

# The History of English in Ten Minutes

From Shakespeare's made up words to blogging.



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Programme running: 10 x 1 min    Production: Angel Eye Media

## Anglo-Saxon

The Angles and the Saxons came up with the words we really needed, like house, loaf and even werewolf. Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday are named after Anglo-Saxon gods. But if you wanted action words like thrust, drag and die, you had to go to the experts – the Vikings!

## The Norman Conquest

William the Conqueror brought plenty of French concepts with him in 1066, including jury, evidence and parliament. Where would crime writers be without him? And the French had plenty of fancy words for food, beginning a tradition of confusing menus.

## Shakespeare

Shakespeare was just making it all up! He invented about two thousand new words and phrases, from eyeball to alligator. Without the bard, we couldn't say 'good riddance' to the 'green eyed monster' or 'break the ice'.

## The King James Bible

A team of scribes translated the Bible in the 1600s, 'going the extra mile' to create a book that could be 'all things to all men' and that even 'the salt of the earth' could understand. And they came up with a few new phrases along the way...

## The English of Science

When scientists get together, they can discover things faster than we can name them! Words like 'acid', 'gravity' and 'electricity' had to be invented to stop their meetings turning into endless games of charades.

## English and Empire

England tried to take its language to the world, but found much more interesting words on their voyages, including 'barbeque', 'canoe', 'bungalow' and 'zombie'.

## The Age of the Dictionary

The language is in chaos! It's time to decide what words are in and which are out. Yet the idea that you can stop people making up new words is complete 'snuffbumble'.

## American English

Is 'real' English the most popular version or the oldest one? American words such as 'fall', 'faucets' and 'candy' were the original words brought across the ocean, while the Brits moved onto 'autumn', 'taps' and 'sweets'.

## Internet English

Since the first email was sent in 1972, we've been typing new words. Conversations shortened along with attention spans, leaving us more time to blog, poke and reboot. But can you always tell if LOL is 'laugh out loud' or 'lots of love'?

## Global English

Whether travelling by the high seas or high speed broadband, English has stolen words from over 350 languages. And English has made plenty of friends including Hindi, Singaporean and Chinese, creating Hinglish, Singlish and Chinglish. Has English got much to do with England now at all?

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