

Ladies and gentlemen,

Today, we embark on a fascinating journey through the history of the English language--a story as rich and diverse as the people who speak it. Picture, if you will, a time over 1,000 years ago, where the roots of English were first planted by the Anglo-Saxons. Their language, Old English, sounded remarkably different from what we know today. It's quite amazing to think that words like "night" and "knight" have their origins back in this time, though they would have sounded more like "niht" and "cniht."

As we move forward to the 11th century, the Norman Conquest brought a wave of French influence. Suddenly, English began to borrow words like "court" and "judge," transforming it profoundly and leading us into the era of Middle English. Picture a medieval marketplace, bustling with people speaking this evolving tongue--a place where Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales" began to take shape.

The journey doesn't stop there. The Renaissance opened the doors to Latin and Greek, infusing English with an academic flair. Words such as "philosophy" and "scientific" entered the scene, paving the way for Early Modern English, the language of Shakespeare and the King James Bible. "To be or not to be," is a phrase that still echoes today, demonstrating the enduring power of these words.

And finally, the English of today, a language shaped by centuries of change, global influences, and technological advancement. We now have a lexicon enriched by the internet, cultures around the world, and a vibrant cross-pollination of ideas. English is a living, breathing entity, continuously growing and adapting.

So, as we delve into the history of this extraordinary language, remember that each word carries a piece of our past. By understanding where English has come from, we better appreciate where it can go. Thank you.