

1475 ... the arrival of the printing press ...

William Caxton invented the printing press ...



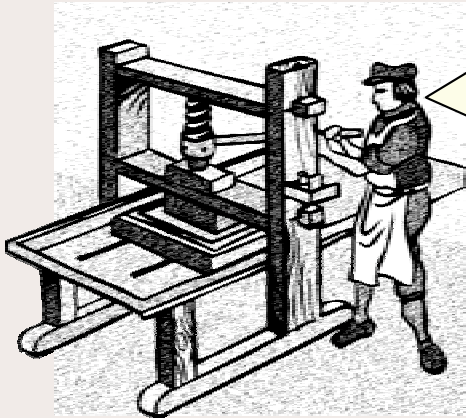
and the scribes
could finally relax.

He is a genius!
...time for a nap...



It was too expensive for the printers
to keep changing spellings.

Many of the spellings we use today are the ones
the printers chose over 500 years ago.



I can spell it
any way you like ...
but it is going
to cost you.

Money is no object
my good man.



William Caxton himself had an influence on spelling.

He came from what is now Belgium where they speak Flemish.



Caxton used the Flemish way of spelling words

**such as *ghost* and *ghastly* with a *gh*
instead of just a *g*.**



**He even spelled
girl > *gherle*
and *goose* > *ghoos*.**

**Fortunately, these were later changed back,
but we are still stuck with *ghost* and *ghastly*.**

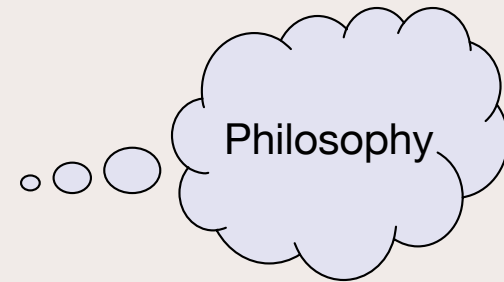
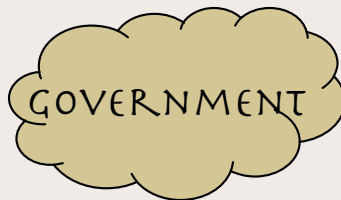
1500 ... more Latin ...



Scholars began to study Latin and Greek.



As they studied the ideas of the ancient civilizations, they started using Latin and Greek words to talk about those ideas.



What the ... ?!
I thought we were done
with this nonsense.



MEMORY
FORMULA
SCRIBE
JUNIOR
SENIOR
MINIMUM
MAXIMUM
MINORITY
MAJORITY

SOCIETY
EDUCATION
ELECTION
NATION
LEGAL

anarchy
theatre
philosophy
psychology
athlete

astronaut
telephone
microscope
photograph
*(what is all this?)



*A detour to the future ...



Greek becomes important again later when scientists put Greek words together in new ways to describe new ideas and discoveries.

psukhe (breath, life, soul) + **logos** (to study) = **psychology**

astron (star) + **nautes** (sailor) = **astronaut**

tele (far) + **phone** (voice, sound) = **telephone**

micro (small) + **skopein** (to look at) = **microscope**

photos (light) + **graphos** (writer) = **photograph**

geo (earth) + **graphos** (writer) = **geography**



HEH HEH HEH

*ac alys us of fulꝛs ...



The scholars liked to show off.
They spelled the Latin and Greek words
the Latin or Greek way so everyone
coude see how smart they were.



I am a gɛnɪus!

He is a gɛnɪus!
I just wish I knɛw
what hɛ was talking about.





HEY SCRIBE ...
YOU OWE ME A B!

For example,
the word *debt* comes from
the Latin word *debitum*.

Old English scribes
spelled the word *dette*
because that is the way
English speakers said it.

Blow it out
your tunic
sword boy...
we are doing
things the
English way now!

Haven't you heard ...
the pen is mightier
than the sword.



But the scholars added the *b* to show that the word comes from Latin ... or



I am a genius ...
and this *b* proves it!

the fulɜs rule ...



But even a genius can have an off day ...

These same scholars added an *s* to *island* because they thought that the word came from the Latin > *insula*.

In fact, the word *island* comes from the Old English > *iegland* - no *s*!



Ooops.

Aaaargh.



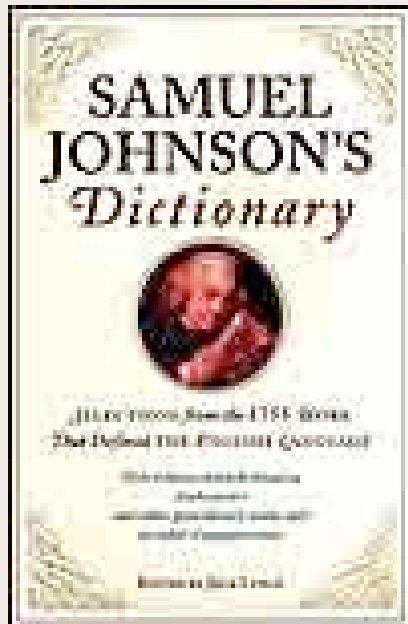
Dictionaries ...

The first dictionaries, such as the one published in 1604 by Robert Cawdrey, were not used to help with spelling.

They were used to look up the meaning of words.

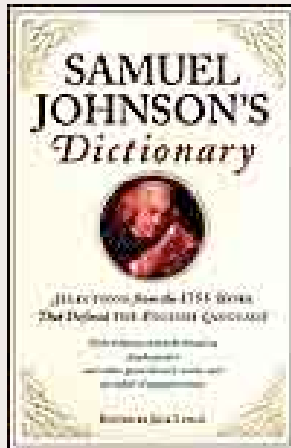


1755 ... the party is over for spelling anarchists



**But all that changed
when Samuel Johnson
published his dictionary in
1755 ...**

Johnson had read a lot in English, Latin and Greek.



Oats:

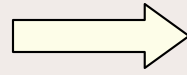
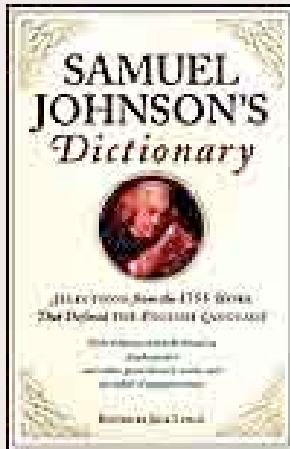
For your lean cattle, fodder them with barley straw first, and the **oat** straw last.

Mortimer's Husbandry

His horse's allowance of **oats** and beans, was greater than the journey required.

Swift

He included quotes from these books and documents to help people understand how to use words.



Oats: A grain, which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland supports the people.

Sometimes Johnson showed his prejudice ... and added insults to annoy people.

Johnson's dictionary was the first one to focus on spelling as well as meaning.

The spellings he chose to use in his dictionary came to be seen as the "correct" ones

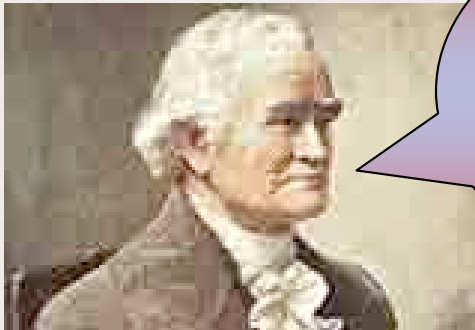
... and the spelling mistake was born.

Thanks a lot.



In England, people still use most of the spellings that Johnson used.

But in the United States ... things are a bit different.

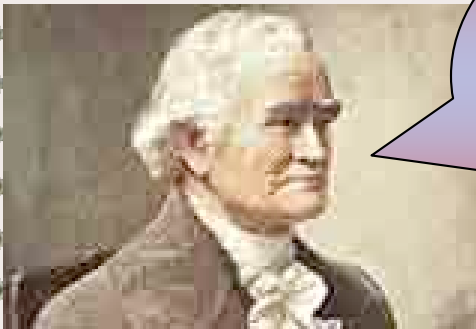


We are sick of other people telling us how to speak and spell.



1828 ... an American dictionary

Noah Webster was a nationalist who thought that language is an expression of national pride - remember King Alfred (page 40).



why.can't.i.spell by t.mollins.2005

We can become more independent from England by creating a separate language.

Wait just a minute here... what is all this about *independence from England?*



Webster tried to make spelling simpler.

Thanks Mr. Webster ...
finally somebody takes
pity on us.



Some of his changes were accepted in
England.

For example, *musick* and *publick* became
music and *public*.

But just ends up adding to the confusion ...

 Others were not. 

American spelling **British spelling**

color

colour

theater

theatre

traveling

travelling

defense

defence

catalog

catalogue

program

programme

We have to put
our foot down
somewhere ...
Yankee upstarts.

