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Houghton Mifflin Company

Boston • New York

Based on the hardcover edition of
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ISBN-13: 978-0-618-55205-4

ISBN-10: 0-618-55205-7

Manufactured in the United States of America

Text design by Joyce C. Weston

QWB 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

mean³ (mēn) *n.* 1. A middle point between 2 extremes. 2. *Math.* The average value of a set of numbers. 3. **means.** Something, as a method, by which an end is achieved. 4. **means.** Wealth, as, money or property. —*adj.* Occupying a middle position between 2 extremes.

me-an-der (mē-ān'dər) *v.* 1. To take a winding course. 2. To wander about without fixed direction. —**me-an'der** *n.*

mean-ing (mē'nīng) *n.* 1. Something that is meant or signified, esp. by language <The word "bank" has several meanings.> 2. Something that one wishes to communicate. 3. Importance; significance <What is the meaning of all this?> * *syns:* ACCEPTANCE, IMPORT, INTENT, MESSAGE, PURPORT, SENSE, SIGNIFICANCE, SIGNIFICATION, VALUE —**mean'ing-ful** *adj.* —**mean'ing-less** *adj.*

mean-time (mēn'tīm') *n.* The period between occurrences: interval. —*adv.* Meanwhile.

mean-while (mēn'hwīl', -wīl') *n.* Meantime. —*adv.* 1. During or in the intervening time. 2. At the same time.

mea-sles (mē'zəlz) *n.* (*sing. in number*). An acute, contagious viral disease, usu. occurring in childhood, characterized by the eruption of red spots.

mea-sly (mēz'lē) *adj.* -sli-er, -sli-est. *Slang.* Despicably small: meager.

mea-sure (mēzh'ər) *n.* 1. The act, process, or result of determining the dimensions, capacity, or amount of something. 2. Something, as a ruler, used in determining measures. 3a. A unit used in expressing measures. b. A system of such units. 4. A basis for comparison: criterion. 5. An appropriate or sufficient extent, amount, or degree. 6. Limit: bounds <wealth knowing no measure> 7. *often measures.* An action taken as a means to an end: expedient. 8. A bill or enactment of a legislature. 9. The notes and rests between 2 successive bars on a musical staff. —*v.* -ured, -ur-ing. 1. To determine the measurements of. 2. To have a particular measurement. 3. To estimate by comparison or evaluation: appraise. 4. To consider carefully <measure one's words> 5. To serve as a measure of <An altimeter measures altitude.> —**measure up.** 1. To live up to certain standards. 2. To be the equal of. —**meas'ur-a-ble** *adj.* —**meas'ura-bly** *adv.* —**meas'ur-er** *n.*

mea-sure-ment (mēzh'ər-mənt) *n.* 1. The act or process of measuring. 2. A dimension, capacity, or amount determined by measuring. —See table on pp. 442-443.

measuring worm *n.* A geometrid caterpillar that moves in alternate contractions and expansions suggestive of measuring.

meat (mēt) *n.* 1. The flesh of an animal used as food. 2. The edible, fleshy inner part <pecan meats> 3. The essential part: core. 4. Nourishment: food. —**meat'i-ness** *n.* —**meat'y** *adj.*

meat-ball (mēt'bōl') *n.* A small ball of often spiced ground or chopped meat.

me-c-a (mēk'ə) *n.* A place that is the center of an activity or interest.

me-chan-ic (mī-kān'ik) *n.* A person who is skilled in repairing, building, or using machines or tools.

me-chan-i-cal (mī-kān'i-kəl) *adj.* 1a. Of or relating to machines or tools. b. Of or relating to mechanics. 2. Performed, produced, or operated by or as if by a machine. —**me-chan'i-cal-ly** *adv.*

mechanical drawing *n.* 1. Drafting. 2. A drawing, as an architect's plans, that is made with instruments.

mechanical engineering *n.* The branch of engineering that encompasses the generation and application of heat and mechanical power and the production, design, and use of machines and tools. —**mechanical engineer** *n.*

me-chan-ics (mī-kān'iks) *n.* (*sing. or pl. in number*). 1. The scientific study and analysis of the action of forces on matter and systems composed of matter. 2. The design, operation, construction, and application of machinery or mechanical structures. 3. The technical side of an activity <the mechanics of baseball>

mech-a-nism (mēk'ə-nīz'əm) *n.* 1a. A mechanical apparatus: machine. b. The arrangement of connected machine parts. 2. A system of interacting parts <the mechanism of the brain> 3. A means or process by which something is done or brought into being.

mech-a-nis-tic (mēk'ə-nīs'tik) *adj.* 1. Mechanically determined. 2. Mechanical. —**mech'a-nis'ti-cal-ly** *adv.*

mech-a-nize (mēk'ə-nīz') *v.* -nized, -niz-ing. 1. To equip with machines or machinery <mechanize a factory> 2. To equip (a military unit) with motor vehicles, as tanks and trucks. 3. To make mechanical, automatic, or unspontaneous. —**mech'a-ni-za'tion** *n.*

med-al (mēd'l) *n.* 1. A flat piece of metal stamped with a commemorative design or inscription, often presented as an award. 2. A piece of metal stamped with a religious symbol.

med-al-ist (mēd'l-ist) *n.* 1. A designer, collector, or maker of medals. 2. One who is awarded or receives a medal.

me-dal-lion (mə-dāl'yən) *n.* 1. A large medal. 2. An emblem of registration for a taxicab. 3. Something resembling a large medal, as: a. An oval or circular design used in decoration. b. A painting set in an oval frame c. A circular portion of food.

med-dle (mēd'l) *v.* -dled, -dling. To intrude in other people's business or affairs. —**med'dler** *n.* —**med'dle-some** *adj.*

me-di-a (mē'dē-ə) *n.* *var. pl. of MEDIUM.* **me-di-ae-val** (mē'dē-ē'vəl, mē-dē'vəl) *adj.* *var. of MEDIEVAL.*

me-di-al (mē'dē-əl) *adj.* 1. Occurring in the middle. 2. Average or mean: ordinary.