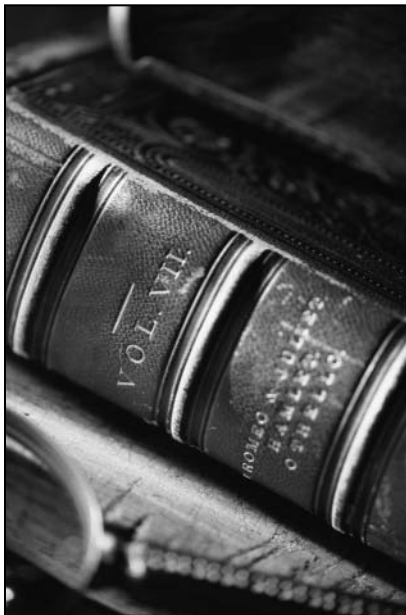


Part One

Resources and Roots

LANGUAGES GROW JUST LIKE CHILDREN. They have parents, they have a childhood, they get old, and sometimes they die. Two of the



languages we will be studying have already died: Latin and Classical Greek. It's not that these languages got wrinkled and put away in a box; ordinary people stopped speaking these languages as a part of their daily life. These two languages, however, are unique in that they have

lived on through scholarship and science. **EVEN THOUGH THEY ARE "DEAD" LANGUAGES, THEY STILL HAVE A GREAT IMPACT ON OUR OWN LANGUAGE, ENGLISH.**

Skillbuilder: **Taking Notes**

*Did you notice the two **BOLD** sentences on the first page in this section? How do you remember what you read? Do you take notes by writing in a notebook or journal, highlight, or use sticky notes?*

We suggest you try all three. Here are some note-taking tips:



- 1. Highlight main ideas**, key words, and key sentences in a special color. You know you have a key word or sentence when
 - there is a broad, general word or phrase used; one that sums up other ideas (often nouns or adjectives like "children" or "alive");
 - the word or sentence appears in the beginning or end of the paragraph; or
 - there is an importance or significance to the ideas expressed.
- 2. Annotate main ideas**, which is a form of marginal notation. You could write the main idea in the margin or on a sticky note that you attach to that page. You can circle a key word, make a comment, or ask a question to help you remember or return to this section.
- 3. Keep a journal or a file where you paraphrase key ideas and details.** By paraphrase, we mean rewrite in your own words. When you rewrite, you use new words and new order. So if you wanted to paraphrase the sentence, "Languages grow just like children," you could write any of the following:
 - "Languages develop like kids,"
 - "Languages develop,"
 - "Languages, like humans, have stages of development," or
 - "Languages = children."Any of these methods would be the appropriate way to make the information you just read memorable and meaningful to you.
- 4. Discuss with your mentor the way you think is best to take notes** during your study of this unit. What suits your learning style and needs?

All three of the languages we will study—Latin, Greek, and English—belong to the same family. By family we mean that one language—the parent—gave rise to other languages. The new languages carried many of the characteristics of the parent, just as you might have your dad's eyes or your mom's nose. You don't have their exact features, but your features resemble theirs, and people can tell you are related. It's the same with languages. Few of the actual words of the parent language remain, but certain characteristics are retained, which indicate that one language came from another. For instance, if you look at a common word, like “father,” you can tell which languages probably started at the same place.

English	German	Dutch	Danish
father	<i>vater</i>	<i>vader</i>	<i>fader</i>



These all look pretty similar, don't they? They even sound similar, especially if you know that the German "v" sounds pretty much like the English "f."

Now let's compare them to another branch of the same family.

Latin	Classical Greek	Spanish	French
<i>pater</i>	<i>pater</i>	<i>padre</i>	<i>pere</i>

Even though these two groups start with different sounds, there are certain consistencies. The fact that they begin with different sounds actually supports their family connection. According to a 19th-century scholar, Jacob Grimm, who was one of the famous folk tale collectors (heard of *Grimms' Fairy Tales?*), the ancient letter *p* became an *f* in later Germanic languages. He also came to many other conclusions about the shifting of sounds that are helpful for us in determining which words are related.

Many other scholars have spent a long time looking back in history to determine that all these languages and a few others derive from an original language called the Indo-European parent language. This language became extinct a long time before people had learned how to

write, so we don't have any direct evidence of it. However, we know it existed in the same way you know that your great-great-great grandmother existed, even if you don't have a picture of her. You had to come from somewhere, right? The similarities in modern languages tell us just as clearly that they had to come from somewhere.

So what do we know about the Indo-European parent language? It was an inflected language. Inflected languages change the ending of a word to indicate its function in a sentence. For instance, the same word will have one ending if it acts as the subject and another if it acts as the object of a sentence.



Descendants of the Indo-European parent language tend to be progressively less inflected, using prepositional phrases and word order rather than endings to show function. That's one way we can tell how far away a language is from the parent. English is hardly inflected at all. If you were to change the order of the words in your sentence, you might change the whole meaning. "The dog bit the man" is not at all the same as "The man bit the dog." The few kinds of inflection that remain are the personal pronouns I, you, he, she, it, etc., and some verbs like to see. From this we can see that English has come far indeed from the parent language.

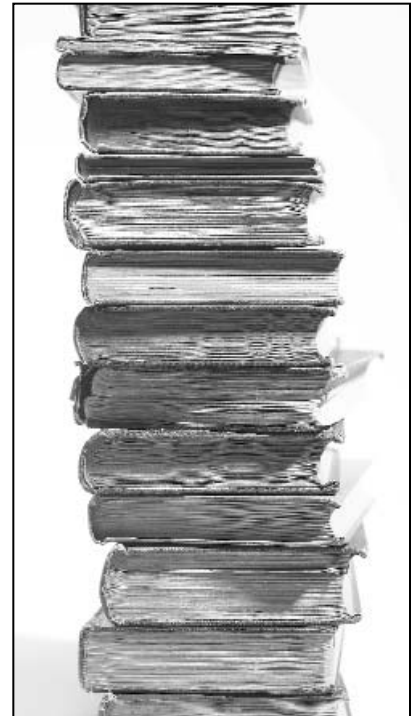
The Indo-European parent language originated during the Stone Age, before writing appeared. The few words we can be certain of focus primarily on farming and animals. Scholars, who came to this conclusion early in the 19th century, were the first to recognize Sanskrit and Ancient Greek as some of the first descendants of the parent language (later scholars deciphered Hittite, another close descendant). Most of the oldest words in these languages were about farming, and it was from those words that the nature of the parent was determined.

Perhaps the most important thing we know about the ancient parent language comes from Grimm's and Verner's Laws. Jacob Grimm and Karl Adolf Verner were able to determine how certain letters of the alphabet changed in the Germanic languages, of which English is a descendant. Romance languages (those from the Roman parent) retained the original Indo-European letters, but Germanic languages made the following shifts:

p to f **t to th** **k to h** **b to p** **d to t** **g to k**

These are pretty consistent, but there are some exceptions.

What does this mean for you? These shifts will help you learn to identify derivatives from Latin despite their changed spelling. For instance, it would explain how the English word “heart” came from the Greek word *kardia*. If you change the *k* to *h* and the *d* to *t* you can clearly see the connection. If you would like more information regarding the history of the English language, read the introduction in *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* or another comparable dictionary that discusses etymologies. The *American Heritage* dictionary does a good job of avoiding obscure technical terms and showing the origin of a word.



Check-in:

How is your note-taking going? What is working well? What's not working so well? Discuss your note-taking successes and areas for improvement with your mentor and, if necessary, brainstorm some new strategies.

Skillbuilder: **Dictionary Quest**

Let's practice using the dictionary. Your first SET of assignments center on the tools used to standardize the English language.

Assignment I

1. Look up the word *idiom* and discuss its meaning with your mentor.
2. Then take the word *set* straight from the first sentence on this page. Look up *set* in the dictionary, a simple word with an amazing array of definitions in both noun and verb forms. Choose and study three idioms using the word *set*.
3. Find and record three (or as many as you can) definitions of *set* that are particular to a single discipline or job.
4. Identify and record the Indo-European root of the words listed below. Most of these words are of Germanic descent rather than Latin or Greek, but they are good for practicing the use of the dictionary. Do the same for:

put	see
call	run
turn	move
walk	mix
wait	bat
neck	break
join	can
press	carry
pick	field
right	send

5. Trace the derivation of the following words. Which language did each originally come from?

chocolate

history

crinkle

khaki

fritter

magazine

guy

robot

hurricane

sherbet

6. Words often have meanings that are connotative (associated, suggesting related, ideas) and denotative (precise, dictionary definition). Look up CONNOTATION and DENOTATION and record their definitions.
7. By looking at the synonyms provided by the dictionary or by a thesaurus, come up with one connotative and one denotative meaning for the words below (you may find many). Write a sentence for each meaning.

dissolve

material

separate

8. Discuss with your mentor the quality of your six sentences.
- How specifically is the word's meaning communicated?
 - Is the sentence memorable?
 - Is the sentence relevant to you as a person?



Mentors: use the "Effective Sentence Rubric" on page 37 to guide this discussion. More practice in writing effective sentences will come later.

6. Begin a Word Journal where you keep track of interesting words you discover in your studies. Be sure to leave room to add more information about roots and related words as you find them.