

languescent

adj

/ lan'gwes^ənt /

L

becoming listless or fatigued.

*The languescent ballerina struggled through the final scene.***languid**

adj

/ 'lanwəd /

L > F

sluggish in character or disposition.

*In India Mary had always felt hot and too languid to care much about anything.***languorously**

adv

/ 'lan(g)(ə)rəslē /

L + Ecff

in a manner characterized by listless indolence or sluggishness.

*After returning from work, Cora reclined languorously on the sofa.***laniary**

adj

/ 'lānē.erē /

L

adapted for tearing.

*Laniary teeth are common in most carnivores.***lanolated**

adj

/ 'lan^əl.ādəd /

L > ISV + Ecff

containing wool grease refined for use in ointments and cosmetics.

*Agnes used lanolated cream to treat her dry, rough skin.***lantern**

n

/ 'lantərn /

Gk > L > F > E

a portable lamp.

*The red light in the distance came from a lantern that hung from the last car of the train.***lapideous**

adj

/ lə'pidēəs /

L

of the nature of stone.

*Lapideous concretions that form in the bladder or kidneys can cause extreme pain.***larceny**

n

/ 'lārs(ə)nē /

L > F > E

the unlawful taking and carrying away of personal property without the consent of its lawful possessor.

*When Tina first saw Victor's art collection, she suspected him of larceny.***larghetto**

adv

/ lār'ged(,)ō /

It

in a somewhat slow manner—used as a direction in music.

*In the second movement, which is played larghetto, Beethoven unfolds one melodic idea after another.***largitional**

adj

/ lār'jishən^{əl} /

L + Ecf

of or relating to a gift or gratuity.

*The seed money for the new museum consists entirely of largitional funds.***lariat**

n

/ 'larēət /

L > Sp

a long light but strong rope used with a running noose for catching livestock.

*Jonathan watched in fascination as the cowboy demonstrated his skill with the lariat.***larigo**

n

/ 'lārə.gō /

Sp

a ring at each end of the cinch of a western saddle through which the straps pass.

*When Lynn investigated her loose saddle, she found that a larigo had broken.***larithmics**

n pl

/ lə'riθmiks /

Gk

the scientific study of the quantitative aspects of population.

*In accordance with a principle of larithmics, the emigration from the country was offset by an increased rate of population growth.***larmoyant**

adj

/ lār'mōiənt /

L > F

given to tears or weeping : tearful.

*Even Jorge, who is not usually larmoyant, had to wipe his eyes during the eulogy.***larrigan**

n

/ 'larəgən /

unknown

an oil-tanned moccasin with legs that is used especially by loggers and trappers.

*The statue of Paul Bunyan depicted him with an ax over his shoulder and a hole in one larrigan.***larva**

n

/ 'lārvə /

L

the immature, wingless, and often vermiform feeding form of an insect which has hatched from the insect egg.

The caterpillar is the larva of the butterfly.

laryngitic

adj

/ ,larən'jɪdɪk /

Gk

affected with an inflammation of the upper part of the trachea containing the vocal cords.

After a long day of pitching his merchandise, the salesman returned home exhausted and laryngitic.

larynx

n

/ 'larɪŋ(k)s /

Gk > L

the modified upper part of the respiratory passage of air-breathing vertebrates bounded above by the glottis and continuous below with the trachea.

The vocal cords are situated within the larynx.

laser

n

/ 'lāzə(r) /

English acronym

a device that utilizes the natural oscillations of atoms or molecules between energy levels for generating coherent electromagnetic radiation.

The surgeon used a laser to make the incision.

lassitude

n

/ 'lasə.tʊd /

L

a condition of weariness or debility : fatigue.

Lassitude is a symptom of many tropical diseases.

laterigrade

adj

/ 'lɑdərə,grād /

L + L

running sidewise or characterized by such running.

The laterigrade movements of the crab delighted the children on the beach.

lathe

n

/ 'lɑθ /

E

a machine in which work is rotated about a horizontal axis and shaped by a fixed cutting tool while being held in a chuck.

Chloe donned her safety glasses before switching on the lathe.

laticiferous

adj

/ ,lɑdə'sɪf(ə)rəs /

Gk? > L + Ecff

containing, bearing, or secreting latex.

Some laticiferous tropical vines are good sources of rubber.

latitudinous

adj

/ ,lɑdə'tʊd'nəs /

L

having breadth especially of thought or interpretation.

Poetry is a latitudinous category, ranging from the moralistic to the nihilistic.

lattice

n

/ 'lɑdəs /

Gmc? > F > E

a framework or structure of wood or metal made by crossing laths or other thin strips so as to form a network.

The window has a lattice, but that did not stop Renton from getting through it.

laud

v

/ 'lɔd /

L

sing the praises of.

The proud parents would laud their child's slightest accomplishment.

laudatory

adj

/ 'lɔdətɔrē /

L

of, relating to, or containing praise.

Seth made sure everyone saw his laudatory telegram from the dean.

laughable

adj

/ 'lɑfəbəl /

E + Ecff

comical, absurd.

Marlene wore antique finery which would have been laughable on any other woman.

launderer

n

/ 'lɔndərə(r) /

L > F > E

one who washes and irons clothing.

Gina took her blouse to the launderer for cleaning.

laureation

n

/ ,lɔrē'ɑʃən /

L

an act of crowning with or as if with a wreath of leaves as a mark of honor or achievement.

At her laureation the recipient of the honorary degree paid tribute to her college professors.

laurel

n

/ 'lɔrəl /

L

[has homonym: loral] foliage used by the ancient Greeks to crown victors in the Pythian games.

The ancient statue of an unknown athlete bore a carefully carved wreath of laurel.

lavash

n
/ 'lɑ.vəʃ /
Armenian

a large thin crisp unleavened wafer with a rough surface caused by air bubbles during baking.

Phil served lavash with goat cheese.

lavatory

n
/ 'lɑ.və.tɔr.ē /
L

a room with conveniences for washing the hands and face and usually with one or more toilets.

All of the soap dispensers in the lavatory were empty.

league

n
/ 'lēg /
Gaulish > L > E

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word.] an English unit of distance of about 3 miles.

Long car rides seem shorter if you figure them by the league instead of by the mile.

leaven

n
/ 'levən /
L > F > E

[has homonym and near homonyms: levin and eleven, levan] a substance (as yeast) acting or used to produce fermentation in a dough or a liquid.

Nina neglected to add the leaven that causes the bread dough to rise.

lebkuchen

n
/ 'lɛp.kükən /
G

a Christmas cookie usually made with honey, brown sugar, almonds, candied fruit peel, and spices.

Bart slipped a lebkuchen to the schnauzer.

lecithin

n
/ 'lesəθɪn /
Gk

a substance that is obtained in the manufacture of soybean oil and that is used in foods (as margarine, chocolate, bakery products).

Lecithin is used in the production of caramel to make it smoother.

lectern

n
/ 'lektə(r)n /
L

a desk or stand with a sloping top and usually a ledge at the bottom of the slope designed to support a book or script in a convenient position for a reader standing before it.

Miguel clutched the lectern in an attempt to conceal his nervousness.

lederhosen

n pl
/ 'lɛdə(r).hɔzən /
G

knee-length leather trousers worn especially in Bavaria.

All the men who volunteered to work at Oktoberfest were asked to wear lederhosen.

legacy

n
/ 'legəsē /
L > F > E

money or property given to someone by direction of a will.

Tim opened a small business with the legacy from his father.

legerdemain

n
/ .lejdə(r)də'mān /
F

skill and dexterity in the performance of juggling or conjuring tricks.

The performer's legerdemain included making a coworker disappear from an enclosure.

legerity

n
/ lə'jɛrədē /
L > F

mental or physical agility and quickness.

The gymnast performed on the balance beam with remarkable legerity.

legislatorial

adj
/ .lejdəslə'tɔrēəl /
L + Ecf

having the power or performing the function of making laws.

Unfinished legislatorial duties kept Congress in session past its normal adjournment date.

legislature

n
/ 'lejdəsləchə(r) /
L + Ecf

an organized body of persons having the authority to make laws.

Ellen served as a page for the legislature last year.

leguminous

adj
/ lə'gyümənəs /
L

of, resembling, or consisting of peas or other vegetables.

The only leguminous food that Mandy likes is peas.

leisurable

adj
/ 'lɛzh(ə)rəbəl /
L > F > E

proceeding deliberately without haste.

The bikers made a leisurable tour of the campus.

lemming

n
/ 'lemɪŋ /
ON > Norw

any of several small rodents of circumpolar distribution.

The legend of suicide by drowning associated with the lemming is fascinating but probably untrue.

lemur

n
/ 'lɛmə(r) /
L

any of numerous arboreal chiefly nocturnal mammals formerly widespread but now largely confined to Madagascar that are related to the monkeys.

The lemur is lower on the evolutionary scale and less intelligent than the monkey.

length

n
/ 'lɛŋ(k)θ /
E

the longer of the two straight-line dimensions of a surface or plane or the longest of the three straight-line dimensions of a solid : extent from end to end.

Marsha and her father frequently argue over the length of her skirts.

leniency

n
/ 'lɛnɪənsɪ /
L

the quality or state of being tolerant or merciful.

At his sentencing the convicted felon expressed remorse and pleaded for leniency.

leoncito

n
/ ,lɔːn'sɛ(ɪ)tɔ /
Sp

a lion monkey; any of several South American marmosets.

The leoncito has a mane of fur around its head like a lion.

leonine

adj
/ 'lɛə.nɪn /
L

resembling or suggesting that of a lion.

Portraits of Beethoven and Einstein always depict them with leonine hairstyles.

leopard

n
/ 'lɛpə(r)d /
Gk > L > F > E

a large strong cat of southern Asia and Africa that is adept at climbing and is usually tawny or buff with black spots.

The so-called "black panther" is actually a black-coated form of the leopard.

leotard

n
/ 'lɛə.tɑːd /
F name

a close-fitting garment for the torso that is worn for practice or performance by dancers and acrobats.

In modern dance, performers often wear a very simple leotard.

lepidopterist

n
/ ,lɛpə'dæptərəst /
Gk

a specialist in the study of butterflies and moths.

Judy was well on her way to becoming a lepidopterist; she already had her own butterfly net.

leporiform

adj
/ 'lɛpərə.fɔːm /
L + E

resembling a hare or rabbit in form.
For Easter, Mom decorates the windows with leporiform figures bearing baskets of eggs.

leprosy

n
/ 'lɛprəsɪ /
Gk > L

a progressive infectious disease that affects the skin and nerves and causes lumps, ulcers, white scaly patches, deformities, and eventual loss of sensation.

Even though approximately 270 cases of leprosy are diagnosed in the United States each year, effective medications have made the existence of leper colonies unnecessary.

leptocercal

adj
/ ,lɛptə'sɜːkəl /
Gk + Gk

tapering off to a long slender point—used of the tail of a fish.
The scuba diver showed Jane his scar from a wound he received when whipped by the leptocercal tail of a stingray.

lesion

n
/ 'lɛzhən /
L > F > E

[has near homonym: legion] an abnormal change in structure of an organ or part due to injury or disease.

Sarah had Dr. Kendall treat the lesion on her shin.

lethal

adj
/ 'lɛθəl /
L

of, relating to, or causing death.
The lethal fire spread through the Riggs Building rapidly.

lethargic

adj

/ lə'thɑːrjɪk /

Gk > L > F

slow-moving, sluggish.

Rhea's dry throat and lethargic disposition warned her that a cold was coming.

lethargy

n

/ 'leθə(r)jɪ /

Gk

the quality or state of being lazy or indifferent : lassitude, apathy.

The hot, humid air of the tropics spreads a feeling of lethargy over everyone.

lettuce

n

/ 'ledʒs /

L > F > E

a common garden vegetable with succulent leaves that are often used in salads.

Rosemarie prefers romaine lettuce for her salads.

leucoryx

n

/ 'lʊkə(,)rɪks /

Gk

a large chiefly pale brownish antelope of North Africa.

The horns of the leucoryx are evenly curved backwards.

levade

n

/ lə'vɑːd /

F > G

a show-ring movement in which a horse raises the forequarters, brings the hindquarters under him, and balances with haunches deeply bent and forelegs drawn up.

When a horse's body is at a less-than-45-degree angle with the ground, the movement is called a "levade."

levanter

n

/ lə'vɑːntə(r) /

L > F > E + Ecf

a strong easterly Mediterranean wind.

When the levanter hits the Rock of Gibraltar, it soars up 1,400 feet, and its vapor becomes a dense white cloud.

levee

n

/ 'levē /

L > F

[has homonym: levy] an embankment built alongside a body of water to prevent flooding of nearby land.

The city plans to construct a levee to prevent flooding from the river.

leveret

n

/ 'lev(ə)rət /

L > F > E

a wild rabbit in its first year.

Jimmy's pet rabbit is a leveret that his dad caught while cutting hay.

leviathan

adj

/ lə'vɪəθən /

Heb > L > E

of enormous size.

The ore was hauled away in leviathan trucks.

levity

n

/ 'levədē /

L

excessive or unseemly frivolity : lack of fitting seriousness.

The minister's levity during the eulogy was inappropriate.

levy

v

/ 'levē /

F > E

impose or collect by legal process or by authority.

The political candidate promised to levy no new taxes if he were elected.

lexicon

n

/ 'leksəkən /

Gk

the vocabulary of a subject or of an occupational group.

The lexicon of computer programmers is slowly becoming part of everyday language.

liberalism

n

/ 'lɪb(ə)rəlɪzəm /

L + Ecf

a political philosophy based on the belief in freedom for the individual and on the belief of governmental guarantees of human rights and civil liberties.

Alex believes that persons attracted to liberalism are often more compassionate than practical.

librarian

n

/ lɪ'brerēən /

L

one whose vocation is working with collections of books, manuscripts, or other literary materials kept for study or reading.

Juan asked the librarian for the key to the rare-book cabinet.

library

n
/ 'li.brerē /
L

a room or section of a building or a building itself given over to books, manuscripts, or other literary and sometimes artistic materials usually kept in some convenient order for use but not for sale.

Stella owns many books and plans to convert a spare bedroom to a library.

libretto

n
/ lə'bre(,)dō /
L

the text of a work (as an opera) for the musical theater.

Michelle bought a dual-language edition of the libretto of Tosca for a quarter at a garage sale.

licentiate

n
/ lɪ'senchēət /
L

an academic degree ranking below that of a doctor given by some European institutions of higher education.

After two years' study, Reverend Pease received a licentiate in canon law.

lichen

n
/ 'lɪkən /
Gk > L

[has homonym: liken] any of numerous complex plants that are made up of an alga and a fungus growing in symbiotic association on various solid surfaces (as rocks or the bark of trees).

Sean used a mixture of green paint and sawdust to simulate lichen on his model train layo

licit

adj
/ 'lɪsət /
L

not forbidden by law : lawful.

Even licit drugs can be dangerous if not used as directed by a physician.

lidocaine**liege**

adj
/ 'lēj /
L > F > E

having the right to feudal allegiance and service.

The serf bowed low before his liege lord.

lienholder

n
/ 'lɛn.hōldər /
L > F + E

one having a valid mortgage.

When she returned from vacation, Iris was mortified to find a stack of letters from her lienholder.

lieu

n
/ 'li /
L > F

[has homonym: loo] place, stead.

Miss Woodhouse had many acquaintances, but not one among them could be accepted in lieu of her best friend Miss Taylor for even half a day.

lieutenancy

n
/ lū'tenənsē /
L > F > E

the term of a commissioned officer in the army, air force, or marine corps ranking below a captain.

During his lieutenancy, Lionel served in Guam.

lieutenant

n
/ lū'tenənt /
L > F > E

a military officer in the army, navy, air force, or marine corps.

At the end of the novel, the young naval hero was finally promoted to lieutenant.

ligament

n
/ 'lɪgəmənt /
L

something that ties or unites one thing or part to another.

International law is considered by some to be the ligament of mankind.

ligature

n
/ 'lɪgəçə(r) /
L > F > E

something that is used to bind; specifically : a thread, wire, or other material used in surgery.

Dr. Adams removed the ligature that had held the vein closed during the operation.

lightning

adj
/ 'lɪtnɪŋ /
E

[has near homonym: lightening] moving with or having the speed and suddenness of lightning.

The lightning rapidity of Mr. Julia's jargon and wit is a tool of his trade as an auctioneer.

ligneous

adj
/ 'lɪgnēəs /
L

of or resembling wood.

Mr. Hart described the plant as a perennial herb with a ligneous crown.

ligniperdous

adj

/ˌlɪgnəˈpɜːdəs/

L + L

destructive to wood.

The house had to be inspected for any ligniperdous insects before it could be sold.

liliaceous

adj

/ˌlɪlɪˈeɪʃəs/

L

of, relating to, or resembling any of numerous erect perennial leafy-stemmed bulbous herbs.

Deb's curtain material has a colorful liliaceous pattern.

lilliputian

adj

/ˌlɪlɪˈpyʊʃən/

imaginary geog name + Ecf
extremely small.

The lilliputian furniture and fixtures in the dollhouse astounded and delighted the museum visitors.

limb

n

/ˈlɪm/

E

[Note: The definition provided is not the one most commonly associated with this word. In addition, word has homonym: limn.] the outer edge of the apparent disk of a celestial body or a portion of the edge.

Teresa spied a crater directly on the Moon's limb.

limbiferous

adj

/lɪmˈbɪf(ə)rəs/

L + L

having a border or margin.

Mr. Lovejoy told his pupils that they would be expected to use limbiferous paper for all their assignments.

limerick

n

/ˈlɪm(ə)rɪk/

Irish geog name

a light verse form of five anapestic lines.

Noel composed a funny limerick about his teacher.

limitrophe

adj

/ˈlɪməˌtrɒf/

L + Gk

situated on a border or frontier : adjacent, neighboring.

The geography teacher asked the class to name all the countries that are limitrophe to Russia.

limn

v

/ˈlɪm/

L > F > E

[has homonym: limb] outline in clear sharp detail : delineate.

The object of the video game is to fire when the periscope sights limn the tanker.

limnology

n

/lɪmˈnɒlədʒi/

L + Gk

the scientific study of physical, chemical, meteorological, and biological conditions in fresh waters especially of ponds and lakes.

An expert in limnology testified that pollution is reducing the fish population in Crystal Lake.

limousine

n

/ˈlɪməˌziːn/

F geog name

a small bus (as for transporting passengers to and from an airport).

Mrs. Waldrup was disappointed that her airport limousine was a ramshackle van.

limpid

adj

/ˈlɪmpɪd/

L

completely free from cloudiness or other obstacles to the passage of light.

Mary got an eerie feeling when she looked into the limpid blue eyes of the Siberian Husky.

linear

adj

/ˈlɪniə(r)/

L

involving a single dimension : not square or cubic.

The micrometer caliper is an instrument for making precise linear measurements of dimensions such as diameters, thicknesses, and lengths.

linguist

n

/ˈlɪŋgwɪst/

L

a student of or expert in languages.

The famous linguist described how many tribal languages are becoming extinct.

liniment

n

/ˈlɪnəmənt/

L > E

a liquid or semiliquid alcoholic, oily, or saponaceous preparation for application to the skin with friction.

Winona delicately rubbed liniment over her sore shoulder.

linoleum

n
/ lɪˈnɒləəm /
L

a floor covering made by laying on a cloth backing a mixture of solidified linseed oil and various solid particles and usually pigments.

The pattern in Sheena's kitchen linoleum resembles inlaid pebbles.

liquefaction

n
/ ˌlikwəˈfækʃən /
L

the process of making or becoming liquid : conversion of a solid into a liquid by heat or of a gas into a liquid by cold or pressure.

Much earthquake damage results from the liquefaction of soil on which buildings stand.

liquefiable

adj
/ ˌlikwəˈfiəbəl /
L

capable of being reduced to a liquid state.

Many familiar solid materials are easily liquefiable by heating.

liquescent

adj
/ liˈkwesənt /
L

being, becoming, or tending to become liquid : melting.

When a giant asteroid hits the ground, it is transformed into a liquescent mass that becomes a fireball.

literate

adj
/ ˈlɪdərət /
L

able to read and write.

The government's goal for all adult citizens to be literate in 20 years needs a strategic plan.

literati

n pl
/ ˌlɪdəˈrædi /
L&It

the educated class : intelligentsia.

The New York literati gathered at the book-signing party.

lithesome

adj
/ ˈlɪθsəm /
E + E

characterized by agile grace.

Denise's lithesome performance in her audition won her a place in the Royal Ballet.

lithification

n
/ ˌlɪθəfəˈkæʃən /
Gk + L

the conversion of unconsolidated sediments into solid rock.

Ben's science project explained how limestone is formed by lithification.

lithochromy

n
/ ˈlɪθəkrōmə /
Gk

the art of painting on stone.

Arthur's work in lithochromy earned him a commission to paint a scene on the museum's slate wall.

lithoid

adj
/ ˈliːθɔɪd /
Gk

resembling a stone.

The lava eventually solidified into lithoid masses.

litigator

n
/ ˈlɪdəˌɡædər /
L

one that prosecutes or defends by pleadings, evidence, and debate in a court.

The cough drop manufacturer hired a famous litigator to appear in its new commercial.

litigiousness

n
/ lɪˈtɪʒəsnəs /
L

the quality or state of being prone to engage in lawsuits.

An increase in lawsuits can be attributed in part to the growing litigiousness of American society.

litmus

n
/ ˈlɪtməs /
Scand

a coloring matter that turns red in acid solutions and blue in alkaline solutions and is obtained from several lichens.

Chris will use litmus to test for acidity in the chemical solution.

litotes

n
/ ˈlɪdəˌtēz /
Gk

understatement in which an affirmative is expressed by a negative of the contrary (as in "He's not a bad ball player").

Rupert loved to use the litotes "not bad" to convey high praise.

littoral

adj
/ ˈlɪdərəl /
L

[has homonym: literal] of, relating to, or being near a shore, especially of the sea.

Eduardo finally realized his dream when he established a littoral nature preserve.

liturgical

adj

/ lɪ'tɜrjəkəl /

Gk > L

of, relating to, or having the characteristics of ceremonial or ritualistic worship.

The priest donned his liturgical vestments before the mass.

liturgy

n

/ 'lɪdə(r)jē /

Gk

a rite or series of rites, observances, or procedures prescribed for public worship in the Christian church in accordance with authorized or standard form.

Since the Second Vatican Council, the use of the vernacular language, rather than Latin, has become widespread in Catholic liturgy.

livid

adj

/ 'lɪvəd /

L > F

discolored by or as if by bruising : black-and-blue.

The bicycle accident left a large livid patch on Violet's arm.

llama

n

/ 'lāmə /

Quechua > Sp

[has homonym: lama] any of a genus of wild or domesticated cud-chewing mammals of South America related to the camels but smaller and without a hump.

The llama thrives in the Alpine grasslands of Bolivia, Peru, Chile, and Argentina.

lobotomy

n

/ lɒ'bədəmə /

Gk

incision into the brain to sever nerve fibers for the relief of certain mental disorders and tension.

Lobotomy is no longer the preferred treatment in cases of extreme psychosis.

lobscouse

n

/ 'ləb.skəʊs /

unknown

a sailor's dish prepared by stewing or baking bits of meat with vegetables, hardtack, and other ingredients.

After Fritz returned from his fishing trip, he ordered a hearty portion of lobscouse for dinner.

locale

n

/ lɒ'kəl /

L > F

a place or locality especially when viewed in relation to a particular event or characteristic.

Evan's doctor told him he needed to live in a drier locale, so he moved to Tucson.

lochetic

adj

/ lɒ'kɛdɪk /

Gk

lying in wait for prey—used especially of insects.

Josh claimed that the ants in the nest next to his porch must be lochetic, because they always seemed to know when he was barefoot.

locust

n

/ 'lɒkəst /

L > E

a grasshopper that frequently travels in swarms.

Cooper placed the captured locust in a mason jar.

lodging

n

/ 'lədʒɪŋ /

E

a place to live : dwelling.

After a fire destroyed their home, the family depended on relatives for temporary lodging.

logarithm

n

/ 'lɒgə.rɪθəm /

Gk

the exponent that indicates the power to which a number must be raised to produce a given number.

When the math teacher said that 4 is the logarithm of 16 to the base 2, only half the class understood what she was saying.

loggia

n

/ 'lədʒ(ē)ə /

F > It

[has near homonym: logia] a roofed open gallery or arcade in the side of a building especially when facing upon an open court.

An airy second-floor loggia ran around three sides of the tiny courtyard.

logion

n

/ 'lɒdʒjən /

Gk

a usually short pointed saying or observation especially of a religious teacher.

The guru's devotees treasured every logion that he uttered.

logistics

n pl

/ lɒ'dʒɪstɪks /

Gk

military science in its planning and handling and implementation of personnel, equipment, and facilities.

Juan has been interested in logistics since he first played with toy soldiers.

logogriph

n
/ 'lɒgə,grɪf /

Gk
[has near homonym: logograph] a word puzzle.

Katrina spent the afternoon constructing a logogriph for her little brother.

logomachy

n
/ lɒ'gəməki /

Gk
a dispute over or about words.
Behind the legislature's logomachy about what makes a Great Lake "great" lay political and economic motives.

logorrhea

n
/ ,lɒgə'reə /

Gk
pathologically excessive and often incoherent talkativeness.
The patient's logorrhea was indicative of deep emotional problems.

lonely

adj
/ 'lɒnl̩ /

E + Ecf
being without company.
Allie took a picture of a lonely fisherman on the pier.

longanimity

n
/ ,lɒŋə'nɪmədi /

L
a disposition to bear injuries patiently : forbearance.
Murphy's Law strikes often in George's project, but his longanimity will help him weather all setbacks.

longevity

n
/ lɒŋ'jeɪvədi /

L
a long duration of individual life.
Mr. Wade's longevity was remarkable, considering he had been sickly as a child.

loquacious

adj
/ lɒ'kwəʃəs /

L
given to excessive talking : garrulous.
Bryn's loquacious sister was quite a hit at the rehearsal party.

lorgnette

n
/ lɒ(r)'nɪt /

F
a pair of eyeglasses or opera glasses with a handle.
Lorgnette in one hand and hankie in the other, Mrs. Vandergriff looked just like the opera-goers portrayed in cartoons.

loricate

n
/ 'lɒrəkət /

L
an animal having a hard protective case or shell.
The armadillo is a well-known loricate, as is the alligator.

lorikeet

n
/ 'lɒrəkēt /

Malay + Sp&F
any of numerous small arboreal parrots that are found in Australasia and that feed largely upon the nectar of flowers.
Ginger has a pet lorikeet that rides on her shoulder.

loupe

n
/ 'lup /

Gmc > F
[has homonyms: loop and loup]
small magnifying glass used by jewelers and watchmakers.
At his jewelry store Arlo always wears a loupe on a chain around his neck.

lovat**loveliness**

n
/ 'ləvl̩nəs /

E
the state of being beautiful.
Colette was awestruck by the loveliness of the stained-glass windows.

loxocosm

n
/ 'lɒksəkəzəm /

Gk
a device to show how the inclination of Earth's axis causes the day's length to vary from season to season.
John constructed a loxocosm for the science fair.

lozenge

n
/ 'ləzɒnj /

F
a small diamond-shaped medicated candy.
Mother gave Rick a cherry-flavored lozenge for his sore throat.

luau

n
/ 'lu:au /

Hawaiian
a feast with Hawaiian food and usually Hawaiian entertainment.
Sabrina wore a grass skirt to the luau.

lucernal

adj
/ ,li:sərnəl /

L + Ecf
of or relating to a lamp.
A slide projector is a lucernal device for displaying images on a screen.

lucid

adj
/ 'lūsəd /

L
penetrated with light : translucent.
The otters romped and played in the lucid stream.

luculent

adj
/ 'lʊkyələnt /

L
transparently clear in thought or expression.

The audience was pleasantly amazed at the luculent commentary on the state of the economy.

ludicrous

adj
/ 'lʊdəkrəs /

L
meriting derisive laughter or scorn : absurd.

The jury was instructed to disregard the ludicrous remarks made by the defendant.

luftmensch

n
/ 'lʊft.menʃ /
G > Yiddish

an impractical contemplative person having no definite trade, business, or income : dreamer.
Every large family seems to have at least one luftmensch among its members.

lugubrious

adj
/ lə'gʊbrɪəs /
L > E

expressive of, marked by, or giving rise to grief or sorrow.

The funeral director spoke in lugubrious tones as she explained the arrangements.

lullaby

n
/ 'lʊləbi /

E
a soothing refrain; especially : a song used to quiet children or lull them to sleep.

The baby was asleep before Mary finished singing the lullaby.

lumen

n
/ 'lʊmən /

L
a unit of luminous flux equal to the light emitted in a unit solid angle by a uniform point source of one candle.

The lumen is used in calculations regarding artificial lighting.

luminaire

n
/ .lʊmə'nɑ(a)(ə)r /
L > F

a complete lighting unit including lamp, shade, reflector, fixture, and other accessories.

A luminaire was built into each cubicle in the office.

luminary

n
/ 'lʊmə.nerē /
L

one that is an inspiration to others : one who has achieved success in his or her chosen field.

Although a luminary in the field, Peter was reluctant to weigh in with his opinion about the ethics of cloning.

luminosity

n
/ .lʊmə'næsədē /
L

the quantity of radiation emitted by a star or other celestial source usually expressed in terms of the Sun's intensity.

The comet's luminosity was so great that it could be seen during the day.

luminous

adj
/ 'lʊmənəs /
L

emitting or seeming to emit a steady suffused light that is reflected or produced from within.
During the movie Stan periodically checked the time on the luminous dial of his watch.

luncheonette

n
/ .lənʃə'net /
E + Fcf

a place where light lunches are sold.

After playing racquetball, Jaime stopped at the luncheonette for a sandwich.

lunge

v
/ 'lʌŋj /
F

make a forceful forward movement.

Every few seconds the swordsman would lunge at his opponent.

lunule**luscious**

adj
/ 'lʊʃəs /
E

having a delicious taste or smell.

The waiter pointed to cakes and pastries, each more luscious than the last, as he told us about them.

lustrous

adj
/ 'lʌstrəs /
L > It > F + Ecf
having a gloss or shine : gleaming.
When dining out, Marcia always wears some lustrous jewelry.

lute

n
/ 'lʊt /
Ar > OProv > F > E

[has homonym: loot] a stringed musical instrument of Oriental origin that has a large pear-shaped body.

The court minstrel strummed his lute thoughtfully, deciding which song to play next.

luthier

n
/ 'lʊdɪə(r) /
Ar > OProv > F

a maker of stringed instruments.

The luthier gave Dolores a choice of inlay patterns for her new guitar.

lux

n
/ 'lʌks /

L
[has homonyms: lucks, luxe] a unit of illumination equal to the direct illumination on a surface that is everywhere 1 meter from a uniform point source of one candle.
Paul's new video camera is designed to operate in a light intensity of only 1 lux.

luxurious

adj
/ ,lʌg'zʰjʊrɪəs /

L
characterized by wealth or rich abundance.
The price of the car with the luxurious interior astounded even wealthy customers.

lycanthrope

n
/ 'lɪkənθrəʊp /

Gk
a person transformed temporarily or permanently into a wolf or capable of assuming a wolf's form.
The zoologist contends that the myth of the lycanthrope is one of the reasons wolves are so maligned.

lymphatic

adj
/ lɪm'fædɪk /

Gk > L
conveying a pale fluid that bathes the tissues of an organism.
The lymphatic system is vital in removing harmful bacteria from tissues.

lynx

n
/ 'lɪŋ(k)s /

Gk
[has homonym: links] any of several wildcats with relatively long legs, a short stubby tail, mottled coat, and often tufted ears.
The lynx lives in cold northern latitudes, where its favorite prey is the snowshoe hare.

lyonnaise

adj
/ 'lɪnəz /

F geog name
prepared or seasoned with onions and sometimes parsley.
Ricardo ordered lyonnaise potatoes as an elegant alternative to french fries.

macadam

n
/ mə'kədəm /

British name
broken stone used in roadway paving.
Depending on the climate, some roads are best made of macadam and others, of asphalt.

macaque

n
/ mə'kək /

Pg > F
any of numerous short-tailed Old World monkeys chiefly of southern Asia and the East Indies.
The islanders trained a macaque to perform several routines for public entertainment.

macarize

v
/ 'makəɹɪz /

Gk
pronounce happy or blessed : felicitate, laud.
After the wedding ceremony various friends will give speeches to macarize the happy couple.

macaroni

n
/ ,makə'rɒnē /

It
an alimentary pasta composed chiefly of semolina dried in the form of slender tubes or small fancy shapes.
Lucy's favorite pasta dish is macaroni and cheese.

macaroon

n
/ ,makə'rūn /

It > F
a small cake composed chiefly of the white of eggs, sugar, and ground almonds or almond paste or coconut.
Cheryl placed a fresh macaroon on each saucer before serving the coffee.

maceral

n
/ 'masəɹəl /

L?
a fragment of plant debris in coal.
Penny examined the maceral under a microscope.

Machiavellian

adj
/ ,makēə'velēən /

It name
of or relating to Machiavelli or his political theory that any means however lawless or unscrupulous can justifiably be used in achieving political power.
The Machiavellian politician was accused of wheeling and dealing, backstabbing, and creating fall guys and cover-ups.

machicolation

n
/ məˈtʃɪkəˈlæʃən /
F > L + L

an opening on a parapet of a battlement for the purpose of dropping missiles upon assailants attacking from below.

Whenever a castle gets stormed in the movies, the defenders are shown pouring boiling oil through a machicolation onto the enemy attacking the gates.

mackinaw

n
/ ˈmækəˌnɔ /

Amer geog name
a short usually double-breasted and belted coat or jacket of heavy fabric.

“No guts, no glory!” exclaimed the skier in a plaid mackinaw as he pushed off down the slope.

macrame

n
/ ˈmɑkrəˌmɑ /

Ar > Turk > It or F
a coarse lace or decorative fringe made by knotting threads or cords in a geometrical pattern.

Penny prefers to use soft yarn in her macrame.

Madagascar

adj
/ ˌmɑdəˈgɑskə(r) /

African geog name
of or from Madagascar, an island in the Indian Ocean.

Lemurs, cute large-eyed furry monkey-like animals, are the best known Madagascar fauna.

madarosis

n
/ ˌmɑdəˈrɔsəs /

Gk > L
loss of the eyelashes or of the hair of the eyebrows.

Dorothy suffered from madarosis during chemotherapy, but her eyelashes eventually grew back even thicker than before.

madeleine

n
/ ˈmɑdˈleɪn /

F name
a small rich cake baked in a tin shaped like a shell.

Knut skipped the main course and went right to the madeleine.

mademoiselle

n
/ ˌmɑdəmwəˈzɛl /

F
an unmarried French woman.

Robert is smitten by a young mademoiselle he met during his trip to Paris.

madrigal

n
/ ˈmɑdrɪgəl /

L > It > E
a polyphonic part-song originating in the 14th century.

At the coronation feast the haunting madrigal brought tears to the eyes of the new king.

maelstrom

n
/ ˈmælztrəm /

D
a powerful water current that usually moves in a circular direction with extreme rapidity.

A memorable scene from the movie Fantasia features the sorcerer's apprentice caught in a maelstrom.

maestro

n
/ ˈmɑ(ɪ)strō /

L > It
a master or teacher of an art (as music).

The award-winning singer gave tribute to her maestro at the conservatory.

magenta

n
/ məˈdʒɛntə /

It geog name
a deep purplish red; specifically : one of the subtractive primary colors.

The visual afterimage of magenta is green.

magisterial

adj
/ ˈmɑdʒəˌstɪriəl /

L
of, relating to, or having the characteristics of a master or teacher : authoritative.

Jubril's magisterial air served him well with everyone but his daughter.

magistracy

n
/ ˈmɑdʒɪstrəsi /

L
the office of a public official entrusted with administration of the laws : magisterial power and dignity.

The dissenters were persecuted by the state for refusing to accept the authority of the magistracy.

magnanimity

n
/ .magnə'nimədē /

L
a nobility of feeling that is superior to meanness, pettiness, or jealousy and that disdains revenge or retaliation.

The philosopher praised the victor's magnanimity in allowing the captives to return home.

magnanimous

adj
/ .mag'nənəməs /

L
showing or suggesting nobility of feeling and generosity of mind.
Simone's magnanimous attitude toward the homeless wasn't shared by her sister.

magnetic

adj
/ mag'nɛdɪk /
Gk geog name
possessing the ability or power to attract.
Even as a child, Julie's magnetic personality charmed everyone who spoke to her.

mahatma

n
/ mə'hətmə /
Skt

a person held worthy of reverence for high-mindedness, wisdom, and selflessness.
Raoul trekked for three days to seek the advice of the mahatma.

mahogany

n
/ mə'həgənē /
unknown
the durable yellowish brown to reddish brown wood of a West Indian tree that is widely used for cabinetwork and fine finish work.
Kate's bedroom furniture is made of solid mahogany.

mahout

n
/ mə'haüt /
Skt > Hindi

a keeper and driver of an elephant.
The mahout trained his elephant to move logs.

mai

n
/ 'mī /
Jpn
[has homonym: my] a slow Japanese folk or theater dance featuring hand gestures.
Midori is an expert in all forms of Japanese dance, but her favorite is the mai.

maillot

n
/ mə'yō /
F
[has near homonym: mayo] a woman's one-piece usually strapless bathing suit.
Becky thought that the maillot was out of fashion until she saw several in the catalog.

maimed

adj
/ 'māmd /
Gmc > F > E
crippled, mutilated.
The maimed dog was taken to the animal hospital for treatment.

maintenance

n
/ 'mānt(ə)nən(t)s /
F
the labor of keeping something (as buildings or equipment) in a state of repair or efficiency : upkeep.
Excellent maintenance preserved the original gingerbread trim on the Victorian house.

maize

n
/ 'māz /
Taino > Sp
[has homonym: maze] Indian corn.
Gina enjoys hearing the story of how the native Americans taught the Pilgrims to grow maize.

majordomo

n
/ .məjə(r)'dō(,)mō /
L > It > Sp
[has near homonym: mayordomo] a head steward or palace official.
Jeeves has been majordomo of Huntington Castle for the last 30 years.

majority

n
/ mə'jɔrədē /
L
a number greater than half of a total.
A runoff is necessary because none of the candidates captured a majority of the votes in the primary.

majuscule

adj
/ 'məjə,skyül /
L > F
written in large letters (as capitals).
Dr. Jenkins could see immediately that the majuscule scripts of the two letters were identical and deduced that the same scribe had written both.

malachite

n
/ 'malə,kīt /
Gk > L > E
a mineral consisting of a green carbonate of copper that is an ore of copper and is used to make ornamental objects.
Pierre bought a piece of malachite at the museum of natural history.

malady

n
/ 'malədē /
L > F > E
a disease, distemper, disorder, or indisposition of the body proceeding from impaired or defective functions.
In the 14th century, the malady known as The Black Death swept across Europe, leaving about 25 million people dead.

malaguena

n

/ ˌmæləˈɡɑːnyə /

Sp geog name

a Spanish couple dance similar to a fandango.

*Juan and Carmela danced the malaguena with extraordinary grace and emotional excitement.***malapropism**

n

/ ˌmæləˈprɒːpɪzəm /

F > E theater name

a blundering use of a word that sounds somewhat like the one intended but is ludicrously wrong in the context.

*No matter how careful he tries to be, Sherman usually utters at least one malapropism in every campaign speech.***malaria**

n

/ məˈlɪəriə /

L > It + Gk > L > It

a disease caused by sporozoan parasites in the red blood cells, transmitted by the bite of anopheline mosquitoes, and characterized by periodic attacks of chills and fevers.

*During the construction of the Panama Canal many workers succumbed to malaria.***malaxage**

n

/ ˌmæləksɪj /

Gk > L > F

the act or process of softening a material (as clay) by moistening and working it.

*After the malaxage the clay was ready for molding on the potter's wheel.***malediction**

n

/ ˌmæləˈdɪkʃən /

L

curse, execration.

*The villain's last words were a malediction on the entire royal family.***malefactor**

n

/ ˌmæləˈfaktə(r) /

L

one who commits an offense against the law.

*The state's correctional program was designed to rehabilitate as well as punish the malefactor.***malice**

n

/ ˈmæləs /

L > F > E

revengeful or unfriendly feelings : ill will, enmity.

*In spite of all he has had to put up with from his classmates, Joel bears them no malice.***malign****malignant**

adj

/ məˈlɪgnənt /

L

evil in nature or influence or effect.

*The dark clammy coldness surrounded her like a malignant beast of prey.***malingerer**

n

/ məˈlɪŋɡərə(r) /

Gmc? > F

one who pretends to be ill or otherwise physically or mentally incapacitated so as to avoid duty or work.

*Jamie Farr's character on the television series M*A*S*H was an entertaining malingerer.***mallard**

n

/ ˈmælə(r)d /

F > E

a common wild duck of the northern hemisphere.

*When Timmy fed the ducks at the marina, he gave his last piece of bread to the mallard.***malleable**

adj

/ ˈmælɪəbəl /

L > F > E

capable of being extended or shaped by beating with a hammer or by the pressure of rollers.

*Because tin is malleable at ordinary temperatures, it has been used to make many household implements.***malleolus**

n

/ məˈlɪələs /

L

[has somewhat near homonym: malleus] the rounded lateral projection on each bone of the leg at the ankle.

*When Marcie realized that her brother was about to reveal her secret, she kicked him on the malleolus.***mallet**

n

/ ˈmælət /

F > E

a tool with a large head for striking a surface without marring it.

*Ray used a rubber mallet to put the wheel cover back in place after he changed the flat tire.***malloseismic**

adj

/ ˌmæləˈsɪzɪmɪk /

Gk

of, relating to, or being a region subject to frequent destructive earthquakes.

*Chris refuses to move to any of the malloseismic areas of California.***malocclusion**

n

/ mələˈklʒən /

L

an abnormality in the fitting together of upper and lower teeth or dentures.

Hector wore braces on his teeth to correct a malocclusion.

malodorous

adj

/ mal'ōdərəs /

L + L

having a bad odor : rank, fetid, stinking.

*Evelina smelled the malodorous skunk from 500 yards away.***mammoth**

adj

/ 'maməθ /

Yakut? > Russ

gigantic.

*Clarence specialized in growing mammoth vegetables and held several records for his specimens.***managerial**

adj

/ .manə'jirēəl /

L > It + Ecf

of, relating to, or characteristic of a person who conducts, directs, or supervises something.

*The classified ads included a notice for a managerial position at the steel wool factory.***mandate**

n

/ 'man.dāt /

L

a formal order from a superior court or official to an inferior one.

*The clerk delivered the written mandate to the lower court judge by hand.***mandatory**

adj

/ 'mandə.tōrē /

L

containing, constituting, or relating to an authoritative command, order, or injunction.

*Several states are instituting a mandatory work program for employable welfare recipients.***mandible**

n

/ 'mandəbəl /

L

any of various invertebrate mouthparts serving to hold or bite into food materials.

*Most insects use the mandible for crushing their food.***manducatory**

adj

/ 'manjəkə.tōrē /

L

relating to, employed in, or adapted for chewing.

*Mr. Rollins brought a live lobster to our biology class so that we could observe its manducatory processes.***manganese**

n

/ 'mæŋə.nēz /

Gk > L > It

a grayish white metallic element that is ordinarily hard and brittle, resembles iron but is not magnetic, and is used chiefly in making steel.

*Manganese nodules, which cover vast stretches of ocean floor, are composed mostly of manganese but also contain iron, nickel, copper, and cobalt.***mangle**

v

/ 'mæŋəl /

F > AF > E

[has homonym: mangel] cut, bruise, or hack with repeated blows or strokes.

*As an act of vengeance, Scott vowed that he would mangle Sara's prize-winning painting.***mangonel**

n

/ 'mæŋə.nəl /

Gk > L > F > E

a military engine formerly used for throwing missiles.

*With a sharp twang the mangonel hurled a boulder at the castle gate.***manicotti**

n pl

/ .manə'kädē /

L > It

tubular pasta shells stuffed with ricotta.

*The caterer filled the chafing dish with manicotti.***manifesto**

n

/ .manə'fe(,)stō /

L > It

a public declaration of intentions, motives, or views.

*The Unabomber's rambling manifesto appeared in a number of newspapers nationwide.***manna**

n

/ 'manə /

Heb > Gk > L > E

[has near homonym: mana]

something of value that falls one's way : windfall.

*Children swarmed the parade route collecting the manna of treats tossed from the float.***mansuetude**

n

/ 'man(t)swətüd /

L

the quality or state of being gentle : meekness.

Gary remembered his mother as having the sensitivity and mansuetude of a saint.

manumit

v
/ 'manyə.mit /

L
set free; especially : release from slavery.

The tobacco farmer had agreed to manumit his one slave just before the Civil War began.

maraca

n
/ mə'rākə /

Tupi > Pg
a dried gourd or rattle containing dried seeds or pebbles that has a handle and is used as a percussion instrument often in pairs.
The band's percussionist accentuated the rhythm with a maraca.

maraschino

n
/ .marə'skē.nō /

It
a sweet liqueur that is used as a cocktail ingredient and in preserving cherries.
Even though she's a grown woman, Evelyn sometimes likes to make herself a Shirley Temple with clear soda and maraschino.

marauding

v
/ mə'rōdɪŋ /

F
roaming about and making irregular sudden small-scale attacks, raids, or incursions for the sake of obtaining loot.
Outlaws were marauding in areas where the law was not well established.

marcescent

adj
/ mār'ses'nt /

L
of a plant part : withering without falling off.
Autumn's first cold snap left many marcescent leaves in its wake.

marchioness

n
/ 'mārsh(ə)nəs /

L
a woman who holds in her own right the rank of marquess.
Once a month the workers on the estate brought their disputes before the marchioness to be resolved.

mare

n
/ 'mä(,)rā /

L
[has near homonym: moray] one of several dark areas of considerable extent on the surface of either the Moon or Mars.
The Sea of Tranquility is perhaps the best-known mare on the Moon.

margaritaceous

adj
/ .mārgərə'tāshəs /

Gk > L > F > E
having a satiny iridescence like that of pearl or mother-of-pearl : pearly.
The tabletops at the diner have a margaritaceous finish.

mariachi

n
/ .mārē'ächē /

F > Sp
a group of Mexican folk musicians usually consisting of singers, guitarists, and a violinist.
On weekends the mariachi entertained diners at the Mexican restaurant.

marine

adj
/ mə'rēn /

L
of or relating to the sea.
Marine iguanas live on the shores of the Galapagos Islands and eat seaweed.

marionette

n
/ .ma(a)rēə'net /

F
a puppet moved by strings or by hand (as in a puppet show).
A marionette of Jay Leno was the hit of the show.

maritime

adj
/ 'marə.tīm /

E name
of or relating to navigation or commerce on the sea.
After Bob graduates, he plans to join the Navy to study maritime law.

marjoram

n
/ 'mār.jərəm /

L > F > E
any of various usually fragrant and aromatic mints that include several forms used as seasoning in cookery.
Vance likes to add marjoram and cream cheese to his scrambled eggs.

marmalade

n
/ 'mārme.lād /

Gk > L > Pg
a soft clear translucent jelly holding in suspension pieces or slices of fruit and fruit rind.
Mom's homemade marmalade on toast is always a great treat for breakfast.

marmoset

n
/ 'mɑːrməˌset /
F > E

any of numerous small soft-furred South and Central American monkeys with claws instead of nails on all the digits except the great toe.

The chisel-like incisors of the marmoset are used for gouging trees to obtain gums and saps.

marotte

n
/ məˈrɑːt /
F name + Fcf

a pet idea or notion.

Katrina's marotte is that she is really too good for life as a bookkeeper and should be a company vice-president.

marshmallow

n
/ 'mɑːrʃ.mələ /
E

a confection made from corn syrup, sugar, albumen, and gelatin, beaten to a light creamy consistency, and usually rolled in powdered sugar when partly dry.

Burt toasted a marshmallow and put it between layers of graham crackers and chocolate squares.

marsupial

n
/ mɑːr'sjʊpiəl /
Avestan? > Gk > L

any of an order of mammals having a pouch for carrying the young and including kangaroos, wombats, bandicoots, and opossums.

The common stereotype of a marsupial is a female kangaroo with a large young one in her pouch.

martial

adj
/ 'mɑːrʃəl /
L

[has homonyms: marshal, marshall] belonging or relating to an army or to military life.

Patrick Henry believed that the only purpose of England's martial array in the colonies and their seaports could be to force the colonists into submission.

martinet

n
/ 'mɑːtɪn.ət /
F name

one who lays stress on a rigid adherence to the details of forms and methods.

A true-born martinet never thinks he is at all severe.

martinetish

adj
/ 'mɑːtɪn'edɪʃ /
F name + Ecf

like or characteristic of a person who lays stress on a rigid adherence to the details of forms and methods.

Though all the students disliked Mr. Wall's martinetish attitude, most of them thought he was an excellent teacher.

martyr

n
/ 'mɑːdər /
Gk

one who voluntarily suffers death as the penalty of witnessing to and refusing to renounce his or her religion or a tenet, principle, or practice belonging to it.

St. Stephen, who was stoned to death, is believed to have been the first Christian martyr.

martyrology

n
/ 'mɑːdər'ɒlədʒi /
Gk

an official catalog of martyrs and saints of the Roman Catholic Church.

Keith bought an old martyrology at the rummage sale.

marzipan

n
/ 'mɑːrtsəˌpæn /
Ar > It > G

a confection made of crushed almonds or almond paste, sugar, and egg whites that is often shaped into various forms (as fruit or animals).

Marlene filled the candy dish with marzipan.

masquerade

n
/ 'mɑːskəˌrɑːd /
It > F

a social gathering of persons wearing covers on their faces and often fantastic costumes especially to impersonate characters from history or legend.

Todd and Sheila wore Conehead costumes to the masquerade.

massacre

n
/ 'mɑːsəkə(r) /
F

the act or instance of killing a considerable number of human beings or animals.

The massacre of buffalo is a regrettable part of the history of the West.

masseter

n
/ mə'sɛdə(r) /
Gk > L

a large muscle that raises the lower jaw and assists in chewing.

Tracy argued that she was trying to strengthen her masseter, but Mr. Gold made her throw out her chewing gum anyway.

masseuse

n
/ ma'sə(r)z /
Ar > F + Fcf

a woman who practices massage and physiotherapy.

Delia spent an hour with the club's masseuse working out the kinks in her back.

massif

n
/ ma'sɛf /
F

a block of Earth's crust bounded by faults or flexures and displaced as a unit without internal change.

In the late 13th century a roadway was opened over the St. Gotthard massif in Switzerland.

mastiff

n
/ 'mastɪf /
L > F > E

a very large powerful deep-chested smooth-coated dog of a very old breed used chiefly as a watchdog and guard dog.

A big brown mastiff stood motionless behind the gate.

mastodon

n
/ 'mastədɒn /
L

someone or something of gigantic size or unusually large size : giant.
Mrs. Campbell's automobile collection ranges from a tiny two-seater to an antique mastodon.

mastoiditis

n
/ .ma.stɔɪ'dɪdɪs /
Gk > L

inflammation of the process of the temporal bone behind the ear.

Amy's doctor treated her mastoiditis immediately so that it wouldn't cause any permanent hearing damage.

matelote

n
/ 'madɔl.ɔt /
F

a sauce made of wine, onions, seasonings, and fish stock.

Even though it is served with fish, a matelote often contains red wine.

mathematics

n pl
/ .mathə'mædɪks /
Gk

a science that deals with the relationship and symbolism of numbers and magnitudes and that includes quantitative operations and the solution of quantitative problems.

Jill's favorite subject in school is mathematics.

matinee

n
/ .mat'nɪ /
L > F

a performance of a production (as a play, opera, film) or the presentation of a concert or sometimes the holding of some other event in the afternoon or occasionally in the morning or at midnight.

The English class attended a matinee of Our Town at the local playhouse.

matrimony

n
/ 'matrə.mɒnɪ /
L + L

the union of man and woman as husband and wife : marriage.

The Las Vegas chapel specialized in instant matrimony.

mattock

n
/ 'madək /
L > E

a tool that combines features of an ax, adze, and pick and is used for digging and chopping.

It took Mark three hours of hard work with a mattock and shovel to dig up the tree stump.

matutine

adj
/ 'machətɪn /
L

of a star : rising in or just before the dawn.

For centuries those who live outdoors have used matutine stars as a kind of alarm clock.

maudlin

adj
/ 'mɔdlɪn /
Biblical Gk name > L > F > E

tearfully or weakly emotional : effusively sentimental.

Brian allowed himself to become maudlin only on St. Patrick's Day.

mauve

n
/ 'mɔv /
L > F

a strong purple with a bluish cast.
Karen has tired of her bedroom of mauve and blue.

maverick

n
/ 'mav(ə)rɪk /
Amer name

a member of any group who refuses to conform and who takes an unorthodox stand.

The rest of the teachers considered Ms. Thorne to be a maverick because she invited her students to call her by her first name.

mawkishly

adv

/ 'mɔkɪʃli /

ON > E

in a cloying or sickly sentimental manner.

*During a mawkishly romantic scene in the movie, Ted got up to get some popcorn.***maxim**

n

/ 'mæksɪm /

L

a saying of proverbial nature.

*"The early bird gets the worm" is Toni's favorite maxim.***mayhem**

n

/ 'mā.hem /

AF > E

willful and permanent crippling, mutilation, or disfigurement of any part of another's body.

*The victim was so badly disfigured that the assailant was charged with felony mayhem.***mayonnaise**

n

/ 'mā.nāz /

geog name? > F

a semisolid dressing made by emulsifying a mixture of raw eggs or egg yolks, vegetable oil, and vinegar or lemon juice usually together with salt and condiments.

*Helga wouldn't eat a roast beef sandwich without mayonnaise.***mayoralty**

n

/ 'mā.ərəl.tē /

L > F > E

the term of office as the chief executive or nominal head of a city or borough.

*His opponent's television commercial made the point that Henry Vermillion had accomplished little during his mayoralty.***mealymouthed**

adj

/ 'mē.lē.maʊθɪd /

E + E

tending to cloak thoughts, ideas, or intents by the use of obscure or devious language.

*All of Judy's friends saw through her mealymouthed explanation.***meandering**

adj

/ mē'andrəs /

Gk geog name

winding, flexuous, rambling.

*Over thousands of years the river had cut a meandering channel through the plain.***measles**

n pl

/ 'mēzəlz /

E

a contagious disease characterized by red spots.

*Most doctors recommend that children be vaccinated against measles, mumps, and rubella.***medallion**

n

/ mə'dalyən /

L > It > F

a large medal (as for a memorial purpose).

*Charise bought a World War II medallion on eBay.***meddlesome**

adj

/ 'medʰlʰsəm /

L > F > E

officiously intrusive.

*Her landlady's meddlesome manner annoyed Hatty so much that she moved out.***mediate**

v

/ 'mēdē.ət /

L

interpose between parties in order to reconcile them or to interpret them to each other.

*The envoy attempted to mediate between the warring factions.***medicine**

n

/ 'medəsən /

L

the science and art dealing with the maintenance of health and the prevention, alleviation, or cure of disease.

*Campbell knows that she would like to one day pursue a career in the field of medicine.***mediocre**

adj

/ .mēdē'ōkə(r) /

L

of but a moderate or low degree of quality.

*Jill's grades were mediocre until she started wearing glasses.***Mediterranean**

adj

/ .medətə'rānēən /

L

of, relating to, characteristic of, or situated near the Mediterranean Sea.

*The Mediterranean island of Malta has been the location for the filming of several movies.***medulla**

n

/ mə'dələ /

L

a posterior portion of the brain.

The medulla governs various involuntary vital functions such as respiration.

megalomaniac

n
/ .megə'lɔ'mānē.ək /
Gk

one affected with or exhibiting an excessive enthusiasm for doing great or grandiose things.
The candidate decried his opponent as a publicity-seeking megalomaniac.

megalopolis

n
/ .megə'lɔpələs /
Gk

a very large city.
Without community growth guidelines, a moderately sized city could become a megalopolis like Los Angeles in just a few decades.

megaseism

n
/ 'megəsizəm /
Gk + Gk

a violent earthquake.
A nuclear bomb can have effects far worse than those of a megaseism.

megohmmeter

n
/ 'me.gōm.mēdə(r) /
Gk + G name + Gk

an instrument for the measurement of large electrical resistances.
Professor Allen designed a laboratory session to acquaint students with the use of the megohmmeter.

melancholy

adj
/ 'melən.kälē /
Gk > L > F > E

depressed in spirits : mournful.
The melancholy chirp of a cricket was the only sign of life near him.

melba

n
/ 'melbə /

Australian name
fruit served with ice cream, raspberry sauce, and whipped cream.
The peach melba was served in a crystal goblet.

melee

n
/ 'mā(.)lā /
F

[has homonyms: Malay, mele] a fight or contest between individuals mingled in a confused mass : a confused struggle.
The soccer match turned into a melee after angry fans stormed the field.

melitensis

adj
/ .melə'ten(t)səs /

L geog name
of, derived from, or caused by a particular bacterium of the genus *Brucella*.
Clyde's melitensis fever was reduced by antibiotics.

mellifluous

adj
/ me'liflʊəs /

L
sweetly flowing : smooth, honeyed.
The soprano's mellifluous voice lulled Frank to sleep.

mellisonant

adj
/ me'lisənənt /

L + L
pleasing to the ear.
Tonia's mellisonant voice never failed to put her little sister to sleep.

mellow

adj
/ 'me(.)lɔ /
E

[has homonym: melo] relaxed and at ease : pleasantly convivial.
The after-dinner crowd enjoyed listening to the mellow, laid-back singer.

melodrama

n
/ 'melə.drämə /
Gk > L > F

a play characterized by extravagant theatricality, subordination of characterization to plot, and predominance of physical action.
George was put off by the opera's melodrama but was enthralled by the beauty of the music.

memoir

n
/ 'mem.wär /
L > F

a history or narrative composed from or stressing personal experience and acquaintance with the events, scenes, or persons described.
The memoir of Burton Smith was published last year.

memorabilia

n pl
/ .memərə'bilēə /

L
things remarkable and worthy of remembrance or record.
The memorabilia in the hall of fame traced the history of basketball from its beginning in 1891.

memoriter

adv
/ mə'mɔrət(e)ɹ /

L
by or from memory : by heart.
Much to her surprise, Sue was able to recite the soliloquy that 20 years ago she had learned memoriter.

menagerie

n
/ mə'naj(ə)rē /

F
a collection of wild or foreign animals in cages or enclosures.
The eccentric billionaire's menagerie includes two pandas and a white rhino.

mendicancy

n
/ 'mendəkənsē /

L
the practice or act of begging.
Panhandlers became so aggressive in the city that its voters demanded legal enactments against mendicancy.

mendicant

n
/ 'mendəkənt /

L
one who begs; especially : one who lives by begging.
The mendicant on the street corner once had a high-paying job.

menehune

n
/ .menə'hünē /

Hawaiian
a small mythical Polynesian being living in the mountains and working at night as a stone builder.
The Hawaiian folklorist told the tale of a stone temple built overnight by a menehune.

menial

adj
/ 'mēniəl /

L > E
of, relating to, or being work not requiring special skill or not calling into play the higher intellectual powers and often regarded as lacking dignity, status, or interest.
Viewed by some office workers as a menial task, making coffee can be quite an art.

meningitis

n
/ .menən'jīdəs /

Gk > L
a disease in which microorganisms cause inflammation of the membranes that envelop the brain and spinal cord.
Trudy had meningitis when she was seven.

meniscus

n
/ mə'niskəs /

Gk > L
the curved upper surface of a liquid column.
Because mercury sticks to itself better than to other substances, its meniscus is convex, or rounded upward.

menorah

n
/ mə'nōrə /

Heb
a candelabrum with nine candlesticks used in the celebration of Hanukkah.
Stuart put the candles in the menorah just before the ceremony.

mentality

n
/ men'talədē /

L
intellectual power or capacity : learning ability.
The mentality of dolphins is greater than that of sharks.

menthol

n
/ 'men.thòl /

L > G
an alcohol that occurs naturally in peppermint oil and Japanese mint oil and can be made synthetically.
Menthol is used in medicines to relieve pain, itching, and nasal congestion.

mentor

n
/ 'men.tò(ə)r /

Gk name
teacher, tutor, coach.
After Helen won the spelling competition, she said that her mother was her mentor.

mephitis

n
/ mə'fīdəs /

OScan > L
a noxious, pestilential, or foul exhalation from the earth.
Ivy suspected she was approaching the geyser when she smelled a strong mephitis.

mercantilism

n
/ 'mər.kən.tē.lizəm /
L > It > F + Ecf
devotion to commercial enterprise.
The turn of the century saw a boom in mercantilism.

mercenarily

adv
/ .mərs'n'erəlē /

L + Eeff
in a manner showing conspicuous lust for money.
Being mercenarily inclined, Joel refused to work for just the minimum wage.

mercenary

adj
/ 'mərs'n'erē /

L
showing conspicuous lust for money : based on or marked by greed.
No one in the family knows where Antonio gets his mercenary tendencies.

mercurial

adj
/ .mər'kyūrēəl /

L
characterized by rapid and unpredictable changeableness or by quick-wittedness : sprightly, temperamental, volatile.
Christopher's mercurial twists of temperament were a trial to his mother.

merely

adv

/ 'mi(ə)rli /

L > E + Ecf

no more than : barely, only.

*Joseph was merely pretending to be asleep.***merganser**

n

/ mə'r'gansə(r) /

L

any of various fish-eating diving ducks with a slender bill and usually a crested head.

*Many people consider the red-breasted merganser one of the most beautiful ducks.***meridian**

n

/ mə'ridiən /

F > E

a great circle of the celestial sphere passing through its poles and the zenith of a given place.

*The apparent solar day is measured by the interval of time between two successive passages of the Sun across the observer's celestial meridian.***meringue**

n

/ mə'reɪŋ /

F

[has near homonym: marang] a mixture of beaten egg whites and powdered sugar baked at low temperature and used as a topping (as on pies and puddings).

*Thelma scraped the meringue off her pie.***mermaid**

n

/ 'mɜ:məɪd /

E

a fabled marine creature having the upper body of a woman and the lower body of a fish.

*As they sailed closer to what they thought was the end of the world, the sailors kept expecting to see a mermaid.***merotomize**

v

/ mə'rädə.mīz /

Gk + Ecf

divide into parts.

*In tomorrow's biology class Jan will merotomize a frog to study its anatomy.***mesoscale**

adj

/ 'mezə.skāl /

Gk > L + ON > E

of or relating to a meteorological phenomenon approximately 1 to 100 kilometers in horizontal extent.

*Unlike a blizzard, which can blanket a dozen states for days, mesoscale weather covers only a small area and passes through quickly.***mesoseismal**

adj

/ ,mezə'si:məl /

Gk

of or relating to the center of an area of earthquake disturbance.

*The town in the mesoseismal area suffered the most damage from the earthquake.***metachrosis**

n

/ ,medə'krəʊsəs /

Gk

the power of some animals (as many fishes and reptiles) to change color voluntarily by the expansion of special pigment cells.

*Metachrosis helps octopi blend with their environments to avoid being easy prey.***metallurgist**

n

/ 'med'ɪ.ərjəst /

Gk

a specialist in the study of the structure and properties of metals.

*Theobald hired a metallurgist to evaluate the ore deposits on his ranch.***metamorphosis**

n

/ ,medə'mò(r)fəsəs /

Gk > L

change of physical form or substance that takes place during an insect's life as it matures.

*Complete metamorphosis is characteristic of beetles, butterflies and moths, flies, and wasps.***metaphor**

n

/ 'medə.fò(ə)r /

Gk

an implied comparison in contrast to the explicit comparison of the simile.

*The poet used the image of a drifting boat as a metaphor for the troubled soul.***metaphrast**

n

/ 'medə.fra:st /

Gk

translator; specifically : one who turns verse into a different meter or prose into verse.

*In translating the epic poem, Elliott consulted a well-known metaphrast.***metastasis**

v

/ mə'tastə.sīz /

Gk

spread, as a disease-producing agent, from the original site of disease to another part of the body.

The oncology professor pointed on the diagram to where the cancer cells would metastasize next.

