



ASSIGNMENT 1: ETYMOLOGY PROJECT

This assignment introduces you to the basic tools and methods of English etymology. 1 page long (about 100 words). You will reconstruct the history of a Modern English word in order to show how it changed in form and meaning from Indo-European (IE) to the present.

DIRECTIONS

1. **Select a word** from the list WORDS TO CHOOSE FROM (below).
2. Determine the word's **IE root** (or etymon) and identify the family of words to which your word is related.
To find the root, check etymonline.com. Use the entry and related entries to formulate a brief description of the word's early history and summarize its relationship to other words in English and other languages. Explore other reference sources, too!
3. Using the etymology section of the word's entry in the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED), explain **how the word came into English**—either as a native Germanic word or as a borrowing from another language.
4. Illustrate the **use and meaning** of your word during the Middle Ages and Renaissance by citing one or two instances of its use by Chaucer and Shakespeare (or others). And using the OED and other dictionaries, define and illustrate the word's use in contemporary English.

WORDS TO CHOOSE FROM

| | | | |
|---------|---------|------------|---------|
| amuse | doom | lace | passion |
| belfry | fantasy | literature | pity |
| charity | fee | mild | sad |
| cheer | genius | mood | silly |
| clerk | gentle | moustache | sister |
| clue | happy | nark | toast |
| corn | holy | nature | virtue |
| creed | humor | nice | wax |
| danger | kind | pain | wit |