

Timeline: English Language and Literature

www.bl.uk/englishtimeline

Teachers' orientation guide

Introduction to the interactive timeline

This interactive timeline allows students to explore British Library collection items chronologically and thematically, looking at the evolution over the last thousand years of English literature and language. The timeline includes a diverse combination of texts, allowing students to contextualise literature both within the changing socio-historical landscape and in conjunction with the development of the language.

Highlights include:

- Handwritten drafts of works by Dickens, Woolf, Wordsworth, Burns, Hardy and Charlotte Bronte.
- Items of historical importance that have a direct bearing on language change, such as the first book printed in English, the King James Bible, and the Kentish Homilies.
- Notebooks, letters and documents written by figures such as Captain Cook, Elizabeth I, Jane Austen and Charles Darwin.
- The first printed editions of Shakespeare's *Richard III*, Fielding's *Tom Jones*, Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* and H G Wells' *The Time Machine*.
- Illuminated manuscripts, musical scores, transcriptions, maps, illustrations, recipes, advertisements, and newspapers.
- Manuscripts of literary works from the period before printing, such as *Beowulf*, *Gawayn and the Green Knight*, and *The Canterbury Tales*.
- Defining works that mark the development of the English language, such as Swift's *Proposal*, Johnson's *Dictionary*, Walker's *Correct Pronunciation*, and the *Oxford English Dictionary*.
- Major historical records, such as the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, Magna Carta, the Habeas Corpus Act, and a newspaper report of the Great Fire of London.
- Extended analyses of the processes of being a writer, ranging from a twelfth century scribe to William Blake, using video and audio.

- Items that explore the development of English as a world language, such as the Hobson-Jobson *Anglo-Indian Dictionary*, The *Barbados Gazette* from 1731, and Morris's *Austral English*.
- Readings of works by Donne, Keats, Austen, Wilfred Owen and others.

This selection of items is not intended to be at all comprehensive, but rather to give an idea of the how these texts were seen by the people who first produced or saw and read them; together they tell a variety of stories about how language and various genres of literature developed alongside each other.

Users will be able to move between the three timelines – '*English Language and Literature Documents*', '*Literary Works*' or '*Letters Newspapers and Chronicle*' - or to combine them or show them simultaneously, allowing for comparisons to be made between aspects of social and political life, language change and literature within time periods and against key events. Scanning over a thousand years worth of texts, students will get a sense of the way printed matter has changed aesthetically over time. Alternatively, timelines can be created to explore diverse ideas such as the novel as social criticism, the growth of literacy, or women writers. Special '*Language Change*' panels located throughout the timeline show the developments in language change over the centuries.

This guide provides teachers with background notes and suggested questions to use the timeline in the classroom and supply students with the tools to develop independent enquiry and creative thinking skills.

The timeline starts in 1000 and continues to the 1970s. Additional sources will be added to the timeline as more of the collections are made available online.

General aims of orientation guide

These resources can be used by teachers with students from KS2 to AS/A2 and are intended to help students:

- Develop research skills
- Locate literary works within a historical and political framework
- Develop the skills to formulate questions for contextual enquiry
- Develop independent enquiry
- Understand the role of primary sources in literary criticism
- Investigate the development of different literary genres

- Develop their chronological understanding
 - Develop visual literacy skills
- Make connections to students' existing knowledge

Using the Guide

The resource sheets offer ideas for using the timeline chronologically and thematically.

The chronological section looks at literature in English within traditional divisions:

- The medieval period until the introduction of printing
- From Caxton until the death of Shakespeare
- The 17th century
- The 18th century and the Romantics
- The 19th century
- The 20th century

The thematic section encourages looking at developments over periods of time:

- Fiction
- Poetry
- Drama
- Language change
- Teaching and learning English
- Advertising
- Journalism
- Writers' drafts

Each resource sheet contains a list of suggested questions and ideas for exploring the resources, and is not specific to a particular Key Stage. Consequently they should be seen as a starting point for creating material appropriate to students' levels and abilities.

The sources can be downloaded or printed directly from the timeline. You can also create your own timeline using the '**My Timeline**' section. Your personal timeline can be printed using images and the introductory text to each source. In many cases the sources can be explored further using the direct links to the Learning section of the British Library website.

Each resource has a set of questions relating to that particular period or theme, but it is recommended that students create their own investigation

questions to help them look closely at the sources and the relationships between them.

Questions may follow the pattern of 'form, function and content', which may generate ideas such as the following:

- Who is the writer, and in what context was he/she writing? Who is the intended audience? How did the text reach its audience?
- Does the text have a direct message – is the reader/audience 'told' directly, or 'shown' through a story? Does the text have a political, social or escapist content? Is the writer trying to change something by means of the text?
- How is the text presented? What does its layout tell you?

Other questions that might help develop thinking about texts:

- Is it important to know who wrote the text?
- Is the tone of the text persuasive, or factual, or impersonal?
- Does the writer show any bias in the text; is he/she definitely on one side of an argument? How do we know?
- What language is the text written in? Why this language?
- Is the writer attempting to give a factual account of real events? Is the writer pretending to give a factual account of real events?
- When was the text written, and how does it relate to the political events of the time?
- How reliable is the text as evidence of what was going on at the time?
- Is the text about or for a specific social class?
- How important is it to see the work in the context in which it was made? Is it possible to read the text without reference to subsequent events?

Other points for consideration:

- What is not included in the timeline?
- Does the timeline reinforce or question the canon of 'English Literature'?
- How does the timeline reflect the nature and diversity of the history of language and literature?

Curriculum links

These resources can support the National Curriculum for English Literature and English Language in many ways, particularly in developing skills for exploring development of genres, historical and cultural contextualisation, and language change.

Cross-curricular links to Religious Education, History, Art, Citizenship, and Music reinforce the context of studying Literature and Language.

Section 1: Chronological

The Medieval period to the introduction of printing

This period runs from 1000 to the arrival of printed books in England in 1473. The timeline includes the only surviving manuscript of the Anglo Saxon poem *Beowulf*, one of the most famous poems in Old English, the language spoken in Anglo-Saxon England before the Norman Conquest. The manuscript is believed to have been written at the beginning of the 11th century, although the story had probably been passed down orally over many previous generations.

From the Norman Conquest it took about 200 years for English to re-assert itself as a literary language, and the period 1000-1476 sees the development of the language from Old English, through Middle English, to the beginnings of Modern English. Low literacy rates meant that reading and writing were the province of few people, and much literature was delivered orally. Though the first book printed in English was produced in Bruges or Ghent in 1473, it was three years before William Caxton set up his printing press in Westminster.

Aims of this resource

This resource collection provides students with materials to explore the following ideas and concepts:

Some of the key literary texts of the period.

Language change during the period.

The historical context for the literature and language change.

How the texts relate to their historical and social context.

Students should be encouraged to explore the timeline themselves and use the potential to select items to make their own timeline to create a collection of material that provokes their own questions.

Suggested sources

Beowulf (c 1000)

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (1020s)

The Kentish Homilies (1150s)

The Owl and the Nightingale (1180s)

Layamon's Brut (1180s)

Magna Carta (1215)

Sumer is icumen in (c 1230)

Decorated Initials with Musicians (1260)

Medieval surgical procedures (c1300)

The Holkham Picture Bible (c 1320)

Peasant at work (1330s)

Lord at supper (1330s)

The Chronicle of the Black Death (1348)

Genesis Picture Book (c 1350)

Piers Plowman (1367-86)

First English cookery manuscript (1390)

The Canterbury Tales (c 1400)

Gawayn and the Green Knight (c 1400)

Wycliffite Bible (c 1400)

Letter in Henry V's hand (1419)

Medicinal plants (1425)

A recipe for custarde (1440)

The Gutenberg Bible (1454)

The Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye (1473)

Valentine's Day love letter (1477)

Medieval astrological chart (1480s)

Suggested questions to use as a starting point

Consider the following questions as starting points for research; encourage students to bring in their knowledge from other sources and disciplines; follow the links to other material online and in books.

- Who were the audience or readers for literature during this period? Think of the different ways in which people would have been presented with these stories or information.
- How did English change during the period? (Check the '*Language Change*' panels).
- Apart from fantasy stories such as *Beowulf*, what sort of things did people write about?
- How did writing about medicine and cookery change during the period? What do these texts tell us about life at this time? Who would have read these texts?
- What difference did printing make to what people read, and what they wrote?
- How do the texts differ visually?
- What is the role of illustration?
- What do the items tell us about literacy levels and education?
- How did English differ in different parts of the country? (Check the '*Language Change*' panels).

Further activities

Encourage the students to formulate their own questions, and to find sources in the timeline and elsewhere to expand their study material.

More information

Explore the following sections of the British Library website



Medieval Realms

www.bl.uk/learning/histcitizen/medieval/medievalrealms.html

Thomas Malory

www.bl.uk/treasures/malory/homepage.html

William Caxton

www.bl.uk/treasures/caxton/homepage.html

Magna Carta

www.bl.uk/treasures/magnacarta/index.html

Beowulf

<http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/englit/beowulf/index.html>

From Caxton until the death of Shakespeare

This period covers the emergence of Modern English. Drama moves from the stalls in the marketplace to purpose-built theatres, producing some of the world's greatest literature. The English language becomes the subject of study, and attempts are made to regulate grammar and spelling. New genres emerge: the sonnet, influenced by Italian Renaissance forms; the essay; and the first steps towards what will become the novel. The Reformation of the Church brings the translation of the Bible into English and the Book of Common Prayer in English. The comparative political stability at the beginning of the reign of Henry VIII and at end of Elizabeth's reign sees the dominant role of music and literature at Court; Henry himself composed songs, while Elizabeth's Protestant court saw the blossoming of cultural life. In the earlier context, More's *Utopia* is illustrative of the type of intellectual argument encouraged by Henry's own publication, *The Defence of the Seven Sacraments*, the first publication by a reigning monarch for 650 years, while at Elizabeth's court poetry and drama flourished. The growth of grammar schools led to an increase in general literacy.

Aims of this resource

This resource collection provides students with materials to explore the following ideas and concepts:

Some of the key literary, liturgical and historical texts of the period.

Language change during the period.

The historical context for the literature and language change.

How the texts relate to their historical and social context.

Students should be encouraged to explore the timeline themselves and use the potential to select items to make their own timeline to create a collection of material that provokes their own questions.

Suggested sources

Caxton's 'egges' story (1490)

Songs written by Henry VIII (c 1518)

More's *Utopia* (1516)

Tyndale's translation of the Bible (1526)

The Book of Common Prayer (1549)

Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* (1563)

The *Great Lottery* (1567)

Mulcaster's *Elementarie* (1582)

Elizabeth's Armada speech (1588)

Shakespeare's *Richard III* (1597)

Cawdrey's *Table Alphabeticall* (1604)

A newsbook (1607)

Shakespeare's *King Lear* (1608)

Shakespeare's *Sonnets* (1609)

The King James Bible (1611)

Image of the Globe Theatre (1616)

Suggested questions to use as a starting point

Consider the following questions as starting points for research; encourage students to bring in their knowledge from other sources and disciplines; follow the links to other material online and in books.

What difference did printing make to the English language and to cultural life in general?

Apart from the wealthy, how were other strata of society affected by printing?

What influence did increased wealth and literacy have on literature?

What kinds of non-fiction writing appeared during the period?

How did the English language change during the period? (Check the '*Language Change*' panels).

How did English translations of the Bible affect people's lives?

What external influences on English were there during this period?

How did the drama at the end of the Tudor period link the populace with the Court?

Further activities

Encourage the students to formulate their own questions, and to find sources in the timeline and elsewhere to expand their study material.

More information

Explore the following sections of the British Library website

Henry VIII

www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/henryviii/interactive/index.html

Crown and Church

<http://www.bl.uk/learning/histcitizen/uk/crownchurch/crownandchurch.html>

Shakespeare

<http://www.bl.uk/treasures/shakespeare/homepage.html>

The 17th century

This section covers the turbulent period of the Civil War, the Restoration of the monarchy, and the 1688 revolution that severely curtailed the power of the Crown. Drama following Shakespeare flourishes, and following the suppression of the theatres during the Commonwealth, is revived during the Restoration. Metaphysical poetry explored the language's potential for extended metaphors and witty paradoxes. Expressing the turmoil of the conflict between Crown and Parliament, pamphleteers express the range of political views of the time, and after the Restoration, journalists continue the debate. Milton's epic poem *Paradise Lost* explores the intense personal religious experience which set Puritan against Anglican against Catholic. The novel form is developed in the works of John Bunyan and Aphra Benn. Dictionary-writers look at different kinds of English, and begin to explore the idea of standardization and 'correct' spelling. English is fully established as the language of literature and government, and reading becomes more widespread, with Samuel Pepys describing seeing a shepherd and his son reading from the Bible; foreign trade brings many new words into the language. London is rocked by plague and fire. Coffee becomes the country's most fashionable drink, and coffee houses become hubs of social and cultural activity.

Aims of this resource

This resource collection provides students with materials to explore the following ideas and concepts:

Some of the key literary and historical texts and the rise of journalism during the period.

The study of English during the period.

The political context for the literature and how the texts relate to their historical and social context.

Students should be encouraged to explore the timeline themselves and use the potential to select items to make their own timeline to create a collection of material that provokes their own questions.

Suggested sources

The First Folio collection of Shakespeare's plays (1623)

John Donne's poetry (1633)

Ben Jonson's *Grammar* (1640)

Areopagitica by John Milton (1644)

Confessions of Charles I's executioner (1640s)

Advert for a quack doctor (1650s)

Early A-Z of London (1650s)

An Horatian Ode by Andrew Marvell (1650)

A Cure for the plague (1660s)

The London Gazette – Fire of London (1666)

Coffee houses (1660s)

Paradise Lost by John Milton (1668)

Games and Pastimes (1670s)

Criminal Slang (1674)

The Rover by Aphra Benn (1677)

The Habeas Corpus Act (1679)

Advertisement for the London Rhinoceros (1684)

The Way of the World by William Congreve (1700)

The East India Company's porcelain sales (1704)

Suggested questions to use as a starting point

Consider the following questions as starting points for research; encourage students to bring in their knowledge from other sources and disciplines; follow the links to other material online and in books.

How did the political events affect what people were able to write and read?

How did the different forms of literature reflect what was happening politically?

How did the development of different genres reflect increased literacy?

What kinds of words into English came into the language because of trade?
(Check the '*Language Change*' panels).

What was Milton's intention in *Areopagitica*?

How is drama at the end of the period different from drama in the early 17th century?

What kinds of non-fiction writing can you find on the timeline during this period?

Apart from the wealthy, how were other strata of society affected by printed material?

How did the English language change during the period?

What aspects of the English language interested scholars during the period?

Further activities

Encourage the students to formulate their own questions, and to find sources in the timeline and elsewhere to expand their study material.

More information

Explore the Cromwell section of the British Library website

www.bl.uk/learning/histcitizen/uk/cromwell/olivercromwell.html

and Freedom of Speech and Belief

<http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/takingliberties/staritems/freedomofspeech.html>

and the Putney Debates

<http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/takingliberties/staritems/54putneydebates.html>

and Hobbes Leviathan

www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/takingliberties/staritems/55hobbesleviathan.html



and the Bill of Rights

www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/takingliberties/staritems/510billofrights.html

The 18th century and the Romantics

Political stability at home, apart from the mid-century Jacobean rebellion, protected by the growth of naval power, allowed increased economic and industrial activity, and increased trade abroad. While drama became less important, the novel form emerged, and began to explore social, philosophical and political themes. Vast social differences existed: the period saw the rise of slavery, the growth of criminal underclasses, and the rewriting of social codes. The beginnings of the industrial revolution moved people away from agricultural work and into factory labour. Towards the end of the period, radical thought influenced by the French Revolution brought the end of slavery, the rise of unionism, and challenges to the limitations of the voting system. The Romantic poets, much influenced by the political turmoil of the late 18th century, took as their subjects imagination, nature, social observation and mysticism. Literary criticism grew, aspects of English such as grammar, spelling and pronunciation became major subjects of study, and the essay form was used to discuss social and philosophical matters.

Aims of this resource

This resource collection provides students with materials to explore the following ideas and concepts:

Some of the key literary and historical texts and the rise of journalism during the period.

The study of English during the period.

The political context for the literature, and how the texts relate to their historical and social context.

Students should be encouraged to explore the timeline themselves and use the potential to select items to make their own timeline to create a collection of material that provokes their own questions.

Suggested sources

The Queen's Royal Cookery (1709)

The Spectator (1711)

A Proposal by Jonathan Swift (1712)

Robinson Crusoe by Daniel Defoe (1720)

Bartholomew fair (1721)

Cargo Lists (1724)

Cities in chaos (1730s)

A Polite Conversation by Jonathan Swift (1738)

Advert for a giant (1742)

Muffin seller (1743)

Tom Jones by Henry Fielding (1749)

Pamela by Samuel Richardson (1740)

The Art of Cookery by Hannah Glasse (1747)

Dictionary by Samuel Johnson (1755)

Tristram Shandy by Lawrence Sterne (1759)

Short Introduction to English Grammar by Robert Lowth (1762)

The Social Contract by Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1762)

The Castle of Otranto by Horace Walpole (1765)

Ranelagh Pleasure Gardens (1770)

Factories (1770)

The Spinning Jenny (1770)

Guidebook to London Prostitutes (1773)

She Stoops to Conquer by Oliver Goldsmith (1773)

Notice about runaway slaves (1781)

First British advert for curry powder (1784)

Poems Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect by Robert Burns (1786)

Storming of the Bastille (1789)

Olaudah Equiano (1789)

Songs of Innocence and Experience by William Blake (1794)

William Blake's notebook (1790s)

The Rights of Man by Thomas Paine (1791)

A Vindication of the Rights of Women by Mary Wollstonecraft (1792)

Critical Pronouncing Dictionary by John Walker (1791)

I wandered lonely as a cloud by William Wordsworth (1804)

Exhibition of a rhinoceros and a zebra (1810)

Jane Austen letter to her sister (1811)

Persuasion by Jane Austen (1816)

Guide to ladies' fashion and etiquette' (1810s)

Coleridge's Lectures on Shakespeare (1810s)

Soldier's letter: Battle of Waterloo (1815)

Ode to a Nightingale by John Keats (1819)

Frankenstein by Mary Shelley (1818)

Ozymandias by Percy Shelley (1818)

Don Juan by George Gordon, Lord Byron (1819)

Confessions of an English Opium-Eater by Thomas De Quincey (1821)

Suggested questions to use as a starting point

Consider the following questions as starting points for research; encourage students to bring in their knowledge from other sources and disciplines; follow the links to other material online and in books.

Richardson's *Pamela* is written in the form of letters; *Robinson Crusoe* has characteristics of a diary. What different formats did writers use for the novel?

How does Swift's *Polite Conversation* indicate how people spoke at the time?

How did literature reflect the changes in British society during this period?

How did literature reflect or react to political turmoil (eg the French revolution and the industrial revolution)?

How did the role of women change during the period, and how is this reflected in the literature?

To what extent was the Romantic movement a reaction to the previous style of writing?

To what extent was the Romantic movement a reaction to the politics of the time?

What do the items of ephemera (i.e. the letters, adverts and other non literary texts) tell us about life during this period?

In what ways do the items of ephemera attempt to argue or persuade their audience, and to describe their subject matter?

How did people's attitudes towards slavery change during the period, and how is this reflected in the literature?

What aspects of the English language interested people during the period?
How were these used as tools of social improvement?

What crisis affected the English language at the beginning of the period?
How was it resolved?

How did Britain's international activities change the English language?

How was the way people thought affected by events happening outside Britain?

Further activities

Encourage the students to formulate their own questions, and to find sources in the timeline and elsewhere to expand their study material.



More information

Explore the Georgians section of the British Library website

www.bl.uk/learning/histcitizen/georgians/georgianhome.html

Alexander Pope

<http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/englit/pope/index.html>

William Blake's notebook section in Turning the Pages on the British Library website

www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/ttp/ttpbooks.html

Other sections of the website to explore

The 19th century

The 19th century saw the growth of the novel as a medium of social criticism and psychological exploration of the individual. Historical and detective novels became popular, and from mid-century many works were published in installments in magazines. Women writers pushed the possibilities of the novel forward, particularly considering the position of women in a society where marriage largely governed women's roles and possibilities. At the end of the century there was a resurgence in drama, with works exploring social and political themes. Journalism and advertising grew rapidly, with the vast increase in improved communications and manufactured goods. With greater travel people became aware of identities within the British Isles, and the use of dialect in literature became more widespread. Mass entertainment required mass publicity; and political awareness, sometimes violent, was supported by a greater market for political writing. With the growth of the British Empire, English was being taken to every area of the globe, while the beginning of what would be the Oxford English Dictionary shows the language being studied scientifically and comprehensively at home.

Aims of this resource

This resource collection provides students with materials to explore the following ideas and concepts:

Some of the key literary and historical texts and the growth of journalism during the period.

The study of English during the period.

The political context for the literature, and how the texts relate to their historical and social context.

Students should be encouraged to explore the timeline themselves and use the potential to select items to make their own timeline to create a collection of material that provokes their own questions.

Suggested sources

Persuasion by Jane Austen (1816)

Frankenstein by Mary Shelley (1818)

The Infant's Grammar (1824)

Diary description of London (1827)

Execution of a 12 year old boy (1829)

Oliver Twist by Charles Dickens (1837)

The Charge of the Light Brigade by Alfred Tennyson (1854)

A Book of Nonsense by Edward Lear (1846)

Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte (1847)

Wuthering Heights by Emily Bronte (1847)

The Communist Manifesto by Karl Marx (1848)

Cookery for the Poor by Alexis Soyer (1855)

Mary Seacole (1857)

The Woman in White by Wilkie Collins (1860)

Mrs Beeton's Book of Household Management (1861)

East Lynne by Ellen Wood (Mrs Henry Wood) (1861)

A Plea for the Queen's English by Henry Alford (1864)

Report of a coalmining disaster (1860)

Middlemarch by George Eliot (1871)

Victorian women's fashion (1870s)

Invention of the telephone (1878)

Freak show posters (1870s)

Illusionists and conjurors (1870s)

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll (1862)

The New English Dictionary (from 1879)

The Story of an African Farm by Olive Schreiner (1883)

The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde by Robert Louis Stevenson (1886)

Jack the ripper murders (1888)

Match girl strike (1888)

Tess of the D'Urbervilles by Thomas Hardy (1891)

The Importance of Being Earnest by Oscar Wilde (1894)

The Time Machine by H G Wells (1895)

Heart of Darkness by Joseph Conrad (1899)

Sherlock Holmes manuscript by Arthur Conan Doyle (1904)

Suggested questions to use as a starting point

Consider the following questions as starting points for research; encourage students to bring in their knowledge from other sources and disciplines; follow the links to other material online and in books.

What different kinds of themes did novel writers work with?

How was the structure of the novel affected by being published in magazines?

Some major political writing was drawn from observation of the working classes in Britain. How did novels investigate the situation of the working people?

What do the items of ephemera (i.e. the letters, adverts and other non literary texts) tell us about life during this period?

In what ways do the items of ephemera attempt to argue or persuade their audience, and to describe their subject matter?

How did educators attempt to make learning English more entertaining for children?

The British Empire took the English language to all parts of the globe. How did other languages influence English?

What were Tennyson's feelings about war as expressed in *The Charge of the Light Brigade*?

How did children's literature develop during the period?

A lot of sensationalist advertising was around during the nineteenth century. How did the Industrial Revolution create a market for this?

Further activities

Encourage the students to formulate their own questions, and to find sources in the timeline and elsewhere to expand their study material.

More information

Explore the Victorians section of the British Library website

www.bl.uk/learning/histcitizen/victorians/victorianhome.html

and the original version of *Alice* in the Turning The Pages section of the website

www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/ttp/ttpbooks.html

Charles Dickens

<http://www.bl.uk/learning/langlit/dickens/dickenshome.html>

<http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/englit/nickleby/index.html>

The 20th century

Drama after the First World War becomes an avant garde medium, pushing forward the boundaries of narrative and dialogue away from realism. The century begins with the suffragette movement, and ends with English as a medium for post-colonial writing in novels, poetry and drama. Journalism reaches everyone, through magazines, newspapers, then radio and television. Among cross-influences, film and the novel feed each other, and poets use the iconoclasm of modernist art in making visual poetry.

Aims of this resource

This resource collection provides students with materials to explore the following ideas and concepts:

Some of the key literary and historical texts and the breadth of journalism during the period.

The external influences on English during the period.

The political context for the literature, and how the texts relate to their historical and social context.

Students should be encouraged to explore the timeline themselves and use the potential to select items to make their own timeline to create a collection of material that provokes their own questions.

Suggested sources

Dulce et Decorum Est by Wilfred Owen (1917)

Pygmalion by George Bernard Shaw (1913)

The Collier's Wife by D H Lawrence (1928)

The BBC Advisory Committee on Spoken English (1928)

Paul Robeson's *Othello* (1958)

The Beatles arrive in the USA (1965)

Punk fanzine (1976)

Suggested questions to use as a starting point

Consider the following questions as starting points for research; encourage students to bring in their knowledge from other sources and disciplines; follow the links to other material online and in books.

Further activities

Encourage the students to formulate their own questions, and to find sources in the timeline and elsewhere to expand their study material.

More information

Explore these sections of the British Library website

Sylvia Plath

<http://www.bl.uk/learning/langlit/poetryperformance/plath/sylviaplath.html>

Wilfred Owen

<http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/englit/owen/index.html>

Rudyard Kipling

<http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/englit/kipling/index.html>

Virginia Woolf

<http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/englit/woolf/index.html>

Section 2: Exploring the timeline thematically

Fiction

Several authors have been claimed as ‘the father of English fiction’ – Geoffrey of Monmouth, Daniel Defoe, Samuel Richardson, Henry Fielding. The seeds of fiction lie in the longer Old English poems like *Beowulf*, and the French romances introduced in the twelfth century, and verse and drama remained the format for fiction until the seventeenth century. It took a long time for the novel to become an established form in English literature, Pilgrim’s Progress appearing several decades after Rabelais’ *Gargantua and Pantagruel* (1532-4) in France and Cervantes’ *Don Quixote* (1605-15) in Spain. ‘Three-decker’ (three volume) novels in the nineteenth century were the format for extensive investigation of relationships and social pressures.

Aims of this resource

This resource collection provides students with materials to explore the following ideas and concepts:

Some of the key texts of fiction over the past thousand years.

Examples of different formats used for telling stories.

The development of formats over the period.

The development of some of the different genres of fiction over the past thousand years (detective fiction, science fiction).

Students should be encouraged to explore the timeline themselves and use the potential to select items to make their own timeline to create a collection of material that provokes their own questions.

Suggested sources

The History of the Kings of Britain by Geoffrey of Monmouth (1130s)

Piers Plowman by William Langland (1370)

Gawayn and the Green Knight (1370s)

The Canterbury Tales by Geoffrey Chaucer (1400s)

The Faerie Queene by Edmund Spenser (1590)

Pilgrim's Progress by John Bunyan (1678)

Robinson Crusoe by Daniel Defoe (1720)

Gulliver's Travels by Jonathan Swift (1726)

Pamela by Samuel Richardson (1740)

Tom Jones by Henry Fielding (1749)

Tristram Shandy by Laurence Sterne (1759)

Persuasion by Jane Austen (1816)

Frankenstein by Mary Shelley (1818)

Oliver Twist by Charles Dickens (1837)

Wuthering Heights by Emily Bronte (1847)

Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte (1847)

The Woman in White by Wilkie Collins (1860)

East Lynne by Mrs Henry Wood (1861)

Middlemarch by George Eliot (1871)

The Story of an African Farm by Olive Schreiner (1883)

The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde by Robert Louis Stevenson (1886)

Tess of the D'urbervilles by Thomas Hardy (1891)

Heart of Darkness by Joseph Conrad (1899)

The Time Machine by H G Wells (1895)

Sherlock Holmes stories by Arthur Conan Doyle (1904)

Mrs Dalloway by Virginia Woolf (1925)

Suggested questions to use as a starting point

Consider the following questions as starting points for research; encourage students to bring in their knowledge from other sources and disciplines; follow the links to other material online and in books.

Trace the use of the first person (I) to address the reader as a fictional device – how does it alter the reception of the text? (*Piers Plowman*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *Jane Eyre*, *Heart of Darkness*)

Some fictional texts propose themselves as factual accounts – why would the writer take this stance? (*Geoffrey of Monmouth*, *Daniel Defoe*)

Trace the changes in the formats of fiction – what might have influenced those changes?

How did fiction become a medium for discussing social change?

Have the subjects of fiction changed over time?

Is the novel no longer a viable format for the investigation of social and personal relationships?

How have writers used previously known texts? (Geoffrey, Layamon, Chaucer, Henryson, Shakespeare, Dryden, Shaw)

Why would women writers have found it politic to disguise their names?

Further activities

Encourage the students to formulate their own questions, and to find sources in the timeline and elsewhere to expand their study material.

More information

Explore the Dickens in context section of the British Library website

www.bl.uk/learning/langlit/dickens/dickenshome.html

Language change

Over the past thousand years English has changed from being a largely Germanic inflexion-based isolated language to one that embraces words from hundreds of languages spoken around the world and is spoken round the world. Successive waves of influence include the influx of words from French in the Medieval period, the debate over 'inkhorn terms' in the later Renaissance, the invention of words for the fields of science and technology, worldwide trade in goods and foodstuffs, the colonial ventures in Africa, Asia and the Pacific. With over a million words, English is now being developed in separate ways around the world.

Aims of this resource

This resource collection provides students with materials to explore the following ideas and concepts:

The external influences on English during the period.

The political context for language change, and how the texts relate to their historical and social context.

The different kinds of language change.

People's reactions to language change.

Students should be encouraged to explore the timeline themselves and use the potential to select items to make their own timeline to create a collection of material that provokes their own questions.

Suggested sources

The Kentish Homilies (c1150)

Ormulum by Orm (c1200)

Medieval English song (c1230)

The Bible translated by John Wycliffe (c1400)

Henry V letter (1419)

Fabilis by Robert Henrysoun (1480s)

Caxton's Egges story (1490)

The Bible translated by William Tyndale (1526)

A Table Alphabeticall by Robert Cawdrey (1604)

The English Grammar by Ben Jonson (1640)

The Canting Academy (1674)

A Proposal for Correcting, Improving and Ascertaining the English Language
by Jonathan Swift (1712)

A Dictionary of the English Language by Samuel Johnson (1755)

A Short Introduction to English Grammar by Robert Lowth (1762)

Poems Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect by Robert Burns (1786)

A Critical Pronouncing Dictionary by John Walker (1791)

The Pickwick Papers by Charles Dickens (1836)

Get Your 'air Cut (1855)

The Queen's English by Henry Alford (1864)

The New English Dictionary/The Oxford English Dictionary (1879)

Hobson Jobson (1886)

Austral English (1898)

Pygmalion by George Bernard Shaw (1913)

BBC English (1929)

Immigration from India (1940s)

Chinese restaurants (1950s)

The BBC Advisory Committee on Spoken English (1928)

Suggested questions to use as a starting point

Consider the following questions as starting points for research; encourage students to bring in their knowledge from other sources and disciplines; follow the links to other material online and in books.

What are the main influences on change in the English language, and how can we see the effect of these influences?

Is there a specific kind of language used in journalism? How has it changed over time?

Does the retention of 'foreign pronunciation' for certain words (pizza, spiel, rendezvous) imply that they have not been fully assimilated into English?

What will happen to English over the next hundred years?

Why has the idea of an academy to regulate English not worked?

Can dictionaries and grammars only ever describe the state of English at a past point in time, or can they successfully function as a way of showing what English ought to be?

How do the ways of compiling Johnson's Dictionary and the OED differ? What are the implications of these differences?

Further activities

Encourage the students to formulate their own questions, and to find sources in the timeline and elsewhere to expand their study material.

More information

Explore the Changing Language section of the British Library website

www.bl.uk/learning/langlit/changlang/writtenword/writtenwordtimeline.html

Poetry

The earliest known poetry in Old English dates from the seventh century, and the English language has produced a stream of poetry ranging from epics such as *Paradise Lost* to Edward Lear's limericks. The range of verse forms used in English have allowed the succinct expression of ideas and emotions providing enduring material for studying the relationship between form and content in the language.

Aims of this resource

This resource collection provides students with materials to explore the following ideas and concepts:

Some of the key verse texts in English.

Writers' drafts, showing the process of writing in action.

The historical context for the poetry, and how the texts relate to their political and social context.

The intellectual context, specifically looking at how the poetry relates to other forms of literature, both contemporary and earlier material.

Students should be encouraged to explore the timeline themselves and use the potential to select items to make their own timeline to create a collection of material that provokes their own questions.

Suggested sources

Sumer is icumen in (1230)

Gawayn and the Green Knight (1375)

The Canterbury Tales by Geoffrey Chaucer (1375)

The Faerie Queene by Edmund Spenser (1590)

Paradise Lost by John Milton (1667)

An Horatian Ode by Andrew Marvell (1650)

The Iliad translated by Alexander Pope (1720)

William Blake's notebook (1794)

I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud by William Wordsworth (1807)

Ozymandias by Percy Shelley (1818)

Don Juan by George Gordon, Lord Byron (1819)

The Charge of the Light Brigade by Tennyson (1854)

Dulce et Decorum Est by Wilfred Owen (1918)

Suggested questions to use as a starting point

Consider the following questions as starting points for research; encourage students to bring in their knowledge from other sources and disciplines; follow the links to other material online and in books.

How do the subjects of poetry change?

How do the forms of poetry change?

How do rhyme and rhythm change?

When do people read poetry? What sort of poetry?

Why do publishers publish poetry? When did you last buy some poetry?

How has the 'language of poetry' changed over time?

Further activities

Encourage the students to formulate their own questions, and to find sources in the timeline and elsewhere to expand their study material.

More information

Explore the Poetry and Performance section of the British Library website

www.bl.uk/learning/langlit/poetryperformance/poetryhome.html

Drama

English drama could claim to derive ultimately from the performed poems of Old English, but is generally considered to have emerged as a discreet activity when performed Biblical stories came out of the church, via the entrance steps, to the pageant taken round the town. Highly developed during the late Elizabethan period, the Restoration, and from the later nineteenth century, writing for drama was less active during the Commonwealth and the eighteenth century.

Aims of this resource

This resource collection provides students with materials to explore the following ideas and concepts:

The published formats of some of the key texts of English drama.

The relationship between dramatic and other texts.

The way dramatists have used existing stories in their work.

Students should be encouraged to explore the timeline themselves and use the potential to select items to make their own timeline to create a collection of material that provokes their own questions.

Suggested sources

History of the Kings of Britain by Geoffrey of Monmouth (1130s)

Doctor Faustus by Christopher Marlowe (1592)

Richard III by William Shakespeare (1597)

King Lear by William Shakespeare (1608)

The First Folio edition of Shakespeare's plays (1623)

Theatrical figures (1662)

The Way of the World by William Congreve (1700)

She Stoops to Conquer by Oliver Goldsmith (1773)

Notes on Shakespeare by Samuel Taylor Coleridge (c1810)

East Lynne by Ellen Wood (1861)

Saturday Night at the Victoria Theatre (1872)

The Importance of Being Earnest by Oscar Wilde (1894)

Pygmalion by George Bernard Shaw (1913)

Suggested questions to use as a starting point

Consider the following questions as starting points for research; encourage students to bring in their knowledge from other sources and disciplines; follow the links to other material online and in books.

What can we tell about the presentation of drama from the images from 1616, 1662, and 1872?

Should the performance of literature (*Beowulf*, Dickens) be thought of as a strand of drama?

Has drama writing become more naturalistic over time? If so, why should that have happened?

Drama during the sixteenth century was performed by men, with boys playing the women's roles. Has drama in English ever fully shaken off this gender imbalance?

Has writing for drama now shifted from the theatre to film and television? Is theatre now more about spectacle than speech?

How have dramatists used previously known texts?

Further activities

Encourage the students to formulate their own questions, and to find sources in the timeline and elsewhere to expand their study material.

More information

Explore the Shakespeare in Quarto section of the British Library website

www.bl.uk/treasures/shakespeare/homepage.html

Journalism

Journalism developed from the handwritten corantos and newsletters of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to the newsbooks and newspapers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Pamphlets were published in vast numbers during the period of the civil war in the mid-seventeenth century, and journals such as *The Spectator* were used as vehicles for political debate in the early eighteenth century. Some of today's newspapers were started in the eighteenth century, and large numbers of specialist newspapers were published in Victorian Britain, serving different interests. Independent newspapers blossomed in the mid-twentieth century, with technologies such as Xeroxing giving rise to samizdat newspapers and fanzines, long before desktop publishing offered the possibility of everyone being a newspaper publisher. As the processes of journalism have moved more to online publishing, the major newspapers are consciously updating their printing presses 'for the last time'.

Aims of this resource

This resource collection provides students with materials to explore the following ideas and concepts:

Some of the key items showing the development and breadth of journalism during the period.

The political context for journalism, and how the texts relate to their historical and social context.

Students should be encouraged to explore the timeline themselves and use the potential to select items to make their own timeline to create a collection of material that provokes their own questions.

Suggested sources

Chronicle of the Black Death (1348)

Speech by Elizabeth I (1588)

A newsbook (1607)

The London Gazette (1666)

Advertisement for the London Rhinoceros (1684)

The Spectator (1711)

Execution of Louis XVI (1793)

Broadside (1829)

The Match-girls' strike (1888)

The *Daily Mirror* (1914)

Kristallnacht (1938)

Newspapers (1960 onwards)

Suggested questions to use as a starting point

Consider the following questions as starting points for research; encourage students to bring in their knowledge from other sources and disciplines; follow the links to other material online and in books.

How does the device of 'fiction delivered as reality' relate to journalism?

What kinds of topics are the subjects of discursive journalism?

What makes sensationalist journalism sensationalist?

How do newspapers indicate who their specific audiences are?

How does the language of newspapers differ from other types of usage?

Further activities

Encourage the students to formulate their own questions, and to find sources in the timeline and elsewhere to expand their study material.

More information

Explore the Civil War News section of the British Library website

www.bl.uk/learning/histcitizen/uk/newspapers/civilwarnews.html

Teaching English

The teaching of English to English speakers has been a source of texts for well over a thousand years. Grammar, spelling, pronunciation and punctuation have all been taught, to adults as well as children. The selected texts have used different approaches to the teaching of English, direct, indirect, rigid and amusing.

Aims of this resource

This resource collection provides students with materials to explore the following ideas and concepts:

Different kinds of texts for teaching English.

Texts for teaching English presented for different kinds of people.

The development of the relationship between social class and different kinds of English.

Students should be encouraged to explore the timeline themselves and use the potential to select items to make their own timeline to create a collection of material that provokes their own questions.

Suggested sources

Ormulum by Orm (c1200)

The Elementarie by Richard Mulcaster (1582)

A Table Alphabeticall by Robert Cawdrey (1604)

The English Grammar by Ben Jonson (1640)

A Dictionary of the English Language by Samuel Johnson (1755)

A Short Introduction to English Grammar by Robert Lowth (1762)

A Critical Pronouncing Dictionary by John Walker (1791)

Alphabet Books (1815)

Grammar for Children (1824)

Punctuation for Children (1825)

Poor Letter H (1854)

The Queen's English by Henry Alford (1864)

Hobson Jobson (1886)

Pygmalion by George Bernard Shaw (1913)

The BBC Advisory Committee on Spoken English (1928)

Suggested questions to use as a starting point

Consider the following questions as starting points for research; encourage students to bring in their knowledge from other sources and disciplines; follow the links to other material online and in books.

How have the works indicated above been directed at specific audiences?

Would an academy for fixing English (Swift, 1712) assist in the learning of English?

How has social class developed as an issue in the acquiring of skills in using English?

How has the teaching of English for adults differed from the teaching of English for children?

How has the teaching of spoken English differed from the teaching of written English?

How has the teaching of spelling developed?

What sort of published material is used now to support the teaching of English?

Further activities

Encourage the students to formulate their own questions, and to find sources in the timeline and elsewhere to expand their study material.

More information



Explore the Dictionaries and Meanings section of the British Library website

www.bl.uk/learning/langlit/dic/meanings.html

Advertising

Advertising can be found as early as the beginning of printing in England, in Caxton's books, and it has continued to be a feature of printed books. The selling of medicine has been a strong source for advertising, and booksellers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries often sold medicines, the two kinds of goods coming together in printed advertisements. The surge of advertising in the nineteenth century reflected the massive growth in trade and entertainment.

Aims of this resource

This resource collection provides students with materials to explore the following ideas and concepts:

Different kinds of advertising through the period.

The different formats of advertising.

Different uses of English to deliver a persuasive message.

The different things and ideas that have been the subjects of advertising.

Students should be encouraged to explore the timeline themselves and use the potential to select items to make their own timeline to create a collection of material that provokes their own questions.

Suggested sources

The First Folio edition of Shakespeare's plays (1623)

Advert for a quack-doctor (1650s)

A cure for the plague (1665)

Advertisement for the London Rhinoceros (1684)

First advertisement for curry powder (1784)

Freakshow posters (1875)

Circus poster (1887)

Wanted poster for Hitler (1939)

Suggested questions to use as a starting point

Consider the following questions as starting points for research; encourage students to bring in their knowledge from other sources and disciplines; follow the links to other material online and in books.

How does the format of a published book advertise its content?

How has advertising changed over the past thousand years?

What have been the main things people have chosen to advertise?

Does advertising always work in the same way?

Is propaganda a kind of advertising?

Further activities

Encourage the students to formulate their own questions, and to find sources in the timeline and elsewhere to expand their study material.

More information

Explore the Persuasion section of the British Library website

www.bl.uk/learning/histcitizen/21cc/lang/persuasion1/persuasion.html

Writers' drafts

Looking at writers' drafts has been described as being in the position of sitting on the writer's shoulder watching the process of writing. When looking at handwritten material before it is published it is important to distinguish between drafts (the text being worked out) and fair copies (the author's version of the text to be presented to the publisher).

Aims of this resource

This resource collection provides students with materials to explore the following ideas and concepts:

Different levels of writers' drafts and texts, some of them not intended for publishing.

To question the idea of whether there is more than one text of a written work.

Students should be encouraged to explore the timeline themselves and use the potential to select items to make their own timeline to create a collection of material that provokes their own questions.

Suggested sources

Captain Cook's Journal (1775)

William Blake's notebook (1794)

I wandered lonely as a cloud by William Wordsworth (1804)

Persuasion by Jane Austen (1816)

Nicholas Nickleby by Charles Dickens (1838)

Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte (1847)

How do I Love Thee? By Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1850)

Middlemarch by George Eliot (1871)

The Importance of Being Earnest by Oscar Wilde (1894)

Tess of the D'Urbervilles by Thomas Hardy (1891)

Sherlock Holmes manuscript by Arthur Conan Doyle (1904)

Dulce et Decorum Est by Wilfred Owen (1918)

Suggested questions to use as a starting point

Consider the following questions as starting points for research; encourage students to bring in their knowledge from other sources and disciplines; follow the links to other material online and in books.

How do we distinguish between drafts and fair copies?

From looking at Thomas Hardy's manuscript we can see that the dialect speech was an alteration from standard English, and that the title was changed. What do these tell us about Hardy's writing process?

What does the draft of *The Importance of Being Earnest* tell us about how Wilde put the play together?

Do writers keep drafts now? Is the study of literature going to be poorer because writers use computers rather than ink and paper?

Should we look at writers' drafts or be content with the published version of the text?

Further activities

Encourage the students to formulate their own questions, and to find sources in the timeline and elsewhere to expand their study material.

More information

Look at the British Library Images Online search results for 'draft'

www.imagesonline.bl.uk/results.asp