Contents

List of Tables, Figures, Timelines, and Sample Texts xii
Preface xvii
Abbreviations xxii

ONE ∞ Studying the History of English 1

Overview 1
Objectives 1
Why Study the History of English? 2
A Definition of Language 3
The Components of Language 4
Linguistic Change in English 9
The Periods of English 9
An Example of Linguistic Change 13
The Nature of Linguistic Change 15
The Inevitability of Change 15
The Arbitrary Nature of the Linguistic Sign 16
The Origin of Language 18
Attitudes toward Linguistic Change 20
Linguistic Corruption 20
Prescriptivism versus Descriptivism 21
Resources for Studying the History of English 22
General Dictionaries 23
Historical and Etymological Dictionaries 23
Historical Grammar and Syntax 24
Concordances and Historical Corpora 24
Recommended Resources 26

TWO ∞ Sounds and Sound Change in English 27

Overview 27
Objectives 27
The Sounds of English 28
The Phonetic Alphabet 28
The Phoneme 28
The Production of Speech 30
Consonants 31
The Consonant Sounds of English 34

Vowels 39
The Vowels of English 40
Stress 45
Sound Change 47
Determining Sounds from Written Records 47
The Nature of Sound Change 47
Types of Sound Change 48
The Writing of English 53
The History of Writing 54
The Origin of the Alphabet 56
Recommended Resources 60

THREE ∞ Causes and Mechanisms of Language Change 61

Overview 61
Objectives 61
Causes of Change 62
Internal 62
External 64
Morphological and Syntactic Change 74
Analogy 74
Grammaticalization 77
Conservative and Innovative Changes 78
Semantic Change 80
Types of Semantic Change 82
Some Generalizations about Semantic Change 90
Pragmatic Change 92
Recommended Resources 95

FOUR ∞ The Indo-European Language Family and Proto-Indo-European 96

Overview 96
Objectives 96
Classification of Languages 97
Typological Classification 98
Genealogical Classification 100
Language Families 101
The Indo-European Language Family 103
The Discovery of Indo-European 103
The Branches of Indo-European 105
Satem Languages 106
Centum Languages 109

Proto-Language 112
Reconstruction 112
Proto-Indo-European 117
Linguistic Features 117
Society 122
Homeland, Migration, and the Dating of PIE 125
Recommended Resources 128

FIVE ∞ Germanic and the Development of Old English 129

Overview 129
Objectives 129
Proto-Germanic 131
Grammatical and Lexical Changes from PIE to Germanic 135
Phonological Changes from PIE to Germanic 139
Grimm's Law 139
Verner's Law 145
Accent Shift and Ordering of Changes 147
Vowel Changes 148
Second Sound Shift and Mechanisms of Change 151
A Brief History of Anglo-Saxon England 153
The Germanic Settlement of England 154
The Christianization of the Anglo-Saxons 157
The Scandinavian Invasions of England 157
The Records of the Anglo-Saxons 158
The Dialects of Old English 158
The Written Records of Old English 159
Recommended Resources 161

SIX ∞ The Words and Sounds of Old English 162

Overview 162
Objectives 162
The Word Stock of the Anglo-Saxons 163
The Continuity of Germanic Vocabulary in English 163
Borrowing in Old English 163
Word Formation in Old English 170
The Orthographic System of Old English 175
The Phonological System of Old English 177
Consonants 177
Vowels 182
Sound Changes 185

Stress 188
A Closer Look at the Language of an Old English Text 190
Recommended Resources 192

SEVEN ∞ The Grammar of Old English 193

Overview 193
Objectives 193
The Nominal System 194
The Grammatical Categories of the Nominal System 194
Pronouns 195
Nouns 198
Demonstratives, Adjectives, and Adverbs 204
Agreement 212
Case Usage 213
The Verbal System 218
Verb Classes 218
The Grammatical Categories of the Verbal System 223
Inflectional Endings of the Verb 224
Syntax 228
Verbal Periphrases 228
Word Order 230
A Closer Look at the Language of an Old English Text 236
Recommended Resources 239

EIGHT ∞ The Rise of Middle English: Words and Sounds 240

Overview 240
Objectives 240
French and English in Medieval England 241
The Norman Conquest 241
The Establishment of French 243
The Re-establishment of English 247
The Word Stock of Middle English 249
French Influence 249
Latin Influence 252
The Written Records of Middle English 255
Middle English Dialects 255
Middle English Literature 259
Orthographic Changes 262
Consonant Changes 264
Vowel Changes 268

Vowel Reduction 268
Other Qualitative Changes 269
Quantitative Changes 273
A Closer Look at the Language of a Middle English Text 277
Recommended Resources 280

NINE ∞ **The Grammar of Middle English and Rise of a Written Standard 281**

Overview 281
Objectives 281
The Effects of Vowel Reduction 282
Grammatical Developments in Middle English 283
Adjectives and Nouns 283
Pronouns 288
Loss of Grammatical Gender 291
Verbs 294
Syntax 299
Comparison of a Middle English and an Old English Text 307
Change from Synthetic to Analytic 311
Middle English as a Creole? 313
The Rise of a Standard Dialect 315
A Closer Look at the Language of a Middle English Text 317
Recommended Resources 320

TEN ∞ **The Words, Sounds, and Inflections of Early Modern English 321**

Overview 321
Objectives 321
Early Modern English Vocabulary 323
The Great Vowel Shift 328
Nature of the Shift 328
Details of the Shift 329
Changes in the Short Vowels and Diphthongs 335
A Closer Look at the Language of an Early Modern English Text 339
Changes in Consonants 340
Renaissance Respellings 344
Changes in Nominal Inflected Forms 347
Nouns 347
Articles 348
Pronouns 349

Case Usage 356
Changes in Verbal Inflected Forms 359
Verb Classes 359
Inflectional Endings 361
A Closer Look at the Language of an Early Modern English Text 364
Recommended Resources 366

ELEVEN ∞ Early Modern English Verbal Constructions and Eighteenth-Century Prescriptivism 367

Overview 367
Objectives 367
Early Modern English Syntax 368
Reflexive and Impersonal Verbs 368
The Subjunctive and the Modal Auxiliaries 370
Verbal Periphrases 371
Do 376
Word Order 378
Late Modern English and the Rise of Prescriptivism 381
Social, Linguistic, and Philosophical Reasons for Prescriptivism 381
Important Prescriptive Grammarians of the Eighteenth Century 383
Aims of the Eighteenth-Century Grammarians 383
Ascertainment 383
An Academy 384
Methods of the Eighteenth-Century Grammarians 387
Authority 387
Model of Latin 388
Etymology 389
Reason 390
The Question of Usage 395
Dictionaries 398
Recommended Resources 403

TWELVE ∞ Modern English 404

Overview 404
Objectives 404
Grammatical and Lexical Changes in Late Modern English 405
Grammatical Changes 405
Modern Borrowings 411
The *Oxford English Dictionary* 414
Changes in Progress 417

Neologisms 417
Grammatical Changes 420
The Effect of New Media on English 425
Radio 425
Television 426
Electronic Communication and the Internet 426
Recommended Resources 433

THIRTEEN ∞ **Varieties of English 434**

Overview 434
Objectives 434
The Development of National Varieties 437
Second-Language Varieties of English 437
British versus North American English 443
Canadian English 448
United States English 455
Australian and New Zealand English 467
African English 471
Caribbean English 474
Important Regional Varieties of the British Isles 478
Welsh English 478
Standard Scottish English 480
Hiberno-English 482
English as a Global Language 485
Recommended Resources 487

Appendix A

Quick Reference Guide 489

Appendix B

Timeline of Significant Historical, Social, Literary, and Linguistic Events in the History of English 505

Appendix C

Anthology of Readings 531

Exercise Key 553
Glossary of Linguistic Terms 588
Works Cited 602
Index 609