

Lexicography

Introduction

What do you think the following words mean? (from www.urbandictionary.com)

1. *jaffa* (v, n)
2. *narsty* (adj)
3. *uber* (adj)

Vocabulary List

Library of Congress

lumpy

equivalent

dedicated

unabridged

enthusiasm

OED

recipe

polysemy

context

greedy

provenance

in the dark

artifact

Pre-listening Discussion



You are going to watch a couple of clips from a presentation by Erin McKean, who is a lexicographer for the *Oxford English Dictionary*. Her job is to make dictionaries. How do you imagine she does this?

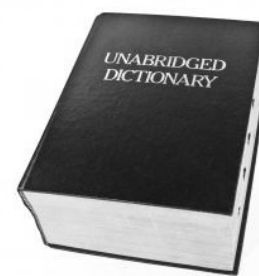
Now read the following questions and try to imagine some answers.

1. What does McKean mean by “undictionaried words”?
2. Does she think it's possible to find undictionaried words? Why or why not?
3. What is the connection between the maps (see right) and English?
4. According to McKean, what is the Internet made up of?
5. Why is that good for lexicography?



Listening 1

Now watch/listen to the video and check your answers to the questions above.



Listening 2

There are a lot of good _____-collecting sites out there now, but the problem with some of them is that they're not scientific enough. They show the word, but they don't show any _____: Where did it come from? Who said it? What _____ was it in? What book? Because a word is like an archaeological _____. If you don't know the provenance or the _____ of the artifact, it's not science: It's a pretty thing to look at. So a word without its _____ is like a cut flower. You know, it's pretty to look at for a while, but then it _____, it _____ too fast.

Listening 2 Summary

Complete the following sentence to form a summary of the text above.

In order to understand a word, we must know ...

Discussion Activity

Erin McKean says there are many *undictionaried* words. How about making your own original word? Make a group of about four people. In your group, discuss and create a new English word that could be used in this class from time to time. Write down the word, indicate how to pronounce it, give a definition, and then give an example of its use (be sure to describe the context clearly).

- Word:
- Pronunciation:
- Definition:
- Example:

