



LANGUAGE ARTS

STUDENT BOOK

▶ **9th Grade** | Unit 2

Language Arts 902

Nature of Language

1. WHAT IS LANGUAGE? 5

ORIGIN OF LANGUAGE | 6

MAKE-UP OF LANGUAGE | 8

A SECOND LANGUAGE | 10

SELF TEST 1 | 13

2. HOW DID WE GET OUR LANGUAGE? 15

INDO-EUROPEAN MIGRATIONS | 16

INDO-EUROPEAN FAMILIES | 18

OLD ENGLISH TO MODERN ENGLISH | 22

SELF TEST 2 | 26

3. HOW SHALL WE USE LANGUAGE? 29

LISTENING AND SPEAKING | 29

READING | 34

WRITING | 36

SELF TEST 3 | 40



LIFEPAC Test is located in the center of the booklet. Please remove before starting the unit.

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Nature of Language

Introduction

All of God's creatures have some form of communication. One worker bee tells the other workers where to find the sweetest blossoms; dolphins send underwater messages to other dolphins. Even a Venus Fly Trap, that clever little plant which literally eats insects, has to send out some form of communication to lure the bugs its way. Only man has language, a unique system involving listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

You are going to investigate a few things in this LIFE PAC® that will help you understand and use our very flexible language to better advantage. Whether you are preparing yourself to be a lawyer, mechanic, homemaker, stenographer, teacher, or President of the United States, you can profit from this study.

When you know what our language consists of and where it comes from, you will become more skillful at using it. As you become more careful with your pronunciation and spelling, increase your vocabulary, and improve your voice control, you will find that even adults will listen with respect to what you have to say. So, full speed ahead into LIFE PAC 902 on the *NATURE OF LANGUAGE*.

Objectives

Read these objectives. The objectives tell you what you will be able to do when you have successfully completed this LIFE PAC. When you have finished this LIFE PAC, you should be able to:

1. Explain the origin and background of language.
2. Discuss the make-up of language.
3. Present a convincing argument for learning a second language.
4. Trace the migration of the Aryan-speaking people from Babel to Europe.
5. Identify the Indo-European language families.
6. Tell *which* major languages contributed what to English.
7. Discuss the changes in English from Old English to Modern English.
8. Demonstrate a vocabulary that includes the meanings of older words and root words.
9. Use six prefixes skillfully in reading.
10. Use the suffixes *-able* and *-ible* skillfully in writing.

1. WHAT IS LANGUAGE?

What do you think when you hear the word *language*? Do you picture someone speaking in a language foreign to yours? a book containing information to learn? or a facial expression conveying an unspoken communication? Spoken words, written words, and **nonverbal** expressions are all language; and all three types of language are necessary for communication.

To define *language* in everyday terms is not an easy task. In our effort to define *language*, we might ask these three questions:

1. Has man always had language, or did he develop it?
2. After the confusion of **tongues** at the Tower of Babel, did the many resulting language families still have anything in common?
3. If a person intends never to travel in or move to a foreign country, does he need to study any language other than his own?

SECTION OBJECTIVES

Review these objectives. When you have completed this section, you should be able to:

1. Explain the origin and background of language:
 - 1.1 Give the Biblical source of language.
 - 1.2 Discuss some Biblical backgrounds of language.
 - 1.3 Cite some evidence that man has always had language.
2. Discuss the make-up of language:
 - 2.1 List four characteristics languages have continued to hold in common.
 - 2.2 Define the four common characteristics of language.
3. Present a convincing argument of learning a second language.

VOCABULARY

Study these words to enhance your learning success in this section.

anthropology (an´ thru pol´ u jē). Study of the origin, development, races, customs, and beliefs of man.

archaeology or archeology (är´ kē ol´ u jē). Study of cities, artifacts, and customs of the ancient world.

emigrate (em´ u grāt). To leave one's own country to live in another.

idiom (id ē um). A phrase or expression whose meaning cannot be understood in the ordinary sense.

linguist (ling´ gwist). A person who studies the history and structure of language.

linguistics (ling qwis´ tiks). Having to do with language or the study of languages.

morphology (môr fol u jē). The study of word forms and how they are affected by their origins.

nonverbal (non ver´ bul). Language that is not expressed in words.

phonetics (fu net´ icks). The branch of linguistics dealing with pronunciation.

phonology (fō nol' u jē). The branch of linguistics dealing with sounds in words.

semantics (su man' tiks). The branch of linguistics having to do with meaning.

syntax (sin' taks). The branch of linguistics having to do with word order.

tongues (tungz). The languages of people or nationalities.

unique (yu nēk'). The only one of its kind.

Note: All vocabulary words in this LIFEPAAC appear in **boldface** print the first time they are used. If you are not sure of the meaning when you are reading, study the definitions given.

Pronunciation Key: hat, āge, cāre, fār; let, ēqual, tērm; it, īce; hot, ōpen, ōrder; oil; out; cup, pūt, rüle; child; long; thin; /ʃh/ for then; /zh/ for measure; /u/ represents /a/ in about, /e/ in taken, /i/ in pencil, /o/ in lemon, and /u/ in circus.

ORIGIN OF LANGUAGE

The origin of language is as early as man. God is the *source* of language. Man was created in the image of God. He was created with the capacity to communicate freely with God and with other men. Both the Bible and **archaeology** provide some *background* for the study of language.

Source. Some people will tell you that man, emerging from his savage state, began to make himself understood by a series of grunts and groans. These sounds, accompanied by gestures and facial expressions, gradually—over a period of hundreds of years—led to words. Words led to sentences; sentences led to more complex **syntax** and finally to **idiomatic** expressions and **semantics**. All this “language development” only took place as man’s brain increased in size, of course!

Genesis 1:3 states, “And God said....” This statement is repeated several times in that first chapter of Genesis: in verses 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26, 28, and 29. When Adam was created, God communicated with him (Genesis 2:16-17); and Adam communicated with God (Genesis 2:19-20)—in a fully developed language.

Background. Archaeological evidence indicates that man had more than one fully-developed language in which he was able to write **phonetically** and idiomatically. That is, he used sounds and word meanings in more than one way. This

use of semantics shows that flexible, expressive languages were being used several hundred years before Abraham.

Still earlier, Noah had to have an involved language structure because of the complicated plan he received for building the ark. In addition, Noah was a teacher and preacher known by all. He was a preacher of righteousness to a corrupt world. God’s destruction resulted from men’s rejection of Noah’s message.

That man was created knowing language is told us in this one sentence from Genesis 2:20: “And Adam gave names to all cattle...fowl...and beast....”

Have you ever tried to find a name for a living creature which has never been classified? For this task, a sophisticated language with a great variety of nouns is required. **Linguists** tell us that the simplest spoken languages have very few nouns. Their languages are built up of more complex verb forms, instead. Some languages, for example, often contain a complete expression of subject, verb, and object in only one word. In these languages, nouns are used to express the most basic of daily needs.

Adam’s language, on the other hand, must have had a **phonology** that could suggest the very sound an animal made. Likewise, the nouns must have had more than one meaning, which involves the use of semantics and the idiom.



Complete these statements.

- 1.1 The Genesis account of Creation assumes _____ to be the source of language.
- 1.2 A recurring statement in Genesis chapter 1 that is related to language begins with these three words: "And God _____."
- 1.3 Archaeological evidence indicates that flexible, expressive languages were being used several hundred years before _____.
- 1.4 A man who both received a complicated building plan from God and delivered a message of righteousness to the people of his day was _____.
- 1.5 Adam's task of naming "every living creature" required a language with a great variety of _____.

Match the following items using only clues from reading the text.

- | | | | |
|------|-------------------|----|--|
| 1.6 | _____ nonverbal | a. | languages of people or nationalities |
| 1.7 | _____ phonetics | b. | dealing with pronunciation |
| 1.8 | _____ semantics | c. | a person who studies languages |
| 1.9 | _____ idiom | d. | dealing with word meanings |
| 1.10 | _____ syntax | e. | dealing with word arrangement |
| 1.11 | _____ archaeology | f. | the studying of cities and ancient peoples |
| 1.12 | _____ linguist | g. | an expression which cannot be understood in the ordinary sense |
| 1.13 | _____ linguistics | h. | dealing with sounds of words |
| 1.14 | _____ phonology | i. | study of language structure |
| 1.15 | _____ tongues | j. | language without words |
| | | k. | spoken words |



Complete these activities.

1.16 On the bus, at home, or in class, sit quietly and watch another person for about five minutes. Jot down any nonverbal language that person uses. (For example, he frowns, he chews his pencil, he rests his chin in his hand, etc.) What do these nonverbal acts mean? (Translate them.) Write your observations here:

1.17 Pretend you are writing a letter to a friend who has been taught that the first humans could not use spoken language. Explain in the letter in a few well-organized sentences how you can be sure man had language from the beginning.

MAKE-UP OF LANGUAGE

When God confused the languages of man at Babel, members of the newly created language families migrated to different areas. You will learn more about those migrations in Section II of this LIFE PAC.

As a great variety of languages developed following the confusion at Babel, all

languages have retained at least four common characteristics:

1. **a pattern of sounds.** This pattern is a series of sounds that only the human speech organs can utter.
2. **a collection of words.** Words stand for objects, actions, or ideas. Man is the only created being that has words.

3. **a system of word arrangement.** A connected pattern of words used to express thoughts is present in all languages. The different arrangements of words in one “tongue” or another is sometimes called the thought pattern of that tongue.
4. **the elements of grammar.** These elements include syntax, or meaningful order, and **morphology**, or variations of words to show how they serve in a sentence. (For example: *He* gave the ball to *me*. *I* gave the ball to *him*. The change in form gives meaning to the pronouns *he* and *him* and *I* and *me*.)



Answer these questions.

- 1.18** What are four characteristics that languages have continued to have in common since Babel?

- 1.19** What are the names and definitions of two elements of grammar that have been a part of all languages since Babel?

- 1.20** What is the different arrangement of words in one “tongue” or another sometimes called?

- 1.21** Why are the sounds of animals not properly called language?

A SECOND LANGUAGE

One might ask this question: “Why learn a second language if all languages have so much in common?” You may think now that you will never need another language. Anyway, English may seem difficult enough to learn. A growing number of people are traveling to South America, Europe, and Asia. Even more are **emigrating** from Latin America to the United States to work or to study. If you are a typical teenager, you probably enjoy communicating both verbally and nonverbally. Speaking and writing only English, you can communicate only with people of English speaking backgrounds. By learning Spanish you could speak or write to many more.

By studying Latin you can improve your understanding and spelling of the English language. More than 50 per cent of our English words are of Latin origin. If you want to be a botanist, nurse, doctor, or **anthropologist**, you will need to study Latin.

Learning a second language can help in understanding people of other cultures as well. People living in the central United States may think that all the world speaks English. Many of these people are unwelcome when traveling to Latin America or elsewhere, not because they insist on speaking only English, but because they know nothing about the customs of the people who speak another language.

Each language has its **unique** thought pattern. Speakers of simpler languages express themselves in relationship to the physical. Words related to the physical world are more important and are placed first in the structure of a sentence, or take a more prominent place in expression. Speakers of European, Middle Eastern, and Asian languages have an entirely different outlook and place more emphasis upon words for thinking and simply being. A speaker of a simpler language will talk more about things; others speak more about ideas.



| Use of a Second Language

Although man has always had language and all language has much in common, each branch of each language family is adapted in many ways to the characteristics of its native speakers. For this reason many missionaries have noticed that their children's personalities were influenced by the second language they learned as small children.

Surely a missionary's child raised in Colombia would waggle his index finger to say "No!" and wave good-bye with palm up, fingers moving toward himself. If you can accept the strange gestures of another culture, you have come a long way in understanding its people. All language, nonverbal included, begins to make sense when the culture is known.



| Need of a Second Language

**Answer true or false.**

- 1.22 _____ To emigrate is to leave one's country to live in another.
- 1.23 _____ Learning a second language does not help in understanding people of other countries.
- 1.24 _____ A Navajo talks about ideas; a Spaniard talks about things.
- 1.25 _____ The study of Latin can improve one's understanding and spelling of English.
- 1.26 _____ More than 50 per cent of our English words are of Latin origin.

Complete this activity with a friend.

- 1.27 Pretend that your friend and you do not understand each other's language. Ask him the following questions in sign language. If he understands, have him answer the same way.

Where is the nearest restaurant?

How far is the next bus station?

What time is it?

Where can I spend the night?

Where can I check my suitcase?

How much does this scarf cost?

Have your teacher or another student check your *dialogue*. If the third person understands both of you, you should get an A. If you talk with words, you get a point off.



Review the material in this section in preparation for the Self Test. The Self Test will check your mastery of this particular section. The items missed on this Self Test will indicate specific areas where restudy is needed for mastery.

SELF TEST 1

Complete these items (each answer, 4 points).

- 1.01** The name given the science of language study is _____ .
- 1.02** The people who study languages are named _____ .
- 1.03** The four characteristics that all languages have in common are
- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- 1.04** To leave one's country to live in another is to _____ .
- 1.05** The study of word forms and how they are affected by their origin is known as _____ .
- 1.06** Man is the only created being that has _____ (for communication).
- 1.07** One's understanding and spelling of English can be improved by the study of _____ .

Match these items (each answer, 3 points).

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 1.08 _____ anthropology | a. language without words |
| 1.09 _____ archaeology | b. dealing with word meanings |
| 1.010 _____ idiom | c. the only one of its kind |
| 1.011 _____ nonverbal | d. study of the origin, development, races, customs, and beliefs of man |
| 1.012 _____ phonetics | e. having to do with word order |
| 1.013 _____ phonology | f. can be understood in the ordinary sense |
| 1.014 _____ semantics | g. cannot be understood in the ordinary sense |
| 1.015 _____ syntax | h. another word for languages |
| 1.016 _____ tongues | i. study of ancient cities, artifacts, and customs |
| 1.017 _____ unique | j. dealing with sounds in words |
| | k. dealing with pronunciation |

Answer these questions (each numbered answer, 5 points).

1.018 Why are the sounds of animals not properly called language?

1.019 What are three advantages of learning a second language?

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

1.020 How do you explain the origin of language?

1.021 What are some evidences that man has always had language?

1.022 What are three types of language?

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

1.023 In our effort to define *language*, what are three questions that we might ask?

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

	SCORE _____	TEACHER _____	initials _____	date _____
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