

Chapter

2

Language



Heere bigynneth the Knyghtes Tale.

Whilom, as olde stories tellen us,
Ther was a duc that highte Theseus;
Of Atthenes he was lord and governour;
And in his tyme swich a conquerour
That gretter was ther noon under the sonne.

Here begins the Knight's Tale.

Once, as old stories tell, there was a prince
Named Theseus that in Athens ruled long since,
A conqueror in his time; for rich lands won
There was no greater underneath the sun.

What Do You Think?

Answer the questions with your best guess. Circle **Yes** or **No**.

Do you think . . .

1. English was a mix of five languages at one time?
2. the first English dictionary came out in 1855?
3. Shakespeare spelled his name in different ways all the time?
4. the word *window* originally meant "wind eye"?
5. The English dish called pie came from the word *circle*?

Yes	No
Yes	No
Yes	No
Yes	No
Yes	No

Pre-Reading

1. Discuss the answers to these questions with your classmates.
 1. Look at the manuscript written in Old English and the modern translation on page 33. Which words are spelled differently today?
 2. There were no spelling rules when Old English was spoken. What problems do you think this situation caused for people?
 3. Do you think spelling rules are important? Why or why not?
 4. What spelling rules do you know in English?
2. Six words in the list below are spelled wrong. Find the misspelled words and correct them. Use a dictionary to check your answers.
 - a. pronunciation (the way you say a word)
 - b. batchelor (unmarried male)
 - c. superintendant (manager)
 - d. exerpt (selected passage from a book or film)
 - e. absorption (process of being absorbed)
 - f. tarrif (import fee)
 - g. occurence (happening)
 - h. newstand (place where you buy newspapers and magazines)
 - i. separate (to move apart)
 - j. nighttime (at night)
3. Do you know the American and British spellings of these words?

American	British
color	5.
1.	centre
2.	behaviour
theater	6.
jail	7.
3.	judgement
program	8.
4.	skilful
check	9.
draft	10.

Reading 1



CD 1,
Track 3

Spell It in English

1 English spelling is confusing and
chaotic, as any student of English knows all
too well. “How can the letters *ough* spell so
many different sounding words,” they ask,
5 “like *dough*, *bough*, *rough*, and *through*?”
And what about a word like *colonel*, which
clearly contains no *r* yet pretends it does,
and *ache*, with its *k* sound instead of the
chuh sound of *arch*? And why does *four* have
10 a *u* while *forty* doesn’t? There are no simple
rules for English spelling, but there is an
explanation behind its complexity. We have
only to look back in history.

Over the centuries, the English language
15 has been like a magnet, attracting words
from numerous other languages. It all
started with the Britons, an ancient people living in a part of Western Europe
that eventually became the British Isles.¹ The Britons spoke a language
called Celtic, which was a combination of the early forms of Irish,² Scottish,³
20 and Welsh.⁴ When the Britons were conquered by the Romans and later
the Germanic tribes, their language was also invaded. The merging of the
languages gave birth to Old English (an early form of the Modern English
we know), and a Latin alphabet replaced, with a few exceptions, the ancient
Germanic alphabet. In the ninth century, the conquering Norsemen from



¹**the British Isles:** Great Britain (England, Scotland, Wales) and Ireland

²**Irish:** the language of Ireland

³**Scottish:** the language of Scotland

⁴**Welsh:** the language of Wales

25 Scandinavia added their pinch of language spice,⁵ as did the French in the 11th century.

By the 14th century, English, with its mix of at least five languages, had evolved into what is called Middle English and had become Britain's official language. At that time, however, its spellings were far from consistent or
30 rational. Many dialects had developed over the centuries, and sometimes people adopted the spelling used in one part of the country and the pronunciation used in another. For instance, today we use the western English spellings for *busy* and *bury*, but we give the first the London pronunciation *bizzy* and the second the Kentish⁶ pronunciation *berry*. Of course, this all
35 happened when English was primarily a spoken language, and only scholars knew how to read and write. Even they appear to have been quite indifferent to matters of consistency in spelling and were known to spell the same word several different ways in a single sentence.

Even after William Caxton set up England's first printing press in the late
40 15th century and the written word became available to everyone, standard spelling wasn't considered very important. As a matter of fact, the typesetters in the 1500s made things even worse by being very careless about spelling. If a blank space needed to be filled in or a line was too long, they simply changed the spellings of words to make them fit. Moreover, many of the
45 early printers in England were from Germany or Holland and didn't know English very well. If they didn't know the spelling of a word, they made up one! Different printers each had their favorite spellings, so one word might be spelled five or six different ways, depending on who printed the passage.

Throughout this period, names and words appear in many different forms.
50 For instance, *where* can be found as *wher*, *whair*, *wair*, *wheare*, *were*, and so on. People were even very liberal about their names. More than 80 spellings of Shakespeare's name have been found, among them *Shagsspeare*, *Shakspeare*, and even *Shakestaffe*. Shakespeare himself didn't spell his name the same way in any two of his six known signatures—he even spelled his name two
55 different ways in his will.

By the late 16th century and early 17th century, some progress had been made in standardizing spelling due to the work of various scholars. By then, however, English spelling was far from a simple phonetic system. For one

⁵**pinch of language spice:** a little bit of variety in the language

⁶**Kentish:** of Kent, a county in southeast England

60 thing, word pronunciations had changed too rapidly for a truly phonetic
spelling to keep up. Also, English had borrowed from many languages and
ended up having far too many sounds (more than 40) for the 26 letters in
its Roman alphabet. By the time printing houses finally began to agree on
standard spellings, many of these written forms were only a shadow of their
spoken selves. In other words, spelling and pronunciation sometimes had
65 little in common.

Finally, in 1755, Samuel Johnson gave English its first great dictionary. His
choice of spellings may not have always been the best or the easiest, but the
book helped to make the spellings of most English words uniform. Eventually,
people became aware of the need for “correct” spelling. Meanwhile, on the
70 other side of the Atlantic, Noah Webster was standardizing American English
in his *American Dictionary of the English Language* and *American Spelling Book*.
Although the British had been complaining about the messiness of English
spelling for some time, it was the Americans, with their fanaticism for
efficiency, who screamed the loudest. Webster not only favored a simplified,
75 more phonetic spelling system, but also tried to persuade Congress to pass a
law making the use of nonstandard spelling a punishable offense.

Mark Twain⁷ was of the same mind—but laziness figured into his
opinion. He wasn’t concerned so much with the difficulty of spelling words
as with the trouble in writing them. He became a fan of the “phonographic
80 alphabet,” created by Isaac Pitman, the inventor of shorthand—a system
in which symbols represent words, phrases, and letters. “To write the word
‘laugh,’” Twain wrote in *A Simplified Alphabet*, “the pen has to make fourteen
strokes—no labor is saved to penman.” But to write the same word in the
phonographic alphabet, Twain continued, the pen had to make just three
85 strokes. As much as Twain would have loved it, Pitman’s phonographic
alphabet never caught on.

Interest in reforming English spelling continued to gain momentum on
both sides of the Atlantic. For a while, it seemed as if every famous writer and
scholar had jumped on the spelling bandwagon.⁸ Spelling reform associations
90 began to pop up everywhere. In 1876, the American Philological Association
called for the “urgent” adoption of 11 new spellings: *liv, tho, thru, wisht,*
catalog, definit, gard, giv, hv, infinit, and ar. In the same year, the Spelling
Reform Association was formed, followed 3 years later by a British version.

⁷**Mark Twain:** an American author (1835–1910) who wrote many books, including
The Adventures of Tom Sawyer and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

⁸**jump on the bandwagon:** join a popular movement

95 In 1906, the philanthropist Andrew Carnegie gave \$250,000 to help establish the Simplified Spelling Board. The board quickly issued a list of 300 words that were commonly spelled two ways, such as *ax* and *axe*, and called for using the simpler of the two. The board helped to gain acceptance for quite a few American spellings, including *catalog*, *demagog*, and *program*.

100 Eventually the Simplified Spelling Board got carried away with its work, calling for such spellings as *tuff*, *def*, *troble*, and *yu*. The call for simplified spelling quickly went out of fashion, particularly with the onset of World War I and the death of Andrew Carnegie. The movement never died out completely, however. Spelling reform continued to be an ongoing, if less dramatic, process, as it had been for centuries. Without the benefit of large
105 donations or outside agencies, many words have shed useless letters. *Deposit* has lost its *e*, as have *fossile* and *secretariate*. *Musick* and *physick* have dropped their needless *k*'s, and *catalogue* and *dialogue* have shed their last two vowels.

As long as the world goes around, language will continue to change. New words will be added to English; spellings will be altered. But because people
110 are most comfortable with the familiar, it's not likely that we'll ever see a major change in the way most words are spelled. Anyway, what would we do without the challenge of English spelling?

Vocabulary

A. Vocabulary in Context

Select the letter of the answer that is closest in meaning to the **bold** word or phrase.

1. The **merging** of the different languages gave birth to Old English.
 - a. crossing
 - b. confusion
 - c. blending
 - d. complication
2. By the 14th century, English, with its mix of languages, had **evolved** into what is called Middle English.
 - a. improved
 - b. appeared
 - c. spread
 - d. developed

3. Even scholars were quite **indifferent** to matters of consistency in spelling and were known to spell the same word several different ways in a single sentence.
 - a. uncaring about
 - b. superior about
 - c. unsocial about
 - d. confused about
4. People were even **liberal** about the spelling of their names, using different spellings on the same page.
 - a. receptive
 - b. interested
 - c. understanding
 - d. free
5. Americans, with their **fanaticism** for efficiency, complained the most about the messiness of English spelling.
 - a. spirit
 - b. obsession
 - c. excitement
 - d. fascination
6. Interest in reforming English spelling continued to **gain momentum** on both sides of the Atlantic.
 - a. be temporary
 - b. become stable
 - c. grow stronger
 - d. get weak
7. The **philanthropist** Andrew Carnegie gave \$250,000 to help establish the Simplified Spelling Board.
 - a. person who is an expert in language
 - b. person who actively helps others
 - c. person famous for his or her written work
 - d. person known for his or her wealth
8. The Spelling Board outlived its usefulness when it **got carried away** with its work.
 - a. became overenthusiastic about
 - b. was removed from
 - c. got to continue
 - d. became successful in

Word Partnership	Use momentum with:
v.	build momentum, gain momentum, gather momentum, have momentum, lose momentum, maintain momentum

9. The call for simplified spelling went out of fashion with the **onset** of World War I.

- | | |
|------------|----------|
| a. outcome | c. end |
| b. tragedy | d. start |

10. Many words **shed** useless letters.

- | | |
|------------|------------|
| a. changed | c. dropped |
| b. kept | d. added |

B. Vocabulary Building

1. Match the adjectives with the nouns as they were used in the context of the reading. Look back at the reading to check your answers. Add two more nouns that may be used with each adjective.

- | | | |
|-------------|------------|-------------|
| a. change | c. offense | e. spelling |
| b. language | d. process | f. system |

- | | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|-------|-------|
| 1. <u>b</u> official | <u>language</u> | _____ | _____ |
| 2. _____ standard | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 3. _____ punishable | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 4. _____ phonetic | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 5. _____ ongoing | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 6. _____ major | _____ | _____ | _____ |

2. Use the nouns and adjectives you listed in Exercise 1 to complete these sentences about English spelling.

- Spelling reform continues to be an _____.
- _____ was introduced with the first dictionaries.
- It is unlikely that there will be any _____ in English spelling now.
- Spelling did not represent the _____ of English.

5. Middle English became the _____ of Britain by the 14th century.
6. Webster wanted to make the use of nonstandard spelling a _____.

C. Vocabulary in New Context

Now make new sentences using the adjective and noun combinations you chose in Part B, Exercise 1.

Reading Comprehension

A. Looking for the Main Ideas

Circle the letter of the best answer.

1. What is the main idea of paragraph 3?
 - a. By the time English had become a written language, the influence of several languages and dialects had made spelling and pronunciation very inconsistent.
 - b. Scholars didn't help the problem of spelling inconsistency, because they often spelled words several different ways.
 - c. In Britain, English words had different spellings and pronunciations in different parts of the country.
 - d. By the 14th century, English had evolved into Middle English and was Britain's official language.
2. Paragraph 6 is mostly about _____.
 - a. how progress had been made in standardizing spelling by the 17th century
 - b. why English spelling and pronunciation were often very different
 - c. how English had many more sounds than it had letters in its alphabet
 - d. why printing houses played a role in standardizing spelling
3. Paragraph 12 is mainly concerned with _____.
 - a. the work of the Simplified Spelling Board
 - b. why the call for simplified spelling went out of fashion
 - c. the many words that have been shortened by dropping useless letters
 - d. the ongoing changes in the English language

B. Skimming and Scanning for Details

Scan the reading quickly to find the answers to the following questions. Write complete sentences.

1. According to the reading, what combination of languages formed the Celtic language?
2. Name four conquering peoples whose languages affected the development of the English language.
3. Before the invention of the printing press, English was mostly what kind of language?
4. Why were the typesetters of the 1500s not very helpful when it came to making spelling standard?
5. Who was responsible for giving English its first great dictionary?
6. What kind of spelling system did Noah Webster favor?
7. What is shorthand, and who invented it?
8. What purpose did spelling reform associations serve?
9. In the last sentence of paragraph 11, to what does the last *their* refer?
10. Why are we not likely to see major changes in the way most words are spelled?

C. Making Inferences and Drawing Conclusions

The answers to these questions are not directly stated in the reading. Circle the letter of the best answer.

1. The reading implies that _____.
 - a. conquering tribes forced the Britons to speak their languages
 - b. English was a "pure" language before the 14th century
 - c. the influence of other languages made English a rich but complicated language
 - d. when Britain made English its official language, it stopped foreign words from entering the language and making it even more complicated

2. From the reading, it can be concluded that _____.
 - a. scholars weren't much more educated than the masses
 - b. until the first dictionaries were written, even educated people weren't overly concerned with the spelling of words
 - c. the invention of the printing press didn't have a significant influence on the English language
 - d. there was no real need for an English dictionary before Johnson wrote his in 1755
3. It can be inferred from the reading that _____.
 - a. if it weren't for Mark Twain, many English words would now be spelled differently
 - b. Andrew Carnegie never played a significant role in the area of American spelling
 - c. spelling reform associations had less influence on English spelling changes than the natural course of language changes today
 - d. thanks to many concerned people, spelling is simpler now than it was 200 years ago
4. The author's tone is _____.
 - a. informal
 - b. sentimental
 - c. insincere
 - d. argumentative

Discussion Questions

Discuss the answers to these questions with your classmates.

1. How would you simplify English spelling?
2. If a spelling system based on pronunciation were devised in English, on whose pronunciation would you base it?
3. Do you know any special strategies for remembering difficult spellings in English?
4. Do you know of any new spellings of words used on the Internet?

Critical Thinking Questions

Discuss the answers to these questions with your classmates.

1. Why do you think proposals to reform English spelling have not won support?
2. What does language tell us about the country and people who speak it?
3. Why are you learning English? Do you think people should know more than one language? Why or why not?
4. In some countries, the people of that country speak several different languages. What problems can this cause? Are there any advantages? Do you think the world should have a universal language? Why or why not?

Reading 2



CD 1,
Track 4

May I Borrow a Word?

The following extracts are taken from pages 154–155 of the book Great Expressions, by Marvin Vanoni (William Morrow & Co., New York, 1989). They illustrate the historical development of the words window, pie, and bangs.

Window

1 **E**arly Norse¹ carpenters had
few tools and no building materials
other than wood, stone, and straw.
Consequently, they were forced to
5 build houses as simply as possible.
There were no iron hinges;² doors
usually hung on leather thongs.³



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Since doors had to be closed in cold weather, some form of ventilation had to be provided. This was usually done by leaving a hole, or “eye,” in the roof. Through it smoke and foul air could escape. Because the wind frequently whistled through it, the air hole was called *vindr auga* (wind eye).

English builders borrowed the Norse term, modified it to window, and developed new techniques by which the eye that once admitted the wind now holds it out.

¹**Norse:** people who lived in Scandinavia in ancient times

²**hinges:** pieces of metal used to join a door to its frame

³**thongs:** a long, thin strip of leather

Pie

Until the late eighteenth century, the bird now called magpie was termed simply “pie.” Then, as now, such a bird was likely to be a habitual collector. It was not unusual to find a pie’s nest filled with pebbles, bits of broken glass, string, chicken feathers, and so on.

At some unrecorded time, an inspired housewife thought



of placing a crust around a small pot of stew. She used whatever ingredients at hand—meat, fowl, or fish, plus a few vegetables and perhaps an egg or two. Her menfolk⁴ liked the odd conglomeration and, casting about for a name, compared it with a pie’s nest, which was filled with a variety of odds and ends. So they called the new dish *pie*.

First used in writing around 1303, the word came to include many varieties of pie. No other language has a word that is even distantly related to the name of the most popular of English dishes.

Bangs

The term we now use to describe a particular hairstyle once referred to the way a horse’s tail looked!

Money problems in the middle of the nineteenth century hurt many of the rich sportsmen. Some sold



⁴**menfolk:** men in a family or society

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their stables⁵ and horses. Others merely reduced their staff and kept only their best animals. The shorthanded stable crews couldn't groom horses as carefully as before. It had been customary to spend hours trimming a horse's tail; in the new age of austerity, grooms⁶ just cut the tail off square, or "banged it off."

Soon bangtail animals were winning horse races everywhere. Designers took note, and it wasn't long before fashionable women were displaying their hair in bangs.

⁵**stables:** buildings in which horses are kept

⁶**grooms:** people whose job is to look after horses in a stable and keep them clean

Vocabulary

A. Vocabulary in Context

Select the letter of the answer that is closest in meaning to the **bold** word or phrase.

- Since doors had to be closed in cold weather, some form of **ventilation** had to be provided.
 - a way to let light in
 - a system to allow air in and out
 - an opening to get in and out
 - a way to see outside
- Through it smoke and **foul** air could escape.
 - clean and fresh
 - light and fragrant
 - thick or dark
 - dirty or impure
- An **inspired** housewife thought of placing a crust around a small pot of stew.
 - having a good idea
 - feeling concerned
 - being desperate
 - having a great need for
- She used whatever ingredients at hand—meat, **fowl**, or fish.
 - cow
 - sea creature
 - bird
 - lamb

5. Her menfolk liked the odd **conglomeration**.
 - a. mess
 - b. confusion
 - c. combination
 - d. sample

6. They compared it with a pie's nest, which was filled with a variety of **odds and ends**.
 - a. a blend of ingredients
 - b. several different locks of hair
 - c. an assortment of small pieces
 - d. a number of things that belong together

7. The **shorthanded** stable crews couldn't groom horses carefully as before.
 - a. having many faults or defects
 - b. having less people than needed
 - c. being able to do something quickly
 - d. being rudely impatient

8. The shorthanded stable crews couldn't **groom** horses carefully as before.
 - a. provide training to
 - b. give medical attention to
 - c. give food and water to
 - d. care for by cleaning and brushing

9. It had been customary to spend hours **trimming** a horse's tail.
 - a. cutting in a neat and tidy way
 - b. cutting in a rough or ragged way
 - c. cutting extremely short
 - d. cutting straight or square

10. In the new age of **austerity**, grooms just cut the tail off square, or "banged it off."
 - a. living with great style
 - b. living by society's rules
 - c. living in a different or radical way
 - d. living with less luxury and comfort

B. Vocabulary Building

1. Read the list of verbs below. Find verbs in the readings that have the same meaning.
 1. alter (window) _____ modify _____
 2. let in (window) _____
 3. make a loud, high sound when moving (window) _____
 4. call or name (pie) _____
 5. show/show off (bangs) _____
 6. pay attention (bangs) _____

C. Vocabulary in New Context

Use the verbs you listed in Part B to complete these sentences.

1. _____ of what I say, you will see that it will be so.
2. He always _____ the same tune in the shower.
3. The expensive restaurant doesn't _____ people dressed in casual clothes.
4. Many movie stars _____ their designer clothes at the Academy Awards.
5. The Old English word *nekename* was later _____ to *nickname*, an added name.
6. When all the roads are so full with vehicles that none of them can move, it is _____ as *gridlock*.

Reading Comprehension

A. Looking for the Main Ideas

Some of the following statements from the reading are main ideas, and some are supporting statements. Write **M** in the blank in front of each main idea. Write **S** in front of each supporting statement.

- _____ 1. Early Norse carpenters had few tools and no building materials other than wood, stone, and straw.
- _____ 2. Since doors had to be closed in cold weather, some form of ventilation had to be provided.
- _____ 3. Through it smoke and foul air could escape.
- _____ 4. Then, as now, such a bird was likely to be a habitual collector.
- _____ 5. It was not unusual to find a pie's nest filled with pebbles, bits of broken glass, string, chicken feathers, and so on.
- _____ 6. At some unrecorded time, an inspired housewife thought of placing a crust around a small pot of stew.
- _____ 7. She used whatever ingredients at hand—meat, fowl, or fish, plus a few vegetables and perhaps an egg or two.
- _____ 8. Money problems in the middle of the nineteenth century hurt many of the rich sportsmen.

- ____ 9. Some sold their stables and horses.
- ____ 10. Others merely reduced their staff and kept only their best animals.

B. Skimming and Scanning for Details

Scan the reading quickly to complete the following sentences.

1. In Norse homes, there were no iron hinges; doors usually hung on _____.
2. In Norse homes, ventilation was provided by _____.
3. The air hole in Norse homes was called *vindr auga*, or wind eye, because _____.
4. Until the _____ century, the bird now called magpie was termed simply "pie."
5. The men compared the housewife's new dish with a _____.
6. The word *pie* was first used in writing around the year _____.
7. The term we now use to describe a particular hairstyle once referred to _____.
8. In the middle of the nineteenth century, many of the rich sportsmen had _____ problems.
9. To save time, the stable crews cut the horse's tail in a _____ shape.
10. _____ noticed the new tails on the horses and soon fashionable women were displaying their hair in bangs.

C. Making Inferences and Drawing Conclusions

Some of the following statements are facts taken from the reading. Other statements can be inferred from the reading. Write **F** in the blank in front of each factual statement. Write **I** in front of each inference.

- ____ 1. The Norsemen were not technologically advanced.
- ____ 2. The Norsemen used whatever was locally available for building.
- ____ 3. The Norse houses were very simple.
- ____ 4. A hole in the roof was made for ventilation.
- ____ 5. English builders developed new techniques to make windows.

- _____ 6. The magpie lines its nest with items it collects.
- _____ 7. Using a crust to contain food was a uniquely English idea.
- _____ 8. Problems can sometimes lead to interesting changes in society.
- _____ 9. Stable crews didn't have the time to spend on grooming the horses that they had once had.
- _____ 10. Cutting off the horses' tails had a positive effect on their performance.

Discussion Questions

Discuss the answers to these questions with your classmates.

1. Certain English words are formed by combining parts of two other words, usually the first part of one and the last part of another. An example is *smog*, which is a combination of *smoke* and *fog*. Other examples include *brunch* and *motel*. Words formed with this technique are called *portmanteau* words. Create five new portmanteau words.
2. Describe the process you would use in learning a new language.
3. Imagine that four of you are together in a deserted part of the world. None of you speak the same language. Describe the process of creating a language to communicate with one another.

Critical Thinking Questions

Discuss the answers to these questions with your classmates.

1. Every day, new words are being added to our language. What changes in the past 100 years have had the greatest impact on the creation of new words? How are these new words created? Name at least 10 words that have come into our languages in the past 25 years alone. What new changes do you think will occur to add even more new words in the next century?
2. What can we tell about a person from the language that he or she speaks? In other words, what does language say about us? How do you think humans first learned language?
3. Historically, diplomats have been compared to poets, actors, and orators. What is the "language of diplomacy," and how do you think it developed? How is language used by diplomats to overcome the differences between nations and cultures?

Writing Skills

A. Organizing: *The Process Essay*

In Reading 1, we saw how English spelling developed over time into what it is today. In Reading 2, we saw how the words *window*, *pie*, and *bangs* originated and how they came to mean what they mean today. Both of these readings use a chronological (time) order.

One type of process essay describes events in the order they occurred over a period of time, such as a morning, a day, a childhood, or the duration of a war. A history or a biography usually describes events over a period of time.

Another type of process essay describes a technical process, such as how a computer works or how hair is transplanted or how chocolate is made. (This type of essay contains many verbs in the passive form.)

Yet another type of process essay is the “how to” essay, in which you tell someone how to do or make something. This type is used to discuss topics such as how to prepare a special dish or how to get a driver’s license.

The essential component in all process essays is time order. Use time experiences and transition signals to indicate the time sequences clearly.

Thesis Statement for the Process Essay

The thesis statement for a process that is historical should name the process and indicate chronological order through words like *developed* or *evolved*.

Example:

Chinese is one of the world’s oldest languages, and its written form, like that of most languages, developed from the pictograph.

The thesis statement for a technical process should name the process and indicate that it involves a series of steps.

Example:

Hair transplantation is a fairly simple process.

It may also name the main steps in the process.

Example:

The main steps in the process of hair transplantation are removal of the desired number of hair transplants, removal of small plugs in the bald area, and insertion of the hair transplants.

The thesis statement for a “how-to” essay is the same as the one for a technical process. It should name the process or item and indicate that it involves a number of steps.

Examples:

Baking your own bread can be quite easy if you follow these steps.

Rescue breathing for a person who is unconscious involves a sequence of steps that must be followed carefully.

Organizing the Process Essay

Deciding how to divide a process essay into paragraphs can be tricky. If you are writing a historical or narrative piece about a chronological process, divide your paragraphs by major time periods, as in the student essay on pages 56 and 57. However, if you are writing about how to do something, the following guidelines will help you:

Introduction:

Introduce the topic and explain why the process is performed, by whom it is performed, and in what situation it is performed. You may list the main steps of the process in the order they are performed.

Body Paragraphs:

Start to describe the process, introducing the first step in a topic sentence. You may at this point state the equipment and supplies needed for the process. Divide the process into three or four major steps. Each major step should be described in a body paragraph. For example, if you were describing a wedding ceremony in your country, the first major step would be the preparations, the next would be the ceremony, and the last would be the reception or banquet.

Conclusion:

Summarize by restating the main steps and describing the result. The type of conclusion will depend on the type of process you are describing (see the student essay on pages 56 and 57).

Time Expressions

Time may be indicated by a preposition with a date or historical period: *in 1920*, *by the 16th century*, *over the next 10 years*, or other time expressions. We will look at some prepositions commonly used with time.

During indicates the duration of the activity from beginning to end, usually without stating the length of time.

Example:

During her first year at college, she performed remarkably.

For indicates the length of time or an appointed time.

Examples:

I waited *for* an hour.

My appointment was *for* three o'clock.

Since indicates a period of time from its beginning to the present.

Example:

He has been living there *since* 1920. (He is still there.)

Other prepositions of time indicate when or how long: *as*, *in*, *on*, *to*, *till*, *up to*, *upon*, *as early as*, *as soon as*, *from/to*, and *as late as*.

Examples:

The process should be completed *in* three hours.

The class will have a test *on* Friday.

He worked *till* ten o'clock.

She spends *up to* three hours every day rehearsing.

Leave to thaw for an hour *upon* taking it out of the freezer.

She woke up *as soon as* it was daylight.

Cook the beans *from* 25 to 35 minutes.

Dependent clauses can be introduced by prepositions used as adverbs (*after, before, until*) or by adverbs (*when, while*).

Examples:

After (or *when*) you have made a rough draft, start revising your work.

Before starting on the second draft, make sure that your details support your topic sentences.

Don't forget to look up the spelling of words you are unsure of *when* you are editing.

Do not be distracted *while* you are editing each sentence.

Other useful words that indicate a sequence in a process are ordinal numbers (*first, second, third*) and interrupters (*next, then, later, simultaneously, eventually*). The expressions *previous to, prior to, and just before* place an action before another action.

Examples:

Prior to writing your research, make sure you have all the information at hand.

Next, revise your draft.

B. Exercises

1. Look back at Reading 1 and underline all the words that indicate time or sequence.
2. Fill in the blanks using the following time words. Each choice can be used only once.

1561	in 1499	still
after	in 1542	then
during	in 1637	until
for	later	when
		while

The first European to discover the Amazon River was Spanish explorer Vicente Pinzon **1.**_____. He had been on Columbus's first voyage seven years earlier and was **2.**_____ determined to find a route to the Orient.

3._____ he sailed into the mouth of the Amazon and looked at the mighty river ahead of him, he thought he had gone around the world and hit the Ganges River in India. He stopped at some islands in the mouth of the river and

4._____ sailed on.

Forty-three years 5._____, 6._____, Francisco de Orellana became the first European to travel the entire river, although that was not what he set out to do at all. 7._____ a Spanish expedition became stranded in the jungles of Eastern Peru, Orellana was sent down the Napo River to find food. But starvation, sickness, and Indian attacks took place, and Orellana couldn't get back upriver. Instead, he followed tributaries to the Amazon, and 8._____ 16 months of incredible hardships, he and what was left of his party made it all the way to the sea.

In 9._____, the notorious Lope de Aguirre traveled the Amazon 10._____ on the run from Spanish troops. He left a trail of death and destruction throughout the Amazon, all the way to the sea.

No one traveled the entire river 11._____ another 76 years, 12._____ a Portuguese captain, Pedro Teixeira, became the first to complete an upriver "ascent" 13._____.

Writing Model: The Process Essay

Read the following process essay written by a student.

The Chinese Art of Writing

1 Chinese is one of the most remarkable pieces of art in language that
humankind has ever made. In elementary school, Chinese teachers ask their
students to write not only correctly but beautifully by printing a picture for
each character. Chinese is different from Western languages such as German,
5 French, or English because it has no alphabet. Instead, it contains 50,000
characters. If a person knows 5,000 of the most commonly used characters,
he or she can read a newspaper. How many characters a person knows
indicates how intellectual that person is. Chinese is one of the world's oldest
languages, and its written form, like that of most languages, developed from
10 the pictograph.

Thi Chi is credited with the invention of the written Chinese language 5,000 years ago. He created the first Chinese characters by imitating the shapes of living things in the world. The sign for *sun* was a circle with a wavy line through it to show heat (☼). The sign for *mountain* had three peaks (屾). The sign for a *child* was a child reaching for mother (𡗗). The sign for *man* looked like a man (𠤎). These signs or pictographs could be easily understood because they looked like real things.

Then, after a few centuries, the Chinese made these pictographs easier to draw. The signs were called characters and are used to this day. These are some of the examples of the changes: the character for *sun* became 日; the character for *mountain* became 山; and the character for *child* became 子. Two lines at 120 degrees (人) now represent *man*.

Later, it became necessary to express more ideas, so strokes were added to the characters or characters were combined. With extra strokes, a character had a new meaning. For example, a man with arms outstretched at 180 degrees (大) represents *big*, and two short lines on each side of a man (小) means *small*. Characters were combined to make new words, as in the example of the character for *to bark* (吠), which is made up of the combination of *mouth* (口) and *dog* (犬). Another example of this kind is the character for *good* (好), which is made up of a woman and child because in China, as well as everywhere, a mother with her child is a good thing. Sometimes a character is repeated to make a different word, as in the character for *forest* (林), which is the repetition of *tree* (木).

From the first character that Thi Chi created, Chinese words have expanded to more than 10,000. The Chinese language also had an influence on other Asian languages such as Japanese and Korean, which somehow contain some Chinese characteristics. Chinese is not only a tool for people to communicate with but also an important subject for Chinese artists to study. Chinese fine handwriting, or calligraphy, was considered a branch of painting, and calligraphy was often combined with painting in a work of art. Chinese can be considered as one of the most beautiful languages in the world without question.

Chun Che
Taiwan

Student Essay Follow-Up

1. What is the writer trying to do in this essay?
2. Underline the thesis statement.
3. Are time signals used through each phase of the process?
4. Underline the topic sentence in each of the body paragraphs. Are the topic sentences supported?
5. Is the process of development clear?

Writing Practice

A. Write a Process Essay

Write a process essay, using chronological order or steps, on one of the following topics. In your essay, try to include **3** or more vocabulary words from the readings in this chapter.

1. Write a process essay on how you recovered from an illness or accident.
2. Write a process essay on learning a foreign language.
3. Write a process essay on a ceremony in your country (for example, a wedding). Indicate the sequence of steps clearly.

B. Pre-Write

Work alone, with a partner, or in a group.

1. Brainstorm the topic. Look at pages 254–256 to find out about brainstorming. Choose the pre-writing technique you prefer.
2. Brainstorm how to divide your process essay into 3 or 4 parts.
3. Work on a thesis statement.

C. Outline

1. Organize your ideas.
Step 1: Write your thesis statement.
Step 2: Divide your steps into 3 or 4 paragraphs.
Step 3: Provide details of each step in the paragraphs.
2. Make a more detailed outline. The essay form on page 21 will help you.

D. Write a Rough Draft

Look at page 257 to find out about writing a rough draft.

E. Revise Your Rough Draft

Use the Revision Checklist on page 258.

F. Edit Your Essay

Use the Editing Checklist on page 259. Check your work for errors in subject and verb agreement. For example, the words *everybody* and *nobody* take a singular verb.

Example:

Error: Everybody find English spelling difficult to understand.

Correct: Everybody finds English spelling difficult to understand.

pro
agree

When you find a mistake of this type, you can write the symbol “pro agree” (pronoun agreement). Look at page 260 for other symbols to use when editing your work.

G. Write Your Final Copy

When your rough draft has been edited, you can write the final copy of your essay.

Additional Writing Practice

A. Summarize

Write a one-paragraph summary of Reading 1. Check your summary with the Summary Checklist on page 269.

B. Paraphrase

Paraphrase paragraph 1 of “Window” in Reading 2. Look at pages 264–267 to find out about paraphrasing. Begin paraphrasing with “According to Vanoni, . . .” or “Based on Vanoni’s work,”

C. Research

Choose a process, procedure, or event leading to a change over a period of time. Consult appropriate sources in the library and/or use your own experience or that of friends to gather information.

The following are suggested topics:

- How the education system works (in the United States or your country)
- How the digestive system works
- How a holiday is celebrated (in the United States or your country)
- How babies learn to talk
- How to learn to use a computer
- How you get a divorce
- How a volcano explodes

You may use your research later to write a process essay.

Weaving It Together

Timed Writing

Choose one of the following topics that you have not already written about in “Writing Practice,” or choose the topic that you have researched. You have 50 minutes to write an essay.

1. Write a process essay on how you recovered from an illness or accident.
2. Write a process essay on learning a foreign language.
3. Write a process essay on a ceremony in your country (for example, a wedding). Indicate the sequence of steps clearly.
4. Write a process essay, using chronological order or steps, about the topic you researched.

Connecting to the Internet

- A. Use the Internet to look up the movement for “spelling reform” in English. Who started it? Does it still exist?
- B. There are over 6,900 known languages. Use the Internet to research “world languages.” Make a list of **10** languages that interest you. Beside each language, state the country or people who speak the language, and provide some information about the origin of the language.
- C. There are many theories about the origins of language in humans. Use the Internet to look up the origins of language. Based on one of these theories, write a short essay about the process by which humans learned language.

What Do You Think Now?

Refer to page 33 at the beginning of this chapter. Do you know the answers now? Complete the sentence or circle the best answer.

1. English was/wasn’t a mix of five languages at one time.
2. The first English dictionary came out in _____.
3. Shakespeare spelled/didn’t spell his name in different ways all the time.
4. The word *window* originally meant/didn’t mean “wind eye.”
5. The English dish called pie came from _____.