



BECOME A WORD DETECTIVE AND ENRICH YOUR VOCABULARY

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THE AIM OF THE WORKSOP IS:

to spark curiosity to find out as much we can about words so we can exploit to our advantage:

- the origin and evolution of words
- the irregularity of English spelling and pronunciation
- word changes
- word futures

Fascinated by words

David Crystal, a world renowned linguist, prolific author, editor, lecturer, broadcaster.

- At any one time language is a kaleidoscope of styles, genres and dialects.
- Vocabulary is a matter of word-building as well as word-using.
- Texting has added a new dimension to language use, but its long-term impact is negligible. It is not a disaster.
- The internet is an amazing medium for languages...
- The story of words cannot be told in one book.

David Crystal [quotes](#) and [website](#)

D. Crystal. 2007. *Words. Words. Words.* OUP



OUTLINE

- The power of words
- Preparation for the investigation of words
- Puzzle- solving
- Final tips: how to become „ masters of words“

THE POWER OF WORDS: the words have the power we give them

A Word is Dead

A word is dead
When it is said,
Some say.
I say it just
Begins to live
That day.

(Emily Dickinson, Complete Poems)

“We cannot control the way people interpret our ideas or thoughts, but **we can control the words** and **tones** we choose to convey them.

Peace is built on understanding, and wars are built on misunderstandings. Never underestimate **the power of a single word**, and never recklessly throw around words.

One wrong word, or misinterpreted word, **can change the meaning of an entire sentence** - and even start a war.

And one right word, or one kind word, can **grant you the heavens and open doors.**”



Suzy Kassem (American writer “Rise Up and Salute the Sun”)

PREPARATION FOR THE INVESTIGATION INTO THE WORLD OF WORDS

Question:

How many words are there in English?

Varying estimations (from half a million to over 2 million)

a) what counts as a word

in writing: **one word** or **two words** or **hyphenated**; all items **as new words**, e.g. with *foster* or *treat* **as combinations of old words** (*foster* + *brother*); **a single meaning or not** (*get at*, *get by*, *get off*, *get over*...)

b) what counts as "English"

words restricted to **a particular country** or to **a particular part of a country**? **regional dialect words**? **the names of people, places** and **things** in the world (knowing that these words are different in other languages? **the proper names** which have taken on special meaning ? **medical** and **scientific terms**? **new technical terms** ? **teenage slang**? **abbreviations**?

D. Crystal. **How many words?** English Today No12, October 1987.

BREAKING NEWS in 2009

On Wednesday, a **Texas-based media consulting** firm announced the birth of the millionth English word, which arrived on June 10, 2009, at 10:22 a.m., Stratford-on-Avon time. Paul JJ Payack, president and chief word analyst of the Global Language Monitor.

The English Language WordClock: **1,005,366** (as of November 26, 2016)

The Millionth Word was the controversial ‘.....’

Web 2.0 The second stage of development of the Internet

Top Trending Words for 2016

1. bigly Video
2. Brexit
10. memory care
12. texticate
14. Trumpism
15. Tenessine

The OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY (OED)

- started life more than 150 years ago
- the accepted authority on the English language
- an unsurpassed guide to the meaning, history, and pronunciation of 600,000 words— past and present—from across the English-speaking world.

The OED Today

- thoroughgoing revision and update.
- New Word lists- every three months (about 500 words)

OED Word of the year 2009

***unfriend** -to remove someone as a 'friend' on a social networking site, such as Facebook*

New entries 2016 December

Brexit, Grexit (blend of Greek and Greece and exit), verklemt (North American, Yiddish, German origin), wobbleboard (Australian)

Word origins

bug, flea market, UFO, pros and cons, brass monkey, etc.

Video: *How do new words are added to the dictionary?*

**LET`S START OUR
INVESTIGATION
INTO THE WORLD
OF WORDS**



PUZZLE 1: WORD ORIGINS

Was the first computer 'bug' a real insect?

bug - an error in a computer program or system.

YES / NO

Watch the OED [video](#)

The story goes that one of the early electromechanical computers suffered a failure because an insect had crawled into the machine and been squashed between the moving parts of a relay switch, thereby jamming it. The incident was written up in the logbook and spread from there throughout the whole of the infant computer industry. However, although the account seems to be genuine, the word is older: the event was recorded as an amusement for posterity precisely because the term 'bug' was already in use. (OED)



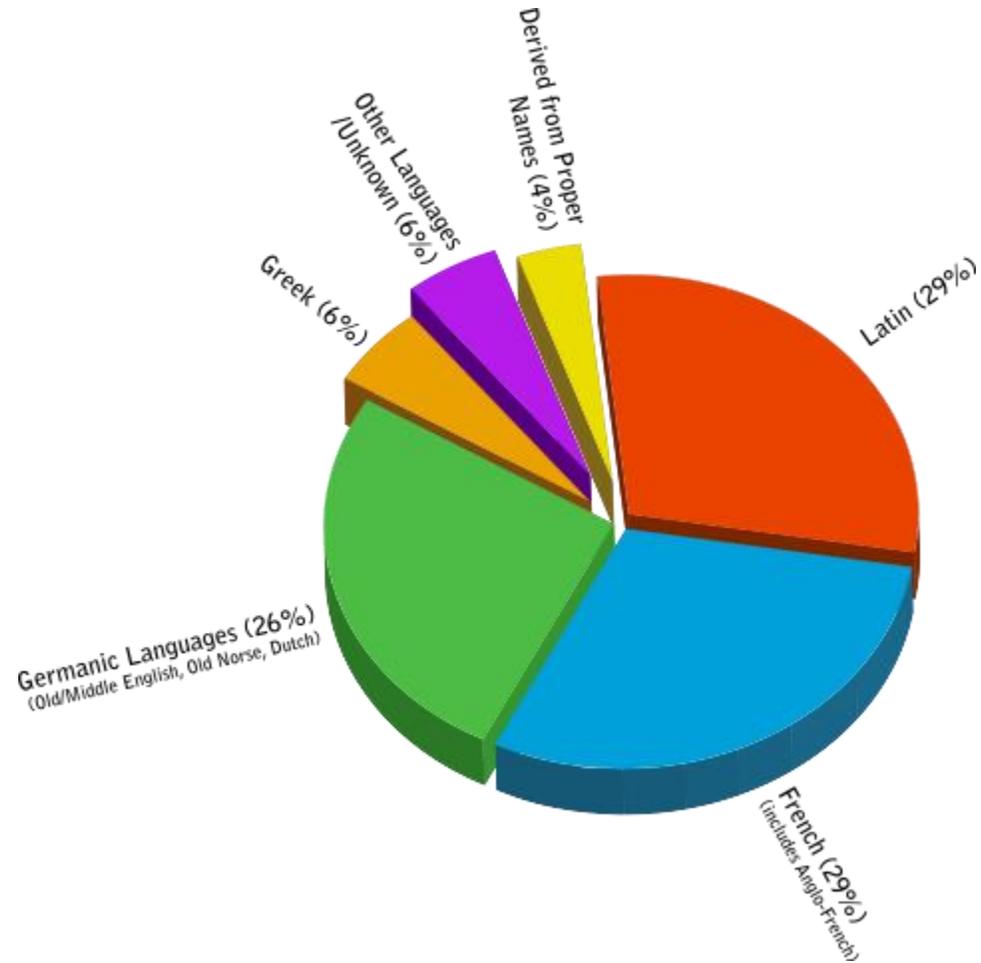
Meaning "**defect in a machine**" (1889) may have been coined c. 1878 by Thomas Edison (perhaps with the notion of an insect getting into the works) (Dictionary of [etymology](#))

PUZZLE 2: FOREIGN WORDS IN ENGLISH

SOME FACTS:

- English has borrowed words from over **350** languages around the world.
- Of 80,000 English words, roughly 28% originate from **Latin**, 28% from **French**, and 25% from **Germanic** languages

Pie Chart: [Wikipedia](#)



Task 2.1. Listen to a sound poem

Names make music

ARABIC all, like

camphor, candy, coffee, kebab,
caravan, crimson, chemistry, haram,
gazelle, giraffe, guitar, salaam,
lemon, lime, tangerine, mimbar,

Names make music

ARABIC all.



Source: Delahunty, A. *Oxford Dictionary of Foreign Words & Phrases*. 2010.

YOUR TURN: CREATE YOUR OWN SOUND POEM

Words of Chinese origin: *bok choy, chop chop, chow, feng-shui, hanfu, kung fu, taipan, tofu, tong, tycoon, yang, yin, wushu, wuxia, wok*

Words of Russian origin: *balalaika, dacha, intelligentsia, karakul, kasha, pirog, samovar, taiga, troika, vodka, zakuska, babushka, kazachoc, kissel, kolkhoz, perestroika, pogrom, samizdat, smetana, sputnik, taiga, talik, tokamak, vobla*

Words of Spanish origin: *chilli, chinchilla, adobe, flotilla, mantilla, amigo, bajada, cabana, canyon, corrida, copita, fiesta, estufa, monte, muleta, patio, pelota, ramada, rodeo, salsa, santerio, santero, tapas, tostada*

Words of Italian origin: (19th century) *calando, cassano, contessa, fermata, granita, meno, mezzani, molto, mosso, pizza, pasta, salami, spaghetti, zucchetto*; (20th century) *capo, cappuccino, cibatta, dolce vita, espresso, frittata, graffiti, ma non troppo, marinara, penne, pepperoni, pesto, ristorante, terra rossa, tiramisu, vino ta tavola, viva, vita nuova.*

TASKS

Task 2.2. Match the words with the country or language of origin (A) and the meaning (B)

disaster, hazard, nice, muscle, galactico, addict, jeans, mortgage, denim, taboo

A. Country or language of origin:

French, France, Greek, Italy, Latin, Spanish, Tongan

B.

a	“ death pledge”
b	a slave to anyone or anything
c	a person from another galaxy; in sport (especially in sport)- one of a team`s start players, especially an expensive signing
d	prohibited or restricted, especially by social custom
e	Late 17th century (as serge denim): from French serge de Nîmes, denoting a kind of serge from the town of Nîmes.
f	“little mouse”
g	means “ bad start”. The sense is astrological, of a calamity blamed on an unfavorable position of a planet
h	related to the he place of origin, Genoa
i	game of chance played with dice
i	"careless, clumsy; weak; poor, needy; simple, stupid, silly, foolish."

PUZZLE 3: The irregularity of English spelling and pronunciation

Why is English spelling exceptionally irregular? The English Spelling Society

Have you ever wondered **why the letters “ough” can be pronounced in so many different ways** (/oʊ/ as in “though”, /uː/ as in “through”, /ʌf/ as in “rough”, /ɒf/ as in “cough”, /ɔː/ as in “thought”, /aʊ/ as in “bough”, /ə/ as in “thorough”?

Or **why there are so many silent letters** like the *k* in *knee* and *knock*, the *c* in *science* or the *h* in *ghost*?

Or **why the letters “bow” can mean two different things** depending on how they are pronounced?

Or **why Brits and Americans spell some words differently?**

NB! Basic spelling system has **91 patters**

69 English spellings have more than **one pronunciation.**

WHY ENGLISH SPELLING IS SO DIFFICULT?

- ❑ Before 1066 English spelling was quite simple, but during the next few centuries French, Latin and Greek words entered the language - and major pronunciation changes. Over time, as pronunciation changed and new words entered the language, the match between letters and sounds broke down. As a result the spelling became incoherent. If the match between letters and sounds breaks down, then learning to read and write becomes harder and all education can suffer. Read [more](#)
- ❑ Learning to read and write English is exceptionally difficult because it has 185 spellings for 44 sounds. 69 English spellings have more than one pronunciation.
- ❑ There are 3,500 words in English that contain exceptions to the spelling 'rules'. And some of the rules have hundreds of exceptions.
- ❑ What's the cost of having such a difficult spelling system? The lack of literacy in Britain is estimated to cost the nation £10 billion a year. Read [more](#)

Source: Improving English Spelling. The English Spelling Society [website](#).

TASK: Can you read the most difficult pronunciation poem in the world?

Gerard Nolst Trenité (1870 -1946)

A Dutch writer, traveller and teacher.

800 examples of irregular spelling

The Chaos

a poem demonstrating the irregularity of English spelling and pronunciation.

1992 /1993 (the Spelling Society)-
274 lines the most complete and authoritative version

Dearest **creature** in **creation**

Studying English pronunciation,

I will teach you in my verse

Sounds like **corpse, corps, horse** and **worse**.

.....

Finally, which rhymes **enough**,

Though, through, bough, cough, hough, sough,

tough??

Hiccough has the sound of cup ...

My advice is: GIVE IT UP!

[The Chaos](#) (full version video)

Will Snellen ([pdf version](#) with the transcription)



HOMETASK

	Word
10	brobdingnagian ,brɒbdɪŋ'naɪən
9	Orthinolaryngologist
8	Floccinaucinilipilification
7	Worcestershire 'wʊs tər ,fɪər, -fər
6	sesquipedalian ,sɛs kwɪ pɪ' deɪ li ən,
5	absquatulate (æb' skwɒtjʊ ,leɪt)
4	bruschetta bru:'skɛtə; bru'ʃɛtə
3	pulchritudinous adj.
2	hipopotomonstrosquippedaliophobia
1	Woolfardisworthy 'wʊlzəri/

Watch a [video: Top 10 difficult words to pronounce](#).

English is a language spoken by millions but there are some words contained therein that are quite simply unpronounceable. These are the top 10 hardest words to pronounce.



PUZZLE 4:

Misleading meanings of English words

1. Disinterested vs uninterested

We need a **disinterested** party to settle the argument. Emil said he likes music but that he is **uninterested** in doing any art work.

2. Inflammable vs flammable

'It burst into flames after its highly **inflammable** gas ignited.' Avoid wearing loose **flammable** clothing when using the blowtorch

1. **Disinterested**: free of bias and self-interest; impartial.

Uninterested: bored, indifferent, lacking interest; not wanting to learn more about something nor to become involved in certain things

Sources: 1. [Disinterested](#) vs uninterested (video)

2. Get the Words [Dictionary](#)

2. Inflammable [Video](#)

Easily ignited and capable of burning rapidly; **flammable**.

nonflammable - descriptive of something that is not readily ignited and so it does not burn easily

Source: Get the Words [Dictionary](#)

PUZZLE 5: Words that are older than we think

Task 5.1

How geek has changed over time?

Geek, nerd, dork, freak, techie, weirdo?

OED: Words that are older than we think
Sources: Online Etymology Dictionary

Task 5.2.

cyber

LOL

text (v)

unfriend (originally noun, now verb)

Oxford Word of the year 2009

Task 5.1:

geek, nerd, dork, freak, techie, weirdo

No	Which word (s) refer (s) to...	Answer
1	a person regarded as strange because of their unusual appearance and behaviour (even eccentric)?	
2	a person who is enthusiastic about technology (especially computers)	
3	a foolish or contemptible person who lacks social skills or is boringly studious.	
4	a socially inept person.	
5	A single-minded person who is an expert in particular field	
6	a person who is obsessed with a particular activity or interest, e.g. a fitness	
7	a knowledgeable and obsessive enthusiast (e. g a computer	
8	US slang term for a technical college student in 1960s	

Task 5.2. Fill in the table from the words from the box. Some words have two meanings.

N	Word	Origin	Original meaning	Meaning now, the area of use since when
1	LOL			
2	text (v)			
4	unfriend (v) unfriend (n)			

Origin	1564, 1960, 1989, 1993, 1948, 13 th century, 2007
Meaning	<i>Little Old Lady, Laughing Out Loud, Lots of Love; to cite texts, one who is not a friend or on friendly terms; an enemy'; remove (someone) from a list of friends or contacts on a social networking website'.</i>

No	Word	Origin	Original meaning	Meaning now, since when
1	LOL	1960 1989	little old lady lots of love	1993 Laughing Out Loud computer chat abbreviation
2	text (v)	1564	to cite texts	2005 , to send a text message by mobile system,"
4	unfriend (n)	13th century	enemy	
	unfriend (v)			2007 , Facebook remove (someone) from a list of friends or contacts on a social networking website'

PUZZLE 6: new words

WHO or WHAT is ...

troll factory

prepper

yuks

brinner

brain fade

outbrag

dad bod

paper suffler

unicorn factory

shareting

The Open Dictionary is Macmillan's **crowdsourced dictionary**, where you can suggest new words and expressions to add. The Open Dictionary started in 2009, and since then more than 4000 new words and phrases have been added. About half of these new words have been "promoted" to become full entries in the Macmillan Dictionary

Use infographic to find the meaning of new words.

Begin the Open Dictionary Quiz [here](#)

Use [Open Dictionary](#).

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PUZZLE 7: The Future of English

- **New forms of 'English' are swiftly evolving, .i.e. other languages are pushing their way into English**

Around 60-70 new 'Englishes' have emerged since the 1960s in countries across the globe, British English is now a minority amongst the many 'Englishes' that are spoken around the world.

Examples:

- Users of Facebook already socialise in a number of different „Englishes“, including Indian English or Hinglish, Spanglish (Spanish English) and Konglish (Korean English).

In Hinglish: stadium (a bald man with a fringe of hair); **pre-pone** (opposite of postpone, to bring something forward)

This trend of 'Englishes' in the plural shows no sign of slowing down anytime soon.

But nothing lasts forever.

[Video:](#) History of English (Part 10): Global English

[Video:](#) World Englishes?

□ A language's development reflects the power of those who speak it

Crystal suggests that a language's development is a direct reflection of the power of those who speak it.

Video: David Crystal - **Will English be always the Global language?**

□ How the Internet is changing the language

“Every time a new technology comes along, people think it's the end of the road for the English language, and indeed sometimes for languages in general,” linguist and author David Crystal says in the film. But, he says, *“the evidence is, for language, that every time a new technology arrives, it expands the expressive richness of the language in a way that wasn't there before.”*

Video: Documentary „**English 3.0**“

Conclusion

- ❑ All living languages change. They have to. Languages have no existence apart from the people who use them.
- ❑ Vocabulary is the area where we most often notice the way language changes.
- ❑ The journey in the world of words is exciting, full of surprises, discoveries, but endless...
- ❑ The story of words cannot be finished during one workshop.
- ❑ Use your toolbox to continue the investigation into the world of words.

Used sources

Convert Text to Speech. Available at:
<http://www.fromtexttospeech.com/>

Crystal, D. 1987. **How many words?** English Today No 12 October

Crystal, D. 2007. **Words, Words, Words.** Oxford University Press.

Delahunty, A. 2010. **Oxford Dictionary of Foreign Words & Phrases.** Oxford University Press.

Thomas H. Johnson (Editor). 1976. **The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson.**



Online resources

Get the words. <http://getwords.com/>

Open Dictionary <http://www.macmillandictionary.com/open-dictionary/>

Online Etymology Dictionary. <http://etymonline.com/>

Snellen, W. **The Chaos.** <http://ncf.idallen.com/TheChaosPRETTY.pdf>

The English Spelling Society. 2017. <http://spellingsociety.org/>

The English Language WordClock. <http://www.languagemonitor.com/global-english/no-of-words/>



Videos

Inflammable means flammable

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q8mD2hsxrhQ&feature=youtu.be>

The Chaos Of English Pronunciation by Gerard Nolst Trenité

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1edPxKqiptw&t=32s>

Top 10 hardest words to pronounce.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=52napSzzul8>

OED Word Origins <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/explore/word-origins>

Toolbox for further research: dictionaries

Macmillan Online Dictionary

<http://www.macmillandictionary.com/>

Oxford Dictionaries <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/>

Rhyming dictionary <http://rhyme.poetry.com/>

Visual Thesaurus <http://www.visualthesaurus.com/>

Wordnik <http://wordnik.com/>

Wordcount <http://www.wordcount.org/index2.html>

WordSpy <http://www.wordspy.com/>

Your dictionary <http://www.yourdictionary.com/>

Toolbox for further investigation: videos

English 3.0 <https://vimeo.com/111108854>

English 3.0 explores how the internet has influenced the way we communicate in the digital age and whether the changes witnessed have had a positive effect on the language. The film features interviews with renowned authors and linguistics: Tom Chatfield, David Crystal, Robert McCrum, Fiona McPherson and Simon Horobin

Will English Always be Global Language

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Kvs8SxN8mc&t=34s>

6 minute English Episode 160804 / 04 Aug 2016 [Is English changing?](#)

[The History of English in Ten Minutes](#) (part 1-10)

Video News Stories [Words in the News](#) [Lingohack](#)

[6 minute News](#) Series of topical discussion and new vocabulary.

Toolbox for further investigation: recording and testing vocabulary

Quizlet <https://quizlet.com/latest>

My Vocabulary.com <https://myvocabulary.com/>

Vocaboy <http://www.vocaboly.com/>

Merriam Webster Vocabulary Quiz.

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/word-games/vocabulary-quiz>

10-question quiz to find out — and maybe learn some new words along the way.

Vocabulary Size Test <http://www.insightin.com/test/test.phtml>

This 50 multiple-choice question Vocabulary Test is designed to test vocabulary size between 1,000 and 10,000. 50 multiple-choice questions



THANK YOU FOR
ATTENTION!