

What and why

Our aim is to help you in your approach and understanding of academic material in any subject and gain more confidence.

All of the words used will appear on GCSE exam papers.

This week's word is...

Corona

[kuh-roh-nuh]

Corona

Synonyms

aureole

circle

crown

light

ring

rosary

tiara

Origin of the word

First recorded use was in 1555–65.

It comes from the Latin *corōna* meaning “garland, crown” (see crown) and from the Greek *korōnē* “crown, curved object”; akin to *korōnís* which means “curved, beaked,” and has links to *kórax* “crow, raven”

Corona

noun

a white or colored circle or set of concentric circles of light seen around a luminous body, especially around the sun or moon.

Meteorology. such a circle or set of circles having a small radius and ranging in color from blue inside to red outside, attributable to the diffraction caused by thin clouds, mist, or sometimes dust (distinguished from [halo](#)).

Astronomy. a faintly luminous envelope outside of the sun's chromosphere, the inner part consisting of highly ionized elements.

Anatomy. the upper portion or crown of a part, as of the head.

What does the *corona* in *coronavirus* mean?

Before 2020, the word *corona* likely brought to mind for many people *Corona*, a popular brand of beer made in Mexico. The logo for *corona* features a gold crown—*corona* being the Spanish word for “crown,” also from the Latin *corōna*. The [lager](#)-style beer was first brewed in 1925.

Due to the 2020 pandemic, however, *corona* became widely used as a shortened form for [coronavirus](#), especially COVID-19. *Coronavirus* refers to a family of viruses that cause respiratory infections. First recorded around 1965–70, the name *coronavirus* is based on the structure of these viruses.

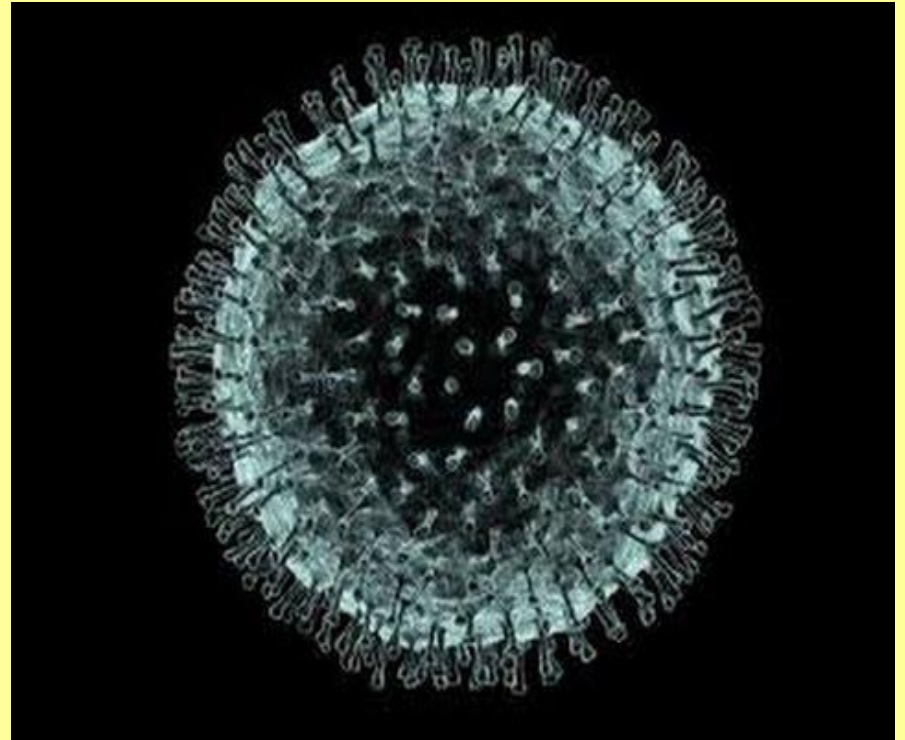
OK, so far we’ve had some Latin lessons, some history, even a dash of architecture and astronomy—a little [pathology](#) can’t hurt.

A virus by any other name...

A virus is an extremely tiny infectious agent made up of an RNA or DNA core, a protein coat, and, in some species, an envelope. Coronaviruses contain RNA and are spherical in form.

They have an envelope from which project club-like spikes all over its surface. When they discovered the virus group in the 1960s, scientists originally thought the array of these spikes resembled the solar *corona*, and so named this family of viruses *coronavirus*.

Corona - Corona



Hopefully you now have a deeper understanding of the word 'Corona' and where its roots lie. Stay safe and keep learning!

