

Vowel-points, in the Hebrew and other eastern languages, are certain marks placed above or below the consonants, or attached to them, as in the Ethiopic, representing the vocal sounds or vowels, which precede or follow the articulations.

The point, the subject; the main question; the precise thing to be considered, determined or accomplished. This argument may be true, but it is not to the *point*.

POINT, *v. t.* To sharpen; to cut, forge, grind or file to an acute end; as, to *point* a dart or a pin; also, to taper, as a rope.

2. To direct towards an object or place, to show its position, or excite attention to it; as, to *point* the finger at an object; to *point* the finger of scorn at one. *Shak.*

3. To direct the eye or notice.

Whoever should be guided through his battles by Minerva, and *pointed* to every scene of them, would see nothing but subjects of surprise. *Pope.*

4. To aim; to direct towards an object; as, to *point* a musket at a wolf; to *point* a cannon at a gate.

5. To mark with characters for the purpose of distinguishing the members of a sentence, and designating the pauses; as, to *point* a written composition.

6. To mark with vowel-points.

7. To appoint. [Not in use.] *Spenser.*

8. To fill the joints with mortar, and smooth them with the point of a trowel; as, to *point* a wall.

To *point out*, to show by the finger or by other means.

To *point a sail*, to affix points through the eyelet-holes of the reefs.

POINT, *v. i.* To direct the finger for designating an object, and exciting attention to it; with *at*.

Now must the world *point* at poor Catherine. *Shak.*

Point at the tatter'd coat and ragged shoe. *Dryden.*

2. To indicate, as dogs do to sportsmen.

He treads with caution, and he *points* with fear. *Gay.*

3. To show distinctly by any means.

To *point* at what time the balance of power was most equally held between the lords and commons at Rome, would perhaps admit a controversy. *Swift.*

4. To fill the joints or crevices of a wall with mortar.

5. In the rigging of a ship, to taper the end of a rope or splice, and work over the reduced part a small close netting, with an even number of knittles twisted from the same. *Cyc.*

To *point at*, to treat with scorn or contempt by pointing or directing attention to.

POINT'AL, *n.* In botany, the pistil of a plant; an organ or viscus adhering to the fruit for the reception of the pollen. Its appearance is that of a column or set of columns in the center of the flower. *Martyn.*

POINT'ED, *pp.* Sharpened; formed to a point; directed; aimed.

2. Aimed at a particular person or transaction.

3. *a.* Sharp; having a sharp point; as a *pointed* rock.

4. Epigrammatical; abounding in conceits or lively turns; as *pointed* wit. *Pope.*

POINT'EDLY, *adv.* In a pointed manner; with lively turns of thought or expression.

He often wrote too *pointedly* for his subject. *Dryden.*

2. With direct assertion; with direct reference to a subject; with explicitness; as, he declared *pointedly* he would accede to the proposition.

POINT'EDNESS, *n.* Sharpness; picketness with asperity. *Johnson.*

2. Epigrammatical keenness or smartness.

In this you excel Horace, that you add *pointedness* of thought. *Dryden.*

POINT'EL, *n.* Something on a point.

These poises or *pointels* are, for the most part, little balls set at the top of a slender stalk, which they can move every way at pleasure. *Derham.*

2. A kind of pencil or style. *Wickliffe.*

POINT'ER, *n.* Any thing that points.

2. The hand of a time-piece. *Watts.*

3. A dog that points out the game to sportsmen. *Gay.*

POINT'ING, *ppr.* Directing the finger; showing; directing.

2. Marking with points; as a writing.

3. Filling the joints and crevices of a wall with mortar or cement.

POINT'ING, *n.* The art of making the divisions of a writing; punctuation.

2. The state of being pointed with marks or points.

POINT'ING-STOCK, *n.* An object of ridicule or scorn. *Shak.*

POINT'LESS, *a.* Having no point; blunt; obtuse; as a *pointless* sword.

2. Having no smartness or keenness.

POISE, *n.* *poiz.* [W. *puys*, weight; Arm. *poes*; Fr. *poids*. See the Verb.]

1. Weight; gravity; that which causes a body to descend or tend to the center. *Spenser.*

2. The weight or mass of metal used in weighing with steelyards, to balance the substance weighed.

3. Balance; equilibrium; a state in which things are balanced by equal weight or power; equipoise. The mind may rest in a *poise* between two opinions.

The particles forming the earth, must convene from all quarters towards the middle, which would make the whole compound rest in a *poise*. *Bentley.*

4. A regulating power; that which balances.

Men of an unbounded imagination often want the *poise* of judgment. *Dryden.*

POISE, *v. t.* *poiz.* [W. *puysaue*, to throw down, to press, to lean or incline, to weigh; Arm. *poesa*; It. *pesare*; Sp. Port. *pesar*; Corn. *puza*; Fr. *peser*.]

1. To balance in weight; to make of equal weight; as, to *poise* the scales of a balance.

2. To hold or place in equilibrium or equi-ponderance.

Our nation with united interest blest, Not now content to *poise*, shall sway the rest. *Dryden.*

3. To load with weight for balancing.

Where could they find another form so fit, To *poise* with solid sense a sprightly wit? *Dryden.*

4. To examine or ascertain, as by the balance; to weigh.

He cannot consider the strength, *poise* the weight, and discern the evidence of the clearest arguments, where they would conclude against his desires. *South.*

5. To oppress; to weigh down.

Lest leaden slumber *poise* me down to-morrow, When I should mount on wings of victory. *Shak.*

POIS'ED, *pp.* Balanced; made equal in weight; resting in equilibrium.

POIS'ING, *ppr.* Balancing.

POISON, *n.* *poiz'n.* [Fr. *poison*; Arm. *em-poesoun*, *poison*; Sp. *ponzoña*; Port. *peçonha*. Qu. its alliance to L. *pus*. See Class Bs. No. 25.]

1. A substance which, when taken into the stomach, mixed with the blood or applied to the skin or flesh, proves fatal or deleterious by an action not mechanical; venom.

The more active and virulent poisons destroy life in a short time; others are slow in their operation, others produce inflammation without proving fatal.

In the application of poison, much depends on the quantity.

2. Any thing infectious, malignant, or noxious to health; as the *poison* of pestilential diseases.

3. That which taints or destroys moral purity or health; as the *poison* of evil example; the *poison* of sin. *South.*

POIS'ON, *v. t.* To infect with any thing fatal to life; as, to *poison* an arrow.

2. To attack, injure or kill by poison.

He was so discouraged that he *poisoned* himself and died. *2 Macc.*

3. To taint; to mar; to impair; as, discontent *poisons* the happiness of life.

Hast thou not With thy false arts *poison'd* his people's loyalty? *Rowe.*

4. To corrupt. Our youth are *poisoned* with false notions of honor, or with pernicious maxims of government.

To suffer the thoughts to be vitiated, is to *poison* the fountains of morality. *Rambler.*

POIS'ONED, *pp.* Infected or destroyed by poison.

POIS'ONER, *n.* One who poisons or corrupts; that which corrupts.

POIS'ONING, *ppr.* Infecting with poison; corrupting.

POIS'ONOUS, *a.* Venomous; having the qualities of poison; corrupting; impairing soundness or purity.

POIS'ONOUSLY, *adv.* With fatal or injurious effects; venomously.

POIS'ONOUSNESS, *n.* The quality of being fatal or injurious to health and soundness; venomousness.

POIS'ON-TREE, *n.* A tree that poisons the flesh. This name is given to a species of *Rhus* or *sumac*, the *Rhus vernix* or *poison ash*, a native of America; also to the *bohun upas* of Java. *Encyc.*

POIT'REL, *n.* [Fr. *poitrail*, from L. *pectoralis*, from *pectus*, the breast.]

1. Armor for the breast. *Skinner.*

2. A graving tool. [Qu. *pointel*.] *Ainsworth.*

POIZE, a common spelling of *poise*. [See *Poise*.]

POKE, *n.* [Sax. *poeca*, *poha*; Fr. *poche*, a pouch or bag.]

A pocket; a small bag; as a pig in a *poke*. *Camden. Spectator.*

POKE, } *n.* The popular name of

POKE-WEED, } a plant of the genus

Phytolacca, otherwise called *cocum* and *garget*; a native of N. America. As a