

## KNOW YOUR ENGLISH

# Know Your English -- What is the meaning of 'religiose'?

**S. UPENDRAN**

MARCH 25, 2013 22:18 IST

UPDATED: OCTOBER 18, 2016 14:08 IST

## What is the meaning and origin of 'What's your poison'?

(V. Nithya, Chennai)

This is the question generally asked when you want to find out what someone would like to drink. The drink in this case is hard liquor – not the colas and juices of the world! It is also possible to say 'name your poison', 'pick your poison' and 'choose your poison'. Since the 19th century, all alcoholic drinks have humorously been referred to as 'poison'.

\*I have brandy, whisky and beer. What's your poison?

No one is really sure about the origin of the idiom. Some people believe that it comes from the word 'intoxicated'; something which happens to people when they drink a little too much. 'Toxic', as you know, is another word for poison.

## Is it okay for a man to ask, 'What do you think of my dress'?

(K. Jairaman, Mysore)

In terms of grammar, there is nothing wrong with the question. As far as usage is concerned, in native varieties of English, 'dress' is a garment worn only by women. Men, on the other hand, wear pants and shirt. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines a dress as a 'one piece garment for a woman or girl that covers the body and extends down over the legs'.

## What is the difference between 'knife' and 'dagger'?

(P.V. Satish, Vellore)

The word knife is a general term for any implement used to cut, pierce or spread. There are different kinds of knives; some are used to cut vegetables, some to spread butter/jam on bread, some to cut open envelopes, some to hurt or injure people, etc. Not all knives are sharp, and not all are used as a weapon. A 'dagger' is a kind of knife that functions as a weapon; it is used to stab and kill people.

## What is the meaning of 'religiose'?

(R. Ramamurthy, Chennai)

First, let us deal with the pronunciation of this rather formal word. The first two syllables are pronounced like the first two syllables of 'religion'. The second 'i' is like the 'i' in 'fit', 'hit' and 'bit', and the following 'o' sounds like the 'o' in 'so', 'no' and 'go'. The final 'e' is silent. The word is pronounced 're-LIJ-i-os' with the stress on the second syllable. Someone who is overly or excessively religious, especially in a sentimental sort of way is said to be 'religiose'. This individual makes it a point to show others what a pious person he is!

\*The religiose followers of the Baba donated liberally.

### **Is it okay to say 'I regret for not seeing your movie'?**

(Suman Murthy, Bangalore)

No, it isn't. One 'regrets something', one does not 'regret for something'. The correct sentence is 'I regret not seeing your movie'. If, on the other hand, we replaced 'regret' with 'apologise' it would be a grammatically acceptable sentence. 'I apologise for not seeing your movie.'

\*\*\*\*\*

*"Belgium is a country invented by the British to annoy the French."* — **Charles de Gaulle**

[>upendrankye@gmail.com](mailto:upendrankye@gmail.com)

Printable version | Apr 20, 2018 5:38:30 PM | <http://www.thehindu.com/books/know-your-english/Know-Your-English-What-is-the-meaning-of-%E2%80%98religiose%E2%80%99/article12399508.ece>

© The Hindu