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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).

affectation *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-ətiv) *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 [2] (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 [2] (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-*[2] and *field*]

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

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

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

aforementioned 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 *affray* meaning 'to attack', 'to frighten']

afresh *adverb* anew, beginning again. [from *a-*[2] 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-**gayp**) *adjective* gaping, open-mouthed. [from *a-*[2] and *gape*]

agar (**ay**-gah) *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** (ayjd) having the age of ♦ *a girl aged 10.* **2** (**ay**-jid) 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-**jen**-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 (**azh**-ahn prə-vok-ə-**ter**) (**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[1] (ə-**glom**-er-ayt) *verb* to collect things or become collected into a mass. **agglomeration** *noun* [from *ad-* and a Latin word *glomus* meaning 'mass']

agglomerate[2] (ə-**glom**-er-ət) *noun* a collection or mass of things.

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

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

aggrandize (ə-**gran**-diyz) *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