

# Definition

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1903 | Lowell Lectures. 1903. Lecture 3. 1st draught | MS [R] 458:14

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By a *definition* I do not mean a statement conveying the exact sense of a word, although that will naturally be involved in a definition. But what I mean is the explanation of the relations of an intellectual conception to other conceptions.

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1904 | New Elements (Kaina stoiceia) | EP 2:302

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A definition is the logical analysis of a predicate in general terms. It has two branches, the one asserting that the definitum is applicable to whatever there may be to which the definition is applicable; the other (which ordinarily has several clauses), that the definition is applicable to whatever there may be to which the definitum is applicable. *A definition does not assert that anything exists.*

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1904 | Sketch of Dichotomic Mathematics | NEM 4:285

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As Aristotle well says (and his authority is well-nigh absolute upon a question of logical terminology), a definition asserts the existence of nothing. A definition would consist of two members, of which the first should declare that any object to which the *definitum*, or defined term, should be applicable would possess the characters involved in the definition; while the second should declare that to any object which should possess those characters the definitum would be applicable.

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1909-12-17 | Letters to William James | CP 8.302

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...Definition, which is the end of Logical Analysis, is the first step, (after general familiarity in use,) toward making Ideas clear.

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1911 | A Sketch of Logical Critics | EP 2:454

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The definition and the utility of a definition require it to specify everything essential, and to omit all that is inessential, to its *definitum*: though it may be pardoned for calling special attention to an omission in order to show that it was not inconsiderate.