

TRANSITION WORK



ENGLISH LANGUAGE 2020

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Now is your chance to be inspired and become passionate about your chosen subject. The recommended time you should spend on each task is provided, but spend longer if you want, particularly if something really grabs your interest.

Transition work is designed to challenge you and make you think. Take it as far as you want to and don't give up if you find it hard.

Once you have worked through all the tasks (you can do them in any order), you will submit a **350-word piece of writing** in which you reflect on what you have learned. We also expect to see your **notes on each task** in your Eng Lang folder (more details on your folder will be provided at the start of term).

Task 1

Watch **one** (or more if you are inspired) of the 8 videos in Melvyn Bragg's The Adventure of English series on youtube. Make notes on key points that interest you.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K1XQx9pGGd0&list=PLbBvyau8q9v4hcgNYBp4LCyhMHSyq-lhe> (1 hour 30 minutes)

Task 2

Research key events in language history.

The English language is developing all the time and is used by people in the UK and beyond in many varied ways. From its earliest origins in the 5th Century, English has gone through many changes and reached many historic milestones (1 hour 30 minutes)

- This activity asks you to create a timeline of key events in the history of English. You might not know some of the dates for these events – and that doesn't matter at this stage – but you will still be able to start sequencing some of the main developments in the language.
- Write the dates in a sequence on a sheet of paper, with the oldest ones on the left and the most recent on the right.
- Once you have decided on the order of events undertake internet research to check your ideas (some links are provided below to start you off).
- How accurate was your timeline? Do any of these dates surprise you?
- Why do you think some of these dates are so significant to the history of the language? Choose three key events from the timeline and write a sentence or two about their significance.
- To find out more about some of the key events in the history of the English language, have a look at the link to the British Library timeline and the Open University *History of English in 10 Minutes*.

British Library [English Language and Literature Timeline](http://www.bl.uk/learning/langlit/evolvingenglish/accessvers/index.html)
(<http://www.bl.uk/learning/langlit/evolvingenglish/accessvers/index.html>)

Open University [The History of English in 10 Minutes](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H3r9bOkYW9s)
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H3r9bOkYW9s>)

Events on the Language Timeline

First TV broadcast in the world	First spelling guide in UK
First printing press in the UK	First English settlement in America
First telephone call	First wood-cased pencil invented
First Bible translation in English	First newspaper printed in UK
First dictionary published in UK	Passing of Education Act that led to compulsory schooling up to age of 15
First BBC radio broadcast	Norman invasion of Britain
First Hollywood film studio built	First email sent
First SMS (text) message sent	Establishment of first university in the UK

Task 3

Explore the English and Media Centre *emagazine*, a magazine and website for A Level students with articles written by academics, critics, writers, teachers and students on texts and topics set for A Level – and on literature and language more generally. (www.englishandmedia.co.uk) **You will need to contact Mrs Gibbs** (AGibbs@guildfordcounty.co.uk) **or Mrs Swaisland** (CSwaisland@guildfordcounty.co.uk) **for login details to the emagazine** . (2 hours)

- Spend some time browsing the site, dipping into articles on English Language, then choosing one that interests you. Dip into the openings of several articles and choose the one that most immediately grabs your attention.
- Read the article and pick out three points. These could be ideas you find interesting, that you want to question (perhaps because you disagree, perhaps because you want to find out more), or a point you don't understand.
- Take one of the points and add your own ideas to it or write a new point of your own.

Task 4

Watch the Ted Talk by Anne Curzan, *What Makes a Word Real*

(https://www.ted.com/talks/anne_curzan_what_makes_a_word_real) What are two of your favourite slang words? Should they be in a dictionary? Give your reasons why they should or should not be listed (30 minutes)

Task 5

Listen to Stephen Fry discussing the standardisation of spelling with David Crystal

(<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p01fwq2f>) Make brief notes on key points that interest you (1 hour)

For more from Stephen Fry, his *Planet Word* is available on Amazon Prime

https://www.amazon.co.uk/Frys-Planet-Word-Episode-1/dp/B00HV5UFP2/ref=sr_1_1?crid=3K47ZF9LVUWTV&dchild=1&keywords=planet+word&qid=1588663449&s=instant-video&sprefix=planet+wo%2Cinstant-video%2C153&sr=1-1

Task 6

Academic reading. The following is a list of recent books on the English language written by academic linguists and language experts about what language is and how it works. (2 hours)

- Choose one or two titles; they can all be found on Amazon, where most of them give you a sample to read on the 'Look Inside' pages. Please note, you do not need to buy any of these books, unless of course you want to.
- Dip in and out of a few of them, looking for what they say about some of the main issues to do with English, making a note of some key quotations you could use further down the line.

Julie Coleman, *The Life of Slang*

Gretchen McCulloch, *Because Internet*

David Shariatmadari, *Don't Believe a Word*

Lane Greene, *Talk on the Wild Side*

Deborah Cameron, *The Myth of Mars and Venus*

Abby Kaplan, *Women Talk More Than Men... and Other Myths About Language Explained*

Lynne Murphy, *The Prodigal Tongue*

Jane Setter, *Your Voice Speaks Volumes*

David Crystal, *Stories of English*

David Crystal, *How Language Works*

Henry Hitchings, *The Language Wars*

Lynn Truss, *Eats, Shoots and Leaves*

Steven Pinker, *The Language Instinct*

Lane Greene, *You Are What You Speak*

Dan Clayton (ed), *EMC Language Handbook (2nd edition): Key Thinkers on Key Topics*

Task 7

Learn your terminology. One of the first things you have to get your head round at the start of the course is learning a lot of language to describe language – otherwise known as a *metalanguage*. You already know some of this, such as word classes like nouns, verbs, adjectives etc. but there are more layers to these than you ever thought possible. Get ahead of the game by creating a glossary of terms. For each entry you make you should include a definition and an example of the word in use (2 hours) Use the internet to help you, for example: www.usingenglish.com and www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com as well <https://www.slideshare.net/BCALevels/alevel-english-glossary>

Task 8

Learn about child language development. Watch the TED Talk by Deb Roy and make notes on the key points that interest you (30 minutes)

https://www.ted.com/talks/deb_roy_the_birth_of_a_word

Task 9

Learn about language and gender. Deborah Cameron is one of the country's leading experts on language and gender so spend time reading her funny, thought-provoking and insightful blog, *A feminist guide to language* (2 hours) <https://debuk.wordpress.com>

Task 10

And finally, who would have thought a couple of Hollywood A listers would have made a film about lexicography? If you can, watch *The Professor and the Madman*, starring Mel Gibson and Sean Penn, available on Amazon Prime. (2 hours)

Written work required

Once you have completed all the tasks above you need to produce a piece of writing reflecting on what you have learned. You should include ideas such as what new knowledge you found the most interesting and why. Were you inspired to go further and study more in depth on a particular topic? If so, which topic and why? What did you find the most challenging and why?

You should write about 350 words.

Also, please remember that we will expect to see the **notes you made on each task**, where relevant. These will form the basis of the Independent Learning section of Your English Language folder.

Resources

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K1XQx9pGGd0&list=PLbBvyau8q9v4hcgNYBp4LCyhMHSyq-lhe> (The Adventure of English)

https://www.ted.com/talks/anne_curzan_what_makes_a_word_real

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p01fwg2f> (David Crystal on spelling)

<https://www.usingenglish.com/glossary/>

<https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/about/practical-english-usage/language-terminology>

https://www.ted.com/talks/deb_roy_the_birth_of_a_word

<https://debuk.wordpress.com>