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opening extract from

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you want to comment on ♦ *The rest of the game was a dull affair.* 3 a temporary sexual relationship between two people who are not married to each other.

**affairs** plural noun the business that a person or organization has to deal with ♦ *I need a few days to put my affairs in order.* [from a French phrase *à faire* meaning 'to do']

**affect** verb 1 to have an effect on something or someone or make a difference to them ♦ *The weather may affect tomorrow's plans.* SYNONYMS: influence, alter, change, modify, have an effect on. 2 to make someone feel sad or sympathetic ♦ *The news of her death affected us deeply.* SYNONYMS: move, touch, upset, trouble. 3 to pretend to have a feeling or attitude ♦ *He decided to affect ignorance.* SYNONYMS: feign, pretend, simulate. [from *ad-* and a Latin word *facere* meaning 'to do']  
 ◇ Do not confuse *affect* (which is a verb only) and *effect* (which is a noun and a verb).

**affection** noun unnatural behaviour that is intended to impress other people.

**affected** adjective (said about behaviour) unnatural or pretended and meant to impress other people.

**affection** noun 1 a feeling of love or strong liking. 2 a disease.

**affectionate** adjective showing affection, loving. SYNONYMS: loving, caring, devoted, fond, tender. **affectionately** adverb

**affidavit** (af-i-day-vit) noun a written statement sworn on oath to be true and used as legal evidence. [a Latin word meaning 'he or she has stated on oath']

**affiliate** (ə-fil-i-ayt) verb to connect a person or organization to a larger organization as a member or branch ♦ *The club is affiliated to a national society.* **affiliation** noun [from Latin *ad-* and a Latin word *filius* meaning 'son'. The original meaning was 'to adopt someone as your son']

**affinity** (ə-fin-iti) noun (affinities) 1 a strong natural liking or attraction. 2 a relationship (especially by marriage) other than blood relationship. 3 a similarity, a close resemblance or connection. 4 the tendency of some substances to combine with others. [from *ad-* and a Latin word *finis* meaning 'boundary']

**affirm** verb 1 to assert something or state it as a fact. 2 (Law) to make an affirmation

instead of an oath. [from *ad-* and a Latin word *firmus* meaning 'firm']

**affirmation** (af-er-may-shən) noun 1 stating something as a fact. 2 a solemn declaration that a person makes in a lawcourt instead of an oath when they have no religion or do not want to use the name of God.

**affirmative** (ə-ferm-ə-tiv) adjective affirming or agreeing, giving the answer 'yes' ♦ *an affirmative reply.*

**affirmative** noun an affirmative word or statement. in **the affirmative** giving the answer 'yes'. **affirmatively** adverb

**affix**<sup>2</sup> (ə-fiks) verb 1 to stick or attach something to something else. 2 to add something in writing. [from *ad-* and a Latin word *fixare* meaning 'to fix']

**affix**<sup>2</sup> (af-iks) noun (Grammar) a prefix or suffix.

**afflict** verb to cause someone physical or mental pain or discomfort ♦ *He has been afflicted with rheumatism for years.* SYNONYMS: trouble, distress, burden, torment, plague. [from *ad-* and a Latin word *flictum* meaning 'struck']

**affliction** noun 1 pain or suffering. 2 something that causes this.

**affluent** (af-loo-ənt) adjective (usually said about groups of people) rich or wealthy.

**affluently** adverb **affluence** noun [from a Latin word *affluens* meaning 'overflowing', from *ad-* and *fluens* meaning 'flowing']

**afford** verb 1 to have enough money or time for something. 2 to be able to do something without a risk ♦ *You can't afford to be critical.* 3 (formal) to provide something ♦ *The trees afforded some protection against the rain.* SYNONYMS: provide, offer, give. **affordable** adjective [from Old English]

**afforest** verb to plant an area with trees to make a forest. **afforestation** noun

**affray** (ə-fray) noun (old use) a breach of the peace by fighting or rioting in public. [from an Old French word *esfreer* meaning 'to riot']

**affront** (ə-frunt) verb to insult deliberately, to offend or embarrass.

**affront** noun a deliberate insult or show of disrespect. [from a Latin phrase *ad frontem* meaning 'to the face']

**Afghan** (af-gan) noun 1 a person born in Afghanistan or descended from people

born there. 2 the language spoken in Afghanistan, Pashto.

**Afghan** *adjective* to do with or coming from Afghanistan.

**aficionado** (ə-fis-yon-ah-doh) *noun* (aficionados) someone who is very keen on a particular sport or pastime. [a Spanish word, in English originally used about bullfighting]

**afield** *adverb* at or to a large distance, far away from home. [from a-<sup>2</sup> and *field*]

**aflame** *adverb & adjective* in flames, burning. [from a-<sup>2</sup> and *flame*]

**afloat** *adverb & adjective* 1 floating, especially on the sea. 2 out of danger or difficulty. [from a-<sup>2</sup> and *float*]

**afoot** *adverb & adjective* happening or in progress ♦ *There's a scheme afoot to improve the roads.* [from a-<sup>2</sup> and *foot*. It originally meant 'on foot']

**forementioned or aforesaid** *adjective* (formal) mentioned or said previously. [from *afore* meaning 'before' and *said* or *mentioned*]

**aforethought** *adjective* (Law) planned in advance, intended ♦ *with malice aforethought.*

**afraid** *adjective* feeling fear; alarmed or frightened. SYNONYMS: frightened, scared, alarmed, anxious, fearful, apprehensive, terrified. *I'm afraid (informal) I regret to say* ♦ *I'm afraid they've broken a window.* [from an Old English inflection of the verb *afraý* meaning 'to attack', 'to frighten']

**afresh** *adverb* anew, beginning again. [from a-<sup>2</sup> and *fresh*]

**African** *adjective* to do with or coming from Africa.

**African** *noun* a person born in Africa or descended from people born there, especially a black person.

**Afrikaans** (af-ri-kahns) *noun* a language developed from Dutch and used in South Africa. [from a Dutch word meaning 'African']

**Afrikaner** (af-ri-kah-ner) *noun* a White person in South Africa whose first language is Afrikaans. [from a Dutch word meaning 'an African']

**Afro** (af-roh) *adjective* (said about a hairstyle) long and bushy, as naturally grown by some black people.

**Afro-** *combining form* African.

**Afro-Caribbean** *noun* a person of African descent living in or coming from the Caribbean area.

**Afro-Caribbean** *adjective* to do with Afro-Caribbeans.

**aft** *adverb* in or towards the stern of a ship or the tail of an aircraft. [a shortening of an Old English word *abaft*, related to *after*]

**after** *preposition* 1 at a later time ♦ *I won't arrive until after eight.* 2 behind in place or order ♦ *The police cars followed on after the procession.* 3 in spite of something ♦ *After all our help they still left without a word.* 4 as a result of something ♦ *After what she said, I can hardly like her.* 5 in pursuit or search of someone ♦ *I'd better run after him.* 6 about or concerning someone ♦ *Daphne was asking after you.* 7 in imitation of someone or in honour of them ♦ *They named their daughter Sibyl after her grandmother.*

**after** *adverb* 1 behind ♦ *Jill came tumbling after.* 2 later ♦ *They met again twenty years after.*

**after** *conjunction* at or in a time later than ♦ *They arrived after we had left.*

**afters** *plural noun* (informal) a course following the main course at a meal. [from an Old English word *æfter*]

**afterbirth** *noun* the placenta and fetal membrane discharged from the womb after childbirth.

**afterburner** *noun* an extra burner in the exhaust stream of a jet engine, to give it greater thrust.

**aftercare** *noun* 1 extra care or treatment of a patient who has left hospital. 2 extra support given to someone who has just left prison.

**after-effect** *noun* an effect that happens or arises after whatever caused it has stopped or gone away.

**afterglow** *noun* light still glowing in the sky after sunset.

**afterlife** *noun* (in some beliefs) a life that follows after death.

**aftermath** *noun* events or circumstances that come after something bad or unpleasant ♦ *Disease was the aftermath of war.*

**afternoon** *noun* the time from midday to early evening.

**aftershave** *noun* a soothing lotion for use on the skin after shaving.

**afterthought** *noun* something thought of or added later.

**afterward** *adverb* (North Amer.) afterwards.

**afterwards** *adverb* at a later time.

**Ag** *abbreviation* (Chemistry) the symbol for silver.

**again** *adverb* 1 another time, once more ♦ *We decided to try again.* 2 as before, in an original place or condition ♦ *The doctor says you'll soon be well again.* 3 what is more, besides ♦ *Then again, she could have asked if she wanted help.* 4 on the other hand ♦ *I might, and again I might not.* [from an Old English word *ongean* meaning 'in the opposite direction', 'back to the beginning']

**against** *preposition* 1 touching or hitting something ♦ *Lean your bicycle against the wall.* 2 in opposition to something ♦ *We are against fox-hunting.* 3 in contrast to something ♦ *The picture looked beautiful against a dark background.* 4 in preparation for ♦ *You'll need a warm coat to protect you against the cold.* [from *again*]

**agape** (ə-ˈgæp) *adjective* gaping, open-mouthed. [from *a-*<sup>2</sup> and *gape*]

**agar** (ay-ˈgah) *noun* a substance made from seaweed and used to thicken foods. [from a Malay word]

**agate** (ag-ət) *noun* a very hard stone with patches or concentric bands of colour. [from a Greek word *akhatēs*]

**age** *noun* 1 the length of time a person has lived or a thing has existed. 2 the later part of life, a person's old age. 3 a period of history, with special characteristics or events ♦ *the Elizabethan Age* ♦ *the atomic age*. SYNONYMS: period, time, era, epoch.

4 (informal) a very long time ♦ *It took ages.* **age** *verb* (aged, ageing) 1 to grow old and show signs of age. 2 (said about wine, cheese, etc.) to become mature. 3 to make someone seem old. **of age** having reached the age at which you have an adult's legal rights and obligations. [via Old French from a Latin word *aevum* meaning 'age', 'era']

**aged** *adjective* 1 (ayjɪd) having the age of ♦ *a girl aged 10.* 2 (ay-jiɪd) very old ♦ *He still lived at home with his aged mother.* SYNONYMS: old, elderly.

**age group** *noun* all the people of the same age.

**ageism** *noun* discrimination against people because of their age.

**ageless** *adjective* never ageing or seeming to be old.

**agency** *noun* (agencies) 1 a business or place of business that provides a special service or does special work ♦ *a travel agency* ♦ *The Child Support Agency.* 2 the action that is done to achieve something ♦ *Flowers are fertilized by the agency of bees.* [same origin as for *agent*]

**agenda** (ə-ˈjɛn-də) *noun* (agendas) a list of items of business to be dealt with at a meeting. [a Latin word meaning 'things to be done']

♦ Although it is originally a Latin plural, *agenda* is normally used with a singular verb ♦ *The agenda is rather long.*

**agent** *noun* 1 someone who organizes the business side of the work of a writer, actor, etc., such as drawing up contracts. 2 someone who acts on behalf of another person or organization ♦ *The Company has an agent in Paris.* 3 something that produces an effect or change ♦ *Soda is the active agent.* [from a Latin word *agens* meaning 'doing things']

**agent provocateur** (əz-əhn prə-ˈvɒk-ə-ˈtɜr) (agents provocateurs) a person employed to prove that suspects are guilty by encouraging them to do something illegal. [a French phrase meaning 'provocative agent']

**age of consent** *noun* the age at which a person may legally agree to have sexual intercourse.

**age-old** *adjective* very old, having existed for a long time.

**agglomerate**<sup>1</sup> (ə-ˈglɒm-er-əyt) *verb* to collect things or become collected into a mass. **agglomeration** *noun* [from *ad-* and a Latin word *glomus* meaning 'mass']

**agglomerate**<sup>2</sup> (ə-ˈglɒm-er-ət) *noun* a collection or mass of things.

**agglutinate** (ə-ˈglʊ-tin-əyt) *verb* to stick or fuse together. **agglutination** *noun* **agglutinative** *adjective* [from *ad-* and a Latin word *glutinare* meaning 'to glue']

**agglutinin** (ə-ˈglʊ-tin-in) *noun* an antibody or other substance that causes bacteria or red blood cells to agglutinate.

**aggrandize** (ə-ˈgran-diɪz) *verb* to increase the power, wealth, or importance of a person or organization. **aggrandizement** *noun* [from *ad-* and a Latin word *grandis* meaning 'large']

**aggravate** *verb* 1 to make something worse or more serious. SYNONYMS: worsen, intensify, exacerbate. 2 (informal) to annoy or