

Name _____

Class _____

Dictionary, *Schmictionary*

What difference does it make?

What makes a good online dictionary? Read the following criteria and use them to evaluate the sites.

A. Navigation

- Definitions should be easy to access.
- The page should load quickly.
- You can easily tell where you are on the site.

B. Content

- Definitions should be complete and easy to understand.
- Pronunciation should be indicated.
- If a word has more than one meaning, all meanings should be listed.
- The entry should include the word's etymology (word history).

C. Appearance

- Colors and text should be attractive and easy to read.
- Advertising should not get in the way (no popups or popunders).
- The site sponsor should be clearly identified.

Use the table below to compare and contrast four online dictionaries. Look up each word and rate the entry according to the criteria above. Use 1 for a low score and 5 for the highest score.

	Merriam-Webster.com	Dictionary.com	AskOxford.com	OneLook.com
<i>caravan</i>	A. 1 2 3 4 5 B. 1 2 3 4 5 C. 1 2 3 4 5	A. 1 2 3 4 5 B. 1 2 3 4 5 C. 1 2 3 4 5	A. 1 2 3 4 5 B. 1 2 3 4 5 C. 1 2 3 4 5	A. 1 2 3 4 5 B. 1 2 3 4 5 C. 1 2 3 4 5
<i>holocaust</i>	A. 1 2 3 4 5 B. 1 2 3 4 5 C. 1 2 3 4 5	A. 1 2 3 4 5 B. 1 2 3 4 5 C. 1 2 3 4 5	A. 1 2 3 4 5 B. 1 2 3 4 5 C. 1 2 3 4 5	A. 1 2 3 4 5 B. 1 2 3 4 5 C. 1 2 3 4 5
<i>panic</i>	A. 1 2 3 4 5 B. 1 2 3 4 5 C. 1 2 3 4 5	A. 1 2 3 4 5 B. 1 2 3 4 5 C. 1 2 3 4 5	A. 1 2 3 4 5 B. 1 2 3 4 5 C. 1 2 3 4 5	A. 1 2 3 4 5 B. 1 2 3 4 5 C. 1 2 3 4 5
TOTAL				

Now that you have assessed all four online dictionaries, take a thoughtful look at your totals. If you have a clear first choice, return to it. Write down some of the features that appeal to you. You will need this list as you write your memo and design your poster.

If a clear first choice has not emerged, look again at the top two. Revisit the sites and select one for your recommendation. Write down the strengths of the site you have chosen.