particular purpose or operation. **26.** to supply (a firearm) with powder for communicating fire to a charge. **27.** to lay a train of powder to (a charge, mine, etc.). **28.** to pour or admit liquid into (a pump) to expel air and prepare for action. **29.** to put fuel into (a carburetor) before starting an engine, in order to insure a sufficiently rich mixture at the start. **30.** to cover (a surface) with a preparatory coat or color, as in painting. **31.** to supply or equip with information, words, etc., for use: *The politician was primed by his aides for the press conference.* **32.** to harvest the bottom leaves from (a tobacco plant).

—*v.i.* **33.** (of a boiler) to deliver or discharge steam containing an excessive amount of water. **34.** to harvest the bottom leaves from a tobacco plant. [bef. 1000; 1910–15 for def. 5; (adj.) ME (< OF *prim*) < L *primus* FIRST (superl. corresponding to *prior* PRIOR[1]); (n.) in part deriv. of the adj.; in part continuing ME *prim(e)* first canonical hour, OE *prim* < L *prima* (*hōra*) first (hour); (v.) appar. deriv. of the adj.] —**prime′ness,** *n.*

—**Syn. 1.** primary. **7.** PRIME, PRIMEVAL, PRIMITIVE have reference to that which is first. PRIME means first in numerical order or order of development: *prime meridian; prime cause.* PRIMEVAL means belonging to the first or earliest ages: *the primeval forest.* PRIMITIVE suggests the characteristics of the origins or early stages of a development, and hence implies the simplicity of original things: *primitive tribes, conditions, ornaments, customs, tools.*

prime′ cost′, that part of the cost of a commodity deriving from the labor and materials directly utilized in its manufacture. [1710–20]

prime′ field′, *Math.* a field that contains no proper subset that is itself a field.

prime′ ide′al, *Math.* an ideal in a ring with a multiplicative identity, having the property that when the product of two elements of the ring results in an element of the ideal, at least one of the elements is an element of the ideal.

prime′ in′terest rate′, *Banking.* See **prime rate.** Also called **prime′ lend′ing rate′.**

prime•ly (prīm′lē), *adv.* excellently. [1605–15; PRIME + -LY]

prime′ merid′ian, the meridian running through Greenwich, England, from which longitude east and west is reckoned. [1860–65]

prime′ min′ister, the principal minister and head of government in parliamentary systems; chief of the cabinet or ministry: *the British prime minister.* [1640–50] —**prime-min•is•te•ri•al** (prīm′min ə stēr′ē əl), *adj.* —**prime′-min′is•ter•ship′,** *n.* —**prime′ min′istry.**

prime′ mov′er, 1. *Mech.* **a.** the initial agent, as wind or electricity, that puts a machine in motion. **b.** a machine, as a water wheel or steam engine, that receives and modifies energy as supplied by some natural source. **2.** means of towing a cannon, as an animal, truck, or tractor. **3.** Also called **unmoved mover.** *Aristotelianism.* that which is the first cause of all movement and does not itself move. **4.** a person or thing that initiates or gives power and cohesion to something, as an idea, endeavor, or organization. [1935–40]

prime′ num′ber, *Math.* a positive integer that is not divisible without remainder by any integer except itself and 1, with 1 often excluded: *The integers 2, 3, 5, and 7 are prime numbers.* Also called **prime.** [1585–95]

prime′ num′ber the′orem, *Math.* the theorem that the number of prime numbers less than or equal to a given number is approximately equal to the given number divided by its natural logarithm. [1660–70]

prim•er[1] (prim′ər *or, esp. Brit.,* pri′mər), *n.* **1.** an elementary book for teaching children to read. **2.** any book of elementary principles: *a primer of phonetics.* **3.** See **great primer. 4.** See **long primer.** [1350–1400; ME < ML *primārium,* n. use of neut. of *primārius* PRIMARY]

prim•er[2] (pri′mər), *n.* **1.** a person or thing that primes. **2.** a cap, cylinder, etc., containing a compound that may be exploded by percussion or other means, used for firing a charge of powder. **3.** a first coat or layer of paint, size, etc., given to any surface as a base, sealer, or the like. [1490–1500; PRIME (v.) + -ER[1]]

prime′ rate′, *Banking.* the minimum interest rate charged by a commercial bank on short-term business loans to large, best-rated customers or corporations. Also called **prime, prime interest rate, prime lending rate.** [1955–60]

prime′ ribs′, a serving of the roasted ribs and meat from a prime cut of beef. Also, **prime′ rib′.** [1955–60]

pri•me•ro (pri mâr′ō), *n.* a card game fashionable in England in the 16th and 17th centuries. [1525–35; < Sp: lit., first < L *primārius* PRIMARY]

prime′ time′, *Radio and Television.* the hours, generally between 8 and 11 P.M., usually having the largest audience of the day. [1955–60]

pri•me•val (prī mē′vəl), *adj.* of or pertaining to the first age or ages, esp. of the world: *primeval forms of life.* Also, **primaeval.** [1765–75; < L *primaev(us)* young (*prim(us)* PRIME + *aev(um)* AGE + *-us* adj. suffix) + -AL[1]] —**pri•me′val•ly,** *adv.*

—**Syn.** primary, primordial, pristine. See **prime.**

pri•mi•grav•i•da (prī′mi grav′i də), *n., pl.* **-das, -dae** (-dē′). *Obstet.* a woman pregnant for the first time. [1885–90; < NL, equiv. to L *primi-,* comb. form of *primus* first (see PRIME) + *gravida,* fem. of *gravidus* pregnant (see GRAVID), on the model of PRIMIPARA]

pri•mine (prī′min), *n. Bot.* the outer integument of an ovule. Cf. **secundine.** [1825–35; < L *prim(us)* first (see PRIME) + -INE[2]]

prim•ing (prī′ming), *n.* **1.** the powder or other material used to ignite a charge. **2.** the act of a person or

CONCISE PRONUNCIATION KEY: act, cāpe, dâre, pärt; set, ēqual; if, īce; ox, ōver, ôrder, oil, bo͝ok, bo͞ot, out; up, ûrge; child; sing; shoe; thin, *th*at; zh as in *treasure.* ə = *a* as in *alone,* e as in *system,* i as in *easily,* o as in *gallop,* u as in *circus;* ˈ as in *fire* (fīˈr), *hour* (ouˈr). l and n can serve as syllabic consonants, as in *cradle* (krādˈl), and *button* (butˈn). See the full key inside the front cover.

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