

October 16! National Dictionary Day!



This Word Roots Lesson “tells” you about – **dic/dict (say, speak or tell)**

National **Dictionary** Day on October 16th commemorates the birthday of Noah Webster, publisher of the first American dictionary. He published his *An American Dictionary of the English Language* in 1828. As a spelling reformer, Webster believed that the English spelling rules were too complicated, so in his **dictionary**, he introduced American English spellings. For example, Webster replaced “colour” with “color,” “wagon” instead of “waggon,” and “centre” with “center.” Webster also added American words such as “skunk” and “squash” that did not appear in British **dictionaries**. He believed the United States “should be as independent from England in words as in politics. The word **dictionary** is derived from the Latin root **dic/dict** which means to say, speak or tell. What do you think a **dictionary** has to do with the concepts of **say, speak, or tell?**

Here are sentences that include “**dic/dict**” words meaning **say, speak, or tell**. Match them with the words in the box to the right.

1. _____ To “**say**” what will happen in the future.
2. _____ To oppose or “**speak**” against another speaker or statement.
3. _____ A final judgement “**spoken**” by a judge in a trial.

a. **Predict**

b. **Verdict**

c. **Contradict**

Dictators

A **dictator** is a ruler who holds total control over a country. A **dictator** simply declares “Because I **say so**” as the reason for decisions. Subjects under their authority must follow their *dictates*. If a *dictator* thinks you have done something wrong, they can put you in jail without a trial. They can function as both judge and jury, issuing the _____ that you are innocent or guilty of his charge. When it comes to laws, *dictators* are free to issue an _____ whenever they want and impose new rules on the people. Because no one can control a dictator, their behavior is _____.



Fill in the blanks above with the appropriate **dic/dict** word below:

A. **Edict**

B. **Verdict**

C. **Unpredictable**

How does each of these words refer to say, speak or tell?

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