

Transition Work

English Language

Focus on Non-Standard and Standard Language

Find a definition of dialect

Make a list of the terms of endearment, such as *dad* or *gran*, that you use within your family. Do you know of any alternatives among your friends or in different parts of the country?

Make a list of words you associate with the dialect of the area you live in. Interview other members of your family/community to see if they can add to your list. Which words do you associate with older generations and which words are used by speakers of all ages? A good area of vocabulary to start with is words associated with emotions, states of mind or personality traits - *happy, angry, moody, grumpy, pleased, annoyed, drunk, attractive, unattractive, badly-behaved, stupid* etc.

Go on to the British Library website to the Sounds Familiar page

<https://www.bl.uk/learning/langlit/sounds/index.html>

Listen to a selection of recordings on the British Library site (between five and ten) from different parts of the UK and list any unusual items of vocabulary. Use a dictionary to find the meaning of the words and try and categorise each word or phrase according to the following criteria:

- Do you hear the word/ phrase in your area or not?
- Do you and your friends use it or not?
- Do you associate it with older or younger speakers?
- Do you think it is peculiar to certain regions?

Make a list of items of vocabulary that you associate with the older generation in your family/community? Vocabulary related to technology, fashion and lifestyle is particularly prone to change and therefore a good starting point - ask older members of your family/community for their contributions.

Make a list of words or phrases that you use that would sound out of place if used by older speakers? Terms of approval and disapproval – words for ‘good’ or ‘bad’ – are very often readily identified with a particular generation and so might be an interesting area of research.

How do you usually form the past tense of the verb 'to be'? Do you or your friends ever use non-standard forms? If so, can you observe any pattern? Make a list of non-standard past tenses that you hear during the course of an average day at school/at home/among friends.

Make a list of non-standard grammatical constructions you come across while listening to the radio or watching a television programme. Programmes that feature members of the public - radio phone-ins or 'reality' television shows - are ideally suited for this activity. Try and categorise each construction according to the following criteria:

- Do you and your friends use it or not?
- Do you associate it with older or younger speakers?
- Do you think it is peculiar to certain regions?

Listen to a selection of recordings on the British Library site (between five and ten from different parts of the UK) and make a list of non-standard grammatical constructions. Try and categorise each construction according to the following criteria:

- Do you and your friends use it or not?
- Do you associate it with older or younger speakers?
- Do you think it is peculiar to certain regions?

Listen to a selection of Traditional Dialect recordings on the British Library site (between five and ten) from different parts of England and list any items of vocabulary that you consider to be old-fashioned. Use a dictionary to find the meaning of the words and try and categorise each word or phrase according to the following criteria:

- Do you and your friends use the word/ phrase or not?
- Do you still hear it used by older speakers in your area?
- Do you think it is peculiar to certain regions?

Interview your friends and family about their attitudes to accents and the use of dialect. You could create a survey to see which accents are more acceptable. Are there some accents that people find off-putting? Why? Do people create judgements based on accents – better educated or less etc.? Are there stereotypes linked to particular accents?

You must come to your first lesson with completed notes for all these sections. You will be using these notes to create a presentation with another student in the group.