

## The English Language

**English** – divided into three stages

- 1) Old English (A.D. 450 – A.D. 1100)
- 2) Middle English (1100 – 1500)
- 3) Modern English (1400 – 1600)

**American English** - Beginning around 1600; derived from American Indian, African American, Asian Americans, and immigrants around the world.

**Etymology** – study of the origins of words and how they evolved.

**Old English** - Modern – come; Old E. – cumin

**Middle English** – strongly influenced by the Norman French Lang., assembly, government, restaurant, empire

**Modern English** – New words from Latin and Greek; Latin – creed, script, form, sign; Greek – adapt, arena, genius, idea, theory  
(*In addition, more French, Spanish, Italian*)

### **Formal/Informal English**

**Formal** – contains carefully constructed complete sentences, avoids contractions, follows standard English usage and grammar, uses a serious tone, and uses sophisticated vocabulary

Ex. – school essays, oral/written reports, interviews, and debates

**Informal** – contains everyday speech and popular expressions, uses contractions, and may include sentence fragments

Ex. Everyday conversations, personal letters or notes, journal entries

**Standard English** – variety of English language taught in English-language school systems, universally accepted and understood, communicate both spoken and written in a common lang.

- Dialects**
- includes slang, colloquialisms, and Idioms
  - a kind of English spoken by a particular group of people in a certain area or place
- Slang**
- is a playful form of speech made up of invented words or existing words that are given new meaning
- Colloquialism**
- word or phrase used in everyday Conversation (*Mondays can be a drag.*)
- Idiom**
- a common expression that has changed the meaning within the expression of the literal meaning (*stuck your foot in your mouth*)
- Register, Tone, Diction, and Voice**
- Register**
- refers to language appropriate for a specific relationship between people
- Tone**
- writer's or speaker's attitude toward a subject
- Diction**
- word choice
- Voice**
- refers to a writer's style; the collective effect of many elements
- Figurative Language**
- meant to be understood
  - imaginatively rather than literally
  - Simile(*comparison using like or as*)
  - Metaphor(*comparison where one thing is written as if it were another; no like or as*)

- **Personification**(*something not human-animal, object, place or idea- is given human qualities*)

**Grammar**

- **the rules and conventions for organizing sentences**

**Syntax**

- **word order in a sentence**(*conveys a clear meaning*)