⊙s/🎬L The History of English in Ten Minutes (Spot on facts/Task 2)

The History of English in Ten Minutes
1. Anglo-Saxon
The English language begins with the phrase 'Up Yours Caesar!' as the Romans leave Britain and a lot of Germanic tribes start flooding in, tribes such as the Angles and the Saxons – who together gave us the term Anglo-Saxon, and the Jutes – who
5 didn't.
The Romans left some very straight roads behind, but not much of their Latin language. The Anglo-Saxon vocab was much more useful as it was mainly words for simple everyday things like 'house', 'woman', 'loaf' and 'werewolf'.
10 Four of our days of the week – Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday were named in honour of Anglo-Saxon gods, but they didn't bother with Saturday, Sunday and Monday as they had all gone off for a long weekend.
While they were away, Christian missionaries stole in bringing with them leaflets about jumble sales and more Latin. [15] Christianity was a hit with the locals and made them much happier to take on funky new words like 'martyr', 'bishop' and 'font'.
Along came the Vikings, with their action-man words like 'drag', 'ransack', 'thrust' and 'die', and a love of pickled herring. They [20] may have raped and pillaged but there were also into 'give' and 'take' – two of around 2000 words that they gave English, as well as the phrase 'watch out for that man with the enormous axe.'

Up yours Caesar! A rude expression like *Leck mich … in German*
jumble sales *Flohmarkt* Churches in England regularly organise jumble sales

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2. The Norman Conquest
1066. True to his name, William the Conqueror invades Britain, bringing new concepts from across the channel like the French language, the Doomsday book and the duty free Galoises multipack.
5 French was de rigueur for all official business, with words like 'judge', 'jury', 'evidence' and 'justice' coming in and giving John Grisham's career a kick-start. Latin was still used ad nauseam in Church, and the common man spoke English – able to communicate only by speaking more slowly and loudly until the
10 others understood him.

de rigueur *(fr)* absolutely necessary
John Grisham American writer of thrillers set in the legal world
toff *(sl)* a member of the aristocracy
bonhomie *(fr)* friendliness
lingo *(sl)* language

Words like 'cow', 'sheep' and 'swine' come from the English-speaking farmers, while the a la carte versions – 'beef', 'mutton' and 'pork' – come from the French-speaking toffs – beginning a long running trend for restaurants having completely indecipherable menus. [15]
The bonhomie all ended when the English nation took their new warlike lingo of 'armies', 'navies' and 'soldiers' and began the Hundred Years War against France. It actually lasted 116 years but by that point no one could count any higher in French and English took over as the language of power. [20]

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3. Shakespeare
As the dictionary tells us, about 2000 new words and phrases were invented by Shakespeare. He gave us handy words like 'eyeball', 'puppy-dog' and 'anchovy' – and more show-offy words like 'dauntless', 'besmirch' and 'lacklustre'. He came up with the
5 word 'alligator', soon after he ran out of things to rhyme with 'crocodile'. And a nation of tea-drinkers finally took him to their hearts when he invented the 'hobnob'.
Shakespeare knew the power of catchphrases as well as biscuits. Without him we would never eat our 'flesh and blood' 'out of house and home' – we'd have to say 'good riddance' to 'the green-eyed monster' and 'breaking the ice' would be 'as [10] dead as a doornail'. If you tried to get your 'money's worth' you'd be given 'short shrift' and anyone who 'laid it on with a trowel' could be 'hoist with his own petard'.
Of course it's possible other people used these words first, but the dictionary writers liked looking them up in Shakespeare [15] because there was more cross-dressing and people poking each other's eyes out.
Shakespeare's poetry showed the world that English was a language as rich vibrant language with limitless expressive and emotional power. And he still had time to open all those [20] tearooms in Stratford.

show-offy *(sl)* impressive
hobnob discussion; also the name of a kind of biscuit

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4. The King James Bible
In 1611 'the powers that be' 'turned the world upside down' with a 'labour of love' – a new translation of the bible. A team of scribes with the 'wisdom of Solomon' – 'went the extra mile' to make King James's translation 'all things to all men', whether
5 from their 'heart's desire' 'to fight the good fight' or just for the 'filthy lucre'.
This sexy new Bible went 'from strength to strength', getting to 'the root of the matter' in a language even 'the salt of the earth' could understand. 'The writing wasn't on the wall', it was
10 in handy little books and with 'fire and brimstone' preachers

reading from it in every church, its words and phrases 'took root' 'to the ends of the earth' – well at least the ends of Britain.
The King James Bible is the book that taught us that 'a leopard can't change its spots', that 'a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush', that 'a wolf in sheep's clothing' is harder to spot than 15 you would imagine, and how annoying it is to have 'a fly in your ointment'.
In fact, just as 'Jonathan begat Meribbaal; and Meribbaal begat Micah. And Micah begat Pithon', the King James Bible begat a whole glossary of metaphor and morality that still shapes the 20 way English is spoken today. Amen.

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5. The English of Science
Before the 17th Century scientists weren't really recognised – possibly because lab-coats had yet to catch on.
But suddenly Britain was full of physicists – there was Robert Hooke, Robert Boyle – and even some people not called Robert,
5 like Isaac Newton. The Royal Society was formed out of the Invisible College – after they put it down somewhere and couldn't find it again.
At first they worked in Latin. After sitting through Newton's story about the 'pomum' falling to the 'terra' from the 'arbor' for
10 the umpteenth time, the bright sparks realised they all spoke

English and could transform our understanding of the universe much quicker by talking in their own language.
But science was discovering things faster than they could name them. Words like 'acid', 'gravity', 'electricity and 'pendulum' had to be invented just to stop their meetings turning into an endless 15 game of charades.
Like teenage boys, the scientists suddenly became aware of the human body – coining new words like 'cardiac' and 'tonsil', 'ovary', and 'sternum' – and the invention of 'penis' (1693), 'vagina' (1682) made sex education classes a bit easier to follow. 20 Though 'clitoris' was still a source of confusion.

lab-coat *Laborkittel*
charades a word game, in which one player acts out a word for the others to guess

The History of English in Ten Minutes
6. English and Empire
With English making its name as the language of science, the Bible and Shakespeare, Britain decided to take it on tour.
Asking only for land, wealth, natural resources, total obedience to the crown and a few local words in return. They went to the
5 Caribbean looking for gold and a chance to really unwind – discovering the 'barbeque', the 'canoe' and a pretty good recipe for rum punch. They also brought back the word 'cannibal' to make their trip sound more exciting.
In India there was something for everyone. 'Yoga' – to help you
10 stay in shape, while pretending to be spiritual. If that didn't work there was the 'cummerbund' to hide a paunch and – if you

couldn't even make it up the stairs without turning 'crimson' – they had the 'bungalow'.
Meanwhile in Africa they picked up words like 'voodoo' and 'zombie' – kicking off the teen horror film – and even more 15 terrifying, they brought home the world's two most annoying musical instruments – the 'bongo' and the 'banjo'.
From Australia, English took the words 'nugget', 'boomerang' and 'walkabout' – and in fact the whole concept of chain pubs.
Between toppling Napoleon (1815) and the first World War 20 (1914), the British Empire gobbled up around 10 millions square miles, 400 million people and nearly a hundred thousand gin and tonics, leaving new varieties of English to develop all over the globe.

chain pub a group of pubs with the same image
gin and tonic the drink connected with the lifestyle of the British in the colonies

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7. The Age of the Dictionary
With English expanding in all directions, along came a new breed of men called lexicographers, who wanted to put an end to this anarchy – a word they defined as 'what happens when people spell words slightly differently from each other'.

5 One of the greatest was Doctor Johnson, whose 'Dictionary of the English Language' which took him 9 years to write. It was 18 inches tall and 20 inches wide – and contained 42,773 entries – meaning that even if you couldn't read, it was still pretty useful if you wanted to reach a high shelf.

10 For the first time, when people were calling you 'a pickle herring' (a jack-pudding; a merryandrew; a zany; a buffoon), a

'jobbernowl (loggerhead; blockhead) or a 'fopdoodle' (a fool; an insignificant wretch) – you could understand exactly what they meant – and you'd have the consolation of knowing they all used the standard spelling.   15

Try as he might to stop them, words kept being invented and in 1857 a new book was started which would become the Oxford English Dictionary. It took another 70 years to be finished after the first editor resigned to be an Archbishop, the second died of TB and the third was so boring that half his volunteers quit   20
and one of them ended up in an Asylum. It eventually appeared in 1928 and has continued to be revised ever since – proving the whole idea that you can stop people making up words is complete snuffbumble.

Asylum hospital for the insane

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8. American English
From the moment Brits landed in America they needed names for all the plants and animals so they borrowed words like 'raccoon', 'squash' and 'moose' from the Native Americans, as well as most of their territory.

5 Waves of immigrants fed America's hunger for words. The Dutch came sharing 'coleslaw' and 'cookies' – probably as a result of their relaxed attitude to drugs. Later, the Germans arrived selling 'pretzels' from 'delicatessens' and the Italians arrived with their 'pizza', their 'pasta' and their 'mafia', just like mamma used to
10 make.

America spread a new language of capitalism – getting everyone worried about the 'breakeven' and 'the bottom line', and whether they were 'blue chip' or 'white collar'. The commuter needed a whole new system of 'freeways', 'subways' and 'parking lots' – and quickly, before words like 'merger' and   15
'downsizing' could be invented.

American English drifted back across the pond as Brits 'got the hang of' their 'cool movies', and their 'groovy' 'jazz'. There were even some old forgotten English words that lived on in America. So they carried on using 'fall', 'faucets', 'diapers' and 'candy',   20
while the Brits moved on to 'autumn', 'taps', 'nappies' and NHS dental care.

NHS dental care Because of their supposed love of sweets, British people are often said to have bad teeth and need treatment on the **N**ational **H**ealth **S**ervice.

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9. Internet English
In 1972 the first email was sent. Soon the Internet arrived – a free global space to share information, ideas and amusing pictures of cats.

5 Before then English changed through people speaking it – but the net brought typing back into fashion and hundreds of cases of repetitive strain syndrome.

Nobody had ever had to 'download' anything before, let alone use a 'toolbar' – And the only time someone set up a 'firewall',
10 it ended with a massive insurance claim and a huge pile of charred wallpaper.

Conversations were getting shorter than the average attention span – why bother writing a sentence when an abbreviation would do and leave you more time to 'blog', 'poke' and 'reboot' when your 'hard drive' crashed? 'In my humble opinion' became   15
'IMHO, 'by the way' became 'BTW and 'if we're honest that life-threatening accident was pretty hilarious!' simply became 'fail'. Some changes even passed into spoken English. For your information people frequently asked questions like "how can 'LOL' mean 'laugh out loud' *and* 'lots of love'? But if you're going   20
to complain about that then UG2BK.

reptitive strain (injury) syndrome injury caused by constantly making the same movement
UG2BK You've got to be kidding.

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The History of English in Ten Minutes
10. Global English
In the 1500 years since the Romans left Britain, English has shown an unique ability to absorb, evolve, invade and, if we're honest, steal. After foreign settlers got it started, it grew into a fully-fledged language all of its own, before leaving home and
5 travelling the world, first via the high seas, then via the high speed broadband connection, pilfering words from over 350 languages and establishing itself as a global institution. All this despite a written alphabet that bears no correlation to how it sounds and a system of spelling that even Dan Brown couldn't
10 decipher.

Dan Brown author of – among others – the thriller 'The Da Vinci code'

Right now around 1.5 billion people now speak English. Of these about a quarter are native speakers, a quarter speak it as their second language, and half are able to ask for directions to a swimming pool.
Modern hybrids of English have really caught on. There's 15 Hinglish – which is Hindi-English, Chinglish – which is Chinese-English and Singlish – which is Singaporean English – and not that bit when they speak in musicals.
So in conclusion, the language has got so little to do with England these days it may well be time to stop calling it 20 'English'. But if someone does think up a new name for it, it should probably be in Chinese.