

Changes in English Word Meaning

Your job: Fill in the blanks (and the chart at the bottom) with the appropriate ancient meaning of each italicized word in parentheses. (Be careful - There is one extra word included.) The second word, (girl), whose ancient meaning was **youth**, is done for you.

Ancient meanings of italicized words

died	small enclosure	youth	opinion	blessed
food	lay (not clergy)	farmer	woman	animals
grain	liquid	crazy	fruit	sober

NOTE: This passage makes sense if the words in italics represent their ancient meanings in English rather than their current meaning.

He was a happy and (*sad*) _____ (*girl*) **youth** who lived in a/an (*town*) _____ forty miles from the closest neighbor. His unmarried sister, a/an (*wife*) _____ who was a vegetarian teetotaler, ate (*meat*) _____ and drank (*liquor*) _____ three times a day. She was so fond of oatmeal bread made from the (*corn*) _____ her brother grew that she (*starved*) _____ from overeating. He fed nuts to the (*deer*) _____ that lived in the branches of a/an (*apple*) _____ tree which bore pears. A/an (*silly*) _____ and wise (*boor*) _____ everyone liked, he was a/an (*lewd*) _____ man whom the general (*censure*) _____ held to be a model of chastity.

Chart with Current meanings of italicized words

Italicized Word	Current meaning	Ancient meaning	Italicized Word	Current meaning	Ancient meaning
<i>Sad</i>	Not happy		<i>Starved</i>	Die from not eating	
<i>Girl</i>	Female child	youth	<i>deer</i>	4-footed ungulate	
<i>Town</i>	Small city		<i>Apple</i>	Specific type of fruit	
<i>Wife</i>	Married woman		<i>Silly</i>	Harmlessly foolish	
<i>Meat</i>	Animal flesh		<i>boor</i>	Rude, insensitive person	
<i>Liquor</i>	Alcohol		<i>lewd</i>	Sexually unchaste	
<i>corn</i>	An Iowa plant		<i>censure</i>	Criticism	

Other word meanings – *teetotaler* (doesn't drink alcohol); *chastity* (not engaging in sex)