

## **A Short History of the English and Spanish Languages**

English and Spanish are the two most commonly spoken languages in the Western Hemisphere. Both have rich and complicated histories and share alphabetic spelling systems. To understand what makes English so complex requires a basic understanding of the history of the English language.

English is melded from the languages of the many peoples that have inhabited, settled in, and invaded the British Isles. The base language of modern English is Anglo-Saxon, spoken by the West Germanic people (Anglos, Saxons, and Jutes) who invaded the British Isles in the late 400's and ruled until the mid 1000's. In 1066, Norman French armies, led by William the Conqueror, invaded and imposed their language (Norman French) and their rule upon the British population. Latin and Greek also heavily influenced English with up to 60% of English vocabulary words comprised of Latin roots. English also has adopted words from other languages.

Spanish originated in the Iberian peninsula as a dialect of spoken Latin approximately 1500 years ago. The base language of Spanish is Latin. Spanish was also influenced by Arabic, as well as by the indigenous languages of North, Central, and South America.