



Introduction to Shakespeare Lesson 1: Development of the English Language

twinkl

The background of the slide features a close-up, slightly blurred image of several old, leather-bound books. The spines of the books are visible, some with gold-leaf lettering and decorative patterns. The colors of the spines include deep red, dark blue, and green. The lighting is warm, highlighting the texture of the leather and the metallic sheen of the gold leaf.

Learning Objective

To learn about the development of the English language and consider how Shakespearean language fits in to the history of Eng

Success Criteria

- All pupils will be able to recognise the main phases of English
- Most pupils will be able to recognise familiar words in different forms of English
- Some pupils will be able to translate some of the different forms of English.

Starter



Questions to Consider:

Can you think of some examples of words that your parents, grandparents or older adults use that you consider to be 'not trendy' and which you wouldn't use yourself?

What does it tell you about language that different generations use different words?

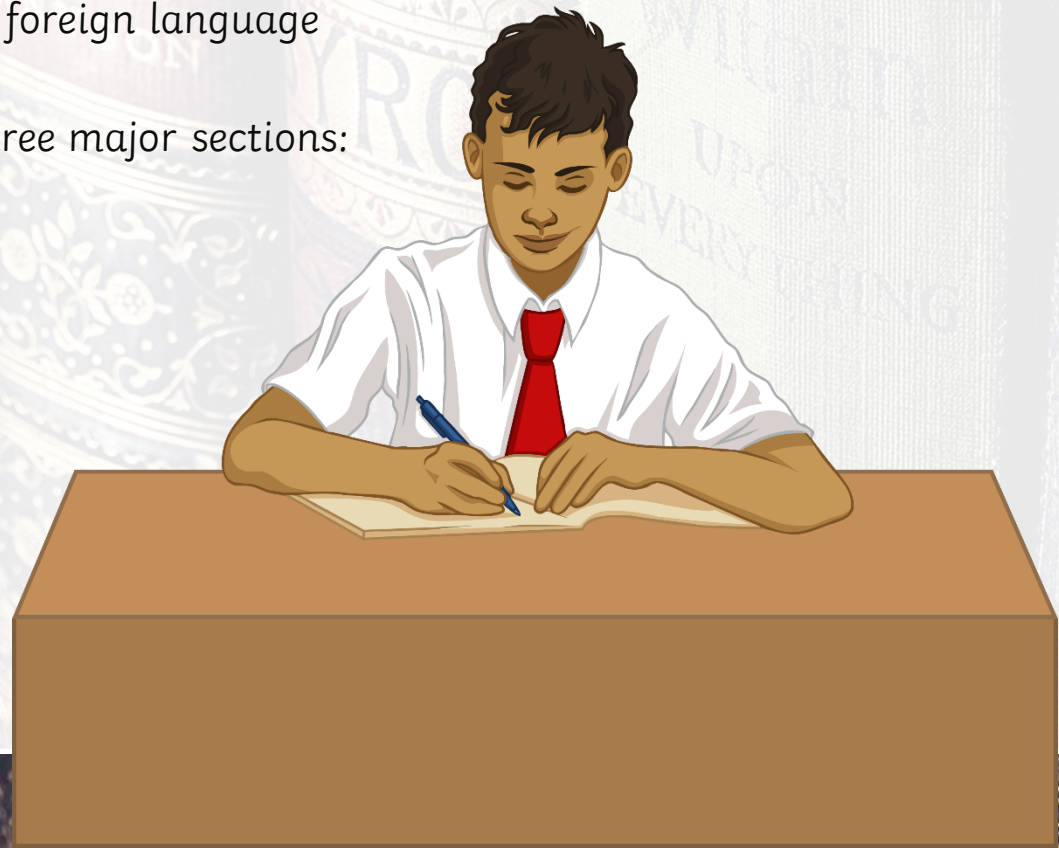
Language Development

The English Language hasn't always stayed the same and never will.

Hundreds of years ago people spoke very differently, which is why reading Shakespeare seems like reading a foreign language sometimes.

English splits into three major sections:

- Old English
- Middle English
- Modern English



Brain Work

Look at this table on your sheet.

Sort out the titles on the next slide into each column.

Old English	Middle English	Modern English

Hint: Look at the Dates

Beowulf 700-1000

Oliver Twist 1846

Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone 1997

Romeo and Juliet 1597-1599

The Canterbury Tales 1400

Revelations of Divine Love 1395

Sense and Sensibility 1811

The Hunger Games 2008

Frankenstein 1818

Of Mice and Men 1937

We Were Liars 2014

The Anglo Saxon Chronicle 850-900

Sorted!

Old English	Middle English	Modern English
Beowulf The Anglo Saxon Chronicle	The Canterbury Tales Revelations of Divine Love	Oliver Twist Harry Potter Romeo and Juliet Sense and Sensibility The Hunger Games Frankenstein Of Mice and Men We Were Liars

Any Surprises?

Language Development

Our language is made up of words from all sorts of different languages.

This is because, as an island, Britain has been invaded and settled by many different types of people. For example: The Vikings, the Romans, the Saxons and the Normans.

Each brought their own language with them and it mixed with the language already there.



Old English



This comes from over 1000 years ago, between 450 and 1066 AD. Think King Arthur - this was his language (if he existed of course).

You have to learn it like a new language if you are to understand it

Beowulf is perhaps the most famous Old English work of literature.

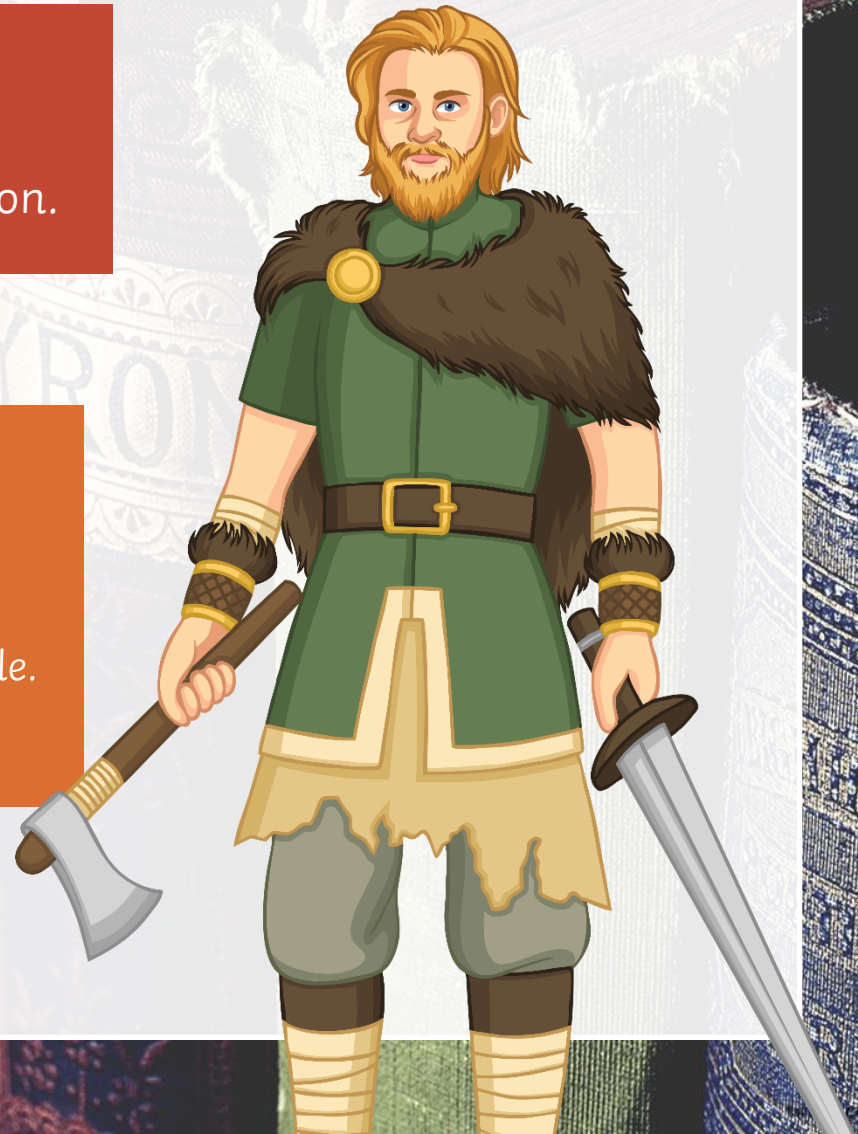
Beowulf

Hwæt we garde
na ingear dagum, þeod cyninga
þrym ge frunon huða æþelingas elle fremedon.

In today's English:

Lo! the Spear-Danes' glory through splendid
achievements
The folk-kings' former fame we have heard of,
How princes displayed then their prowess-in-battle.
Translation by John Lesslie Hall. 1856-1928

**Rate the difficulty of Old English on
your sheet!**



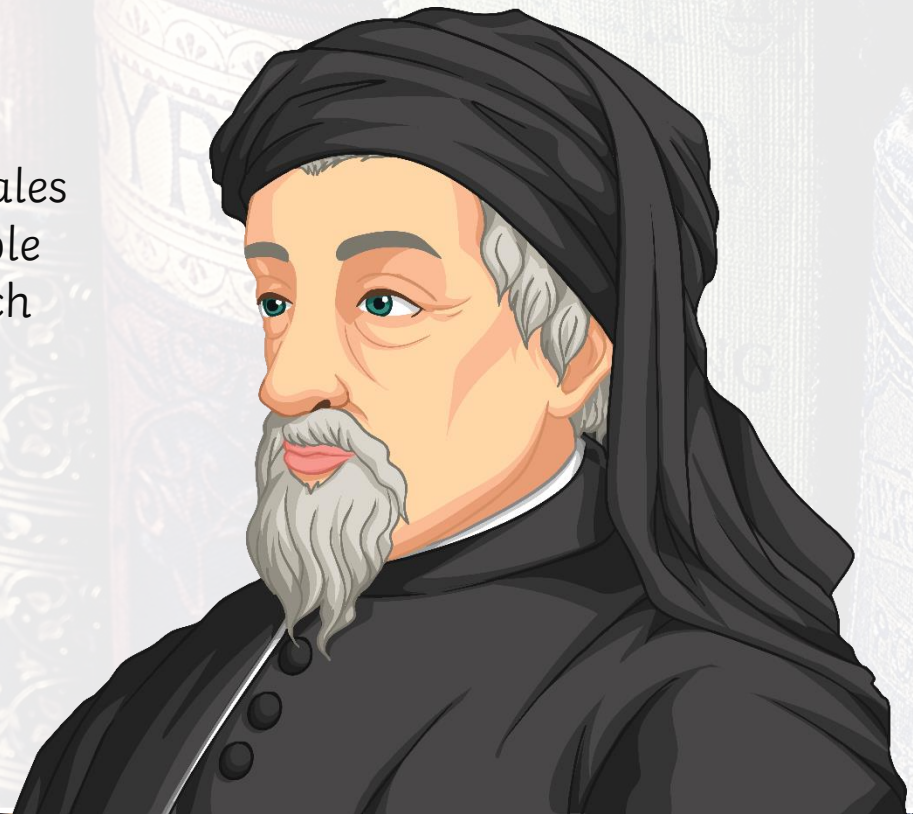
Middle English

Middle English is from the Medieval Era and is slightly more understandable than Old English.

It covers the English used from 1066-1450.

Probably the most famous writing from this time is *The Canterbury Tales* by **Geoffrey Chaucer**, a tale of people going on pilgrimage and telling each other stories.

The next slide is the beginning of **The Miller's Tale**.



The Miller's Tale Prologue

Heere folwen the words bitwene the Hoost and the Millere.

Whan that the Knyght had thus his tale ytoold,
In al the route ne was ther yong ne oold
That he ne seyde it was a noble storie,
And worthy for to drawn to memorie;

Task:

1. How many words do you recognise?
Write them down.
2. Have you any idea what this may
mean? Have a go at translating it!
3. Rate the difficulty of Middle English.



Translation

Literal Translation:

Here follows the words between the host and the miller.

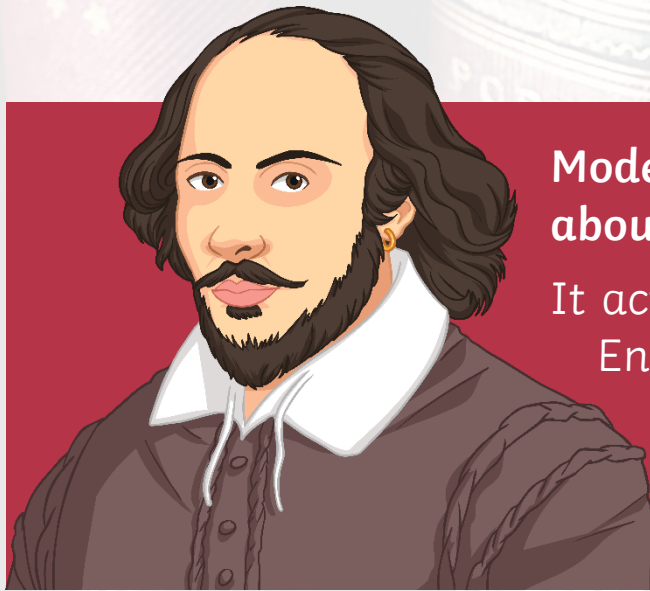
When that the knight had in this manner his tale told,
In all the route never was there young nor old
That he not said it was a noble story
And worth drawing to memory.

Today's English Translation:

**The following is the conversation between
the host and the miller.**

When the knight had told his tale,
Nobody, and that includes everyone there, whether young or old,
Denied that it was an excellent story
And one worth remembering.

Modern English



Modern English is the English used from about 1450.

It actually has two halves, early modern English and Late Modern English.

Shakespeare fits into early modern English and is comparatively easy to understand. I promise.

Romeo and Juliet

(Early Modern English)



What storm is this that blows so contrary?
Is Romeo slaughter'd, and is Tybalt dead?
My dearest cousin and my dearer lord?
Rate the difficulty on your sheet.

Late Modern English

You are an expert in Late Modern English!

Write your own example, a short paragraph all about what you've learned today about the development of English.

Old
English



Middle
English



Modern
English

Rate the difficulty on your sheet.

Translation

Here are a few words to become aware of before reading Shakespeare.

Thou = **you** 'Thou art a villain.'

Thee = **you** 'I pray thee, good Mercutio, let's retire.'

Thy = **your** (before a consonant) 'Deny thy father and refuse thy name.'

Thine = **your** (before a vowel) 'There lies more peril in thine eye.'

Have a go at translating the phrases on your sheet.



ER
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R.
CKETT

THE
NINE-
CENTH
NTURY

ADSTONE
VELOCK
SMARCK
NICOLN

POEMS
OF
PENNYSON

YRON

WITHIN
UPON
EVERY THING

