

DVD CONTENTS: *THE ADVENTURE OF ENGLISH: 500-2000 A.D.*

ONE: "Birth of a Language"

1: English's Expedition

Threatened and revered, English spans centuries and the globe; a look at each episode in the series traces the language's European origins and its world travels.

2: English's Natural Roots

English's origins in the Netherlands; modern Frisian and English share Germanic roots; Germanic tribes take proto-English with them in conquering other lands.

3: Westward, Ho!

Roman invasion of England breaks up Celtic population and culture; modern place names reveal ancient roots; Old English develops among Germanic tribes and serves as the foundation for today's modern English.

4: Latin Lovers

Revival of Christianity brings Latin influx to English; Latin alphabet replaces symbolic runes; Latin's scholarly writings influence English.

5: Putting pen to Paper

Old English is written using the Latin alphabet; the Bible is translated; Beowulf becomes the first great poem in the English language.

6: Take Away the Danish!

Viking invaders, or Danes, pillage and plunder eastern England over 70 years; Danes threaten Old English; King Alfred acts as Great Defender of the English language; spoken English survives the Danish invasion.

7: From Oral to Written Law

King Alfred devises plan to promote literacy and restore the language; Alfred establishes a publishing house; the masses read history, philosophy, and poetry.

8: The First Normandy Invasion

Normans invade England and coin the word "battle"; French words infiltrate, symbolizing Norman rule over the country; English is forced underground.

TWO: "English Goes Underground" (detailed chapter contents unavailable)

1; Down but not Out

2: Language of Lords and Ladies

3: English-born vs. French-bred

4: Tongues Entwined

5: Death and Rebirth

6: Beyond Canterbury

THREE: "Battle for the Language of the Bible"

1: Bible and Backlash

The Catholic Church controls all aspects of life in England; Latin is the only language spoken in church, but English prevails in popular culture.

2: The Religious Write

The English want an English-language Bible to help access their faith; scholar John Wycliffe secretly translates the Bible from Latin to English; Wycliffe trains preachers to teach and distribute his Bible – with catastrophic results.

3: English Ever-Evolving

English becomes a language of literature and authority, rivaling French and Latin; Wycliffe's legacy lives on as the battle for the Bible's language continues.

4: Spelling, Speaking and Standards

Henry V breaks with royal tradition by writing and speaking in English; standardization begins; English's complexity derives from many Latin and French roots, leading to confusion among English speakers and scribes.

5: Pressed into Service

The printing press demands permanent spelling choices; William Tyndale smuggles his English translation of the New Testament into England; it forms the foundation for the King James Bible.

6: English Rose

English finally becomes the language of court and state affairs; the Bible is accessible to everyone in the newly Protestant England.

FOUR: "This Earth, This Realm, This England" (detailed chapter contents unavailable)

1: Foreign Favors

2: Rooted in the Classics

3: Speaking Volumes

4: Prose and Poetry

5: All the Worlds a Stage

FIVE: "English in America"

1: Natives Get Restless

Seeking religious freedom, Puritan settlers in America face famine and illness; Squanto, an English-speaking Native American, saves the settlers, teaching them to farm; *The New England Primer* becomes the basis for teaching English.

2: On American Soil

Dutch, French, and Spanish settlers fight for power in America; as English spreads, it sprouts branches far from its roots; the colonies declare independence from England; American-English dominates the expanding country.

3: Casting a Permanent Spell

Schoolteacher Noah Webster's *The American Spelling Book* outsells every book except the Bible and standardizes American-English pronunciation and spelling.

4: Home on the Range

The Louisiana Purchase in 1804 doubles the size of the United States; Lewis and Clark chronicle their expedition west in very "American" frontier language.

5: Riled Up, Settling Down

The great rivers become superhighways; Scotch, Irish, and French settlers add boating language and place-names; riverboat gambling and drinking adds its own lexicon; Davy Crockett opens the door to “tall talk.”

6: As Good as Gold

Thousands migrate west in the Gold Rush, picking up new language on the way; railroads open up the west; cowboys bring Mexican/Spanish influences.

7: Unchained Melody

The black slave population brings West African and Caribbean influences; Gullah is a surviving dialect still spoken in parts of the south.

8: Pride and Prejudice

The Civil War sees the slaves freed, paving the way for the language of segregation and bias; Mark Twain blends dialects and vernacular.

SIX: “Speaking Proper”

1: The Season of Reason

England’s “Age of Reason” sees massive political upheaval; John Locke’s “An Essay Concerning Human Understanding” argues that language needs to be used more concretely; coffee houses become centers for exchanging ideas.

2: Swift Changes

Jonathan Swift argues unsuccessfully in court that English will suffer from its own growth; Dr. Samuel Johnson spends seven years updating the dictionary; upper and lower classes continue to speak different versions of the language.

3: From Scotland’s Yards

English replaces Gaelic in Scotland’s lowlands; Thomas Sheridan’s mission is to teach Scots proper English; Robert Burns’ poems defy much of the standard English that Sheridan fought to adopt.

4: Beyond Wordsworth’s Words

William Wordsworth writes in the language of the common people, to critical disdain; Richard Sheridan’s “Mrs. Malaprop” turns the language upside down; Jane Austen popularizes literature for female readers.

5: Powered by English

Scottish engineer James Watt designs the steam engine, starting the Industrial Revolution; the inventions and concepts bring new words, including “railroad.”

6: Code Word: Cockney

The Industrial Revolution’s slums result in urban dialects like Cockney, replete with its own slang; authors’ characters, such as Shaw’s reflect the new society.

SEVEN: “The Language of Empire”

1: To Market, To Market

The British Empire and its language span the globe; in India, English challenges over 200 languages for supremacy; the East India Company monopolizes the spice markets; trade and industry flourish, then the relationship sours.

2: From Class to Caste

The British cite “moral obligation” to govern India and set up schools to spread English; T. B. Macaulay endorses English over Indian dialects; Indian-tinged English spans the subcontinent, even as the British leave power.

3: Cruising to the Caribbean

The British colonize the Caribbean; on St. Kitts, they begin importing African slaves, inadvertently aiding the creation of a unique dialect called Creole.

4: Colonizing the Convicts Down Under

Fleets of ships carry convicts from England to Australia – 150,000 in 80 years; English replaces 250 aboriginal languages; the criminal background of early settlers shapes the colorful Australian-English.

5: An English Epidemic

English displaces hundreds of languages worldwide; Lakota Indians in North America lose their language; prejudice against Welsh threatens its survival.

6; Currying Favor

Speaking English marks India’s elite even while remaining a minority language; an Australian dictionary legitimizes cultural differences; Jamaican patois is regarded as inferior to English.

EIGHT: “Many Tongues Called English, One World Language”

1: Loosening Up the Lingo

As America rises in the global economy, American-English generates new vocabulary reflecting its industries; at home, slang dominates across the classes.

2: War and Peace

British-English expands with World War I; African American speech is brought into the mainstream by popular music.

3: Continental Divide

Immigrants from central and eastern Europe double the US population; German and Yiddish influence American-English; movies make gangster lingo popular.

4: English Soldiers On

World War II puts the language under a microscope; Americans publish a book explaining British culture to American soldiers.

5: Spanning the Globe

English is the language of worldwide trade, international government, and economics, as well as the official or semi-official tongue in over 60 nations.

6: Dialect-able

An endangered language, Scots Gaelic battles for its existence; Glaswegian, based on a range of English forms, remains distinct but faces extinction; Yorkshire English is a dialect of South Asian Brits.

7: To infinity and Beyond

The *Oxford English Dictionary* is the ultimate lexicon, with 750,000 entries. English travels to outer space by messenger from the UN.

[Contents taken from descriptions accompanying the DVDs in the series.]

