

□ **" In richness, good sense and convenience, no other of the living languages may be put beside English".**□

□ **Jacob Grimm.**

- □ **Why are unwanted objects called " White Elephants"?**

There is a white elephant that lives mainly in Thailand. Also, within the Buddhist religion the white elephant is a sacred animal. At the time when Thailand was called Siam, its kings would keep white elephants because of their sacred position. They were kept in absolute splendour. If the kings of Siam wanted to ruin a person, they could do so by giving a gift of a white elephant to that person. Even though it was given in honour, it would ruin the person as, on the one hand, he couldn't give the gift away and on the other, he couldn't afford the great expense of keeping such a sacred animal in splendour.

The truth of the matter is that in the 11th century peasants in India used to sell their unwanted household goods from the back of an elephant. The elephants often turned white with fear when crowds of people appeared. Later the phrase " white elephant" was applied to any unwanted item.

- □ **Why do we say " It's raining cats and dogs"?**

□ □ □ □ In Norse mythology the cat as the Devil's animal was supposed to have great influence on the weather. Many myths credited the cat with an ability to predict the weather. The dog, like the wolf, is a signal of wind. Thus the cat may be taken as the symbol of the downpouring rain. In the 16th century in Britain the streets were so narrow and the drainage was so poor that during very heavy rains the streets would be full of stray cats, dogs and rats which had died earlier or had drowned from the deluge itself.

There is no record of it ever having rained cats and dogs, but it has rained frogs! In Germany there was once a snail storm and in 1972 black worms about the size of bees fell from the sky by the thousands over Bucharest.

Norse - скандинавский

stray - бездомный

a deluge - потоп