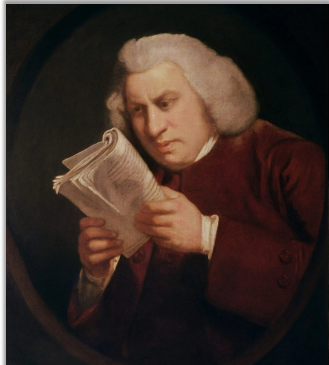
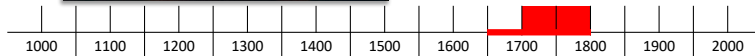


Samuel Johnson (1709-1784)



- born to an impoverished bookseller in Litchfield; left Oxford before taking a degree
- moved to London to write for the *Gentleman's Magazine*
- publication of his *Dictionary* in 1755 established his reputation
- suffered from various physical ailments throughout his long life
- subject of the most famous biography in English, by James Boswell (1791) (NAEL C788-90)



Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language* (1755)

sample entries

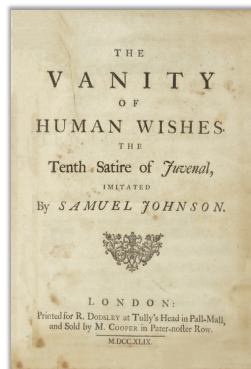
dull: Not exhilarating; not delightful; as, to make dictionaries is dull work.

lexicographer: A writer of dictionaries; a harmless drudge that busies himself in tracing the original, and detailing the signification of words.

oats: A grain, which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland appears to support the people.

- commissioned by London booksellers in 1746, among the first comprehensive dictionaries of the English language
- written single-handedly by Johnson over seven years, with only minor clerical assistance, for the equivalent of CDN\$500,000
- was the most influential English dictionary until the publication of the first edition of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, some 173 years later (*Wikipedia*)

Johnson, *The Vanity of Human Wishes* (1749)



- an imitation (not a translation) of Juvenal's *Satire X* (AD 100-127)
- follows the rhetorical structure and stately tone of Juvenal's Latin original, but infused with Johnson's trenchant voice and compactness of expression
- advances Johnson's most frequently recurring theme: the dangerous but pervasive power of wishful thinking and the false expectations that blind humans
- considered Johnson's finest poem (NAEL C788-90)

Juvenal, *Satire X* (AD 100-127)

Original Latin

omnibus in terris, quae sunt a Gadibus
usque
Auroram et Gangem, pauci dinoscere
possunt
uera bona atque illis multum diuersa,
remota
erroris nebula. quid enim ratione
timemus
aut cupimus? quid tam dextro pede
concupis ut te
conatus non paeniteat uotique peracti?
(1-6)

Modern English Translation

Search every land, from Cadiz to the dawn steaked
shores
Of Ganges, and you'll find few men who can
distinguish
A false from a worthwhile objective, or slash their way
through
The fogs of deception. Since when were our fears and
desires
Ever dictated by reason? What project goes so
smoothly
That you never regret the idea, let alone its
realization?

—transl. by Peter Green (1967)

translation vs imitation

translation

- rendering an author’s work from one language to another
- literal:** rendering the exact meaning of the original at the expense of syntax, grammar, idiom, etc.
- loose:** conveying the spirit, sense, and style of the original by finding equivalents
- free:** adapting with considerable alterations to the original’s style, structure, etc. (Cuddon 736)

imitation

- the adoption of the tone, style, and attitude of another writer
- a “re-creation” of a preceding work
- regarded as a wholly respectable practice in the 18thC; writers should learn everything they can from past masters
- considered derivative and lacking in originality by the 19thC (Cuddon 355-56)

maxim

examples

- “Three may keep a secret, if two of them are dead.”
—Benjamin Franklin
- “Give a man a mask and he will tell you the truth.”
—Oscar Wilde
- “The road to excess leads to the palace of wisdom.”
—William Blake
- “Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel.”
—Samuel Johnson

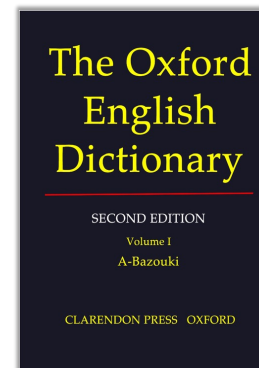
- a short and memorable statement of a general principle
- an *aphorism* or *apopthegm*
- pithily condenses much wisdom in few words
- sometimes takes the form of a definition (“x is ...”)
- imparts advice or guidance for one’s life (Baldick 20, 22, 216)

📖 Johnson, *The Vanity of Human Wishes* (1749)

rhetorical structure

Introduction	wishful thinking creates false expectations	(1-20)
Public	Wealth	creates more problems than it solves (21-72)
	Power	corrupts, leading to defeat and downfall (73-134)
	Learning	is a distraction from acquiring true wisdom (135-74)
Private	Glory	is built on a false foundation of exploitation (175-254)
	Age	just engenders worsening infirmity and illness (255-318)
	Beauty	is only skin deep and is ultimately fleeting (319-42)
Conclusion	trust fate, nature, heaven, god to fulfil you	(343-68)

exemplar



exemplar

- a model or pattern.
- a typical instance of a class of things.

exemplary

- fit to be imitated; outstandingly good.
- serving as a warning.
 - Law* (of damages) exceeding the amount needed for simple compensation.
- illustrative, representative. (*OED*)

exemplar

Exemplars of Power

- Thomas Cardinal (107) **IMPRISONED**
- George Villiers (14) **ASSASSINATED**
- Robert Harley (13) **IMPRISONED**
- Thomas Wentworth (13) **EXECUTED**
- Edward Hyde (131) **EXILED**

Exemplars of Learning

- Thomas Lydiat (162) **DIED IN POVERTY**
- Galileo Galilei (164) **ARRESTED**
- William Laud (168) **EXECUTED**

Exemplars of Glory

- Charles XII of Sweden (17) **EXILED**
- Elector Charles Albert (17) **DEFEATED**
- Xerxes (227) **DEFEATED**

Exemplars of Age

- King Croesus (13) **DETHRONED**
- John Churchill (31) **STROKE/COMA**
- Jonathan Swift (318) **SENILITY**

Exemplars of Beauty

- Anne Vane (32) **DIED AGE 25**
- Catherine Sedley (32) **EXILED**

Queen's University Official Statement of Copyright: This material is copyrighted and is for the sole use of students registered in courses at Queen's University. This material shall not be distributed or disseminated to anyone other than students registered in courses at Queen's University. Failure to abide by these conditions is a breach of copyright, and may also constitute a breach of academic integrity under the University Senate's Academic Integrity Policy Statement.