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Editor in Chief Frederick C. Mish
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Dear Mr. Mish,

I am writing to you in the hope that you will be able to assist me with a query I have regarding the Eleventh edition of the Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary.

Recently I compiled a list (see Appendix A) of nouns that name the nationalities of the world, and then looked up each of these nouns in the above-mentioned dictionary. While the list I compiled is not definitive it is reasonably complete. Of the 228 nationalities on my list only 86 (Appendix B) were included in the dictionary, meaning that 142 (Appendix C) were not included. As I worked through my list registering which nationalities were in the dictionary and which weren't, I kept looking for patterns to help me understand what the selection criteria for inclusion was.

At first I assumed that it must be related to population—the nationalities of the larger countries being included, and the smaller ones being excluded. But this theory was discounted time and time again. For example 'Brazilian'—of which there over 170,000,000—was not in the dictionary, but 'Tongan' — of which there are 99,000—was included. This same example also discounts the possibility of the distinction being made on the basis of landmass because Brazil is obviously a much larger country than Tonga.

I then wondered if the selection criteria may perhaps be based on US foreign interests and that countries close to the US in terms of trade and/or diplomatic relations may be prioritized, but the fact that 'Iraqi' is excluded from the dictionary and 'Faeroese' is included dispels this theory somewhat.

Being a common usage dictionary I then thought that perhaps the selection criteria favored those nouns that are most familiar to us. However 'Jamaican', 'Cuban' and 'Iraqi' all seem to be fairly familiar words to the

American public and are all excluded from the dictionary, but 'Tadjik', 'Uzbek' and 'Tswana' are much less common and are included, dispelling this theory also.

So in order to continue with my search for a lexicographical method I mapped my findings (Appendix D) to see if it was perhaps a matter of proximity to the United States –that those closest were included and those farthest away excluded. But again my hypothesis was denied by the omission of the entire South American continent.

I then wondered if the selection could be based on the GDP of a country; however New Zealand was left out of the dictionary and its comparable neighbor Australia was included.

So as you can see I have not been very successful in determining any selection criteria, and would be very grateful if you could help me to understand how and why these choices have been made.

Thank you for your time.

Yours sincerely,

Fiona Jack

Appendix A

List of nationalities of the world compiled primarily from the United Nations, the CIA World Fact Book, and www.nationsonline.org

Afghan	Cameroonian	Frenchman,	Lao or Laotian
Albanian	Canadian	Frenchwoman	Latvian
Algerian	Cape Verdean	Gabonese	Lebanese
American	Caymanian	Gambian	Liberian
American Samoan	Central African	Georgian	Libyan
Andorran	Chadian	German	Liechtensteiner
Angolan	Chilean	Ghanaian	Lithuanian
Anguillan	Chinese	Gibraltarian	Luxembourger
Antiguan, Barbudan	Chinese Macanese	Greek	Macedonian
Argentinian	Colombian	Greenlander	Madagascan or
Armenian	Comoran or Comorian	Grenadian	Malagasy
Aruban	Congolese	Guadeloupean or	Malawian
Australian	Congolese	Guadeloupian	Malaysian
Austrian	Cook Islander	Guamanian	Maldivian
Azerbaijani or Azeri	Costa Rican	Guatemalan	Malian
Bahamian	Croat or Croatian	Guinean	Maltese
Bahraini	Cuban	Guinean	Marshallese or
Bangladeshi	Cypriot	Guyanese	Marshall Islander
Barbadian	Czech	Haitian	Martinican
Belarusian	Dane	Honduran	Mauritanian
Belgian	Djiboutian	Hungarian	Mauritian
Belizean or Belizian	Dominican	Icelander	Mexican
Beninese	Dominican	Indian	Micronesian
Bermudian or	Dutch	Indonesian	Moldovan
Bermudan	Ecuadorean or	Iranian (some use	Monacan or
Bhutanese	Ecuadorian	Persian)	Monégasque
Bolivian	Egyptian	Iraqi	Mongolian
Bosnian,	Emirian	Irishman, Irishwoman	Moroccan
Herzegovinian	English or British	Israeli	Mosotho (sing.),
Brazilian	Equatorial Guinean	Italian	Basotho (pl.)
Breton	Eritrean	Ivoirian or Ivorian	Mozambican
British Virgin Islander	Estonian	Jamaican	Myanmarese
Briton, Brit,	Ethiopian	Japanese	Namibian
Englishwoman,	Faeroese or Faroese	Jordanian	Nauruan
Englishman	Falkland Islander	Kazakh	Nepali
Bruneian	Fijian	Kenyan	New Caledonian
Bulgarian	Filipino, Filipina	Kiribatian	New Zealander
Burkinabe or	Finn	Kittsian, Nevisian	Nicaraguan
Burkinese	French Guianese	Korean	Nigerian
Burundian	French Polynesian	Kuwaiti	Nigerien
Cambodian		Kyrgyz	Niuean

Norfolk Islander	Sahrawi	Slovene	Trinidadian and
Northern Mariana	Saint Helenian	Solomon Islander	Tobagan or
Islander	Saint Lucian	Somali	Tswana
Norwegian	Saint Vincentian or	South African	Tunisian
Omani	Vincentian, Grenadine	Spaniard	Turk
Pakistani	Saint-Pierrais,	Sri Lankan	Turkoman
Palauan	Miquelonnais	Sudanese	Tuvaluan
Palestinian	Salvadoran or	Surinamer or	Ugandan
Panamanian	Salvadorean or	Surinamese	Ukrainian
Papuan	Sammarines	Swazi	Uruguayan
Paraguayan	Samoan	Swede	Uzbek
Peruvian	São Toméan,	Swiss	Vanuatuan
Pitcairner or Pitcairn	Principean	Syrian	Venezuelan
Islander	Saudi or Saudi	Tadjik or Tajik	Vietnamese
Pole	Arabian	Taiwanese	Virgin Islander
Portuguese	Scotsman,	Tanzanian	Wallis and Futuna
Puerto Rican	Scotswoman	Thai	Islander
Qatari	Senegalese	Tibetan	Welshman,
Reunionese	Serb or Serbian,	Timorese	Welshwoman
Romanian	Seychellois	Togolese	Yemeni
Russian	Sierra Leonian	Tokelauan	Zambian
Rwandan or	Singaporean	Tongan	Zimbabwean
Rwandese	Slovak		

Appendix B

Nouns **included** in the Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary, Eleventh Edition:

Afghan	Ethiopian	Libyan	Serb or Serbian,
Albanian	Faeroese or Faroese	Lithuanian	Slovak
American	Fijian	Macedonian	Slovene
Armenian	Filipino, Filipina	Madagascan or	Somali
Australian	Finn	Malagasy	South African
Azerbaijani or Azeri	Frenchman,	Malaysian	Spaniard
Belarusian	Frenchwoman	Maltese	Swazi
Belgian	Georgian	Mexican	Swede
Breton	German	Micronesian	Swiss
Briton, Brit,	Greek	Mongolian	Tadjik or Tajik
Englishwoman,	Haitian	Mosotho (sing.),	Thai
Englishman	Hungarian	Basotho (pl.)	Tibetan
Bulgarian	Indian	Myanmarese	Tongan
Cambodian	Indonesian	Nepali	Tswana
Cameroonian	Iranian (some use	Norwegian	Turk
Canadian	Persian)	Papuan	Turkoman
Chinese	Irishman, Irishwoman	Pole	Ukrainian
Croat or Croatian	Israeli	Portuguese	Uzbek
Czech	Italian	Romanian	Vietnamese
Dane	Japanese	Russian	Welshman,
Dutch	Kazakh	Sammarines	Welshwoman
Egyptian	Korean	Samoan	
English	Lao or Laotian	Scotsman,	
Estonian	Latvian	Scotswoman	

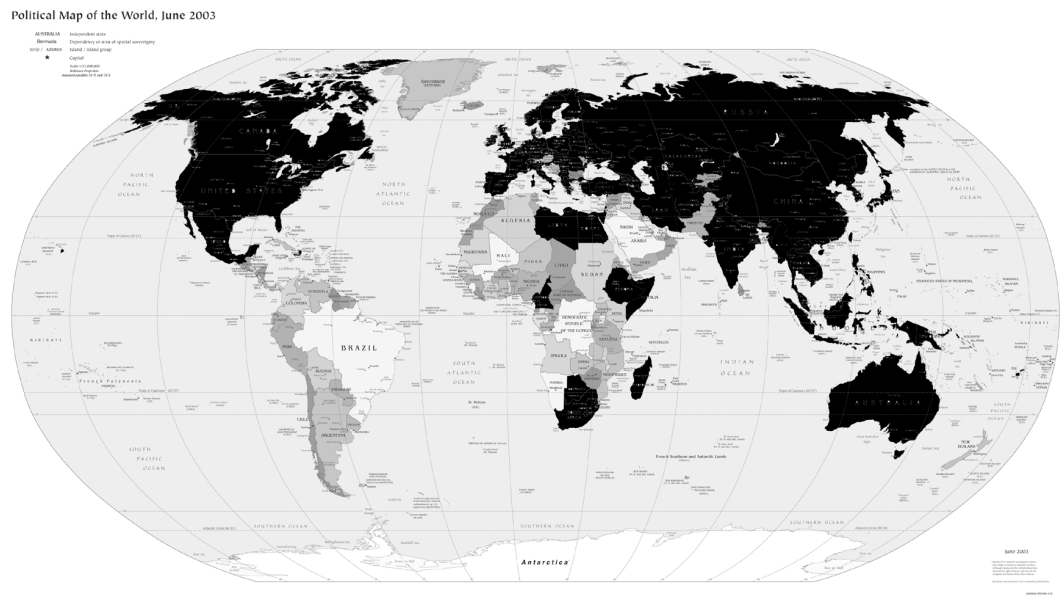
Appendix C

Nouns **not included** in the Merriam-Webster Collegiate dictionary, Eleventh Edition:

Algerian	Cypriot	Malawian	Saint Lucian
American Samoan	Djiboutian	Maldivian	Saint Vincentian or
Andorran	Dominican	Malian	Vincentian, Grenadine
Angolan	Dominican	Marshallese or	Saint-Pierrais,
Anguillian	Ecuadorean or	Marshall Islander	Miquelonnais
Antiguan, Barbudan	Ecuadorian	Martinican	Salvadoran or
Argentinian	Emirian	Mauritanian	Salvadorean or
Aruban	Equatorial Guinean	Mauritian	São Toméan,
Austrian	Eritrean	Moldovan	Principean
Bahamian	Falkland Islander	Monacan or	Saudi or Saudi
Bahraini	French Guianese	Monégasque	Arabian
Bangladeshi	French Polynesian	Moroccan	Senegalese
Barbadian	Gabonese	Mozambican	Seychellois
Belizean or Belizian	Gambian	Namibian	Sierra Leonian
Beninese	Ghanaian	Nauruan	Singaporean
Bermudian or	Gibraltarian	New Caledonian	Solomon Islander
Bermudan	Greenlander	New Zealander	Sri Lankan
Bhutanese	Grenadian	Nicaraguan	Sudanese
Bolivian	Guadeloupean or	Nigerian	Surinamer or
Bosnian,	Guadeloupian	Nigerien	Surinamese
Herzegovinian	Guamanian	Niuean	Syrian
Brazilian	Guatemalan	Norfolk Islander	Taiwanese
British Virgin Islander	Guinean	Northern Mariana	Tanzanian
Bruneian	Guinean	Islander	Timorese
Burkinabe or	Guyanese	Omani	Togolese
Burkinese	Honduran	Pakistani	Tokelauan
Burundian	Icelander	Palauan	Trinidadian and
Cape Verdean	Iraqi	Palestinian	Tobagan or
Caymanian	Ivoirian or Ivorian	Panamanian	Tunisian
Central African	Jamaican	Paraguayan	Tuvaluan
Chadian	Jordanian	Peruvian	Ugandan
Chilean	Kenyan	Pitcairner or Pitcairn	Uruguayan
Chinese Macanese	Kiribatian	Islander	Vanuatuan
Colombian	Kittsian, Nevisian	Puerto Rican	Venezuelan
Comoran or Comorian	Kuwaiti	Qatari	Virgin Islander
Congolese	Kyrgyz	Reunionese	Wallis and Futuna
Congolese	Lebanese	Rwandan or	Islander,
Cook Islander	Liberian	Rwandese	Yemeni
Costa Rican	Liechtensteiner	Sahrawi	Zambian
Cuban	Luxembourger	Saint Helenian	Zimbabwean

Appendix D

Citizens **included** in the Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary, Eleventh Edition (black areas indicate selection):



Citizens **not included** in the Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary, Eleventh Edition (black areas indicate selection):

