

The English language

1 **SPEAKING** Work in pairs. Where are you most likely to see or hear English words in your country?

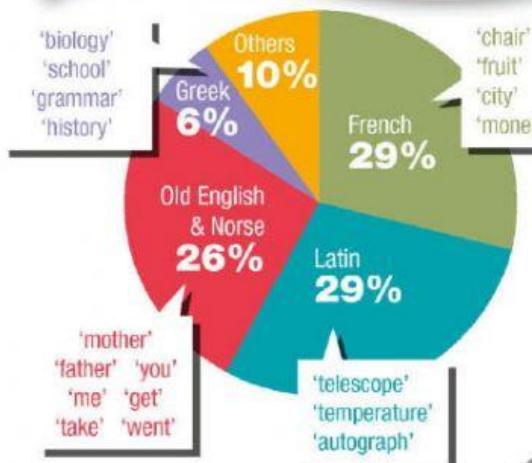
2 Read the information about the history of English. Are the sentences true or false? Write T or F.

- 1 Britain's first inhabitants spoke Latin.
- 2 Old English arrived from Norway and Denmark.
- 3 The Vikings invaded parts of Britain between about 800 and 1000 AD.
- 4 After 1066, most powerful and important people in Britain spoke French.
- 5 Over half of all English words come from French and Latin.

3 Read the information again and answer the questions.

- 1 Where did the Saxons come from?
- 2 What language did the Romans bring?
- 3 Where did the Celtic speakers go after the Saxons arrived?
- 4 What language did the Vikings speak?
- 5 After 1066, which language did most ordinary people speak?
- 6 Which very common English word came from Celtic?
- 7 What percentage of English words come from Old English and Norse?

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**. 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.

4 **3.23** Listen to an interview about English as a global language. Which one of these topics do they not mention?

- 1 The future of English
- 2 The number of English speakers
- 3 How English became a global language
- 4 The influence of technology
- 5 Foreign words in English
- 6 The effect of English on other languages

5 **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.

- 1 What are the benefits of being able to speak English for people in your country?
- 2 Does your language have words borrowed from English and other languages? Give examples.

