

Skip to main content Support our journalism Millions of readers rely on Vox's free explanatory journalism to understand and navigate the coronavirus crisis. Search Ads California Real Estate Prices Might Surprise You California Real Estate Prices Might Surprise You California Real Estate [Pics] 25 Dog Breeds Too Dangerous For Your Home [Pics] 25 Dog Breeds Too Dangerous For Your Home Articlesvally [Pics] Wife Vanishes After Doctor's Appointment, 42 Years Later They Find Her [Pics] Wife Vanishes After Doctor's Appointment, 42 Years Later They Find Her Studentsea Recommended by Terms of Use Privacy Notice Cookie Policy Do not sell my info Communications Preferences Licensing FAQ Accessibility Platform Status Contact Send Us a Tip Masthead About Us Editorial Ethics and Guidelines Advertise with us Jobs @ Vox Media (C) 2020 Vox Media, LLC. 13) Which countries in Europe can speak English english Jakub Marian English is one of the three official "procedural languages" of the European Union. The president of German recently suggested making it the only official language. But how well people in each European Union country speak English varies considerably. This map shows where most people can -- and can't -- have an English conversation. 14) Where people read English Wikipedia Kobolen English dominated in the early days of the Internet. But languages online are getting more diverse. In 2010, English no longer made up the majority of the text written online, as advancements in technology made it easier for non-Roman alphabets to be displayed. Still, English is the dominant language of Wikipedia -- both when you consider the language articles are written in, and where people use the English-language version, as is shown in this map. 15) Where new English words come from OED word origins Oxford English Dictionary This fascinating chart based on data from the Oxford English Dictionary shows where words originally came from when they first started to appear in English. Most words come originally from Germanic languages, Romance languages, or Latin, or are formed from English words already in use. But as this screenshot from 1950 shows, words also come to English from all over the world. 16) How vocabulary changes based on what you're writing Origins of words Mike Kinde Borrowing words from other language didn't stop when Old English evolved into Middle English. The Enlightenment brought an influx of Greek and Latin words into English -- words for scientific concepts that moved into broader use as science developed. Scientific vocabulary is still usually based on Greek or Latin roots that aren't used in ordinary conversation. On the other hand, Mark Twain, master of the American dialect, relied heavily on good old Anglo-Saxon words in his work, a reflection of the endurance of those very old words for the most ordinary concepts in everyday life. 17) Vocabulary of Shakespeare vs. rappers Shakespeare rappers vocabulary Matt Daniels Designer Matt Daniels looked at the first 35,000 words of artists' rap lyrics -- and the first 35,000 words of Moby-Dick, along with 35,000 words from Shakespeare's plays -- to compare the size of their vocabularies. He found that some have bigger vocabularies than Shakespeare or Melville. Of course, vocabulary size isn't the only measure of artistry. But it's an interesting look at how English has changed. 18) Where English learners speak the language proficiently EF proficiency map EF English is the second most-spoken language in the world. But there are even more people learning English (secondary speakers) than people who claim English as their first language. Here's where people tend to score well and poorly on tests of English from Education First. Green and blue countries have higher proficiency levels than red, yellow and orange ones. Scandinavian countries, Finland, Poland, and Austria fare best.

The Middle East generally lacks proficient English speakers. 19) Scores on the Test of English as a Foreign Language TOEFL scores R-Chan The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is required for foreign students from non-English-speaking countries to enroll at American universities, among other things. Here's where students tend to perform well. (English-speaking countries are included on the map, but the test is only required for people for whom English is not a first language.) The Netherlands gets the top score: an average of 100 points out of a possible 120. 20) Immigrants to the US are learning English more quickly than previous generations immigrants learning English Claude S. Fischer, Mike Hout, Aliya Saperstein Concerns about whether immigrants are assimilating in the US often focus on criticisms that they're not learning English quickly enough (think of outrage over phone systems that ask you to select English or Spanish). But in fact immigrants to the US today are learning and using English much more quickly than immigrants at the turn of the 20th century. More than 75 percent of all immigrants, and just less than 75 percent of Spanish-speaking immigrants, speak English within the first five years, compared to less than 50 percent of immigrants between 1900 and 1920.

Dialects and regionalisms 21) Where Cockneys come from Cockney map MutleyBG The traditional definition of a Cockney in London is someone born within earshot of the bells of St.-Mary-le-Bow church -- the area highlighted in tan on this map. (The smaller circles within it are where the bells can be heard more loudly in the noisier modern world.) The distinctive Cockney accent or dialect is best known for its rhyming slang, which dates back to at least the 19th century. The slang starts as rhymes, but often the rhyming word is dropped -- "to have a butcher's," meaning "to take a look," came from the rhyming of "butcher's hook" with "look." Learn more 40 maps that explain World War One An awesome map of the last time each European country was occupied 40 maps that explain the Middle East Credits Writer Libby Nelson Editors Sarah Kliff, Max Fisher Developer Yuri Victor Copy Editor Ann Espuelas TOP ARTICLES 1/5 8 ways to go out and stay safe during the coronavirus pandemic RECODE Facebook nears a tipping point when it comes to moderating hate speech RECODE Facebook's war against one of the internet's worst conspiracy sites RECODE How to make sure Google automatically deletes your data on a regular basis View all stories in Technology Sponsored Content This App Can Get You Speaking Spanish This Summer This App Can Get You Speaking Spanish This Summer Babbel Cyber Security Courses in Amman May Be Better Than You Think Cyber Security Courses in Amman May Be Better Than You Think Cyber Security Courses IToday's American English is actually closer to 18th-century British English in pronunciation than current-day British English is. Sometime in the 19th century, British pronunciation changed significantly, particularly whether "r"s are pronounced after vowels. 8) Early exploration of Australia Australia Lencer Many of the first Europeans to settle in Australia, beginning in the late 1700s, were convicts from the British Isles, and the Australian English accent probably started with their children in and around Sydney. Australia, unlike the US, doesn't have a lot of regional accents. But it does have many vocabulary words borrowed from Aboriginal languages: kangaroo, boomerang, and wombat among them. 9) Canada Canada English map Metro News British Loyalists flooded into Canada during the American Revolution. As a result, Canadian English sounds a lot like American English, but it's maintained many of the "ou" words from its British parent (honour, colour, valour). The phrase "I don't give a damn" was once speculated to refer to an Indian coin. This

probably isn't true -- the Oxford English Dictionary disagrees -- but it shows that language exchange during the colonial era was a two-way street. 11) Tristan da Cunha Tristan da Cunha varp Tristan da Cunha is the most remote archipelago in the world: it's in the South Atlantic Ocean, more or less halfway between Uruguay and South Africa. It's also the furthest-flung location of native English speakers. Tristan da Cunha is part of a British overseas territory, and its nearly 300 residents speak only English. Tristan da Cunha English has a few unusual features: double negatives are common, as is the use of "done" in the past tense ("He done walked up the road.") English around the world 12) Countries with English as the official language English as official language Shards Fifty-eight countries have English as an official language. Canada is undergoing a vowel shift of its own, where "milk" is pronounced like "melk" by some speakers. But unlike British and American English, which has a variety of regional accents, Canadian English is fairly homogenous. 10) English in India Maps of India The British East India Company brought English to the Indian subcontinent in the 17th century, and the period of British colonialism established English as the governing language. It still is, in part due to India's incredible linguistic diversity. But languages from the subcontinent contributed to English, too. The words "shampoo," "pajamas," "bungalow," "bangle," and "cash" all come from Indian languages. 4) The Danelaw Danelaw Hel-hama The next source of English was Old Norse.