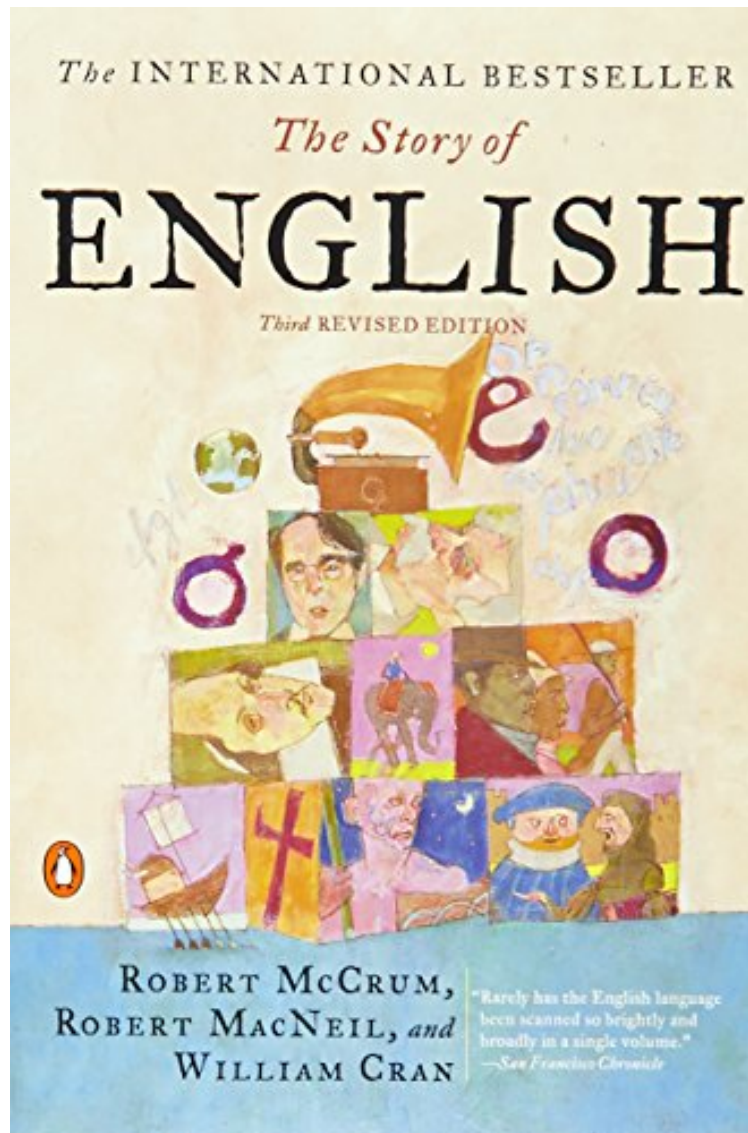


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The Story of English: Third Revised Edition

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Robert McCrum, Robert Macneil, William Cran : The Story of English: Third Revised Edition before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Story of English: Third Revised Edition:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This is a reasonably good overview of the development of the English language By Herman Cost This is a reasonably good overview of the development of the English language, but be aware that it suffers from an overdose of political correctness. There is a constant hectoring about the 'fact' that all

dialects are equal, that Standard English has no claim to superiority over, say, Black English, Cockney, or any of the various creoles or pidgins found around the world. Of course, this is the opinion of the authors, but it is not presented that way; those who argue for Standard English are in essence dismissed as elitist at best, racist at worst. Along the same lines we are treated to numerous lectures about the horrors and evils of slavery and the awful treatment of the Irish by the English. These things may well be true but I thought I was reading a book about the development of a language, not the Peculiar Institution. Part of the reason for the PC approach may have been that the book is a companion to a PBS television series. But the authors' concern for the various English dialects is shown clearly enough by the fact that the development of Old and Middle English amazingly gets just one chapter. In sum, this is a well researched and useful overview, but if a PC orientation bothers you, you probably should look elsewhere.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This informative and entertaining book should never have been out of print nor the companion TV series it encapsulates. By Patricia J. Robinson For anyone who speaks English, or has tried to master its unruly and spelling and grammar this book is a must. It explains WHY the English language is a linguistic hodgepodge as we know it today, and why we still use those crazy silent "gh"s as in laugh, taught, etc., and other assorted spellings and pronunciations that frustrate even native speakers. If you're interested in word origins idioms, you'll learn about the many authors writing in English who "invented" thousands of new words over the past 500 years words and expressions we use every day. There is even a chapter on American English which clears up the mystery: "Why don't we sound British?" Why does English in Boston sound so different in Dallas or New Orleans? Yet, with hundreds of facts and factoids, you don't have to be a history or linguistics scholar to make this a good read.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The "story of English" is an amazing tale, inseparable from cultural aspirations and achievements. By Uncle Bear This is one of those truly precious books that should be read not only by those interested in linguists, poets, writers, etc., but by every English-speaking person. How did English evolve in some widely different cultures? How did it come to be the most widely spoken language in the world? Why does it remain the most dynamic language in the world?

Now revised, *The Story of English* is the first book to tell the whole story of the English language. Originally paired with a major PBS miniseries, this book presents a stimulating and comprehensive record of spoken and written English from its Anglo-Saxon origins some two thousand years ago to the present day, when English is the dominant language of commerce and culture with more than one billion English speakers around the world. From Cockney, Scouse, and Scots to Gullah, Singlish, Franglais, and the latest African American slang, this sweeping history of the English language is the essential introduction for anyone who wants to know more about our common tongue.

From *Library Journal* A tie-in for a nine-part television series to be broadcast over PBS beginning in September, this is a wide-ranging account of the travels and changes of the English tongue from its beginnings to tomorrow, from England to America to Australia to Africa and India and the Pacific. Despite an occasionally perceptible British bias, the authors have tried hard to paint a colorful, vivid picture of the many faces and varieties of English. The text is never dull, but is enlivened by innumerable examples and by interviews with representative individuals: a minister in Scotland, a couple from the Appalachians, a storekeeper in Newfoundland, a Philadelphia shoeshine man, a cockney fruitseller, an Australian farm family, the president of Sierra Leone, a writing professor in India. A readable book that all public libraries should have.

BOMC alternate. Catherine V. von Schon, SUNY, Stony Brook Copyright 1986 Reed Business Information, Inc. "Highly enjoyable... A first-rate introduction to one of the most fascinating of subjects." *The New York Times* "Rarely has the English language been scanned so brightly and broadly in a single volume." *The San Francisco Chronicle*

About the Author Robert McCrum is the author of six novels and *My Year Off: Rediscovering Life After a Stroke*. Now literary editor of *The Observer*, he is working on an authorized biography of P. G. Wodehouse. Robert MacNeil was the co-anchor of PBS's *The MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour*. His books include two volumes of memoirs and three novels including his latest, *Breaking News*. William Cran is the executive producer for the television series *The Story of English*.