

HISTORY COURSE

The History of the English Language Appendix

2 Chapters

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Generated with Claude

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The History of the English Language

Appendix · Timeline

The main dates used in the chapters, in order, with the chapter that explains each and the Wikipedia article it came from. Dates are given as the sources give them: "about" and "c." mean approximately, and where sources disagree both are listed. Nothing here is new: if a date is not in a chapter, it is not on this page. The list is selective, not every date in the course.

How to use this page

Read it down once to see the shape of the story: the Conquest, the long return of English, the standard and the press, the new words and the Bible, the dictionaries and rules, and the spread abroad. Then use the Chapter column to go back to the explanation. The Map page shows where the places are and how English is spoken around the world.

Watch out

Period labels are conventions (Chapter 1). Where an article gives a start or end for Old English, Middle English or Early Modern English, I list it as that article's date and not as a fact about the language. Several rows show two dates for the same event on purpose.

1066 to about 1250: the Conquest and the old language

Date	Event	Ch.	Source
450 to 1150; "after 1066"	Old English, as dated by two articles (Baugh's dates, and the Conquest as the usual end)	1	*Old English*; *History of English*
14 October 1066	Battle of Hastings; Harold killed	2	*Norman Conquest*
25 December 1066	William crowned at Westminster Abbey	2	*Norman Conquest*
1069 to 1070	The Harrying of the North	2	*Norman Conquest*

Date	Event	Ch.	Source
1086	Domesday Book: about 5% of land south of the Tees in English hands	2	*Norman Conquest*
1095	No English bishop remained after Wulfstan's death	2	*Norman Conquest*
4 August 1116	Fire at Peterborough destroys the monastery's library	3	*Peterborough Chronicle*
1122 to 1154	The Peterborough continuations, in transitional English; last entry 1154	3	*Peterborough Chronicle*
1150s to 1180s	The shift from Late Old English to Middle English complete, per the article	1, 3	*Middle English*
1258	The Provisions of Oxford, among the earliest English legal texts in French	2	*Law French*

About 1250 to 1450: Middle English and the return of English

Date	Event	Ch.	Source
1275	First official document in Anglo-Norman, a statute	2	*Anglo-Norman language*
1250 to 1400	The most prolific period of French borrowing (about 40% of French words first appear)	2	*French influence on English*
1348 to 1349	The Black Death in England	4	*Black Death in England*
1349	English becomes the language of instruction at Oxford	2	*French influence on English*
1362	Pleading in English Act	2	*Law French*

Date	Event	Ch.	Source
from the 1370s	Monolingual English spreads in writing	4	*Standard English*
about 1375 to 1425	Anglo-Norman abandoned in records	4	*Standard English*
about 1382; 1388 and 1395	Wycliffe's Bible: Early Version; Later Version revised	4	*Wycliffe's Bible*
early 1380s	Chaucer begins *The Canterbury Tales*; Chaucer lived about 1343 to 1400	3	*Geoffrey Chaucer*
1407 / 1408 / 1409	Oxford Convocation vote and the Constitution *Periculosa* (the article gives 1407 and 1408 for the vote, and 1407 to 1409 for the Constitution)	4	*Wycliffe's Bible*
August 1417; about 1430	Henry V's English Signet letters; the Chancery Standard emerges	4	*Chancery Standard*
about 1400 to 1700	The Great Vowel Shift (first phase complete about 1500)	6	*Great Vowel Shift*

About 1450 to 1650: print, new words and the Bible

Date	Event	Ch.	Source
about 1440; 1453	Gutenberg's movable-type press; the Mainz Psalter	5	*Printing press*
about 1470; about 1473; 1476	Middle English ends about 1470 per one article; Caxton's first book in English at Bruges; his Westminster press	1, 5	*Middle English*; *William Caxton*
by 1480	Printers in 110 places in Europe, including England	5	*Printing press*

Date	Event	Ch.	Source
about 1500; 1540s	Early Modern English begins "around 1500" (*History of English*) or in the 1540s (*Middle English*)	1	*History of English*; *Middle English*
1526	Tyndale's full New Testament, printed at Worms; he was executed in October 1536	7	*William Tyndale*
1538; 1543; 1583; 1598	Elyot's wordbook; the phrase "inkhorn" first recorded; Mulcaster's and Florio's works	7, 8	*Inkhorn term*; *A Dictionary of the English Language*
January 1604; 1604	Hampton Court Conference; Cawdrey's *A Table Alphabeticall*	7, 8	*King James Version*; *A Table Alphabeticall*
1607; 1620	Start of the colonial era in the infobox; the Pilgrims reach Plymouth Plantation	9	*Colonial history of the United States*
1611	The King James Version published	7	*King James Version*

1650 to today: rules, America and the world

Date	Event	Ch.	Source
1730 / 1731	English required in the courts: the Proceedings in Courts of Justice Act (1730) or, in another article, Law French banished in 1731	2	*Law French*; *Anglo-Norman language*
1746 to 1755	Johnson's *Dictionary* commissioned in June 1746, published 15 April 1755 (4 April for the folios)	8	*A Dictionary of the English Language*
1762	Lowth's *A Short Introduction to English Grammar*	8	*Robert Lowth*
1769	The Oxford standard text of the King James Version	7	*King James Version*
1776	End of the colonial era in the infobox	9	*Colonial history of the United States*

Date	Event	Ch.	Source
1803; 1834; 1864; 1890	Split infinitive: Comly's objection; an anonymous writer's advice; Alford's *Plea*; the term first recorded	8	*Split infinitive*
1828	Webster's *American Dictionary* (Webster lived 1758 to 1843)	9	*Noah Webster*
2003; 2021	Crystal's three-to-one estimate of non-native to native speakers; 380 million native and 1.457 billion total speakers	10	*English language*

Note on sources

Every row was taken from the chapters of this course, which give the portion of each article read. I did not look up any date again for this page, and I left out minor dates for space. Article names in the Source column are the ones the chapters name. The grouping into periods and the "Watch out" remark are mine. The Black Death row's link to English in Chapter 4 is the article's "may have", not a settled fact.

The History of the English Language

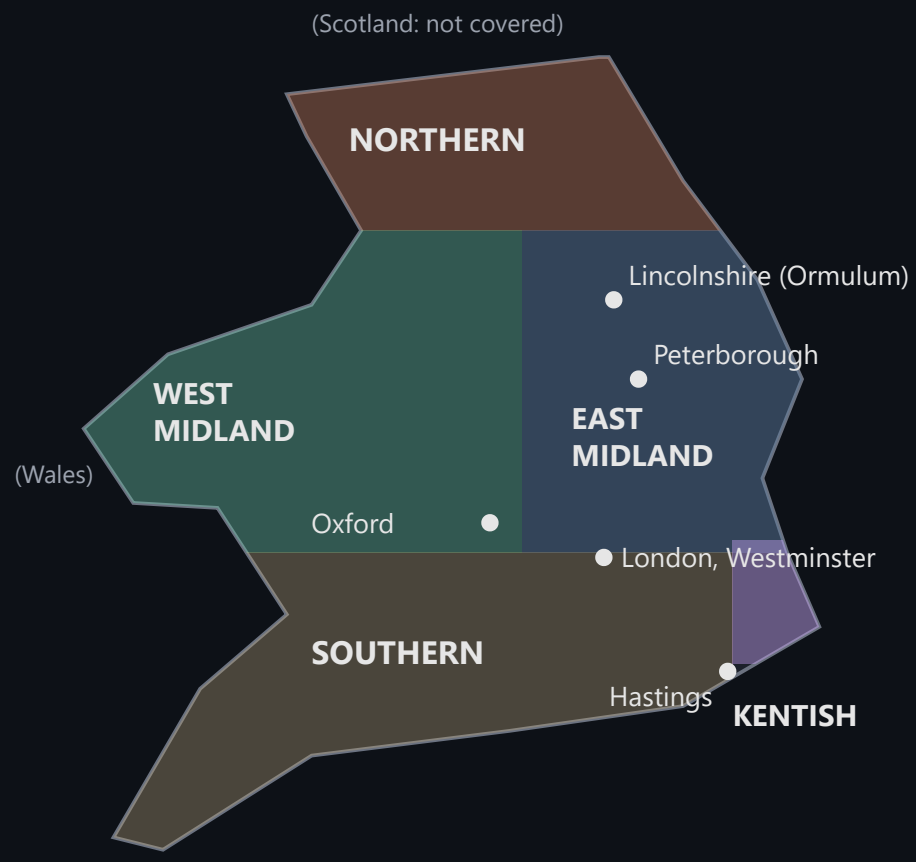
Appendix · Map

Two sketches. The first shows England with the four main Middle English dialect areas of Chapter 3 and the places the chapters name. The second shows the countries Chapter 9 gives as examples of Kachru's three circles, as a labelled grid. I drew both myself as schematics.

These are simplifications

The England outline is rough and not to scale, and the dialect boundaries are straight lines I chose. The *Middle English* article names the four dialects but gives little detail on their boundaries, so the areas are my approximation. Kent is shown because the *Ayenbite of Inwyt* is described as Kentish. The second sketch is not a map: its boxes are placed by continent for readability and do not show size or true position.

England, about 1300



Key to the England sketch

Mark	What it shows	Where the chapters say it
Orange area	Northern dialect	Chapter 3
Green area	West Midland dialect (the *Ancrene Wisse* is linked to the West Midlands)	Chapter 3
Blue area	East Midland dialect (the East Midlands-influenced London speech behind the Chancery Standard)	Chapters 3, 4
Yellow area	Southern dialect	Chapter 3
Purple area	Kentish: the *Ayenbite of Inwyt* (1340)	Chapter 3

Places on the England sketch

Place	Why it is here	Ch.
Hastings	The battle of 14 October 1066	2
London, Westminster	Coronation at Westminster Abbey in 1066; London English; Caxton's press at Westminster in 1476	2, 4, 5
Peterborough	The Peterborough Chronicle, ending in 1154	3
Lincolnshire	The *Ormulum*, probably composed there in the second half of the 12th century	3
Oxford	English became the language of instruction in 1349; Oxford Convocation vote on translations in 1407 or 1408; one of the places where the King James translators' committees sat	2, 4, 7

English around the world: the three circles



Key to the circles sketch

Mark	What it shows	Where the chapters say it
Blue boxes	Inner Circle, "norm-providing": the UK, US, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland and anglophone Canada	Chapter 9
Green boxes	Outer Circle, "norm-developing": India, Nigeria, Kenya, Singapore, the Philippines and Jamaica	Chapter 9
Grey boxes	Expanding Circle, "norm-dependent": China, Japan, South Korea, Russia, much of Europe and the Middle East	Chapter 9

Two caveats from the *World Englishes* article are worth repeating here: the categories are not fixed (Singapore may be shifting toward the Inner Circle), and the Expanding Circle total is "the most difficult to estimate", with estimates from 100 million to one billion. South Africa, which the

article lists among the places of the first diaspora, is not among its circle examples, so I do not place it.

Note on sources

The England sketch is drawn from the dialect list in Chapter 3 (Wikipedia's *Middle English*) and the places named in Chapters 2 to 5; the circles sketch uses only the countries listed in Wikipedia's *World Englishes* article, as Chapter 9 gives them. The outline of England, the boundaries between dialects and the positions of towns are mine, drawn from my general knowledge and checked against no map, and the circles sketch is a labelled grid, not a map. The chapters' sources do not give coordinates. The Oxford marker is a rough position I chose.