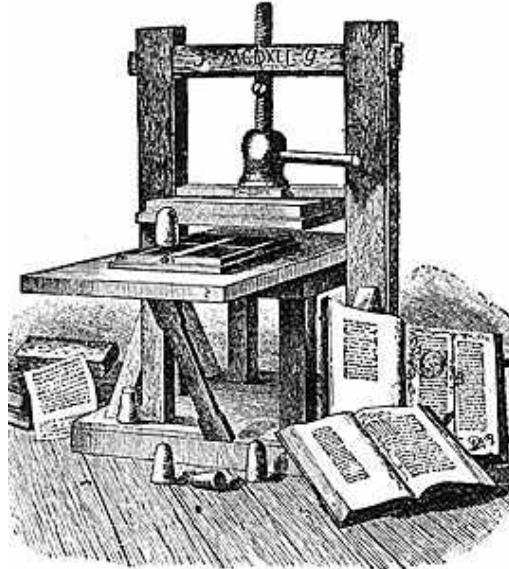


**COMPETENCY 1.0 UNDERSTAND THE HISTORY AND STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

Early printing presses, such as this, created an avenue for mass production of the written language.

**Skill 1.1 Major developments in the history of the English language (e.g., invention of the printing press, standardization of written language, development of dictionaries)**

The major developments in the history of the English language include the emergence of standard written and oral English and the development of the printing press and standard dictionaries. A pioneer in the study of how English was standardized is John H. Fisher, a Medievalist and author, who researched and wrote many books on the subject – including *The Emergence of Standard English* and *The Importance of Chaucer*. Fisher was a professor of English at the University of Tennessee before he retired in 1996 to further his research in the standardization of the English language.

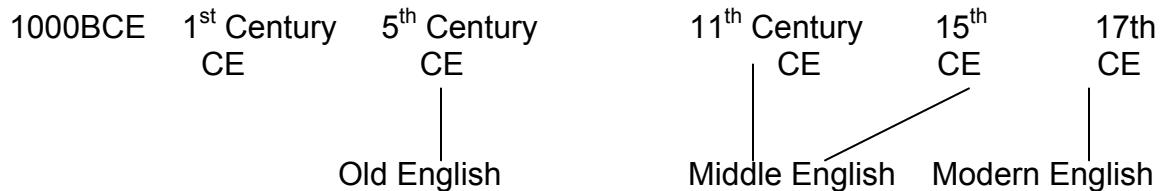
According to Fisher, the standardization of English began in the 1400s during the Old English period. During this time, people who spoke English used the Latin alphabet to write out and pronounce sounds.

Johannes Gutenberg invented the printing press in 1440. The printing press created an avenue for mass production of the written language. The ability to transfer images and words to paper repeatedly and consistently allowed for the widespread distribution of standardized written language.

## Skill 1.2 Major linguistic origins of the English language (e.g., Anglo-Saxon roots, Celtic influences, Greek and Roman elements)

Figure 1 English Family Tree

Celts- Celtic -Latin - Romans - Anglo Saxons - Irish -Scottish –Vikings- Chaucer  
Greek



The English language has Germanic roots tracing back to tribes living in the British Isles in the 5<sup>th</sup> Century. The Angles, Saxons and Jutes were Germanic tribes who had crossed the North Sea from Denmark and Germany. The Celts were the original inhabitants of Britain who spoke a Celtic language, which was quickly displaced along with the inhabitants to Wales and Scotland as the Germanic tribes took over the land and the language.

The land of origin for the Angles was Engle, and the language was Englisc – later changed to English. During the 5<sup>th</sup> century, written Old English included a West Saxon dialect derived from Scandinavian languages. The writing system of English comes from Latin origins brought over from Ireland. English words derived from Latin include the following:

- Street
- Kettle
- Cheese
- Angel
- Candle

The Viking influence contributed Norse words to the English language, some of which coexisted with English words:

- Anger-wrath
- Nay-no
- Dike-ditch
- Skip-shift
- Sky
- Egg
- Skin

English is the second most spoken language in the world, with an estimated 300 million people who speak English as a second language and another 100 million who speak it as a foreign language. English provides a global connection of communication in over 45 countries. Some examples of countries where English is a major secondary language include the following:

- Australia
- Bahamas
- Belize
- Bermuda
- Canada
- Grenada
- Ireland
- Jamaica
- New Zealand
- St. Vincent
- South Africa
- United Kingdom
- United States of America

Many languages have contributed to the English language worldwide. Borrowed words from Latin, Greek, French, German and Spanish create an enormous spoken and written English vocabulary base. The English vocabulary is considered one of the largest in the world. The core of the English language remains Anglo-Saxon, based in Old English.

### **Skill 1.3 Derivatives and borrowings**

#### **Borrowed words**

A borrowed word (or a loanword) is a word that has been adopted from another language (the source language) directly into the native language with little or no change. Borrowing is a result of cultural interactions between two language communities.

A newly borrowed word gradually adopts the characteristics and sound of the adopted language. Eventually, the borrowed word begins to resemble the words of the native language. With time, people in the borrowing community do not perceive the word as a loanword at all. It has become a part of our American cultural history to adopt loanwords from the languages of the various cultures with which we have come in contact.

Some examples of words borrowed from other languages are:

*French:* jail, duchess, poultry, clarinet, diamond

*Latin:* abdomen, anatomy, physician, insane, janitor, notorious

*Greek* (many of these via Latin): atmosphere, comedy, history, pneumonia, skeleton

*Spanish:* alligator, armadillo, guitar, mosquito, tornado

*Italian:* broccoli, macaroni, piano, umbrella, violin

*German:* loafer, noodle, poodle, pretzel, sauerkraut

*Yiddish:* bagel, Hanukkah, kosher, klutz, matzo

### **Derived words**

Derived words are words that have been formed by joining two words together.. The original words usually have two separate meanings. When combined, they produce a completely new word. Examples of derived words are:

*Jet-black:* very dark black in color

*Jet lag:* the feeling of being very tired due to traveling on a plane

Many of the root words that define our native language have Greek and Latin origins. It would be extremely beneficial to early readers to learn as many Greek and Latin root words as possible, in order to comprehend larger words.

### **Skill 1.4 Differences between oral and written English (e.g., level of formality, diversity of oral dialects, and uniformity of written language)**

Often, people assume that written language is simply a codified oral language (in other words, it is oral language put into symbols on a page). This is far from the truth. Consider, first, how children can speak fluently before they can communicate fluently in writing. Consider also how it is very easy for most adults to orally discuss issues, but how often adults struggle when putting words on paper.

A significant difference between oral and written language is the level of formality. Oral language tends to be informal, while written language is more formal. Highly formalized oral language may sound unnatural to listeners. Similarly, it is not easy for some readers to accept highly informal styles of writing

Another difference between oral and written language is that written language is not easily influenced by the diversity of oral dialects. Oral language, on the other hand, can be strongly influenced by the country's regions, local culture, and other factors. Generally, accent, word choice, tone, and other elements distinguish oral language from written language.

Finally, written language is more uniform than oral language. While speaking out loud, people regularly use run-on and fragment sentences or make other grammatical errors that typically go unnoticed by listeners. People also add emphasis in oral speech through repeated phrases, volume, tone, and other elements unavailable in written language.

Understanding the difference between oral and written language is important for teachers because both skills need to be developed in students separately. Often teachers assume that oral language develops naturally and that no specific work needs to be done in the classroom to enhance it. This is not true. Although informality and unevenness are accepted more readily in oral language, students must learn and practice the skills needed to express themselves competently in oral language (both in formal presentations and informal discussions).

By modeling good oral language and having students practice it through classroom discussions, oral presentations, and group discussions, teachers can provide students good outlets to improve their oral language skills. To teach writing skills, on the other hand, instructors need a different set of tools. Writing skills begin with basic language development and progressively move through improvement in vocabulary, research skills, topic selection, content organization, content revision, and more. (These tools are discussed later in this domain.)

### **Skill 1.5 Fundamental language structures (i.e., phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics)**

#### ***Phonics***

As opposed to phonemic awareness, the study of phonics must be done with the eyes open to make the connection between the sounds and letters on a page. Students learning phonics might see the word “bad” and sound each letter out slowly until they recognize that they just said the word.

Phonological awareness means the ability of the reader to recognize the sound of spoken language. This recognition includes how these sounds can be blended together, segmented (divided up), and manipulated (switched around). This awareness then leads to phonics, a method for teaching children to read. It helps them “sound out words.”

Development of phonological skills may begin during pre-K years. Indeed, by the age of 5, a child who has been exposed to rhyme can recognize a rhyme. Such a child can demonstrate phonological awareness by filling in the missing rhyming word in a familiar rhyme or rhymed picture book.

Children gain phonological awareness when they are taught the sounds made by letters, the sounds made by various combinations of letters, and how to recognize individual sounds in words.

Phonological awareness skills include:

1. Rhyming and syllabification
2. Blending sounds into words, such as pic-ture-boo-k
3. Identifying the beginning or starting sounds of words and the ending or closing sounds of words
4. Breaking words down into sounds, also called “segmenting” words
5. Recognizing other smaller words in a big word by removing starting sounds, such as “hear” to “ear”

### ***Phonemic Awareness***

Phonemic awareness is the acknowledgement of sounds and words, such as a child’s realization that some words rhyme. Onset and rhyme, for example, are skills that might help students learn that the sound of the first letter “b” in the word “bad” can be changed with the sound “d” to make it “dad.” The key in phonemic awareness is that it can be taught with the students’ eyes closed. In other words, it’s all about sounds, not about ascribing written letters to sounds.

To be phonemically aware means that the reader and listener can recognize and manipulate specific sounds in spoken words. Phonemic awareness deals with sounds in words that are spoken. The majority of phonemic awareness tasks, activities, and exercises are oral.

Since distinguishing between individual sounds – phonemes – within words is a prerequisite to associating sounds with letters and manipulating sounds to blend words ( in order to read), the teaching of phonemic awareness is crucial to emergent reading. For phonics instruction to be effective, children need a strong background in phonemic awareness.

### ***Morphology, Syntax and Semantics***

**Morphology** is the study of word structure. When readers develop morphemic skills, they are developing an understanding of patterns they see in words. For example, English speakers realize that cat, cats, and caterpillar share some similarities in structure. This understanding helps readers to recognize words at a faster and easier rate, since each word doesn’t need individual decoding.

**Syntax** refers to the rules or patterned relationships that correctly produce phrases and sentences from words. When readers develop an understanding of syntax, they begin to understand the structure of how sentences are built and eventually how grammar is used.

Example: "I am going to the movies."  
This statement is syntactically and grammatically correct.

Example: "They am going to the movies:  
This statement is syntactically correct since all the words are in their correct place. However, it is grammatically incorrect with the use of the word "they" rather than "I," the use of a colon instead of a period at the end of the sentence, and the lack of end quotes.

**Semantics** refers to the meaning expressed when words are arranged in a specific way. This is where connotation and denotation of words play a role in reading.

All of these skill sets are important in developing effective word-recognition skills and helping emerging readers develop fluency.

### ***Pragmatics***

Pragmatics deals with the difference between the writer's intended meaning and the sentence meaning (the literal meaning of the sentence) based on social context. Those who are competent in pragmatics are able to understand the writer's intended meaning or what the writer is trying to convey. In a simpler sense, pragmatics can be considered the social rules of language.

For example, a child sitting beside her mother at a fancy restaurant after her great-grandmother's funeral looks over to the table next to them. She sees a very elderly woman eating her dessert. "Mom?" she asks, patiently waiting for response. When her mother addresses her, she states loudly, "That woman is old like Grandma. Is she going to die soon too?" Of course embarrassed, the mother hushes her child. However, this is a simple example of immature pragmatics. The child has the vocabulary, the patience to wait her turn, and some knowledge of conversational rules; however, she is not aware that certain topics are socially inappropriate and does not adapt her language to the situation.

## Skill 1.6 Parts of speech (e.g., noun, verb, adjective, adverb, conjunction, preposition)

A verb agrees in number with its subject. To make the verb and subject agree, one must properly identify the subject.

- One of the boys was playing too rough.
- No one in the class, neither the teacher nor the students, was listening to the message from the intercom.
- The candidates, including a grandmother and a teenager, are debating some controversial issues.

If two singular subjects are connected by *and*, the verb must be plural.

- A man and his dog were jogging on the beach.

If two singular subjects are connected by *or* or *nor*, a singular verb is required.

- Neither Dot nor Joyce has missed a day of school this year.
- Either Fran or Paul is missing.

If one singular subject and one plural subject are connected by *or* or *nor*, the verb agrees with the subject nearest to the verb.

- Neither the coach nor the players were able to sleep on the bus.

If the subject is a collective noun, its sense of number in the sentence determines the verb: singular if the noun represents a group or unit and plural if the noun represents individuals.

- The House of Representatives has adjourned for the holidays.
- The House of Representatives have failed to reach agreement on the subject of adjournment.

## **Use of verbs (tense)**

Present tense is used to express that which is currently happening or is always true.

- Randy is playing the piano.
- Randy plays the piano like a pro.

Past tense is used to express action that occurred in a past time.

- Randy learned to play the piano when he was six years old.

Future tense is used to express action or a condition of future time.

- Randy will probably earn a music scholarship.

Present perfect tense is used to express action or a condition that started in the past and is continued to or completed in the present.

- Randy has practiced piano every day for the last ten years.
- Randy has never been bored with practice.

Past perfect tense expresses action or a condition that occurred as a precedent to some other action or condition.

- Randy had considered playing clarinet before he discovered the piano.

Future perfect tense expresses action that started in the past or the present and will conclude at some time in the future.

- By the time he goes to college, Randy will have been an accomplished pianist for more than half of his life.

**Use of verbs (mood)** Indicative mood is used to make unconditional statements; subjunctive mood is used for conditional clauses or wish statements that pose conditions that are untrue. Verbs in subjunctive mood are plural with both singular and plural subjects.

- If I were a bird, I would fly.
- I wish I were as rich as Donald Trump.

**Verb conjugation** The conjugation of verbs follows the patterns used in the discussion of tense above. However, the most frequent problems in verb use stem from the improper formation of past and past participial forms.

Regular verb: believe, believed, (have) believed

Irregular verbs: run, ran, run; sit, sat, sat; teach, taught, taught

Other problems stem from the use of verbs that are the same in some tense but have different forms and different meanings in other tenses.

- I lie on the ground.
- I lay on the ground yesterday.
- I have lain down.
  
- I lay the blanket on the bed.
- I laid the blanket there yesterday.
- I have laid the blanket every night.
  
- The sun rises.
- The sun rose.
- The sun has risen.
  
- He raises the flag.
- He raised the flag.
- He had raised the flag.
  
- I sit on the porch.
- I sat on the porch.
- I have sat on the porch swing.
  
- I set the plate on the table.
- I set the plate there yesterday.
- I had set the table before dinner.