

# A HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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**FOUR PROGRAMMES. ONE OUTCOME.**



**ESTABLISHED 1969**

**HARROW HOUSE**  
INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE

# ABOUT HARROW HOUSE

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## **COURSES FOR YOUNG LEARNERS, JUNIORS, ADULTS AND PARENTS.**

Harrow House International College was founded in 1969 and continues to provide quality educational courses for Young Learners from 8 - 11 years, Juniors from 10 - 17 years, Adults 16+ years and Parents from more than 50 different countries.

Students that study at Harrow House enjoy a combination of academic and sports activities that give them an excellent foundation in the English language.

To find out more about Harrow House, please visit [www.harrowhouse.com](http://www.harrowhouse.com)

# WHY ENGLISH MATTERS

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## INTRODUCTION

Did you know that it's been estimated that over one billion people in the world speak English and 67 countries have it as their official language?

Choosing to study English as a second language is an invaluable way to develop a lifelong skill which can help students fulfil their ambitions and broaden their horizons in ways they may never have imagined.

In this eBook, we look at the history of the English language - and why it holds such relevance in today's globalised world.

## **Harrow House International College**

# WHERE IT ALL STARTED

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## THE 5TH CENTURY AD

The English language started in the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD when three Germanic tribes (the Angles, the Saxons and the Jutes) invaded the British Isles from what is known today as Denmark.

At that time they spoke a Celtic language, but most Celtic speakers were pushed to the West and the North of the British Isles into what is now known as Wales, Scotland and Ireland.

There have been different variations of English spoken throughout time. The goal of this eBook is to explain how the English language has developed across the British Isles and the rest of the world. Before we begin, it's important to recognise that the English language comes in many different varieties because of the influence it has in many cultures. That's why it is now spoken on all five continents of the world.

# YOUNG LEARNERS 8 - 11

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# OLD & MIDDLE ENGLISH

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## **OLD ENGLISH: 450 - 1100 AD**

Old English was spoken by the invading Germanic tribes. It does not sound or even look like the way English is spoken or seen today. In fact, English speakers from today would have found it very difficult to understand Old English.

Did you know that half of the most commonly used words in Modern English came from the roots of Old English? Words including: 'be', 'water' and 'strong'.

## **MIDDLE ENGLISH: 1100 - 1500 AD**

In 1066, William the Conqueror invaded and conquered England. The new conquerors were known as the Normans.

When they invaded and conquered England, the Normans brought a variation of the French language with them. This became the language of the Royal Court, the ruling and business

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classes. For some time there was a division where lower-classes spoke English and upper-classes spoke French. During the 14<sup>th</sup> century, English once again became dominant in England, with many French words becoming part of its vocabulary. Middle English would still be difficult for today's English speakers to understand.

# JUNIORS

## 10 - 17

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# EVOLVING MODERN ENGLISH

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## EARLY MODERN ENGLISH: 1500 - 1800 AD

As Middle English was coming to an end, there was a sudden change in the language where vowels were being pronounced shorter. This was known as the 'Great Vowel Shift'.

The introduction of Modern English happened because people started to understand the language on common grounds. For example, it was the language used by the famous William Shakespeare, who wrote plays that were enjoyed across the classes.

From the 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards, the English had contact with many people around the world. This meant that many new words and phrases were shared. As a result, many of those words entered the English language. This, as well as the renaissance of classical learning, played a part in the introduction of new words and phrases which became more commonly used among people.

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By this time, English became a language that was more understandable because of the invention of printing. This meant that there was a common language in print and speech. Books became cheaper, so more people had learned to read. The spelling and grammar of the English language were fixed and the dialect became standardised. As a result of people learning to read, the first dictionary was published in 1604.

### **LATE MODERN ENGLISH: 1800 AD - PRESENT DAY**

The reason why there are two types of Modern English comes down to vocabulary.

Late Modern English has more words because of two principal factors. The first being the Industrial Revolution and the technology which created a need for new words. The second being the British Empire, which covered a quarter of the Earth's surface. Because of this, the English language had picked up foreign words from many different countries.

With the British Empire ruling many parts of the world, the English language was able to adopt foreign words and phrases.

# ADULTS 16+ & PARENTS

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# VARIETIES OF ENGLISH

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## **STARTING WITH AMERICAN ENGLISH**

The English language has become a powerful one - and it is used across the whole world in different ways.

The two major varieties of the English language are British and American. Collectively, they are spoken by over 400 million people. The total number of English speakers worldwide is approximately one billion. The English language will certainly keep growing over time because of the development of technology and the influence the English language has across different cultures and traditions.

It should not be surprising to see more words, phrases and sentences being shortened. In today's day and age, American English is particularly influential because of the USA's dominance of cinema, television, music, trade and technology (including the internet). The dominance of the USA on all of these factors plays a part in the lifestyle of people and the way

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in which they speak and write. People take in the language they listen to and pick up on words and phrases. They then utilise them in their own lives.

However, American English is not the only influential variation of the language in the world. There are many other varieties of English, such as: Australian English, New Zealand English, Canadian English, South African English, Indian English and Caribbean English. The variety of English spoken around the world shows how much of an impact the English language has made throughout history.

# WHAT ARE YOU **WAITING** FOR?

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## **THERE'S NO BETTER TIME TO LEARN ENGLISH**

Hopefully you now have an insight into why English can open new doors for a young person.

We believe Harrow House International College is the perfect place to learn English. Our site in Swanage offers unrivalled facilities, splendid views of the surrounding Purbeck Hills, the sea and the Isle of Wight. The long inviting sandy beaches and the town centre are within a few minutes' walking distance. Swanage, on the South Coast of England, is one of the top four seaside resorts in the UK, approximately 2.5 hours away from London and is considered to be the gateway town to the Jurassic Coast - England's first natural UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Students can choose between our excellent residential college accommodation, or our carefully selected 'Homestays', which are all within walking distance of the college.

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## GET IN TOUCH

If you would like to find out more about Harrow House International College, please contact us on the details below:

**Email:** [info@harrowhouse.co.uk](mailto:info@harrowhouse.co.uk)

**Telephone:** +44 1929 424421

**[www.harrowhouse.com](http://www.harrowhouse.com)**