

## The English language

- 1 SPEAKING** Work in pairs. Where are you most likely to see or hear English words in your country?
- Read the information about the history of English. Are the sentences true or false? Write T or F.
  - Britain's first inhabitants spoke Latin. \_\_\_\_
  - Old English arrived from Norway and Denmark. \_\_\_\_
  - The Vikings invaded parts of Britain between about 800 and 1000 AD. \_\_\_\_
  - After 1066, most powerful and important people in Britain spoke French. \_\_\_\_
  - Over half of all English words come from French and Latin. \_\_\_\_
- Read the information again and answer the questions.
  - Where did the Saxons come from?
  - What language did the Romans bring?
  - Where did the Celtic speakers go after the Saxons arrived?
  - What language did the Vikings speak?
  - After 1066, which language did most ordinary people speak?
  - Which very common English word came from Celtic?
  - What percentage of English words come from Old English and Norse?
- 3.23** Listen to an interview about English as a global language. Which one of these topics do they not mention?
  - The future of English
  - The number of English speakers
  - How English became a global language
  - The influence of technology
  - Foreign words in English
  - The effect of English on other languages
- 3.23** Listen again. What is the significance of these numbers and dates?
 

|                               |                              |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 the 18th and 19th centuries | 5 1.5 billion                |
| 2 1945                        | 6 half a million             |
| 3 55%                         | 7 one hundred years from now |
| 4 335 million                 |                              |
- 6 SPEAKING** Work in pairs. Ask and answer the questions.
  - What are the benefits of being able to speak English for people in your country?
  - Does your language have words borrowed from English and other languages? Give examples.

### Origins of English words



**1** Before the arrival of the Romans in the first century AD, the people of Britain spoke **Celtic languages**, similar to modern Welsh. Very few Celtic words came into English. But one very common one did: *dad*.

**2** In 43 AD, the Romans arrive, bringing **Latin** with them.

**3** **Old English** arrives in the 4th and 5th centuries AD, with Saxons from North Germany and Holland. The Saxon invaders pushed the Celtic speakers to the west and north.

**4** In the 9th century AD, Vikings invade northern and eastern England from Norway and Denmark. Many very common English words come from their language, **Norse**.

**5** In 1066, William the Conqueror and the Normans invade. Their language, **French**, becomes the language of the aristocracy, the church and the government, while the ordinary people continue to speak English. But many French words come into English.

Words for meats, e.g. *beef* and *mutton*, are French, but the words for the animals are Old English: *cow* and *sheep*. That's because the farmers who looked after the animals spoke Old English, while the rich Normans, who ate the meat, spoke French.

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