

WORD BOOK

A glance into the *Oxford English Dictionary* will show that most words in Old, Middle and Early Modern English had variant spellings, depending upon their dialect and the period at which they were written down. For example, the complete range of spellings of *worship*, from OE to present-day English, is (in alphabetical order)

virchippe	wirship	worscip	wourship	wurschipe
virschip	wirshipe	worshepe	wrchepe	wurship
vyrchippe	wirshippe	worship	wrhsipe	wurshippe
weorðscipe	woorship;	worshipp	wrscipe	wurþschipe
weorðscype	worchep;	worshippe	wrshepe	wurðschipe
whorshype	worchep	worshyp	wrsipe	wurðscipe
wirchep	worchip	worshypp	wrðsipe	wurðscype
wirchepe	worchipe	worshypp	wrþsipe	wurðshipe
wirchip	worchippe	worsip	wurchep	wurðsipe
wirchipe	worchyp	worsipe	wurchip	wurðsype
wirscep	worschepe	worssipe	wurchipe	wurþscipe
wirscepp	worschip	wortschyp	wurchippe	wushippe
wirschep	worschipe	wortscip	wurchyp	wyrchepe
wirschepe	worschipp	worþschip	wurhschipe	wyrchippe
wirschip	worschippe	worþssipe	wurrshipe	wyrshypp
wirscip	worschupe	worðschepe	wurrshype	wyrship
wirscipe	worschyp	worðschipe	wurrsipe	wyrðscipe
wirscipp	worschype	worðscip	wurrþshipe	
wirscippe	worschyppe	worðscipe	wurschipe	

The source languages of derived words also show variants, eg *people*:

AF. poeple, people = OF. pople, poeple, pueple, peuple, puple

Here, for another example, are the variant spellings for the English and French versions of *chamberlain*,

English

chamberling, chaumberlein, chamberlein, chaumburleyn, chamberleyn(e), chambyrleyne, chaumberlaine, chaumberlayn, chamburlain(e), chamburlayn(e), chamburleyne, chamberlayn(e), chawmbyrleyne, chambrelayne, chalmerlain, chamberlaine, chammerlayne, chambarlayn, chamberlin, chamberlen; chalmerlane chamberlain.

Old French

chamberlain, chamberlen, chamberlanc, chamberlenc.

In this *Word Book* only one version of each word is given, and students should refer to the *Oxford English Dictionary* for more comprehensive information on the historical changes and varieties of spellings.

The reflexes of OE words which have survived into MnE are given, with a translation where the meaning has changed significantly. MnE translations of OE words which have not survived are marked with the = symbol.

Loan-words are printed in **bold type**, to make it easier to identify words that have not derived from Old English or Old Norse.

- For Old English texts the three columns contain,

<i>1 - OE text word</i>	<i>2 - OE base form (if different)</i>	<i>3 - MnE reflex or translation</i>
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Alphabetical order for OE texts is,

a æ b c d e f g / ʒ h i k l m n o p r s t þ ð u x y

- For Middle English & Early Modern English texts up to the 16th century, the three columns are,

<i>1 - Derivation of ME text word</i>	<i>2 - text word</i>	<i>3 - MnE reflex or translation</i>
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As letter yogh <ʒ> came to be used for the sound [j] in Middle English, as in *ʒonge* (*young*), as well as for other sounds, it is listed after <y>. So the alphabetical order for Middle English texts is,

a b c d e f g h i k l m n o p q r s t þ ð u v w x y ʒ z

- For the Early Middle English texts from the 17th and 18th centuries, where no translation is required, the columns are,

<i>1 - Derivation of EMnE text word</i>	<i>2 - date of earliest recorded occurrence</i>	<i>3 - text word</i>
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or

<i>1 - Derivation of EMnE text word</i>	<i>2 - text word</i>
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The dates must be treated with caution. They provide a “no later than” date of the manuscript or printed book in which the word is recorded. Dates of manuscripts are often very approximate. Remember also that the word will certainly have been in the spoken language, perhaps for decades.

WORD-LISTS

The word lists for the texts in each chapter are numbered separately.

Ch 1

Text 1 late WS c 1050.....	1
Text 2 late 14th C Middle English.....	1
Text 3 Early MnE.....	1

Ch 2

Text 4 Opening of Peterborough Chronicle	1
Texts 5a & 5b AD 47.....	1
Texts 6a & 6b AD 443	1
Text 7 AD 449.....	2
Text 8 AF455	3
Texts 9a & 9b AD 519	3
Texts 10a, 10b, 11a & 11b AD 611 & 614.....	3

Ch 3

Texts 12a & 12b AD595.....	1
Texts 13a & 13b AD 601.....	1
Text 14 <i>Cædmon's Hymn</i>	1
Text 15 <i>Testimonie of Antiquitie</i>	2
Texts 16a & 16b AD 628.....	2
Texts 17a & 17b AD 787.....	2
Texts 18a & 18b AD 793.....	3
Texts 19a & 19b AD 878.....	3
Text 20 King Ælfred's Preface (i)	4
Text 21 King Ælfred's Preface (ii)	4
Text 22 Inscription, Kirkdale	5
Text 23 AD 937 P'borough Chronicle	5
Text 24 AD Parker Chronicle.....	5
Text 25 AD 1066 P'borough Chronicle6	

Ch 4

Text 26 AD 937 Parker Chronicle.....	1
Text 27 <i>Beowulf</i>	2
Text 28 OE Gospels	3
Text 29 Wulfstan.....	4

Ch 5

Text 30 OE homily.....	1
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Middle English texts

Text 31 Anonymous metrical chronicle.....	1
Text 32 Robert of Gloucester.....	2
Text 33 Chronicle for AD 1140.....	3
Text 34 Chronicle for AD 1137.....	4
Text 35 <i>Ormulum</i> (i)	6
Text 36 <i>Ormulum</i> (ii)	6

Ch 6

Text 37 Lazamon's <i>Brut</i>	1
Text 38 <i>The Owl & the Nightingale</i>	2

Ch 7

Text 39 <i>The Fox & the Wolf</i>	1
Text 40 <i>St Kenelm</i> introduction.....	1
Text 41 <i>The Southern Passion</i>	2
Text 42 <i>Ancrene Wisse</i>	3
Text 43 <i>Blow northerne wynd</i>	4
Text 44 <i>Wiþ longyng y am lad</i>	4
Text 45 <i>Lenten is come wiþ loue to toun</i>	4
Text 46 The Lion.....	5
Text 47 The Eagle.....	6
Text 48 The Whale.....	7
Text 49 <i>Havelok the Dane</i>	8
Early 13 th C loan-words 1200-1249	9

Ch 8

Text 50 <i>Cursor Mundi</i> (i)	1
Text 51 <i>Cursor Mundi</i> (ii)	4
Later 13 th C loan-words 1250-1299.....	6

Ch 9

Texts 52, 53 & 54 <i>Ayenbyte of Inwyte</i>	1
Text 55 Robert of Gloucester (i).....	3
Text 56 Robert of Gloucester (ii).....	4
Texts 57 & 58 John of Trevisa	5
Loan-words 1300-1319.....	7

Ch 10

Text 59 <i>The Bruce</i> (i).....	1
Text 60 <i>The Bruce</i> (ii).....	1
Text 61 York proclamation	2
Text 62 <i>Pentecost Play</i>	3
Texts 63 & 64 <i>York Lay Folk's Catechism</i>	4
Text 65 Chaucer <i>Reeve's Tale</i>	6
Loan-words 1320-1339	

Ch 11

Texts 66 & 67	
<i>Sir Gawayn and þe Grene Knyzt</i>	1
Text 68 <i>Piers Plowman</i> (i)	3
Text 69 <i>Piers Plowman</i> (ii)	4
Text 72 <i>Piers Plowman</i> (iii)	5
Loan-words 1340-1#59.....	5

Ch 12

Text 73 <i>Mandeville</i> (i)	1
Text 74 <i>Mandeville</i> (ii)	1
Text 75 <i>Mandeville</i> (iii)	1
Texts 76 & 77 Thomas Usk's appeal.....	2
Loan-words 1360-1379.....	3

Ch 13

Text 78 Chaucer's *Tale of Melibeus* 1
 Text 79 Chaucer's *Parson's Tale*..... 1
 Text 81 Chaucer's *Friar's Tale* 2
 Text 82 *Summoner's Tale/Friar's Tale*..... 3
 Loan-words 1380-1399 5

Ch 14

EARLY MODERN ENGLISH (selected texts)

Text 83 King Henry V letter 1
 Texts 84-87 *Boke of Margery Kempe*..... 2
 Texts 88 & 89 Paston letters..... 4
 Texts 90 & 91 *Polychronicon* 5
 Text 92 Caxton (i)..... 7
 Text 93 Caxton's advertisement 8
 Text 94 Caxton's *Reynart the Foxe*..... 8
 Text 95 Malory (i) 9
 Text 96 Malory (ii) 10
 Text 97 Cely letter 1478..... 11
 Text 98 Cely letter 1479..... 11
 Text 99 Cely memoranda..... 12
 15th C loan-words..... 12

Ch 15

Text 100 George Bassett letter 1
 Text 101 Sir William Kingston letter..... 1
 Text 102 Bishop of Carlisle letter..... 2
 Text 103 Proem to *The Gouvernour* 3
 Texts 104-106 Elyot's *The Gouvernour* 3
 Text 107 Puttenham..... 6
 Text 108 Verstegan..... 7
 Texts 109 & 110 John Hart 9
 Loan-words 1500-1549 11

Ch 16

Text 115 Shakespeare 1
 Loan-words 1550-1599 3

Ch 17

Text 118 Sir Thomas Browne (i) 1
 Text 119 Sir Thomas Browne (ii) 2
 Text 120 Sir Thomas Browne (iii) 6
 Texts 121-128 George Fox..... 7
 Text 129 Milton (i)..... 12
 Text 130 Milton (ii)..... 17
 Loan-words 1600-1649 18

Ch 18

Text 136 Bunyan..... 1
Loan-words 1650-1699 1

Ch 19

Text 161 King James Bible..... 1
 Text 162 Harwood's *New Testament*..... 3
 Text 163 Thoman Hearne 6
 18th century loan-words..... 7

Ch 21

19th & 20th century loan-words..... 1

SOURCES OF ENGLISH VOCABULARY 1

01 MnE words from Old English..... 3-9

SELECTED LOAN-WORDS 1

(the following lists are each separately paginated)

02 Celtic 1-2
 03 Latin 1-5
 04 Old Norse & Scandinavian..... 1-2
 05 French 1-7
 06 Low German..... 1
 07 Arabic..... 1-2
 08 Portuguese..... 1
 09 Italian..... 1-2
 10 Spanish 1-2
 11 Russian 1-2
 12 German..... 1
 13 Urdu & Hindi..... 1-2
 14 Japanese 1-2
 15 Chinese..... 1

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