

Chapter 3

Regional Differences

Opening Activity

The opening quotation is designed to get students to think about how the place where one is born/grows up determines to some extent how one speaks. Using context, it is possible to determine that *brogue* refers to heavily accented speech. One meaning of brogue is a heavy shoe formerly worn in Scotland and Ireland. It is possible that the dialectal meaning of brogue comes from the brogues worn by peasants.

Objectives for Students

Content

- Figure out the origin of some American place names
- Define dialects and idiolects
- Understand how language varies depending on an individual's place of origin
- Know two major dialect areas of English

Language

- Vocabulary based on place names
- Determining meaning from context
- Morphology: prefixes and suffixes
- Understanding features of British and American English

I. Place Names

A.

Techniques

In groups students should consider each of the three maps to determine (a) if the three maps represent similar areas, (b) what kinds of place names are represented in each map, and (c) who the settlers were.

Answers

Map 1: Upper Peninsula of Michigan

Typical place names: Ishpeming, Negaunee, Munising, Menominee, Mackinac Island, Sault Ste. Marie, Les Cheneaux Islands, St. Ignace, Marquette

Settlers: Native American groups and French

Map 2: New Mexico

Typical place names: Española, Chimayo, Conchas Reservoir, Santa Rosa, Albuquerque, Madrid, Domingo

Settlers: Spanish

Map 3: West Virginia

Typical place names: Chapmanville, Bandytown, Montcoal, Dry Creek, Mountain View, Ramage, Clothier

Settlers: Early colonial settlers

B.

Techniques

Students should work in groups to match the column on the left with that on the right. Students should be encouraged to explain their choices. Depending on the level of proficiency of the students, some vocabulary work might need to be done before beginning this exercise. Alternatively, dictionaries can be used. Some answers could vary.

Answers

	Explanation
1. Fair	This word has the sense of beautiful.
2. Gnawbone	People were so poor that they had to gnaw on bones for food.
3. Headache Spring	A spring is a source of water. Drinking from it in this place gives a headache.

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| 4. Easy Day Peak | The easy day is the resting day before climbing to the peak of the mountain. |
| 5. Laughing Pig | The rock probably had the appearance of a pig that was laughing. |
| 6. Scratchgravel | Soil that contains a lot of gravel is not fertile. The other possibility is that all one had to do was scratch the gravel on the surface to find gold. |
| 7. Helltown | The fact that the town represents "hell" suggests an unpleasant place. |
| 8. Needmore | If a place lacks many things, it needs more things. |
| 9. Wartrace | This is the only choice of answers in which the topic of war predominates. |
| 10. Whiskey | In the days of mining, whiskey was frequently consumed. |

C.

Answers will vary.

- a. Named as being even drier than nearby *Dry Creek*.
- b. Often in the West used to indicate a place where water was available before the beginning of a desert or something similar.
- c. An area of burned timber.
- d. It was named because of a storm.
- e. Named because three tall pines shaded the post office on the west.

D.

Answers will vary depending on the students in the class. It is interesting when possible to form groups of students from different language backgrounds.

II. Dialects and Idiolects

Techniques

The purpose of Activity A is to get students to think about regional dialect features of their own country as a way of beginning to think about the same issues as they relate to English. It is best when possible to mix language backgrounds in groups.

Before beginning the reading it is useful to have a discussion on possible strategies used when confronted with unknown words. For example, the discussion can start by asking students what they do in their own language when confronted with a word they do not know. They should then be given a limited amount of time to locate three unknown words in the passage and to guess the meaning based on the context.

Answers

A./B./C.

Answers will vary.

D.

idiolect—the unique features of an individual’s language

dialect—a variety of a single language that shares systematic features and that is able to be understood by speakers of all varieties of that language

mutually intelligible—language varieties are said to be mutually intelligible when speakers of these varieties can understand one another

systematic—regular, not random

idiosyncracies—features that are not regular, but are unique to a given individual

rule-of-thumb—guiding principle

E./F.

Refer to chapter 2 for information on connectors/main ideas/supporting ideas. Answers will vary.

G.

The two words are *personality* and *ability*. Both make the words into nouns. Other examples are falsity, alacrity, paucity, sincerity, regularity, loyalty (spelling change), and security.

H.

<i>Suffix or Prefix</i>	<i>Meaning</i>	<i>Other examples</i>
-ly	makes an adverb	regularly, quickly, lovingly, carefully

un-	is a negative	unlawful, unsavory, uncharacteristic, unsightly
-a/ible	an adjectival ending	collectable (collectible), imaginable, sociable, understandable
-al	an adjectival ending	political, analytical, nautical, seasonal

I.

- a. disorganized
- b. inability
- c. unable
- d. insecure
- e. imperfect
- f. unprofessional
- g. unseasonal
- h. inaccessible
- i. antisocial
- j. abnormal
- k. insincere
- l. unimportant
- m. disloyal
- n. disrespectful
- o. illegal
- p. irregular
- q. impatient

J.

<i>Noun</i>	<i>Adjective</i>	<i>Person</i>	<i>Verb</i>	<i>Adverb</i>
organization	organized	organizer	organize	
disability	disabled	disabler	disable	
employment	employed	employer	employ	
prediction	predictable	predictor	predict	predictably
intelligence	intelligent			intelligently
difference	different		differ	differently

III. British and American English

A.

Answers

1. Four differences:
 - a. spelling (color/colour)
 - b. grammar (Do you have any . . . / Have you any . . .)
 - c. vocabulary (elevator/lift)
 - d. pronunciation (schedule)
2. Other examples:
 - a. spelling: honor/honour
enrol/enroll
judgment/judgement
 - b. morphology: singular/plural (committee is singular in American English/plural in British English)
 - c. vocabulary: buggy/pram
 - d. pronunciation: **controversy**/**controversy**
laboratory/**laboratory**
aluminium/**aluminum** (note the spelling)

B.

clothes peg	l. clothes pin
braces	f. suspenders
tin	k. can
pram	j. baby buggy
waistcoat	n. vest
sweets	a. candy
boot (of car)	m. trunk
underground	o. subway
crisps	h. potato chips
biscuits	e. crackers
queue	c. line
torch	g. flashlight
high street	d. main street
lorry	b. truck
holiday	i. vacation

C./D.

Techniques

This tape can be used in a number of ways. It can be used as a dictation; it

can be used as a pronunciation exercise; it can be used for listening comprehension. In any case, students can attempt to identify (and imitate) the features that differentiate one speaker from the other. Which is easier to understand? Why?

The British speaker is first. The text is as follows. Differences should be noted in the pronunciation and/or stress of the italicized words.

The other day I took my *daughter* Mary out to dinner at the new Italian restaurant in town, and what an experience it was. First of all, we couldn't find the place. We *asked* for *directions*, but *nobody* would help us—all we got were *hostile* looks. When we finally got *there* I tried to find a place to *park* the *car*, but it was *futile*. We had to *park* several *blocks* away. Mary said that she didn't *care*—she needed the exercise and I could smoke a *cigarette* on the *walk* over. When we got there, the waitress came over and I ordered a *bottle* of *beer*, and *pasta* with *basil sauce* for both of us. As we were eating the complimentary bread, I got *butter* all over my sleeve. Then the main course arrived and it was so *hot* that I *burnt* my tongue. And to top it all off, just as we were finishing, someone at the next table knocked over a candle, started a small *fire*, and to put it out, threw a pitcher of *water* on it and consequently on me. The manager apologized for all the trouble, but I said, “No *harm* done. I'll dry.” He then insisted on paying for our meal, but I told him it wasn't *necessary*. As we were leaving, I told Mary how sorry I was for the wasted evening, I know she has a very busy *schedule*. She replied that spending time with me was *better* than studying the effects of *aluminum* on coastal *bird* populations. I took that as a compliment.