

Learn
BRIGHT

VARIETIES OF ENGLISH



ENGLISH

GRADE 5

- Teacher Guidelines ▶ pages 1 – 2
- Instructional Pages ▶ pages 3 – 4
- Activity Page ▶ page 5
- Practice Page ▶ page 6
- Homework Page ▶ page 7
- Answer Key ▶ pages 8 – 9

Classroom Procedure:

1. Display a picture of a can of soda or pop. Display the following question: What do you call this drink?
2. Allow for response and discussion. Some students will say that it is pop, while others may say it is soda. Explain that both are right, just that people call it different names. Ask students to think of other items people call a different name. Allow for response and discussion.
3. Distribute the *Varieties of English* content page. Read and review the information with the students. Save the final questions for the lesson closing. Use the additional resources to enhance understanding in and out of the classroom.
4. Distribute the Activity page. Read and review the instructions. Have students check their answers with a partner to see what they call certain items. Allow time for completion.
5. Once completed, have students share their answers with the class.
6. Distribute the Practice page. Check and review the students' responses.
8. Distribute the Homework page. The next day, check and review the students' responses.
9. In closing, ask students: What is a dialect? How does language change with culture and location? How does language change with the audience?
10. Allow for response and discussion.

Lesson Title: **Varieties of English**

Subject: Language Arts

Approximate Grade Level: 5

Objectives: Students will evaluate a text to view the nuances and the varieties of English it possesses. They will first consider different dialects and be able to understand culture or locale through them. Students will understand how word choice and tone fluctuate depending on the audience.

State Educational Standards*

LB.ELA-LITERACY.L.5.3, LB.ELA-LITERACY.L.5.3.B

Class Sessions (45 minutes): 2 class sessions

Teaching Materials/Worksheets: *Varieties of English* content pages (2), Activity page, Practice page, Homework page

Student Supplies: Content page (2), Activity page (2), Practice page (2), and the Homework page (6).

Prepare Ahead of Time: Copy handouts.

Options for Lesson: If needed, have the students read the dialogue or text aloud. This will help the students hear the words and the dialogue differences in them.

*Lessons are aligned to meet the education objectives and goals of most states. For more information on your state objectives, contact your local Board of Education or Department of Education in your state.



Varieties of English

Sometimes we think that if people speak English, it is all the same, right? Not exactly. Take someone that lives in California, someone that lives in Alabama, and someone that lives in New York and put them all in a room. Even though they all speak the English language, they use different words for different items. They also may have different accents and may pronounce words differently than you do.

Dialect

There are many different dialects in the English language. A dialect is a way someone pronounces a word, the grammar they use, and the way they write or speak.

For example, what do you call that yummy brown sauce that usually is on top of ice cream and other desserts? Do you call it “carmel”? Or do you call it “caramel”? There isn’t a right way to pronounce this word, but the way you say it has to do with your dialect. Dialect is made up of your culture and where you come from.

Audience

Sometimes varieties of English are based on the audience, both in writing and in speaking. For instance, how would you greet your best friend? Maybe like this: “What’s up, Andrew? How-ya doing?” That is appropriate, right? Of course. Conversational English exists when speaking to friends and peers. This is perfectly fine.

How would you greet your principal? Would you say: “What’s up, Mr. Blake? How-ya doing?” Maybe not. Why would your greeting be different when speaking to your best friend and speaking to your principal? You are addressing a different audience with different expectations for your greeting. Because Mr. Blake is your principal, he is older, and because he is authority, people use more formal language.



Tone and Word Choice

Often, people are more informal with their tone and word choice when speaking to people they are very familiar with, as well as people their own age.

This changes with people who are older, who are in authority, and whom you do not know very well. Many people have been taught to address people of age and authority with professional and formal words. So when addressing your principal, you may say, “Hello, Mr. Blake. How are you doing today?”

The same is true when you write dialogue or a story where people are having a conversation. Another example is when texting, have you ever typed the letters “TTYL” for “Talk to you later” or “BRB” for “Be right back”? These are abbreviations for common sayings that we use when texting. Many people understand these letters and what they mean, and we often use abbreviations for words when texting.

Would you use those letters when texting your best friend? Would they understand them? Maybe you would use them, or you might prefer to spell out the exact message.

Now, would you use “TTYL” and “BRB” when you are texting your grandmother? Why not? Would she understand what those letters mean, or would she think you were typing gibberish?

What about using those letters in an essay for English class? Why not?

We are used to adjusting our word choice, tone, and how we deliver messages based upon who we are speaking and writing to. We adapt our messages based upon our audience. Most of the time, we do this without realizing we have done so.

Here is an experiment you may want to try. With a partner, find a page with three to five paragraphs written on it. Read the sections aloud while your partner records you. Then watch the tape and listen to the sound of your voice. Can you hear the dialect or sounds you emphasize? What was your tone like? Did you begin loud or fast, or was your pacing consistent all the way through? Read the same passage to a teacher or other adult and compare the two recordings. You may be surprised to hear and see the difference in how your dialect, tone, and word choice are different from the recording read to your best friend and an adult.

Everyone wants to be an effective communicator. No one wants to go to the trouble to send a message, write something, or say something that the other person will not understand. Knowing your audience is one way you avoid being misunderstood. Using language, your audience is familiar with is another way to be clear as to what you are saying.



Instructions: Below are pieces of dialogue from different people with different dialects. Read the sentences aloud while your partner records you. Play the recording and listen to your dialect and tone of voice. Write in your own words what you would say in place of the sentence.

1. "Howdy, pal. Well, aren't you a sight for sore eyes?" _____

2. "It's a pleasure to make your acquaintance." _____

3. "That party was lit." _____

4. "It's been a minute." _____

5. "Ain't any of yo' business. But I'llow make it my business. I can lick you with one hand tied behind my back." _____

With a partner, circle and discuss what you call these different items. Do you agree?

8. Soda or pop?
9. Tennis shoes or sneakers?
10. Lollipop or sucker?
11. Lightening bug or firefly?
12. Garage sale or yard sale?
13. Carry out or take out?
14. Drinking fountain or water fountain?
15. Traffic circle or roundabout?



Instructions: Read the nursery rhymes below. Answer the questions.

Little boy Blue, come blow your horn / The sheep's in the meadow, the cow's in the corn. / Where is that boy who looks after the sheep? / He's under a haystack, fast asleep. / Will you wake him? / Oh no, not I, / For if I do, he'll surely cry.

1. What region or locale do you think this nursery rhyme takes place? What evidence helps you come to that answer? _____

2. When do think this nursery rhyme was written? (Year) _____

3. Why would Blue need to blow his horn? Explain. _____

4. Does this job exist in today's word? Explain. _____

The Queen of Hearts / She made some tarts, / All on a summer's day; / The Knave of Hearts / He stole those tarts, / And took them clean away. / The King of Hearts / Called for the tarts, / And beat the Knave full sore; / The Knave of Hearts / Brought back the tarts, / And vowed he'd steal no more.

5. What region or locale do you think this nursery rhyme takes place? What evidence helps you come to that answer? _____

6. What time period is this nursery rhyme written? What evidence help you come to that answer?

7. What is a "Knave"? What does "beat the knave full sore" and "vowed he'd steal no more" mean? _____



Instructions: This is an excerpt from the novel *Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain. Read the passage and then answer the questions.

My name is Huckleberry Finn, but I will skin you if you call me by that name, as people around here just call me Huck. You really don't know much about me unless you have read this one book by the name of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. You didn't read the first book, now did you? Well, if you have never read the first novel, then you will have trouble understanding what is yet to come, so it is my job to fill you in.

Now the way that the previous book winds up is that Tom Sawyer, who is my best friend, and I found this secret money that these sneaky robbers hid in the far off caves. Finding that stash made us both rich. It was an awful sight of money when it was piled up as it towered all the way up to my ears.

Let me tell you a bit more information about me. You see, I was an orphan, but don't be too sad as I was perfectly fine. I became my own boss, but the adults in this town thought I needed an adult. So, Widow Douglas, a nice and lonely lady, took me in as her son, but the worst part of that is that she wanted to civilize me and make me normal. It was extremely rough living in the house all the time. Instead, I wanted to assemble a band of robbers and start thieving for more gold. But Tom said I should stay with Widow Douglas.

The rough part was that she put me in clothes that had zippers and snaps. I couldn't do anything but sweat and sweat. I felt all cramped. After supper each night, Widow Douglas got out her book and taught me all about Moses parting the sea. She also taught me how to read and spell, which was extremely difficult for me.

1. **What are some examples of dialect in this passage? Highlight them.**
2. **What does the dialogue tell you about Huckleberry Finn?**
3. **How do his dialect, word choice, and tone differ based on formality and who the audience is?**



Instructions: Read the nursery rhymes below. Answer the questions.

Little boy Blue, come blow your horn / The sheep's in the meadow, the cow's in the corn. / Where is that boy who looks after the sheep? / He's under a haystack, fast asleep. / Will you wake him? / Oh no, not I, / For if I do, he'll surely cry.

1. What region or locale do you think this nursery rhyme takes place? What evidence helps you come to that answer? I think this nursery rhyme takes place in the country. I think this because Blue is in the meadow and he is surrounded by farm animals. "The sheep's in the meadow, the cow's in the corn."

2. What time period is this nursery rhyme written in? What evidence helps you come to that answer? I feel that this nursery rhyme is written in the past. There isn't usually people that herd cows and sheep anymore. "Little boy Blue, come blow your horn."

3. Why would Blue need to blow his horn? Explain. He needs to blow his horn because the cows are in the corn and the sheep are in the meadow. They shouldn't be there.

4. Does this job exist in today's world? Explain. This job is not as prevalent or as common as it was in the past.

The Queen of Hearts / She made some tarts, / All on a summer's day; / The Knave of Hearts / He stole those tarts, / And took them clean away. / The King of Hearts / Called for the tarts, / And beat the Knave full sore; / The Knave of Hearts / Brought back the tarts, / And vowed he'd steal no more.

5. What region or locale do you think this nursery rhyme takes place? What evidence helps you come to that answer? I feel that this nursery rhyme takes place in a made up land or in a land with royalty due to the presence of a king and a queen. "The Queen of Hearts she made some tarts." And "The King of Hearts called for the tarts."

6. What time period is this nursery rhyme written in? What evidence help you come to that answer? I think that this nursery rhyme takes place in the past due to the presence of royalty. "The King of Hearts called for the tarts, and beat the knave full sore."

7. What is a "Knavе"? Also, what does "beat the knave full sore" and "vowed he'd steal no more" mean? A knave is a bad or untrusting individual. The line "vowed he'd steal no more" means that the knave promised to be good and change his ways.



Instructions - Read the passage below. This is an excerpt from the novel Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain. Read the passage, then answer the questions about dialect on a separate sheet of paper.

My name is Huckleberry Finn, but **I will skin you if you** call me by that name, as people around here just call me Huck. You really don't know much about me unless you have read this one book by the name of The Adventures of Tom Sawyer. You didn't read the first book, now did you? Well, if you have never read the first novel, then you will have trouble understanding what is yet to come, so it is my job to fill you in.

Now the way that the previous book winds up is that Tom Sawyer, who is my best friend, and I found this secret money that these sneaky robbers hid in the far off caves. Finding that stash made us both rich. **It was an awful sight of money** when it was piled up as it towered all the way up to my ears.

Let me tell you a bit more information about me. You see, I was an orphan, but don't be too sad as I was perfectly fine. I became my own boss, but the adults in this town thought I needed an adult. So, Widow Douglas, a nice and lonely lady, took me in as her son, but the worst part of that is that **she wanted to civilize me and make me normal.** It was extremely rough living in the house all the time. Instead, I wanted to assemble a band of robbers and start thieving for more gold. But Tom said I should stay with Widow Douglas.

The rough part was that she put me in clothes that had zippers and snaps. I couldn't do anything but sweat and sweat. I felt all cramped. After supper each night, Widow Douglas got out her book and taught me all about Moses parting the sea. She also taught me how to read and spell, which was extremely difficult for me.

1. What are some examples of dialect in this passage? Highlight them. Some instances of dialect are highlighted above.
2. What does the dialogue tell you about Huckleberry Finn? The text tells me that Huckleberry Finn is young, grew up in the south, and is not very formal.
3. How does his dialect, word choice, and tone differ based on formality and who the audience is? He seems to be talking to us like where are friends, rather than in authority.