

# Re: Plausibility Check

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- *From:* "Peter T. Daniels" <[grammatim@xxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:grammatim@xxxxxxxxxxxxx)>
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Franz Gnaedinger wrote:

The term Middle Ages was not really wrong, but not precise enough, as it can be used in different ways:

Aa) from around 500 to around 1350  
Ab) from around 500 to around 1450

Ba) from around 1100 to around 1350  
Bb) from around 1100 to around 1450

In my remote schooldays we used definition Bb, implicitly if not explicitly. It goes along with the era of Middle English from 1066 to 1475.

Ba is called the "High Middle Ages," obviously not the entire Middle Ages.

Ab and Bb take the Middle Ages up to the Age of Exploration -- you've eliminated the Renaissance!

Perhaps an allusion to Miller's "5 plus or minus 2."

Don't know about that.

Short-term memory is able to handle "5 plus or minus 2" items at a time.

Your own estimate of the Middle English vocabulary, by counting entries in the MED, was half the number you misremember from the radio program. Or do you forget reporting your calculation?

## Re: Plausibility Check

The era of Middle English lasted from 1066 to 1475. Did Shakespeare live in that era? No, he lived later on. As I explained in a previous message, the end of the era of Middle English and of the Middle Ages went along with the Renaissance in Italy, the Renaissance opened the door for many a new science, the new scientific disciplines led to plenty new applications, and these gave rise to a lot of new words. Roughly 100,000 English words in the era of Middle English and 200,000 English words in the time of Shakespeare go along fine with me. I see no reason why I should doubt that sentence from that radio program. And remember: invectives are no arguments. All that counts in the sciences are the better arguments.

No. This is not a matter of argument, this is a matter of fact.

You, through your university, have access to the electronic OED. Just do the damn search.