

WORD BOOK

A glance into the *Oxford English Dictionary* will show that most words in Old, Middle and Early Modern English had variant spellings, depending upon their dialect and the period at which they were written down. For example, the complete range of spellings of *worship*, from OE to present-day English, is (in alphabetical order)

virchippe	wirship	worscip	wourship	wurschipe
virschip	wirshipe	worshepe	wrchepe	wurship
vyrchippe	wirshippe	worship	wrhsipe	wurshippe
weorðscipe	woorship;	worshipp	wrscipe	wurþschipe
weorðscype	worchep;	worshippe	wrshepe	wurðschipe
whorshype	worchepe	worshyp	wrsipe	wurðscipe
wirchep	worchip	worshypp	wrðsipe	wurðscype
wirchepe	worchipe	worshyppe	wrþsipe	wurðshipe
wirchip	worchippe	worsip	wurchep	wurðsipe
wirchipe	worchyp	worsipe	wurchip	wurðsype
wirscep	worschepe	worssipe	wurchipe	wurþscipe
wirscepp	worschip	wortschyp	wurchippe	wushippe
wirschep	worschipe	wortscip	wurchyp	wyrchepe
wirschepe	worschipp	worþschip	wurhschipe	wyrchippe
wirschip	worschippe	worþssipe	wurrshipe	wyrshypp
wirscip	worschupe	worðschepe	wurrshype	wyrship
wirscipe	worschyp	worðschipe	wurrsipe	wyrðscipe
wirscipp	worschype	worðscip	wurrþshipe	
wirscippe	worschyppe	worðscipe	wurschipe	

The source languages of derived words also show variants, eg *people*:

AF. poeple, people = OF. pople, poeple, pueple, peuple, puple

Here, for another example, are the variant spellings for the English and French versions of *chamberlain*,

English

chamberling, chaumberlein, chamberlein, chaumburleyn, chamberleyn(e), chambyrleyne, chaumberlaine, chaumberlayn, chamburlain(e), chamburlayn(e), chamburleyne, chamberlayn(e), chawmbyrleyne, chambrelayne, chalmerlain, chamberlaine, chammerlayne, chambarlayn, chamberlin, chamberlen; chalmerlane chamberlain.

Old French

chamberlain, chamberlen, chamberlanc, chamberlenc.

In this *Word Book* only one version of each word is given, and students should refer to the *Oxford English Dictionary* for more comprehensive information on the historical changes and varieties of spellings.

The reflexes of OE words which have survived into MnE are given, with a translation where the meaning has changed significantly. MnE translations of OE words which have not survived are marked with the = symbol.

Loan-words are printed in **bold type**, to make it easier to identify words that have not derived from Old English or Old Norse.

- For Old English texts the three columns contain,

<i>1 - OE text word</i>	<i>2 - OE base form (if different)</i>	<i>3 - MnE reflex or translation</i>
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Alphabetical order for OE texts is,

a æ b c d e f g / ʒ h i k l m n o p r s t þ ð u x y

- For Middle English & Early Modern English texts up to the 16th century, the three columns are,

<i>1 - Derivation of ME text word</i>	<i>2 - text word</i>	<i>3 - MnE reflex or translation</i>
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As letter yogh <ʒ> came to be used for the sound [j] in Middle English, as in *ʒonge* (*young*), as well as for other sounds, it is listed after <y>. So the alphabetical order for Middle English texts is,

a b c d e f g h i k l m n o p q r s t þ ð u v w x y ʒ z

- For the Early Middle English texts from the 17th and 18th centuries, where no translation is required, the columns are,

<i>1 - Derivation of EMnE text word</i>	<i>2 - date of earliest recorded occurrence</i>	<i>3 - text word</i>
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or

<i>1 - Derivation of EMnE text word</i>	<i>2 - text word</i>
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The dates must be treated with caution. They provide a “no later than” date of the manuscript or printed book in which the word is recorded. Dates of manuscripts are often very approximate. Remember also that the word will certainly have been in the spoken language, perhaps for decades.

WORD-LISTS

The word lists for the texts in each chapter are numbered separately.

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Text 44 <i>Wiþ longyng y am lad</i>	4
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