

English as an International Language

Read and answer the questions

About one hundred years ago many educated people learned and spoke French when they met people from other countries. Today most people speak English when they meet foreigners. It has become the new international language. There are more people who speak English as a second language than people who speak English as a first language. Why is this?

There are many reasons why English has become so popular. One of them is that English has become the language of business. Another important reason is that popular American culture (like movies, music, and McDonald's) has quickly **spread** throughout the world. It has brought its language with it.

Is it good that English has spread to all parts of the world so quickly? I don't know. It's important to have a language that the people of the earth have **in common**. Our world has become very global and we need to **communicate** with one another. On the other hand, English is a fairly **complicated** language to learn and it brings its culture with it. Do we really need that?

Scientists have already tried to create an **artificial** language that isn't too difficult and doesn't include any one group's culture. It is called Esperanto. But it hasn't become popular. But maybe the popularity of English won't last that long either. Who knows? There are more people in the world who speak Chinese than any other language. Maybe someday Chinese will be the new international language.

Vocabulary

✚ **to spread**- to go everywhere

✚ **in common**- the same

✚ **communicate**- talk

✚ **complicated**- difficult

✚ **artificial**- not real

Name:

Date:

Questions

1. What was the world language 100 years ago?
2. Which group is larger- people who speak English as a first language or people who speak English as a second language?
3. What are two reasons English has become an international language today?
4. What are two reasons English isn't a good international language?
5. What is Esperanto?
6. What might the future international language be?