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OED SAYS OMG, FYI, LOL OK

SITTIN' IN THE LIGHTHOUSE

If you know what the title of this article means, you are probably now in the majority of English language users. Yes, these abbreviations, formerly the property of young people sending text messages, are now considered actual words.

Who says, you say? Oxford English Dictionary, or OED, as they define themselves in their own dictionary.

OED is considered by



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most experts to be the word on words, or final authority on what is considered authentic usage. The English language is constantly changing, and the OED updates four times a year to stay up with the latest trends.

So, while you are busy telling kids to straighten up, quit being too lazy to spell out words, get rid of the chewing gum, and pull up their pants, the dictionary is telling them what an old fuddy-duddy you are and that common electronic abbreviations are perfectly OK for everyday use.

A word is considered a word when it comes into common usage and most people know what it means. Words no longer come into use from teachers or wordsmiths who generally respect formal language and grammar usage.

Words now sneak into the vocabulary online through the back

door of the internet in apps (applications) such as Twitter, where the number of characters used in a message is limited to 140 and you can say more by saying less.

Text messages on smart phones simply take too long if you use enough time to type out an entire word say many users, and so words are abbreviated in a clever way that makes sense to the sender and receiver, even if it does not make sense to anyone else.

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Some of the abbreviations make more sense than others, and before you know it, everyone is jumping on the abbreviation bandwagon. Part of the attraction of using the abbreviations is being in the know and on the cutting edge of a new trend.

I must admit that I've been guilty of using all of these abbreviations in informal writing, and even a few others that I can't mention here because the dictionary doesn't approve or them, at least not yet.

However, now that certain

text message abbreviations have been officially anointed and blessed by the dictionary writers, we can probably expect to see them popping up in all sorts of places: newspapers, magazines, articles and books as well as on our cell phones.

If you are behind the times, you can only blame yourself. While you were busy worrying about minor details, such as whether Google is a noun or a verb, the language kept right on going down the fast lane as fast as the internet could carry it. BTW (by the way), Google is both a proper noun and a verb these days. Pretty soon it will probably be an adjective or an expletive.

I kind of suspected things were going south when smiley's came into common usage as a noun by using symbols that represent a smiling face. Now "heart" has gone in the same direction. We used to love finding a new way to express ourselves. Now we <3 New York, not to mention new words, and :-) when we think something is funny. Words, it seems, just won't behave themselves.

We tweet on Twitter, but tweets are tweets, not twits, which are still very foolish people. Of course, that could all change the next time the OED is updated. Maybe FYI, OMG, and LOL are not so bad after all.

There is one really good thing about the ever-changing world of the dictionary, IMHO. That is that words can also fall into disfavor and be removed when they are no longer commonly used.

Some days I feel so old, if thou knowest what I mean.



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