which is why, one day, this dictionary decided she would...

alphabet /ˈæl.fə.bet/ A group of letters in a particular order. Not actually a word but very useful for spelling them. Has its own song. Good friends with the dictionary.

also /ˈɔːl.səʊ/ Likewise or in addition. Loves to be included in a sentence, often turning up in the middle, usually before the end.

always /ˈɔːl.weɪz/ All the time. A consistent word that doesn't do things by half. Not to be confused with a slightly less certain word like maybe.

amaze /əˈmeɪz/ To overwhelm someone with wonder. Amazement is the point when a human brain gives up trying to understand something and lets the sheer beauty of life take over.

ambassador /æmˈbæs.ə.dər/ Official representative, often sent by one country to another country. They can be seen at 1. parties with music. 2. parties where everyone dresses in black. 3. parties where people sit down and eat a lot. Ambassadors are polite and can talk for a long time. They are good at laughing, smiling, making a good impression, and getting things done for their country.

amber /ˈæm.bər/ A mixed colour of red and yellow. A fair compromise between stop and go. [see: traffic light] A colour that can make some people speed up, and others slow down.

amble /ˈæm.bəl/ To walk gently and without purpose. Not popular at traffic lights but great in discovering secret passages and good ideas.

ambulance /ˈæm.bjə.lənts/ A vehicle used for taking poorly people to a doctor or a hospital. In an emergency an ambulance will flash its lights or switch on a loud siren. If you're driving on the road you should always pull over or stop when you hear the siren or see flashing lights.

amoeba /əˈmiː.bə/ Small living thing made of one cell. Amoebas can split themselves in two (which is handy for loneliness). [see: alone] Most amoebas are too tiny to see without a microscope. No one has done any tests to see if amoebas have invisible friends. Even under microscope invisible friends are still invisible.

among /əˈmʌŋ/ To be surrounded by many similar things, often nouns and verbs. To be in the company of good friends

anagram /ˈæn.ə.græm/ A word or phrase that is formed by rearranging the letters of another word too tiny to see without a microscope. No one has done any tests to see if amoebas have invisible friends. Even under microscope invisible friends are still invisible.

among /əˈmʌŋ/ To be surrounded by many similar things, often nouns and verbs. To be in the company of good friends

anagram /ˈæn.ə.græm/ A word or phrase that is or phrase. For example: below = elbow; cat = act; astronomer = moon starer; dormitory = dirty room.

ancestor /ˈæn.ses.tər/ A family member who lived in the past, such as a great-great grandmother. If you didn't have an ancestor, you wouldn't be here. They helped make the person that made the person that made you. They are from beyond the time when we can remember. One good reason to be nice and kind is that one day you'll be an ancestor to someone in the future.

and /ænd/ A sociable word that likes to introduce other words to each other, as in arm and armpit.

anger /ˈæŋ.gər/ Really not happy. Does not like other words and prefers shouting and blaming.

animal /ˈæn.ɪ.məl/ A living thing that can move around by itself. Birds, fish, insects, and mammals are all animals. Animals are good at living. Shoes, televisions and parking tickets are not animals. It's worth taking time out now and again to look around and see how many great animals there are: rhinos, lumpfish, peacocks, dung beetles, and many more. There are a serious number of fantastic creatures out there.

animate /ˈæn.ɪ.meɪt/. To bring to life with motion. A popular technique used to animate is dancing for joy. Other ways to animate can involve lots of drawing or getting drunk. [see: alcohol]

ankle /ˈæŋ.kəl/ The part of the body that links the leg to the foot. Ankle often collaborates with sock and shoe.

anonymous /əˈnɒn.ɪ.məs/ A name for a name that nobody knows. Popular with superheroes and bank robbers.

anorak /ˈæn.ə.ræk/ A waterproof jacket with a hood. The Inuit people invented the anorak because they were very clever at finding ways to keep dry and warm when it's cold and wet. Some people wear anoraks for decoration, other people wear anoraks for protection and some people wear anoraks because everyone else is wearing anoraks. Other people don't wear anoraks.

another /əˈnʌð.ər/ One more of something. Needed when you've lost or broken the first one.

answer /ˈɑːn.sər/ The most popular response to a question. [see also: silence, confusion and guess] Some of the most popular answers can be very short. [see: uh-huh and yep]

and some people wear anoraks because everyone else is wearing anoraks. Other people don't wear anoraks.

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answerphone /ˈɑːn.sə.fəʊn/ A voice messagin where a recorded voice talks at you before ma beep after which you talk back to it. Popula time before smartphones and messages app screens.

ant /ænt/ A small insect that lives in a large gr called a colony. Ants follow each other in lines food. Ants enjoy a good picnic, and they are tidying up. The biggest ant in the colony and when it's hot, she has a party where baby ants wings, and every one flies

anteater /ˈænt.iː.tər/ A mammal and thin tongue that eats ants and cannot see very well but h ave ag Anteaters aren't very good at fl invited to the queen ants party. y

anti /ˈæn.tiː/ A word that words. A tricky word: it's kno back on themselves. Not very po authorities. [see: anti-establishment fine dining. [see: antipasto]

antique /ˈæn.tiːk/ An object of age telling you things about the past time it can change dramatically. [se

any /ˈen.i/ A very relaxed word that is taken out from many. Good friends with slightly less fussy).

apology /əˈpɒl.ə.dʒi/ To show regret and mistake. Apology can often be found near to and forgiveness.

appeal /əˈpiːl/ To make a heartfelt plea. Succes appeals are very appealing and can result in ap and apples. [see: appetite] Sometimes when an ap

appetite /ˈæp.ə.taɪt/ The feeling that you really want something, usually food. Appetite is good friends with appeal.

apple /ˈæp.əl / A hard round fruit with green, red or yellow skin. Some apples can send princesses to sleep or make people live forever. Other apples fall to the ground to help explain complicated laws. [see: gravity] If we leave apples alone, they turn themselves into trees. [see: amazing]

apricot /ˈeɪ.prɪ.kɒt/ A small, orange-coloured soft fruit that has a stone in it and grows on an apricot tree. Apricots can be used to make jam and puddings. They can be dried and eaten without their stones. No or make people live forever. Other apples fall to the ground to help explain complicated laws. [see: gravity] If we leave apples alone, they turn themselves into trees. [see: amazing]

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lly knows where apricots originally came from.

/ˈɑː.tʃər/A person who shoots with a bow rrow. Shootingwith a bow and arrow is called eryand can be a sport. Humans have used ry as a way to hunt for food or to fight with one er. So metimepeople stick apples on their heads ee if a n archercan hit the apple with an arrow bad idea]

Sometimes known as the The Arctic fox lives in the Arctic hern Hemisphereand can survive low as minus 90°C. It has thick amouflage and a big, fluffy tail, dressed foxes out there.

he study of using numbers numbers. Numbers are how many things there are you run out of fingers numbers

body between the shoulder ings can be called arms - such but the most useful arms are he body. Arms are handy. Arms nsible for clearing fridges, lighting oraks. ted. It was be cause of arms that

ASouth American mammal hard,bony plates to protect legs but can move fast. When ord armadillos roll themselves up into a just jump up terrified The Pink itself and not many people

A huge battle fought scale. [see: bedtime]

armchair /ˈɑːm.tʃeər/ A comfortable chair that is very popular with arms - offering good support. Before armchairs people used to sit on stools, walls and logs (none of which supported arms). Armchairs also support cups of tea and afternoon naps.

armpit /ˈɑːm.pɪt/ The less famous friend of arm is armpit. Armpit is tucked away out of sight and sometimes gets forgotten. When left alone for too long it gets sad and begins to let off a lonely smell. Armpit's best friend is hand and they meet in the bath with their pal soap. Armpit, soap and hand have a lot of fun. Sometimes, at bedtime, arm and hand get together also support cups of tea and afternoon naps.

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good fun to invite to birthday parties. When not at parties they can often be found in the parks climbing trees.

Aeroplane - a flying vehicle made mainly of metal with an engine and wings. It can be small enough for just one person or big enough to carry hundreds of people. In the old days you had to spin the propeller to get them going but nowadays they have computers for that kind of thing. (Some people still like to spin the propellers.)

Alien - someone or something that seems to come from another world. Aliens might be friendly but because some humans are scared of them, they sometimes get a little scared themselves and don't seem so friendly. Nobody likes being called scary. They certainly don't have to be frightening or green and we think they would really like to go to earth parks and climb trees with acrobats.

Alligator - a large reptile that looks like a crocodile. Alligators are protected by thick skin with many hard bumps. They live in rivers, lakes and swamps and swim with their babies in their mouths. When not carrying their babies in their mouths, they have a special fondness for baked sugary snacks. It is not a good idea to get into the same water with them because cakes aren't the only things they like to eat…

Air - the gas which we breathe all the time and is usually invisible. It also makes wind and can fill balloons. On very cold days it can be seen as mist coming out of our nostrils or mouths. Air is really good at keeping us alive and even though we can't see it we have to be really careful and look after it because once it gets dirty it is hard to clean. Trees are great at cleaning it and the more trees we have the better air tastes. Even though we use cars and aeroplanes a lot, these things are not as good as trees at keeping it clean.

Alarm clock - a clock with a loud sound to wake you up. It can also come with a snooze button to let you sleep for a few minutes longer but that's always tricky as once you set snooze that means you then have to wake up a second time in the same day. Some adults wake up three or four times in one morning and that's a lot of waking up. When there are no alarm clocks, sunlight, dogs, cats and small people all double up as perfectly good ways to be woken up.

Ambassador - official representative, often sent by one country to another country. They get invited to lots of different types of parties: parties with music, parties where they all dress in black and parties where they sit down and eat lots of food. Ambassadors are very polite and can talk for a long time. They are good at laughing and smiling. Some of them like flying kites at the weekend.

Amoeba - a small living thing made of only one cell. Amoebas move by changing shape and they can split themselves in two (which is really handy when they feel a little lonely because then they get a buddy to hang out with). Most Amoebas are too tiny to see without a microscope. No one has done any tests to see if Amoebas have invisible friends. It's really hard for scientists to know if Amoebas have invisible friends because even with a microscope, invisible friends are still invisible. Scientists do other types of tests instead.

Ancestor - a family member who lived in the past, such as a great-great grandmother or great-great-great uncle. These people are special because if you didn't have an ancestor, you wouldn't be here. They helped make the person, that made the person, that made the person, that made the person that made you. They are from a long time ago (beyond when we can remember). There aren't many things we know about "beyond when we can remember" except that's where some of our ancestor live. One day you'll be an ancestor and it's a wise idea to be a good one.

Animal - a living thing that can move around by itself and can feel. Birds, fish, insects, mammals and reptiles are all animals. Animals are good at living and living things are pretty interesting. Some of your best friends might be living (humans are living). Some of your best friends might also not be alive. Water, stones and imaginary friends aren't living but they are still great. It really is worth taking time out now and again to look around and see how many great things there are in the world – rainbows, puddles, bicycles. There is a serious amount of fantastic stuff out there.

Anorak - a waterproof jacket with a hood. Anoraks were worn for snowy countries and to go to the North Pole. The Inuit people invented them because they were very clever at finding ways to keep dry and warm. Now people wear anoraks for all sorts of reasons. Some people wear Anoraks for decoration, other people wear Anoraks for protection and some people wear Anoraks because everyone else is wearing Anoraks. Some people don't wear Anoraks.

Ant – a very small insect that lives in a large group called a colony. Ants follow each other in lines to get food. Ants eat pizza and it's pretty likely they have tried eating chillies and they didn't like them but they didn't get hiccups. Ants enjoy a good picnic and they are great at tidying up. The biggest ant in the colony is the queen and every now and again, when its hot, she has a party where she gives her baby ants wings and everyone flies around in the air.

Apple - a hard round fruit with green, red or yellow skin. Apples can be crushed to make juice or cooked to make apple pies. Some apples are magic and can send princesses to sleep or make people live forever. Other apples fall to the ground to give humans ideas about why things fall to the ground. It's a little tricky to work out which ones do which because there are so many types - like Jonathan, Egremont Russet, Fuji, and Pippin. If apples are left alone they can turn into a tree.

Armadillo - a South American mammal whose body is covered in hard, bony plates to protect it. Armadillos have short legs but can move fast. Some people think that when they are frightened, they roll themselves up into a ball shape, but only two types of Armadillo do that whilst most of them just jump when startled (wouldn't you?). When they are not being surprised, they are really good at holding their breath and like a swim. The Pink Fairy Armadillo lives by itself and not many people have seen one.

Arm - the long part of the body between the shoulder and the wrist. Other things are called arms, such as the part of a chair, are useful but not as useful as an arm that's attached to a body. Arms are very handy at doing things. Arms have been responsible for cleaning fridges, lighting fires and making Anoraks. It was because of arms that hugging was invented.

Armpit – The less famous neighbour of the arm is armpit. Armpit is tucked away out of sight and it sometimes gets forgotten. When left alone for too long it gets sad and begins to let off a little lonely smell. Armpit's best friend is hand and they meet in the bath with their pal soap. Armpit, soap and hand have a lot of fun together. Sometimes, at bedtime, arm and hand get together and give armpit a good tickle – which makes everyone laugh. Armpit is always up for fun (and smells).

Artist – a person who spends a lot of time with a funny ideas – often drawing, writing or acting them

But before any of them could answer,
Ghost floated into the scene,
and gave everyone
an awful fright!
(as Ghosts tend to).

to get swept into
Tornado's terrible, TERRIBLE tantrum!