

Research
Based
Curricula



Sociolinguistics: The Study of Language in Society

Key Stage 4

English Language

Resource 1

2019



Resource One Overview



Topic	Introduction to Variety of Language
GCSE Modules	Critical Reading, Comprehension
Objectives	By the end of this resource you will have: <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Reflected on your own perceptions of different varieties of language✓ Commented on varieties that are appropriate in various settings.
Instructions	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Read the data source2. Complete the activities3. Explore the further reading
Context	The data source in this resource is an article written in 2012 by Michael Holden about the idea of Cockney slang – that's a form of slang that originated in the East End of London in the 1800s- and whether it is dying out, and what type of slang is now replacing it.



Resource One

Data Source



LONDON (Reuters)

Would you Adam and Eve it? Cockney rhyming slang is brown bread.

According to a survey, the famous lingo which developed in the working class east end of London in the 19th century is on its way out and now leaves even those brought up in the British capital scratching their "loaf of bread" (head).

From the likes of "apples and pears" (stairs) to "trouble and strife" (wife) and "bacon and eggs" (legs), the slang language is being replaced by a new youth version linked to mobile phone and internet text speak.

The Museum of London quizzed 2,000 Britons, including half from the capital itself, and found many did not understand phrases such as donkey's ears (years) or deep fat friar (liar) while even fewer used them. "Porky pies" (lies) was the most commonly used expression but only 13 percent said they had uttered it recently.

"Portrayals of Cockney Londoners from (Charles) Dickens's novels to (TV soap) 'East Enders' characters have popularized the London Cockney," said Alex Werner, Head of History Collections at the museum.

"However this research suggests that the Cockney dialect itself may not be enjoying the same level of popularity.

"The survey found that "awesome" was the top of the modern slang phrases, with the top 10 also featuring "oh em jee" (OMG), "epic fail" and "innit".

Despite the findings, language experts said reports of the slang's demise might be a bit premature and new rhyming phrases were still being invented by users, including "Simon Cowell" (towel) and "Catherine Zeta Jones" (moans).

"In my files I've seen in the last two or three years slang such as 'he was wearing his Barack Obamas', meaning pyjamas," David Crystal, honorary professor of linguistics at Bangor University, told the Daily Telegraph newspaper .

"So while it might be true that Cockney slang may be dying out it's worth pointing out that whatever started our impulse to rhyme words is still with us today."

For anyone baffled, this story's introduction translates as "Would you believe it? Cockney rhyming slang is dead".

Resource One Activities



Activities



1. List all of the different types of slang are mentioned in the data source? can you identify in the article?
2. Look at your list from Q1 and write a short description of each type of slang mentioned and the context(s) in which you think they can be used.
3. What perception of the different varieties of language does the article convey?
4. What categories of people does the writer associate with the different varieties, and what does this suggest about these people?
5. What assumptions are made about the following varieties of language and the people who use them:
 - a) Standard English
 - b) Cockney slang
 - c) Other forms of slang
6. The article refers to a survey, a quiz, research, and quotes a professor in linguistics.
 - a) Why do you think the writer mentions those elements?
 - b) Is anything lacking in the way the article mentions these references?
7. How does this article affect your perception of the different varieties of language? Consider the following in your answer:
 - Your experience of using the different varieties of language
 - Your experience of others who use the different varieties of language
 - How hearing people use different varieties of language effects your thoughts or feelings about a person

Resource One

Further Reading



Explore

Further reading:

<https://www.standard.co.uk/lifestyle/london-life/how-much-does-your-accent-actually-affect-your-career-path-a3371361.html>Extension Work





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