

DISCOVERING WORDS ON MONDAYS AUGUST 18TH – “FREE CHOICE” THEME

The aim of this record is to help you to follow up any points of interest.

LATEST ADDITIONS TO CAMBRIDGE DICTIONARY e.g.

SKIBIDI: “a word that can have different meanings such as ‘cool’ or ‘bad’, or can be used with no real meaning as a joke”, an example of its use is: ‘What the skibidi are you doing?’

People older than generation Alpha tend to greet the use of the word with despair .

DELULU: an abbreviation of delusional, has become associated with a post-truth world where personal beliefs are more important than reality. Its dictionary entry defines it as **“believing things that are not real or true, usually because you choose to”**.

Delulu emerged more than 10 years ago as an insult directed at obsessive K-pop fans who believed they could date their idols. The term “delulu is the solulu” for manifesting your wishes has been viewed billions of times on TikTok. The phrase “delulu with no solulu” was used earlier this year by Australia’s prime minister, Anthony Albanese, to attack his opponents in parliament.

BROLIGARCHY: a term for the tech industry leaders on whose platforms many of these new words are spreading, also makes it into the dictionary.

Merging “bro” and “oligarchy”, the dictionary says it refers to “a small group of men, especially men owning or involved in a technology business, who are extremely rich and powerful, and who have or want political influence”. e.g. Elon Musk or Mark Zuckerberg.

MOUSE JIGGLER: a post-pandemic device or piece of software used to make it seem as though you are working e.g. at home when you are not.

COLLYWOBBLES

The term collywobbles likely originates from a combination of **colic and wobble**.

First coined about 1815 - 1825 to describe an uncomfortable feeling in the stomach caused by feelings of nervousness or slight fear: I've got the collywobbles about my exam this afternoon.

BERSERK

The word berserk originates from the Old Norse term berserkr which referred to a type of fierce, frenzied Scandinavian warrior. It literally translates to bear shirt – ber meaning bear, and serkr meaning shirt. But there is a theory that says “berr” could come from the word for “bear” in Old High German

In Norse sagas and legends, berserkers were warriors who fought with superhuman strength and frenzied, uncontrollable force.

The term was adopted into English, first as a noun referring to the warrior, then later as an adjective describing someone in a state of uncontrolled rage or aggression. “My mother will go berserk when she finds out I've ruined her favourite dress”.

Berserk (robot), a Belarusian military robot

Berserk! a 1967 British film

Berzerk (song) a 2013 song by Eminem

Berzerk (video game), a 1980 video game

Berserk (manga), a Japanese manga series by Kentaro Miura

GOBBLEDYGOOK

The term was coined by Maury Maverick who worked for the US government during **WW2**. He used it in a memo in **1944** to describe the **complex and confusing language often used in official documents** and by government officials. He found the language used to be overly verbose and difficult to understand. Maverick reportedly likened the confusing and repetitive nature of this style of writing to the **sound of a turkey gobbling**.

In terms of use, gobbledygook can confuse people and is often used to hide a lack of real knowledge.

ANIMAL SOUNDS

Dog

English	woof woof
Italian	bau bau
Japanese	wan wan
Chinese	wang wang
Arabic. Polish	hau hau
Hungarian	vau vau
Indonesian	guk guk

Rooster

English	cock a doodle doo
Portuguese, French	<i>cocoricó.</i>
Chinese	<i>wo-wo-wo.</i>
German, Spanish	<i>kikeriki.</i>
<i>Greek</i>	<i>kikeriku</i>
<i>Arabic</i>	<i>koko koko</i>
<i>Hindi</i>	<i>kokaduku</i>

Pig

English	oink
Japanese	buu buu
Korean	koi koi
Chinese	heng heng
French	groin groin
Hindi	oi oi
Arabic	n o n e !!

MATCH: We now have the same word for a sporting contest and a small wooden ignition stick.

Match (1) is from Old English "gemaecca", a mate or companion. Means a contest where individuals or teams compete against each other. Can also mean an equal ("met his match") and a marriage partner.

Match (2), a stick for striking fire, OE 14th C. "macche", the wick of a lamp or candle. Ultimately Gk/Lat "myxa", a lamp wick. Somewhat revolting link with "mucus" in sense of dribbling or dangling. By 15th C a piece of cord used for lighting fire (compare "spill"). By 1830 mass-produced and sulphur-tipped, also known as "lucifers" (link between sulphur and the devil!).

For no particular reason - words that rhyme with "match".

BATCH: a group formed of a number of things, an instalment, "the latest batch". OE "baecca/bacan", to bake. The batch = the loaves produced in one baking. Also used locally as a name for a hillock, found in around 30 place names, e.g. Inglesbatch near Bath recorded in 1290. And used for waste heaps from coal mining in North Somerset.

CATCH: to take or capture. French ""cachier", hunting, capture of animals. To catch disease 15th C, to catch fire 18th C. Also to grasp or understand ("catch on"). Catching the eye 17th C. A dismissal in cricket, a children's game. A part of a door or gate (cf. latch).

HATCH: an opening between two rooms. From nautical use to mean trapdoor or cover ("batten down the hatches" and "down the hatch"). OE "haecca", a gate or fence. Surname Hatcher may derive from gatekeeper. As a verb, to produce young by incubating eggs, is from OE "haecan". Figurative use "to hatch a plot". "Hatching" (lines of variable thickness) also used in cartography to show steepness of gradient and formerly in black-and-white printing to indicate colours using a key, (e.g. thin diagonals = blue, perhaps). Used, e.g. in heraldry records.

LATCH: OE "laecan". To latch on = to attach oneself or understand. Can be a bar with a lever, part of a door like catch. Former meaning was to grasp or seize, another link with catch.

PATCH: piece of material (possibly temporary) or ground, unlike its surrounds. May indeed be related to "piece". The phrase "not a patch on" was known by 1860.

SCRATCH: OE had "scrat" and "cratch", both of unknown origin. Possibly onomatopoeia from the sound (??), to mark a surface with tearing using a sharp point. Seem to have merged by 14th C into "scacen". Meaning "to relieve skin irritation" known by 1520s.

Later uses: to withdraw a horse from a race, by 1865; to cancel a plan 1865; to "scratch the surface" by 1915. A "scratch race" = one in which no advantage is given to weaker contestants. "Up to scratch", of a sufficient standard, also a sporting origin. "Scratch one's head" (not necessarily literally !) known by 1712.

A few recent observations:

- Move to first syllable stress in words/phrases such as COLD war, **PRI**ivate school, **CIG**arette and many others.
- Use of "get in trouble" rather than "get into trouble"
- "If I would have" instead of "if I had". "from the get-go" instead of "from the word go"
- Also use of sung, swum, sprang rather than sang, swam, sprang.

FRENCH WORDS IN ENGLISH AND VICE VERSA

There are many words of French origin in English, some in common use although retaining a foreign pronunciation like:

- **BALLET** - borrowed in 17c from French, "**theatrical presentation telling a story by means of dance and mime**," from Latin *ballāre* to dance + *-etto*, diminutive suffix.
- **BOUQUET** - meaning "bunch of flowers," introduced to English in early C18 by Lady Mary Montague from French *bouquet*, originally "little wood," from Old French *bochet*, *boschet* (14c.), diminutive of *bosco*, from Latin *boscus* "grove". The meaning "perfume from a wine" is recorded by 1815.
- **BUFFET** - *Inherited in C14 from French buffet "side table" or sideboard for serving food*, the sense in English was extended to "refreshment bar, place set aside for refreshments in public places" (1792), then, via *buffet-table*, *buffet-car* (1887), *buffet-lunch*.

Some seem to have caught on because there is no direct English equivalent like:

- **CUL-DE-SAC** - borrowed from French, where it literally means "**bottom of the bag**". It usually refers to a dead-end street and was adopted in English in the 19th century, probably due to the influence of French culture and language at the time, especially in architecture and urban planning.
- **DÉJÀ-VU** - **feeling of having previously experienced a present situation**, used in English from c. 1903 (?), derived from French *déjà vu*, literally "already seen". Comes from combination of Latin *dē* "of, from" and *ex* "out, out of" and *iam* meaning "already".

Despite the **attempts of the Académie Française to control the adoption of foreign words**, there is an **increasing infiltration of English words**. A recent article in "Libération" about a French region where many British people have settled, cites the use by the locals of "**fish and chips**", but some English words are adopted in a different way, like going to a French café for a few beers "**à l'after work**" or there are some gîtes by a lake advertising "**de pêche de no kill**" (to catch fish but throw them back in!) You can have "**un look tendance**" – a trendy look. And so on.

A growing number of **English words are in common use because there isn't a neat French equivalent**.

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|-----------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| • Le sandwich | • Le lifting (face lift) | • Le footing (jogging) |
| • Le selfie | • Le parking | • Mon crush (boyfriend) |
| • Le bulldozer | • Le weekend | • Le scoop* |
| • Le hashtag | • Le tee-shirt | |
| • L'after-shave | • Le people-pleaser | |

*the Académie française recommends a French synonym, "l'**exclusivité**"

SCOOP as a **journalistic word means a story or fact learnt or reported before anyone else**. It is an **Americanism** and first appeared sometime **between 1874 and 1884**. It is generally considered to have entered mainstream English when Arthur Conan Doyle used it in a science fiction novel in 1912: "We may get a **scoop**, if we are lucky. You'll be there in any case, so you'll just give us a pretty full report." (Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Lost World*, London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1912)

SCOOP – origin of noun is early 14c., *scope*, "**utensil for bailing out**," from Middle Low German 1200-1500, *schope* "**ladle**". The meaning "hand-shovel with a short handle and a deep, hollow receptacle" is from late 15c. Meaning "action of scooping" is from 1742; that of "amount in a *scoop*" is from 1832.