

**brevity** /'brevɪtɪ/ *noun* **1** using few words; conciseness. **2** shortness of time. [from Old French *brievete*, from Latin *brevīs*, short]

⊖ **1** conciseness, terseness, succinctness, pithiness, crispness, incisiveness, abruptness, curtness. **2** briefness, shortness, impermanence, ephemerality, transience, transitoriness.

⊕ **1** verbosity. **2** permanence, longevity.

**brew** — *verb* **1** to make beer or other alcoholic beverage by infusion, boiling, and fermentation of malted barley. **2** (also **brew up** or **brew something up**) to make (tea, coffee, etc) by mixing the leaves, grains, etc with boiling water. **3** *intrans.* to be prepared by brewing: *the tea is brewing*. **4** (also **brew up**) to become stronger and threatening: *there's a storm brewing*. **5** (also **brew something up**) to plan or prepare something (usually unwelcome): *brew up trouble*. — *noun* **1** a drink produced by brewing, especially tea or beer. **2** an amount of beer, etc produced by brewing: *last year's brew*. **3** the quality of what is brewed: *a good strong brew*. [from Anglo-Saxon *breowan*]

⊖ *verb* **1** infuse, stew, boil, seethe, ferment, prepare, soak, steep. **2** infuse, stew, boil. **4** build up, develop, gather, threaten. **5** plot, scheme, plan, prepare, project, devise, contrive, concoct, hatch, excite, foment. *noun* **1** infusion, drink, beverage, liquor, potion, mixture, blend, concoction.

**brewer** *noun* a person or company that brews and sells beer.

**brewer's yeast** a type of yeast (especially *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*) used in the brewing of beer, and as a source of vitamins of the vitamin B complex for use in dietary supplements.

**brewery** *noun* (PL. **breweries**) a place where beer and ale are brewed.

**brewing** *noun* the process by which alcoholic beverages, especially beer, are produced by the slow fermentation of malted cereal grains, usually barley, flavoured with hops.

**brewpub** *noun* a pub, often incorporating a restaurant, where beer is brewed. See also MICROBREWERY.

**briar**<sup>1</sup> or **brier** /braɪə(r)/ *noun* any of various prickly shrubs, especially a wild rose bush. [from Anglo-Saxon *brer*]

**briar**<sup>2</sup> or **brier** /braɪə(r)/ *noun* **1** a shrub or small tree (*Erica arborea*), native to S Europe, the woody root of which is used to make tobacco pipes. **2** a tobacco pipe made from the root of this plant. [from French *bruyère*, heath]

**bribe** — *noun* a gift, usually of money, offered to someone to persuade them to do something illegal or improper. — *verb* to offer or promise a bribe, etc to (someone). [from Old French *briber*]

⊖ *noun* incentive, inducement, allurements, enticement, *colloq.* backhander, kickback, payola, *colloq.* sweetener, *colloq.* hush money, protection money. *verb* corrupt, buy, buy off, suborn.

**bribery** *noun* the practice of offering bribes.

⊖ corruption, *slang* graft, *colloq.* palm-greasing, inducement.

**bric-à-brac** /'brɪkəbræk/ *noun* small objects of little financial value kept as decorations or ornaments. [from French *à bric et à brac*, at random]

⊖ knick-knacks, ornaments, curios, antiques, trinkets, baubles.

**brick** — *noun* **1** a rectangular block of baked clay used for building. **2** the material used for making bricks. **3** a child's plastic or wooden rectangular or cylindrical toy for build-

ing. **4** something in the shape of a brick: *a brick of ice-cream*. **5** *Brit. colloq. (only in sing.)* a trusted and helpful person. — *adj.* made of bricks, of the dull red colour of bricks. — *verb* (**brick something in** or **up**) to close or fill it in with bricks: *brick up the window*. — **drop a brick** *Brit. colloq.* to do or say something embarrassing or insulting without realizing that it is. **like banging** or **knocking one's head against a brick wall** *colloq.* having no effect despite much effort. **make bricks without straw** to do a job without having the proper materials for it. [from Old Dutch *bricke*]

**brickbat** *noun* **1** an insult or criticism. **2** a piece of brick, or anything hard, thrown at someone.

**bricklayer** *noun* a person who builds with bricks.

**bricklaying** *noun* the skill or practice of laying bricks in building.

**brickwork** that part of a building, eg the walls, that is made of brick.

⊖ masonry, shell, walls.

**brickyard** *noun* a place where bricks are made.

**bridal** *adj.* of a wedding or a bride. [from Anglo-Saxon *brydeala*, wedding feast, from *bryd*, bride + *ealu*, ale]

⊖ wedding, nuptial, marriage, matrimonial, marital, conjugal.

**bride** *noun* a woman who has just been married, or is about to be married. [from Anglo-Saxon *bryd*]

**bridegroom** *noun* a man who has just been married, or is about to be married.

**bridesmaid** *noun* a girl or unmarried woman attending the bride at a wedding.

**bridewealth** *noun* *Anthropol.* in some societies, property or money given by a bridegroom to the relatives of his bride, especially her parents, as a means of compensating them for her loss to the family, or to establish his rights over her.

**bridge**<sup>1</sup> — *noun* **1** a structure that spans a river, road, railway, valley, ravine, or other obstacle, providing a continuous route across it for pedestrians, motor vehicles, or trains. **2** anything joining or connecting two separate things. **3** *Comput.* a component which connects the parts of a communications network. **4** the narrow raised platform from which the captain of a ship directs its course. **5** the hard bony upper part of the nose. **6** a small piece of wood on a violin, guitar, etc which keeps the strings stretched tight. **7** a fixed replacement for one or more missing teeth, consisting of a partial denture that is permanently secured to one or more adjacent natural teeth. **8** same as BRIDGEWORK. — *verb* **1** to form or build a bridge over. **2** to make a connection, close a gap, etc. — **cross a bridge when one comes to it** to deal with a problem when it arises and not before. [from Anglo-Saxon *brycg*]

⊖ *noun* **1** arch, span, causeway. **2** link, connection, bond, tie. *verb* **1** span, cross, traverse. **2** fill, link, connect, couple, join, unite, bind.

*Types of bridge include:* suspension bridge, archbridge, cantilever bridge, flying bridge, flyover, overpass, footbridge, railway bridge, viaduct, aqueduct, humpback bridge, toll bridge, pontoon bridge, Bailey bridge, rope bridge, drawbridge, swing bridge.

**bridge**<sup>2</sup> *noun* a card game for four people playing in pairs, developed from whist. A player declares trumps, and also plays the hand of that player's partner, which is laid down face upwards.

**bridge-builder** *noun* **1** a person who builds bridges. **2** a person who tries to settle a dispute between two other people.

**bridgehead** *noun* a position well into enemy land from which an attack can be made.