

From Old English to Modern English: Dating Words

Let's recap with the changes in English, from Beowulf to Chaucer to Shakespeare to Austen.



The World of Languages
and Languages of the World

What languages are these?

What differences and similarities can you see between the languages?

1.

Fæder ure ʒu ʒe eart on heofonum,
si ʒin nama gehalgod.
to becume ʒin rice,
gewurʒe ʒin willa,
on eorʒan swa swa on heofonum.
urne gedæghwamlican hlaf syle us
todæg,
and forgyf us ure gyltas,
swa swa we forgyfaʒ urum
gyltendum.
and ne gelæd ʒu us on costnunge,
ac alys us of yfele soʒlice

2.

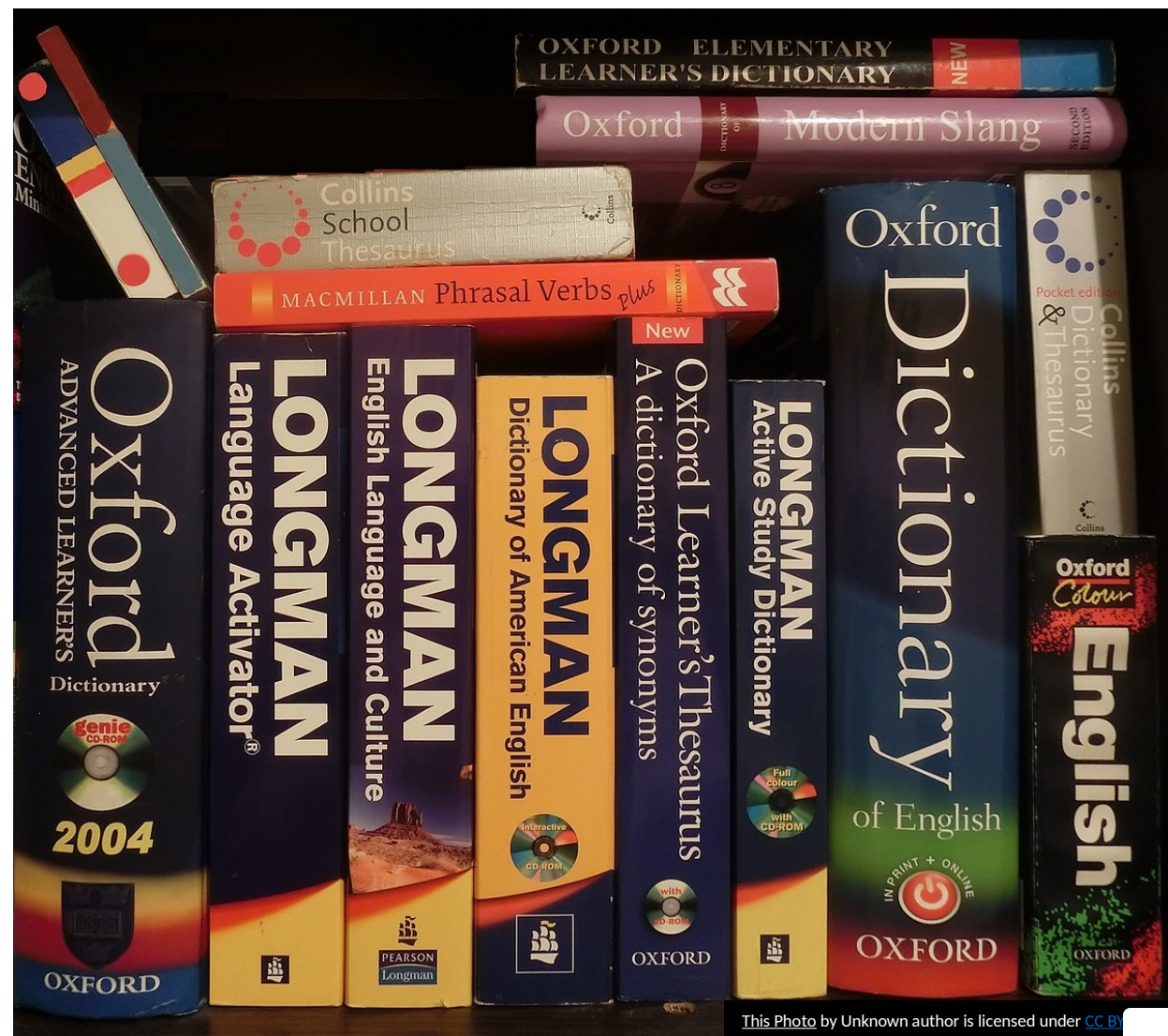
Oure fadir ʒat art in heuenes
halwid be ʒi name;
ʒi reume or kyngdom come to be.
Be ʒi wille don
in herʒe as it is dounin heuene.
yeue to us today oure eche dayes
bred.
And foryeue to us oure dettis ʒat
is oure synnys
as we foryeuen to oure dettouris
ʒat is to men ʒat han synned in us.
And lede us not into temptacion
but delyuere us from euył

3.

Our father which art in
heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done
in earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily
bread.
And forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who
trespass against us.
And lead us not into
temptation,
but deliver us from evil.



- 1 is Old English
- 2 is Middle English
- 3 is Modern English



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Ιπποπόταμος
WoLLoW the HiPPo

Recap: What were the influences on Old English?

- Anglo-Saxon is also known as _____
- It was used for around 700 years until the Norman conquest in the year _____
- One of the most famous poems written in Old English is _____



Recap: What were the Influences on Middle English?

- Middle English developed following the _____ of 1066.
- The Normans brought Norman French to our shores which greatly influenced our language.
- _____ is the most famous writer from this period. He wrote in Middle English.

And whan I sawgh he wolde never fine
To reden on this cursed book al night,
Al sodeinly three 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 mordreð me?
Er I be deed yit wol I kisse thee."

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Ιπποπόταμος
WoLLOW the HIPPO

Early Modern English

- Towards the end of Middle English, a sudden and distinct change in pronunciation (**the Great Vowel Shift**) started, with vowels being pronounced shorter and shorter.
- From the 16th century the British had **contact with many people from around the world**. This, and the **Renaissance** of Classical learning, meant that many new words and phrases entered the language.
- The invention of **printing** also meant that there was now a common language in print. Books became cheaper and more people learned to read. Printing also brought **standardization** to English.
- Spelling and grammar became fixed**, and the dialect of London, where most publishing houses were, became the standard. In **1604** the first English dictionary was published.

Enter Hamlet.
Cor. Madame, will it please your grace
To leave vs here?
Que. With all my hart. *exit.*
Cor. And here *Ophelia*, 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 euerslasting Iudge,
From whence no passenger euer returnd,
The vndiscovered country, at whose sight
The happy smile, and the accursed damnd.
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 curled of

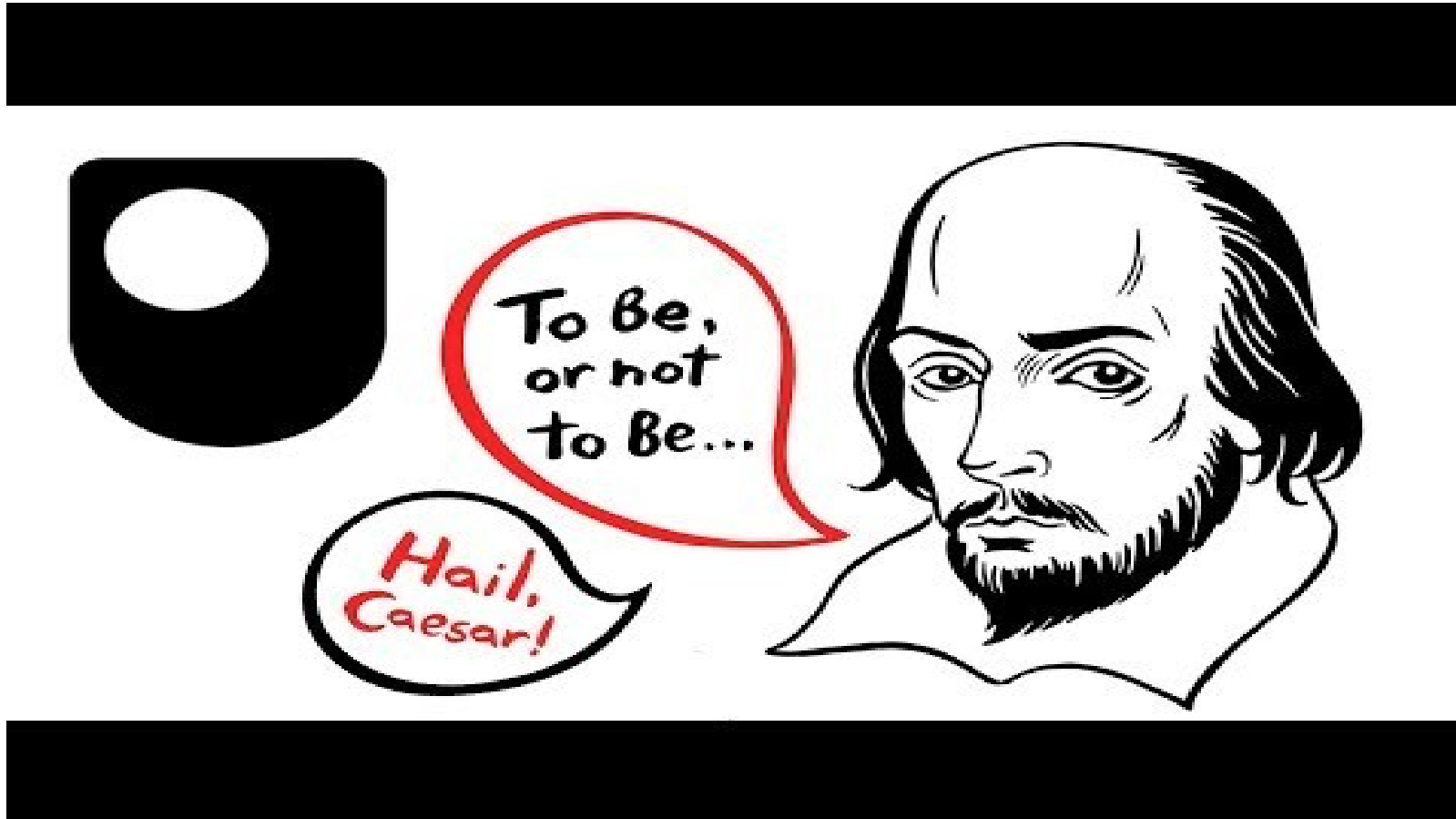


Printing

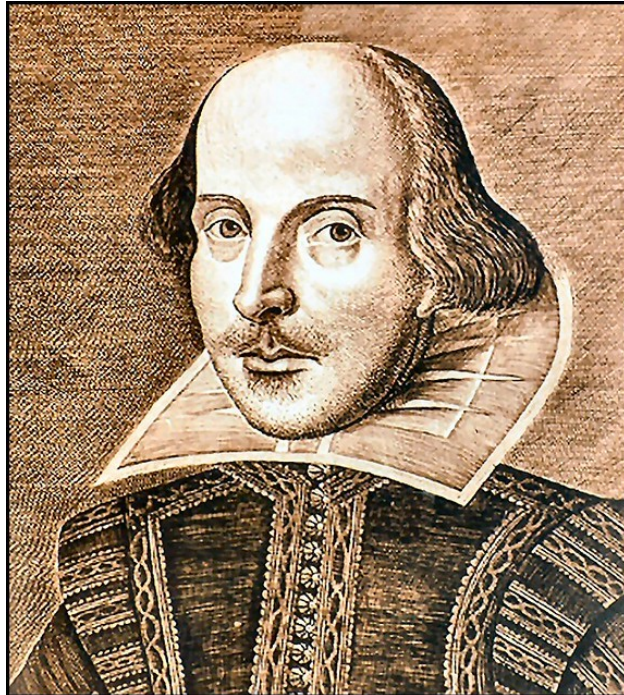


What did Early Modern English sound

(Just watch the first 5 minutes of this clip from the Open University <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gPlpph>)



Shakespeare



18.
Shall I compare thee to a Summers day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough windes do shake the darling buds of Maie,
And Sommers lease hath all too short a date:
Sometime too hot the eye of heauen shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd,
And euery faire from faire some-time declines,
By chance, or natures changing course vntrim'd:
But thy eternall Sommer shall not fade,
Nor loose possession of that faire thou ow'st,
Nor shall death brag thou wandr'st in his shade,
When in eternall lines to time thou grow'st,
So long as men can breath or eyes can see,
So long liues this, and this giues life to thee,

Can you understand the words?

Have you heard this sonnet before?

What differences do you notice between Early Modern English and the English that we speak today?



Over to you...

List three important things that happened in the 1500s to change the English language:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Before this, was there one 'correct' way to spell words?

_____ .

When was the first dictionary published? _____

What two influences could be important in creating new vocabulary for Late Modern English?

- 1.
- 2.

What next?

- Make a prediction about how the English language will evolve in the future. Discuss.
- Complete the English Language timeline in your workbook (Questions F and G)



Ecclesiastes and Orwell

Anglo-Saxon monosyllables [1533] and Latinate [1904] polysyllables [1570]

Each word is followed by the date, according to the OED, on which it was first used.

OE = Old English

“I returned [1325], and saw [1300] under the sun [OE], that the race [1330] is not to the swift [888], nor the battle [1297] to the strong [OE], neither yet bread [OE] to the wise [897], nor yet riches [OE] to men [OE] of understanding [888], nor yet favour [1300] to men of skill [1175]; but time [OE] and chance [1297] happeneth [1385] to them all [OE].”

Ecclesiastes 9:11, King James Version

“Objective [1838] consideration [1386] of contemporary [1614] phenomena [1583] compels [1380] the conclusion [1382] that success [1537] or failure [1643] in competitive [1829] activities [1425] exhibits [1490] no tendency [1628] to be commensurate [1641] with innate [1420] capacity [1481], but that a considerable [1631] element [1600] of the unpredictable [1840] must [OE] invariably [1646] be taken into account [1660]”

George Orwell: Politics and the English Language (1946)

Try dating Hamlet's words to Horatio.

"If thou didn't ever hold me in thy heart,

Absent thee from felicity awhile

And in this harsh world draw
thy_

To t



The great gift the English author has is the size of his/her lexicon and the range from Anglo-Saxon simplicity to the invention of new Latin words before our very eyes.

Dating words is very hard but use your knowledge from this term to have a go. The underlined word may come under more than one heading.

Latin

Anglo-Saxon

Norse

Norman

Middle English



Try dating Hamlet's words to Horatio.

"If thou didn't ever hold me in thy heart,

Absent thee from felicity awhile

And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain

To tell my story."

Latin – absent (abesse), story (historia)

Anglo-Saxon – thou, hold, heart, awhile, , old english, breath, tell

Norse - hold

Norman – absent, pain (from Old French peine), story (estorie)

Middle English – felicity (from felix/felic-, Latin – happy), pain, story, harsh

