

# The United States and the United Kingdom



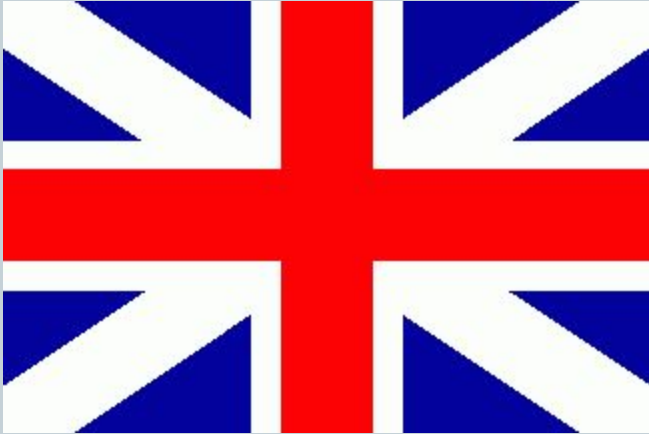
**“TWO COUNTRIES DIVIDED BY  
A COMMON LANGUAGE” –  
GEORGE BERNARD SHAW**

# The British Empire



- The English language was introduced to America through colonization.
- The first English settlement was established in Jamestown, Virginia in 1607.
- The language also spread to other parts of the world as a result of British trade and colonization. By 1921 the former British Empire controlled a population of 470 to 570 million people (a  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the world's population).

# The History of English



- Over 400 years, the English language has changed into two versions we refer to as American English and Standard British English.
- Differences include: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, idioms, and formatting of dates.

# Dates



- The way dates are formatted in the UK & USA is different:
  - 05/01/2013: British English – DD/MM/YYYY
  - 01/05/2013: American English – MM/DD/YYYY
- The way UK and USA speakers say dates is also different:
  - 5<sup>th</sup> of January 2013 – British English
  - January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013 – American English
- It gets a bit confusing!

# Spelling



- American English does not use the letter U in words ending in –or.
  - Example: Labour / Labor, Favour / Favor, Savour / Savor, Colour / Color
- American English does not always use double consonants.
  - Example: Traveller / Traveler
- American English has changed words ending in “re” to “er.”
  - Example: Fibre / Fiber, Centre / Center, Theatre / Theater
- American English has changed “C” to “S” in words.
  - Example: Defence / Defense, Offence / Offense
- American English has changed “S” into “Z.”
  - Example: Recognise / Recognize, Hyponotise / Hypnotize, Realise / Realize

# Vocabulary



- There are many objects that are described by different words in British and American English.
  - Examples:
    - Dustbin and Trash Can
    - Rubbish and Garbage
- Differences most likely to create confusion are those where the same word or phrase is used for two different objects.
  - Examples:
    - French Fries □ Chips
    - Chips □ Crisps
    - Crisps □ Chips
    - Chips □ French Fries





# British and American English



apartment  
flat



cab  
taxi



can  
tin



candy  
sweet



chips  
crisps



closet  
wardrobe



cookie  
biscuit



corn  
maize



diaper  
nappy



drapes  
curtains



overalls  
dungarees



elevator  
lift



eraser  
rubber



fall  
autumn



faucet  
tap



flashlight  
torch



fries  
chips



garbage  
rubbish



gasoline  
petrol



highway  
motorway



hood  
bonnet



jello  
jelly



license plate  
number plate



line  
queue



mail  
post



movie  
film



pajamas  
pyjamas



pants  
trousers



Scotch tape  
Sellotape



sidewalk  
pavement



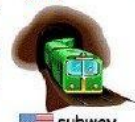
sneakers  
trainers



soccer  
football



stove  
cooker



subway  
underground



tire  
tyre



truck  
lorry



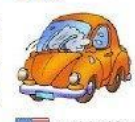
trunk  
boot



vacation  
holiday



vest  
waistcoat



windshield wiper  
windscreen wiper



yard  
garden



zipper  
zip

# Pronunciation



- The /ae/ sound becomes /a:/ in American English.
  - Example: Fast / Path / Grass
- The /o/ sound is pronounced with lips rounded only in British English.
  - Example: Not / Lot / Hot / Top
- Unaccented syllables are very slightly pronounced in British English.
  - Example: literature.
- Ts are less pronounced in American English.
  - Example: Meter / Twenty
- The double T turns into a D sound in American English.
  - Example: Kettle / Battle / Bottle / Little



# Pronunciation



- Vitamin
- Garage
- Controversy
- Scone
- Schedule
- Aluminum / Aluminium

# ACCENT VIDEOS



- [Regional American Accents](#)
- [The English Accent in 24 Languages](#) (British)