

The Periodization of English language History

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Old English

Middle English

Modern English



THREE MAIN PERIODS

There are 3 stages of periodzation

- 1. Old English(I-XI)
- 2. Middle English(XI-XV)
- 3. Modern English(XV-till now)

EME (XV-XVIII)

LME(XVIII-till now)

The history of the English language really started with the arrival of three Germanic tribes who invaded Britain during the 5th century AD:

- The Angles
- The Saxons
- The Jutes

- They crossed the North Sea from what today is Denmark and northern Germany.
- At that time the inhabitants of Britain spoke a Celtic language.

But most of the Celtic speakers were pushed west and north by the invaders - mainly into what is now Wales, Scotland and Ireland. The Angles came from England and their language was called Englisc - from which the words England and English are derived.



North
Sea

Germanic invasions
of the 5th
century

JUTES

ANGLES

SAXONS

Germany

N

France

Modern countries are shown in green

Scotland

Ireland

Wales

England

BRITAIN

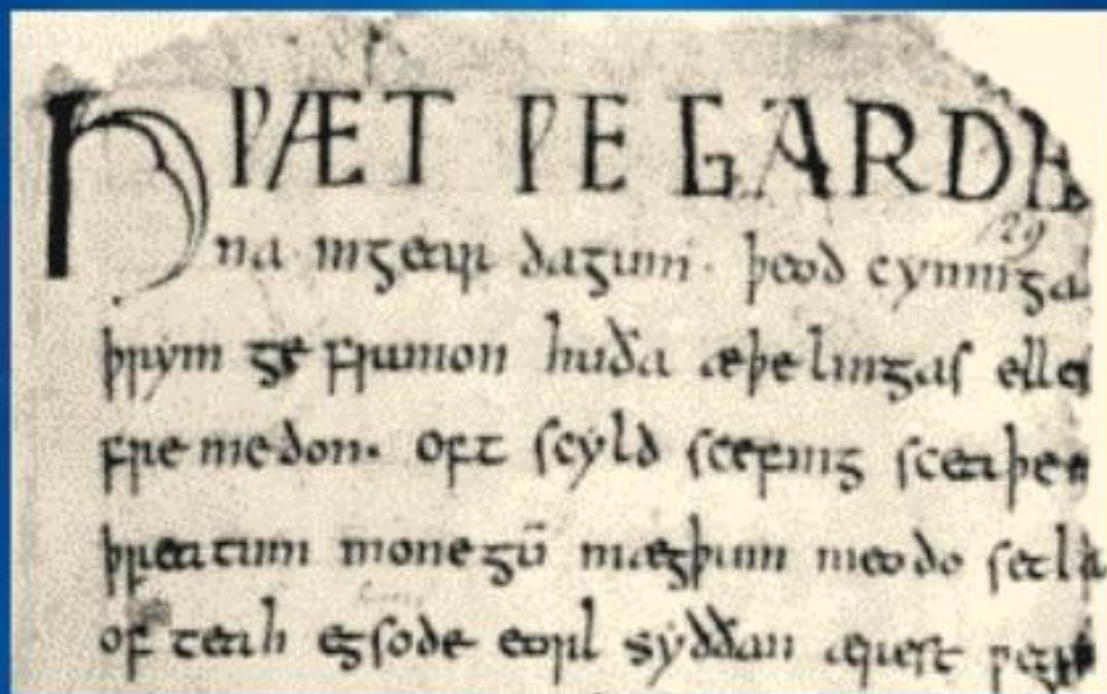


Old English

▯ Old English (450-1100 AD)

The invading Germanic tribes spoke similar languages, which in Britain developed into what we now call Old English. Old English did not sound or look like English today. Native English speakers now would have great difficulty understanding Old English. Nevertheless, about half of the most commonly used words in Modern English have Old English roots. The words *be*, *strong* and *water*, for example, derive from Old English. Old English was spoken until around 1100.

PART OF *BEOWULF*, A POEM WRITTEN IN OLD ENGLISH



HWÆT WE GARDAS
na mæca dazum. þeod cymmas
þym 7 þumon luda æþelungas ella
fre medon. of 7 seald seofung sceapen
þætum monegū mæsum meodo secla
of teah esode eorl syddan ærest þæt

Middle English



MIDDLE ENGLISH (1100-1500)


□

In 1066 William the Conqueror, the Duke of Normandy (part of modern France), invaded and conquered England. The new conquerors (called the Normans) brought with them a kind of French, which became the language of the Royal Court, and the ruling and business classes. For a period there was a kind of linguistic class division, where the lower classes spoke English and the upper classes spoke French. In the 14th century English became dominant in Britain again, but with many French words added. This language is called Middle English. It was the language of the great poet Chaucer (c1340-1400), but it would still be difficult for native English speakers to understand today.

AN EXAMPLE OF MIDDLE ENGLISH BY CHAUCER.

And whan I sawgh he wolde never fine
To reden on this cursed book al night,
Al sodeinly thre leves have I plight
Out of his book right as he redde, and eke
I with my fist so took him on the cheeke
That in oure fir he fil bakward adown.
And up he sterte as dooth a wood leon
And with his fist he smoot me on the heed
That in the floor I lay as I were deed.
And whan he swagh how stille that I lay,
He was agast, and wolde have fled his way,
Till atte laste out of my swough I braide:
"O hastou slain me, false thief?" I saide,
"And for my land thus hastou mordred me?
Er I be deed yit wol I kisse thee."

Early Modern English



Early Modern
English

By the time of **Shakespeare** (1592-1616), the language had become clearly recognizable as Modern English. It was during the **English Renaissance** that most of the words from Greek and Latin entered English. This period in English cultural history is sometimes referred to as "*the age of Shakespeare*" or "*the Elizabethan era*", taking the name of the English Renaissance's most famous author and most important monarch, respectively.

During the reign of **Queen Elizabeth I** there was an explosion of culture in the form of support of the arts, popularization of the printing press, and massive amounts of sea travel.

HAMLET'S FAMOUS "TO BE, OR NOT TO BE" LINES, WRITTEN IN EARLY MODERN ENGLISH BY SHAKESPEARE

Enter Hamlet.

Cor. Madame, will it please your grace
To leaue vs here?

Que. With all my hart. *exit.*

Cor. And here *Ofelia*, reade you on this booke,
And walke aloofe, the King shal be vnscene.

Ham. To be, or not to be, I there's the point,
To Die, to sleepe, is that all? I all:
No, to sleepe, to dreame, I mary there it goes,
For in that dreame of death, when wee awake,
And borne before an euerlasting Iudge,
From whence no passenger euer returnd,
The vndiscovered cuntry, at whose sight
The happy smile, and the accursed damn'd.
But for this, the ioyfull hope of this,
Whol'd beare the scornes and flattery of the world,
Scorned by the right rich, the rich cursted of the poore?

Late Modern English

- The main difference between Early Modern English and Late Modern English is *vocabulary*.

Early Modern
English

Late Modern
English

English
Today



Late Modern English (1800-Present)

The main difference between Early Modern English and Late Modern English is vocabulary. Late Modern English has many more words, arising from two principal factors: firstly, the Industrial Revolution and technology created a need for new words; secondly, the British Empire at its height covered one quarter of the earth's surface, and the English language adopted foreign words from many countries.

Late Modern English

Early Modern
English

Late Modern
English

1828	Webster publishes his American English dictionary.	Late
1922	The British Broadcasting Corporation is founded.	Modern English
1928	The <i>Oxford English Dictionary</i> is published.	





**THANK YOU FOR YOUR
ATTENTION!**