



The Future of the English Language

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Learning Objectives:

- Understand the influence of various factors in the development of Old English and note the continued change of the language.
- Predict/imagine the future of the English language, noting current influences and possible disruptions to expected outcomes.

Materials:

- Holt McDougal *British Literature*, Evanston, Illinois: 2010.
- Smartphone, iPad, or laptop computer for brief research
- computer and projector for powerpoint or prezzi presentation

Procedures:

DAY 1

1. Students read assigned historical background in *British Literature*, pp. 23-27 (aloud or individually).
2. View map of Anglo-Saxon area on screen, particularly of countries such as Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Germany, whose invaders wound up in England.
3. Teacher plays an Anglo-Saxon poem from Youtube to allow the class to hear the sounds. Recommended: “Deor: The Anglo-Saxon Poem,” performed by John Farrell. (Farrellmedia, Inc. 2012) It runs about 3.5 minutes.
4. Students note any words they hear that seem to be familiar (if any).

DAY 2

5. View the appearance of Old English runes on the classroom screen so that students can see how different they are from our Arabic alphabet. Use Wikipedia for this—it is legitimate in this instance, and provides a nice chart of symbols and meanings.

6. Conduct quick research on phone, iPad, or laptop: list 3 Anglo-Saxon words we have not discussed and tell their origin.
7. Pair and share these words with a neighbor. Go around the room and share findings aloud.
8. Have students do a quick preliminary assessment of what they think influences on Old English are (These will be handed in as an exit ticket at the end of class.)
9. Count off students into groups of 4 or 5 (depending on the class size). Avoid a group larger than 5. The easiest way to accomplish this is to literally go up and down the rows with students counting off.

The advantage of this kind of count is that it mixes up the class well, thus allowing students to interact directly with others that they might otherwise not even know.

DAY 3

10. Count off students into groups of 4 or 5 (depending on the class size). Avoid a group larger than 5. The easiest way to accomplish this is to literally go up and down the rows with students counting off.

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11. Have students exchange contact information: phone numbers, Facebook contact, etc. This method should be one that the student uses regularly and will notice if a message is present.
12. Follow instructions enumerated in the shaded area of page 1 of the packet.

*Depending on the class, this activity may exceed one day and spread out over 2 class periods.