

Invading Words

The English language is filled with words that come from different languages. When Britain was invaded by the Normans in 1066, the invading army, led by William the Conqueror, brought their language as well—Norman-French. As a result, many words that are part of our modern English were introduced almost one thousand years ago. See Exhibit 6.5 for a lesson plan.

As discussed earlier, the origins of words add to students' growing vocabulary. Not only did the Anglo-Saxons influence our language, but the Norman-French and Scandinavians did as well. Katie regularly shared the handouts in Exhibits 6.6 through 6.8 with her eleventh-grade British literature students so that they could see the foreign influences on the English language.

Exhibit 6.5 Invading Words Lesson Plan

Invading Words Lesson

Objective To expose students to words and word parts that originated from the Normans

Materials Norman-French Vocabulary

Time 30–40 minutes

Procedure

Step 1 Make enough copies of the handout for all of the students. Put the students in groups of four to complete the handout.
Give the students the following direction:
Explain about the Norman invasion of Britain in 1066 and how this affected our language.
Instruct the students that they are now language detectives, and that with what they will learn about Norman-French and what they already know about English, they are to see what patterns emerge and what words became part of the English vocabulary.

Step 2 The students will work in their groups to complete the accompanying handout.

Step 3 When the students complete the handout, hold a large-group discussion about what they observed about the language patterns.

IRA/NCTE Standards 6. Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and non-print texts.

From Katherine S. McKnight and Bradley Berlage, *Teaching the Literature Classics in the Inclusive Classroom: Reader Response Activities to Engage All Learners*. Copyright © 2007 by Jossey-Bass. Reprinted by permission of Jossey-Bass.

Exhibit 6.6 Invading Words Handout: Word Set 1

Look at the words in Norman-French and compare them to the Anglo-Saxon list. What connection is there between these words?

Norman-French	Anglo-Saxon
beef	cow
mutton	sheep
pork	pig

Prior to the 1066 invasion, the words had the same meaning in these different languages. How are these words similar and different?

Word connection:

Exhibit 6.7 Invading Words Handout: Word Set 2

Anglo-Saxon	English
close	shut
reply	answer
odour	smell
annual	yearly
demand	ask
chamber	room
desire	wish
power	might
ire	wrath/anger

What is the relationship between these words?

Word connection:

Exhibit 6.8 Invading Words Handout: Word Set 3

Before the invasion in 1066, Scandinavian tribes influenced Anglo-Saxon English.

Norse	English
anger	wrath
nay	no
fro	from
raise	rear
ill	sick
bask	bathe
skill	craft
skin	hide
dike	ditch
skirt	shirt
scatter	shatter
skip	shift

What is the relationship between these words?

Word connection: