



## The History of English in Ten Minutes

### *American English*

**Narrator:**

From the moment Brits landed in America they needed names for all the plants and animals so they borrowed words like 'raccoon', 'squash' and 'moose' from the Native Americans, as well as most of their territory.

Waves of immigrants fed America's hunger for words. The Dutch came sharing 'coleslaw' and 'cookies' – probably as a result of their relaxed attitude to drugs. Later, the Germans arrived selling 'pretzels' from 'delicatessens' and the Italians arrived with their 'pizza', their 'pasta' and their 'mafia', just like mamma used to make.

America spread a new language of capitalism – getting everyone worried about the 'breakeven' and 'the bottom line', and whether they were 'blue chip' or 'white collar'. The commuter needed a whole new system of 'freeways', 'subways' and 'parking lots' – and quickly, before words like 'merger' and 'downsizing' could be invented.

American English drifted back across the pond as Brits 'got the hang of' their 'cool movies', and their 'groovy' 'jazz'. There were even some old forgotten English words that lived on in America. So they carried on using 'fall', 'faucets', 'diapers' and 'candy', while the Brits moved on to 'autumn', 'taps', 'nappies' and NHS dental care.