



LATIN



An extinct language from Ancient Rome. Evidence suggests it was first used over 2500 years ago. Latin influenced many languages, especially French, Spanish and Italian – ‘The Romance Languages’. Latin is an extinct language that was the official language of Ancient Rome. It was also written, read and spoken across the Roman Empire. Artefacts inscribed with written Latin have been found from as far back as 500BC! There were two different types Latin: Classical Latin (used in writing for the educated Romans) and Vulgar Latin (used by the common townspeople in spoken conversations).

IS LATIN STILL USED TODAY?

Latin is an extinct language. This means that it is no longer spoken by anyone as a first language. However, many people study it in school. It is still useful, because it shows how society worked in past times. It also helps people understand modern words in many languages today. Spanish, French and Italian (among others) are known as ‘The Romance Languages’ and they have many similarities to Latin and to each other.

Latin is still used to name technical things such as species of living things, medicine and diseases. Therefore, lots of Latin is found in Science.

Latin was very important to Christianity for many centuries. It is still spoken today during some religious places and churches. It is an official language in the Vatican, where the Pope leads the Roman Catholic Church. If people in the Vatican speak different first languages, they use Latin to communicate.

IS LATIN LIKE ENGLISH?

The Romans invaded - and settled in - Britain in AD 43. Native Latin speakers brought their language with them and taught the Celtic people to read and write. Although the Celts had a language of their own, many were illiterate (unable to read and write) and had never had the opportunity to read or write before. Many Latin words became part of ‘Brittonic’ and therefore the ‘English’ we speak today.

About 80% of the entries in any English dictionary are borrowed from other languages, mainly from Latin. Over 60% of all English words have Greek or Latin roots. If you include the vocabulary of science and technology, the figure rises to over 90 percent. The study of where a word comes from is called etymology.



LATIN WORDS

Latin	English	Example Words
aqua	water	aquarium, aqua park
aud	to hear	audience, audio, audition
cent	100	century, centimetre, percent
form	shape	transform, formation
fract	to break	fraction, fracture
multi	many	multiply, multicultural
rupt	to break	interrupt, erupt, disrupt
scrib	to write	scribe, scribble, describe
spec	to look	spectacles, spectate, inspect
struct	to build	Construct, destruct, instruct

FIND OUT MORE...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jWyX8vl6kMs>

EXAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. Name the 3 main Romance Languages.
2. Which version of Latin did the poor townspeople speak during Roman times?
3. Which word means Latin has died out as a first language?
4. What do you call the study of where a word comes from?
5. What percent of the English language comes from Latin and Greek?
6. In which country is Latin still an official language?
7. These words all share a Latin root word, but what does the root mean in English? interrupt, erupt, disrupt.
8. These words all share a Latin root word, but what does the root mean in English? construct, destruct, instruct