

NOTE: Today is a computer lab day. Make sure you have signed up for the lab in advance.

TITLE OF LESSON

American Literature Unit 1 Lesson 4 – Language as a Changing Social Phenomenon
How does language reflect change?

TIME ESTIMATE FOR THIS LESSON

One class period

ALIGNMENT WITH STANDARDS

California – Eng 11-12: R1.0-3, W1.0-5, W/O1.0-2, L/S1.0
NETS for Students – 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

MATERIALS

American Literature Permission Form – Teacher Page
Dictionary Sources List – Teacher Page
Computer lab with Internet access

LESSON OBJECTIVES

- To reflect on the Regional Expressions Checklist Exercise.
 - To share results of the exercise with other students
 - To research other time or place-specific expressions
 - To consider whether there is one correct standard for language
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FOCUS AND MOTIVATE STUDENTS – WARM-UP ACTIVITY

- 1) Homework Check – Stamp/initial all Journal 2 entries, and the **Regional Expressions Checklists**. Have students keep these with them for discussion.
- 2) **Daily Log** – Tell students to copy the Daily Log below.
- 3) **Sustained Silent Reading** – Read for ten minutes. Make sure to read silently while the students read. Ask students if their books contain any expressions that seem to be unique to a particular time and place. Point out some examples from your own book. Tell students to take out a sheet of paper and title it “Word Diary.” On this sheet, they should list the examples they find in their novels. Tell them that they will be keeping a word diary for *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, and that they will keep track of regional expressions from Huckleberry Finn and from other sources for use in their final dictionary project. They should create a section in their binders to keep their word diaries.
- 4) Computer Protocol – Remind students of the computer lab etiquette you have established for your class and the consequences of any misbehavior. Computers should stay off until you tell them to turn the computers on.

Date	Journal	Lecture Discussion	Activity	Readings	Homework
	3 - What was interesting/surprising about the Regional Expressions Checklist exercise? (1 page)		1. Journal 3 Entry 2. Regional Expressions Checklist Roundup 3. Research regional/time-specific expressions		1. Create an expressions checklist using the word diary and your own graphic organizer 2. Continue Vocabulary Worksheets (Item 8). 3. Continue reading novels.

ACTIVITIES – INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP

1. **Journal 3 Entry** – Have students write a page describing what was interesting about the **Regional Expressions Checklist** exercise that they just completed. Did the people they surveyed have different answers from their own answers? Why do they think that is? Did they encounter any words or expressions that were new to them? Have them write down the thing they were most surprised by and why they were so surprised by it. (1 page)
2. **Discussion** – Ask every student to share the piece of information that was most surprising to them. For every piece of information, ask the student to speculate on why the speaker they surveyed gave them that answer. For example, if someone says, “I was surprised that my grandfather called a frying pan a spider. I had never heard that before,” ask them where they think the expression came from, why it would exist, or what place it originated. Ask students if they think certain answers are related to where the speakers came from. How many students surveyed people from the West Coast? From the Midwest? From the South? Non-native English speakers? Are there words in common from these groups? Ask students if they believe any of their friends their own age would use the same expressions as the older people they surveyed, and then put the question to the class to see if anyone does.
3. **Vocabulary** – When everyone has shared information from the checklist, explain to the class that this checklist was created in the 1960s. They should think about the kind of checklist they would create today. What expressions would be common? Would they be common everywhere or just in their school, or their city? Tell the students to think of five examples of expressions that would be specific to their school, their city, or their generation. Then they should write these words in their word diary. Tell students to take out their vocabulary lists and look at the word “Etymology.” What definition did they come up with for this word? What did it have to do with dictionaries?
4. **Internet Research** – Tell students to turn on their computers and open their web browsers. Students who did not return permission forms should be given an alternative assignment and placed where you have deemed appropriate prior to class. Write the following websites on the board:

www.americandialect.org/links.html
www.uta.fi/FAST/US8/REF/dialects.html

Tell the students that they will be etymologists today, people who study the places and times that words originate. Using the above websites, or links listed on those websites, they need to find at least seven expressions from a specific time or place. (There is a lot of information on both of these websites, so you may need to direct them a little more. The first site has a great link called “Words of the Year,” that lists words that became very trendy during a particular year. It goes back about ten years. Both sites also have several links to pages examining regional dialects. Suggest that students seek out links that list a specific geographical place in the title.) You might also want to use some of the sites listed on the **Dictionary Sources** page used in Lesson 2. Remind the students that, as they look through the sites, and find examples of slang and regional expressions, they will no doubt encounter profanity and offensive language. Just as with any other Internet search, they must stay focused on the task, which is not to research obscenity, but to find appropriate examples of regional dialects. Moreover, they should remember the class ground rules regarding potentially offensive language.

5. **Graphic Organizer** – Once they locate an expression that is new and interesting to them, they should take note of it, writing the word and the meaning. They should also write the time and the place that the word is used, and the type of speaker that would use it. (Is it a word that is newly coined or a word that was used in the 19th century? Is it a word used on the west coast of the U.S. or in Great Britain?) Tell them to create a graphic organizer that will display this information in a way that is informative and easy to read. Point out the difficulty of finding the words and meanings in some of the sites they explored. What would have made the information easier to read? Instruct them that their graphic organizer must contain the following: the words, the meanings, the time and place that are unique for that word, and the type of speaker that would use it. They must create the format. Tell them to have fun creating the visual that houses this information and to make sure that how it is organized is effective and clear. Give them about ten to fifteen minutes to research as many words or phrases as they can. As stated above, they must find at least seven examples, but encourage them to find as many as possible. They will enjoy the search once they begin.

6. **Group Checklist** – Have the students gather in their groups and tell each other their findings. Ask the groups to put a star next to a favorite example from each student in the group. After they have had a chance to share, ask the group to come up with an answer to this question: Based on the readings about Ebonics, the **Regional Expressions Checklist**, your own opinions, and the research you did today, do you believe there is one correct way to speak? Why or why not? (To be fair, point out that you have loaded this question by having them look at the multiple ways that people speak. But also point out that many people – many teachers included! – feel that there is a correct standard that must be used.) Give them ten minutes to complete the favorite examples and answer the question. Everyone in the group must agree.
 7. **Present** – At the end of 10 minutes, call time. Call on people randomly to present their group’s viewpoints and the favorite examples from each member. Ask the rest of the class to add the favorite words each group presents to their word diary. This means that everyone will need to be taking notes and paying attention.
 8. **Review Homework** – Tell students to use the list of words from their word diaries to create their own checklist of expressions. For each word or expression listed in the word diary, they should also think of one other way to say the word or expression, and write what type of speaker would use it. Or, if it is impossible to say the same thing, they should try to think of a close equivalent. (For example, if they were researching the expression, “The El”—from “Chicagospeak” on the Illinois Education Association website—it would say, “Nickname for the CTA's elevated train system.” The closest equivalent would probably be the name for the subway or train system in their city.) For this checklist, they should use the graphic organizer they created in class today. However, they must add one more section to the organizer, called “Similar Expressions,” or some other name of their own choosing. This section will list the alternate ways of saying the words in the word diaries. Therefore, their assignment will consist of a checklist done in their own individual format, listing all of the words placed in the word diary today, their meanings, the place/time/speaker unique to the word, and a different way of saying the word that is specific to themselves.

They should also continue working with their **Vocabulary Worksheets**, this time completing Item 8 for each one. Item 8 is “people who would tend to use the word in typical conversation.” Just as they are thinking of what kind of speakers would use the words on their checklist of expressions, they should think about who uses the vocabulary words from their list. (For example, if one of the words on their worksheets had been “etymologists,” they could have put down “linguists” as the type of people who would use this word.)
 9. **American Literature Permission Form** – Distribute the **American Literature Permission Form** to the students. Ask them to have their parents read it over and sign it **ONLY** if they wish to have their child excluded from reading the texts the rest of the class will be reading. This simply means they will be given alternate readings and writing assignments, totaling the same amount of work for the same amount of credit. They will not be able to work with the rest of the class, if that permission form is signed and returned. Tell the students to read it over as well.
 10. **Clean Up** – Ask students to shut down their computers, push in their chairs, and clean up their workstations. Collect Journal 3 Entry.
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HOMEWORK

- 1) Create your own checklist of expressions, using the word diary and the graphic organizer you created.
 - 2) Continue **Vocabulary Worksheets** (Item 8).
 - 3) Continue reading novels.
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GROUP ROLES

None

DOCUMENTATION FOR PORTFOLIO

Unit 1

*Our Narrative Memory
The Individual and Society*

*3:1:4:Language as a Changing Social
Phenomenon*

None