

Foreign words used in English

Topic

What other languages have contributed to the English language

Learning outcomes

- Give examples of words that English has borrowed from other languages
- Read a text about the origins of the English language and understand details
- Explain why spelling and pronunciation rules in English can feel very arbitrary
- Spell some commonly misspelled words accurately

Age and level

13-17, Adults (B2+)

Time

Approximately 60-75 minutes

Materials

- Presentation OR Student worksheet

Introduction

The lesson begins with a short quiz about the English language, which makes sure that the students understand what a hybrid language English is, and the concept of loan words. They then look at some common loan words and try to decide which language they originally came from, before reading a short text to check their ideas.

The point is made in the text that English spelling (and pronunciation) seems very irregular because so many words come from different languages. The students then look at some commonly misspelt words and learn to spell them correctly.

There are versions available for both face-to-face and online contexts. A student worksheet accompanies this lesson. However, teachers can use a presentation for a no-printing option.

Procedure

<p>Lead-in (10 minutes)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell students that you are going to do a quick quiz about the English language. Show slide 2 of the presentation or refer them to the Lead-in task in the student worksheet. • Give students time to answer the questions individually, then put them into pairs to discuss their answers to the questions. It is fine for them to guess if they are not sure of the answers. • After the students have had some time to discuss, go through the answers. Ask if any of the answers surprised them. <p>Answer key</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A: The Anglo-Saxons originally came to Britain from West Germany, The Netherlands and West Denmark between the mid 5th century and the 7th Century. 2. B: It is estimated to be more than a million words, though this is of course changing all the time. This large number does include a lot of words which are almost never used, however. There are about 170,000 words in common use (answer A) and most native speakers have a vocabulary of between 20,000 and 30,000 words. 3. C: Over 60% of English words have Greek or Latin roots 4. B: (although most words come from Latin, Greek, French, Spanish, Italian and German)
<p>Task 1: Speaking</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show slide 3 of the presentation or refer students to Task 1 in the student worksheet. Read the questions and ask students to provide a few examples or

<p>(10-15 minutes)</p>	<p>give some yourself. The idea here is to get them thinking about loan words that they already know. You might want to consult this page if you need help with giving students examples: https://tinyurl.com/2udwpatb</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In pairs or small groups, students discuss the questions and note examples. Feedback as a class and write examples on the board. Give students time to practise pronunciation of the words.
<p>Task 2: Vocabulary (10 minutes)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show slide 4 of the presentation or refer students to Task 2 in the student worksheet. In pairs, ask students to try and guess the original language of the loan words in the box. Help students with any unknown vocabulary or let them use dictionaries. • Don't give them the answers at this stage, as they are in the text they are about to read.
<p>Tasks 3 / 4: Reading (15-20 minutes)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show slide 5 of the presentation or refer students to Task 3 in the student worksheet. Tell them you are going to give them 5 minutes to skim read the text to find the answers to the vocabulary task. • Elicit the answers or show slide 6 of the presentation. Get feedback on how many words students guessed correctly. <p>Answer key</p> <p>Arabic: admiral, candy, caravan</p> <p>French: café, entrepreneur, beef</p> <p>German: rucksack, delicatessen</p> <p>Hindi and Urdu: pyjamas, bungalow, khaki, shampoo</p> <p>Italian: broccoli, graffiti</p> <p>Japanese: anime, tsunami, rickshaw</p> <p>Spanish: cockroach, guerrilla</p> <p>Yiddish: glitch, bagel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optional: If you have time, show slide 8 or refer students to Task 4 in the student worksheet. Ask students to read the text again, then to discuss the questions in pairs or small groups. Feedback as a class.

Answer key

1. That many French words came into the language as a result of the Norman Conquest- when French became the official language of the country.
2. Because many English people spent a lot of time in India when it was a colony of Britain.
3. That the rules often follow the systems of other languages, rather than the original English language.

**Task 5:
Spelling
focus
(20 minutes)**

- Ask students if they know any spelling rules in English. For example, 'i' before 'e' except after 'c'. You could point out that when this doesn't 'work' it is often because it is a loanword, such as beige, caffeine (both from French).
- Show **slide 7** of the presentation or refer students to **Task 5** in the student worksheet.
- Put students into pairs and ask them to correct any words that they think are misspelt. Explain that these are loanwords and for that reason have irregular spellings.
- Ask pairs to give the correct spellings and write them on the board for everyone to check.

Answer key

1. embarrass
2. occasion
3. accommodation
4. acquiesce
5. recommend
6. responsible (Latin based words tend to end -ible, not -able)
7. necessary
8. pronunciation
9. professional
10. immediately
11. foreign (French, so 'i' before 'e' doesn't apply)

	<p>12. accessible (Latin based words tend to end -ible, not -able)</p> <p>13. aficionado (Spanish)</p> <p>14. anniversary (Latin based words tend to end -ary, not ery)</p> <p>15. ingenious</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students to test themselves on any they got wrong until they are confident that they know them.
Optional activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you have time, you could ask students to practise the spellings they have just learnt. Choose 4-5 of the words from the table from the reading, or from the list that they have just looked at. • Tell students that they have 3 minutes to write an interesting sentence that includes all of those words. Remind students that the sentence should be grammatically correct, even if it doesn't make logical sense. • For example, with the words pyjamas, rickshaw, admiral and immediately, they could write something like: 'The admiral immediately ordered a rickshaw and drove away in his pyjamas.' • After 3 minutes ask students to share their sentences. Comment on any particularly original sentences.
Homework options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If students have not completed Task 4 in class, they could do it for homework. • Ask students to look back through their work and find any other words they often misspell, and write them out correctly.

Contributed by

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