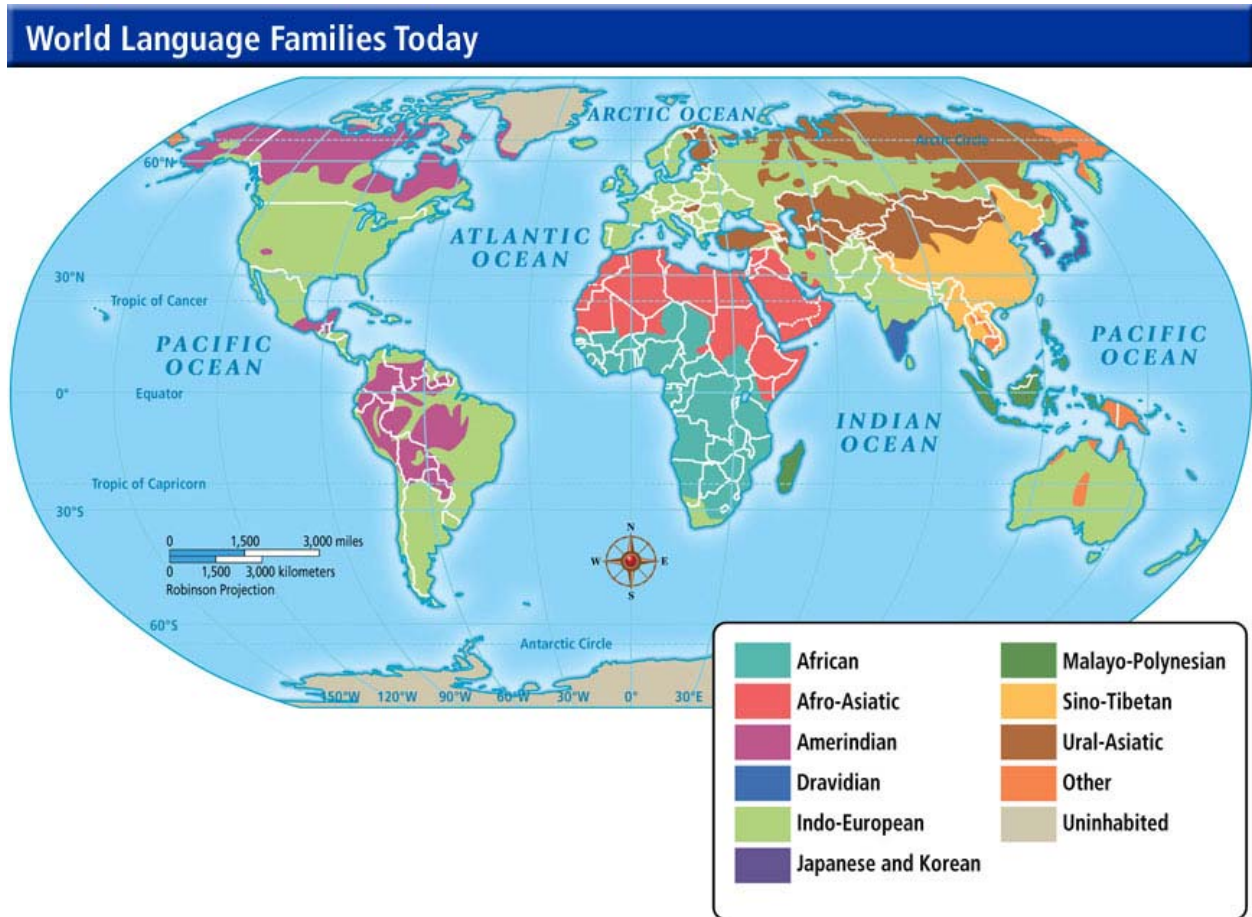


Language Families & Dialects

"It is generally agreed that language and culture are closely related. Language can be viewed as a verbal expression of culture. It is used to maintain and convey culture and cultural ties. Language provides us with many of the categories we use for expression of our thoughts, so it is therefore natural to assume that our thinking is influenced by the language which we use. The values and customs in the country we grow up in shape the way in which we think to a certain extent."

- Lexiophiles.com

DIRECTIONS: Use the map below to complete Section I of your Languages Packet. Be sure to label the continents and create a legend.



III. Language Families

Language is a system of words and symbols that people use to communicate with each other. A language family is a group of languages that have descended from a common historic ancestor, also known as the proto-language. To date, there are 7,472 KNOWN languages spoken in the world today, and they descend from 141 different language families.

All languages change with time. A comparison of Chaucer's English, Shakespeare's English and Modern English shows how a language can change over several hundred years. Modern English spoken in Britain, North America and Australia uses different words and grammar.

DIRECTIONS: Follow the instructions for the mapping portion on your Languages Packet.

If two groups of people speaking the same language are separated, in time their languages will change along different paths. First they develop different accents; next some of the vocabulary will change (either due to influences of other languages or by natural processes). When this happens a different dialect is created; the two groups can still understand each other. If the dialects continue to diverge there will come a time when they are mutually unintelligible. At this stage the people are speaking different languages.

One of the best examples in Western history occurred after the Roman Empire collapsed in the 4th Century AD. Latin was the language of that empire. All the Latin speakers in different parts of Europe (Italian Peninsula, Gaul, Iberian Peninsula, Carpathia) became isolated from each other. Their languages evolved along independent paths to give us the modern languages of Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese and Romanian.

DIRECTIONS: Use the map below to complete Section III of your Languages Packet. Be sure to label the countries and create a legend.



The Sanskrit spoken in North India changed into the modern languages of the region: Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, Bengali and others. Ancient Persian has evolved into Farsi, Kurdish and Pashto.

DIRECTIONS: Use the link below to complete Section III of your languages packet. Be sure to create a legend.



DIRECTIONS: Use the following information to complete Section IV in your Languages Packet. Be sure to answer in complete sentences.

IV. Translations

In time, with enough migrations, a single language can evolve into an entire family of languages. Languages in the same family share many common grammatical features and many of the key words, especially the older words, show their common origin.

The table below shows this effect with the word for *month* in several Indo-European languages:

English	month
Dutch	maand
German	Monat
Swedish	månad
Welsh	mis
Gaelic	mí
French	mois
Spanish	mes
Portuguese	mês
Italian	mese
Polish	miesiac
Russian	myesyats
Lithuanian	menuo
Albanian	muaj
Greek	minas
Farsi	mâh
Hindi	mahina

The table below demonstrates the word for *month* into several NON Indo-European languages:

Arabic (Afro-Asiatic Family)	shahr
Finnish (Uralic Family)	kuukausi
Basque (Independent)	hilabete
Turkish (Altaic Family)	ay
Malay (Malao-Polynesian Family)	bulan
Zulu (Niger-Congo Family)	inyanga
Mandarin (Sino-Tibetan Family)	yue
Kannada (Dravidian Family)	tingalu
Vietnamese (Austro-Asiatic Family)	thang
Cherokee (Iroquoian Family)	iyavnda

V. Dialects

The difference between a language and a dialect can be political rather than linguistic. For example, Croatian and Serbian are closely related dialects of the same language. However, they are written in different scripts and are spoken by people of different religions living in Catholic Croatia and Orthodox Christian Serbia, respectively.

The main language spoken in Iraq and Morocco is called Arabic in both countries, but they are very different from each other. The official language selected by the Chinese government is Mandarin, and China's other languages (Cantonese and Wu) are considered to be dialects even though they share very few common traits.

DIRECTIONS: Use the map below to help you answer Section V of your Languages Packet.

Map 4: Dialects of Mandarin and Southern Chinese

