

1. That may be applauded; that may gain favor or approbation; hence, superficially pleasing; apparently right; specious; popular; as a *plausible* argument; a *plausible* pretext; a *plausible* doctrine.

2. Using specious arguments or discourse: as a *plausible* man.

PLAUSIBLENESS, *n.* Speciousness; show of right or propriety; as the *plausibleness* of Arminianism. *Sanderson.*

PLAUSIBLY, *adv.* With fair show; speciously; in a manner adapted to gain favor or approbation.

They could talk *plausibly* about what they did not understand. *Collier.*

PLAUSIVE, *a.* Applauding; manifesting praise.

2. Plausible. *Shak.*

PLAY, *v. i.* [Sax. *plegan*, *plegian*, to play, to joke, to perform on an instrument of music, to move or vibrate, to clap or applaud, to deride or make sport of; *plegan*, to ply or bend to, or to lean or lie on; *ge-plegan*, to play, and to dance or leap. The Sw. *leka*, Dan. *leger*, to play, are the same word without a prefix, and in the northern countries of England, *leka* is used as it is in Sweden. This word seems to be formed on the same root as *lay*.]

1. To use any exercise for pleasure or recreation; to do something not as a task or for profit, but for amusement; as, to *play* at cricket.

The people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to *play*. Ex. xxxii.

2. To sport; to frolic; to frisk.

The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed to day,  
Had he thy reason, would he skip and *play*? *Pope.*

3. To toy; to act with levity. *Milton.*

4. To trifle; to act wantonly and thoughtlessly.

Men are apt to *play* with their healths and their lives as they do with their clothes. *Temple.*

5. To do something fanciful; to give a fanciful turn to; as, to *play* upon words. *Shak.*

6. To make sport, or practice sarcastic merriment.

I would make use of it rather to *play* upon those I despise, than trifle with those I love. *Pope.*

7. To mock; to practice illusion.

Art thou alive,  
Or is it fancy *plays* upon our eyesight? *Shak.*

8. To contend in a game; as, to *play* at cards or dice; to *play* for diversion; to *play* for money.

9. To practice a trick or deception.

His mother *played* false with a smith. *Shak.*

10. To perform on an instrument of music; as, to *play* on a flute, a violin or a harpsichord.

*Play*, my friend, and charm the charmer. *Granville.*

11. To move, or to move with alternate dilatation and contraction.

The heart beats, the blood circulates, the lungs *play*. *Cheyne.*

12. To operate; to act. The engines *play* against a fire. *Dryden.*

13. To move irregularly; to wanton.

Ev'n as the waving sedges *play* with wind. *Shak.*

The setting sun

*Plays* on their shining arms and burnish'd helmets. *Addison.*

All fame is foreign, but of true desert,  
*Plays* round the head, but comes not to the heart. *Pope.*

14. To act a part on the stage; to personate a character.

A lord will hear you *play* to-night. *Shak.*

15. To represent a standing character.

Courts are theaters where some men *play*. *Donne.*

16. To act in any particular character; as, to *play* the fool; to *play* the woman; to *play* the man. *Shak.*

17. To move in any manner; to move one way and another; as any part of a machine.

PLAY, *v. t.* To put in action or motion; as, to *play* cannon or a fire-engine.

2. To use an instrument of music; as, to *play* the flute or the organ. [Elliptical.] *Gay.*

3. To act a sportive part or character.

Nature here  
Wanton'd as in her prime, and *play'd* at will  
Her virgin fancies. *Milton.*

4. To act or perform by representing a character; as, to *play* a comedy; to *play* the part of king Lear.

5. To act; to perform; as, to *play* our parts well on the stage of life.

6. To perform in contest for amusement or for a prize; as, to *play* a game at whist.

To *play off*, to display: to show; to put in exercise; as, to *play off* tricks.

To *play on or upon*, to deceive; to mock or to trifle with.

2. To give a fanciful turn to.

PLAY, *n.* Any exercise or series of actions intended for pleasure, amusement or diversion, as at cricket or quoit, or at blind man's buff.

2. Amusement; sport; frolic; gambols.

Two gentle fawns at *play*. *Spenser.*

3. Game; gaming; practice of contending for victory, for amusement or for a prize, as at dice, cards or billiards.

4. Practice in any contest; as sword-play. He was resolved not to speak distinctly, knowing his best *play* to be in the dark. *Tillotson.*

John naturally loved rough *play*. *Arbuthnot.*

5. Action; use; employment; office.

—But justifies the next who comes in *play*. *Dryden.*

6. Practice; action; manner of acting in contest or negotiation; as fair *play*; foul *play*.

7. A dramatic composition; a comedy or tragedy; a composition in which characters are represented by dialogue and action.

A *play* ought to be a just image of human nature. *Dryden.*

8. Representation or exhibition of a comedy or tragedy; as, to be at the *play*. He attends every *play*.

9. Performance on an instrument of music.

10. Motion; movement, regular or irregular; as the *play* of a wheel or piston.

11. State of agitation or discussion.

Many have been sav'd, and many may,  
Who never heard this question brought in *play*. *Dryden.*

12. Room for motion.

The joints are let exactly into one another, that they have no *play* between them. *Mozon.*

13. Liberty of acting; room for enlargement or display; scope; as, to give full *play* to mirth. Let the genius have free *play*.

PLAYBILL, *n.* A printed advertisement of a play, with the parts assigned to the actors.

PLAYBOOK, *n.* A book of dramatic compositions.

PLAY-DAY, } *n.* A day given to play  
PLAYING-DAY, } or diversion; a day exempt from work. *Swift.*

PLAYDEBT, *n.* A debt contracted by gaming. *Arbuthnot.*

PLAYED, *pp.* Acted; performed; put in motion.

PLAYER, *n.* One who plays in any game or sport.

2. An idler. *Shak.*

3. An actor of dramatic scenes; one whose occupation is to imitate characters on the stage. *Bacon.*

4. A mimic. *Dryden.*

5. One who performs on an instrument of music.

6. A gamester.

7. One that acts a part in a certain manner. *Carew.*

PLAYFELLOW, *n.* A companion in amusements or sports. *Sidney.*

PLAYFUL, *a.* Sportive; given to levity; as a *playful* child. *Spectator.*

2. Indulging a sportive fancy; as a *playful* genius.

PLAYFULLY, *adv.* In a sportive manner.

PLAYFULNESS, *n.* Sportiveness.

PLAYGAME, *n.* Play of children. *Locke.*

PLAYHOUSE, *n.* A house appropriated to the exhibition of dramatic compositions; a theater. *Pope. Dryden.*

PLAYMATE, *n.* A playfellow; a companion in diversions. *More.*

PLAY-PLEASURE, *n.* Idle amusement. [Not used.] *Bacon.*

PLAYSOME, *a.* Playful; wanton. *Shelton.*

PLAYSOMENESS, *n.* Playfulness; wantonness.

PLAYTHING, *n.* A toy; any thing that serves to amuse.

A child knows his nurse, and by degrees the *playthings* of a little more advanced age. *Locke.*

PLAYWRIGHT, *n.* A maker of plays. *Pope.*

PLEA, *n.* [Norm. *plait*, *plet*, *plaid*, *ple*; plu. *pliz*, *pleytz*; Fr. *plaider*, to plead; *plaidoyer*, a plea; It. *piato*, a plea; *piature*, to plead; Sp. *pleyto*, dispute; *pleytear*, to plead; *pleyteador*, a pleader; Port. *pleito*, *pleitear*; D. *pleit*, *pleiten*. The Spanish word *pleyto* signifies a dispute, contest, debate, lawsuit, and a covenant, contract or bargain, and *pleyta* is a *plaited* strand of brass. The Portuguese verb *pleitear* signifies to plead, to go to law, to strive or vie. The elements of this word are probably *Ld* or *Pld*. In the sense of pleading, the word accords with the Gr. *κατῆ*, and in that of striving, with the L. *lis*, *lilis*.]

1. In *law*, that which is alleged by a party in support of his demand; but in a more limited and technical sense, the answer of