

Name:  
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Ms. Lopez

## ***Pygmalion: Cockney***



Writers and comics love Cockney dialect, which is traditionally spoken by large numbers of lower-class Londoners who live within the sound of Bow bells, the bells of the church of St. Mary leBow.

**Read this line from the play aloud:**

"Nah then, Freddy: look wh' y' gowin, deah."

What is Eliza saying? \_\_\_\_\_

**Judging from this line alone, complete these pronunciation "rules" for Cockney speakers:**

1. ow (as in *how*) is pronounced \_\_\_\_\_
2. long o (as in *Joe*) is pronounced \_\_\_\_\_
3. final *r* is pronounced \_\_\_\_\_
4. from an "-ing" ending, you drop \_\_\_\_\_

**Add these "rules" to give you a sense of what Cockney sounds like:**

- ✓ Drop your *h*'s (say " 'alf a 'undred" for "half a hundred")
- ✓ *ay* (as in *pay*) is pronounced *aye* (as in *pie*)
- ✓ long *i* (as in *fine*) is pronounced *oy* (as in *join*)
- ✓ long *e* (as in *teach*) is pronounced *uh-eye*
- ✓ *oi* (as in *spoil*) is pronounced *aw* (as in *saw*)
- ✓ *ir* (as in *girl*) is pronounced *e* (as *bell*)
- ✓ *oo* (as in *you* or *duty*) is pronounced ə (uh) -oo (as in *salute*)
- ✓ short *e* (as in *well*) is pronounced *a* (as in *cat*)
- ✓ Many sounds are slurred together.

**Following these rules, write each of these lines from the play and then say them in your own dialect:**

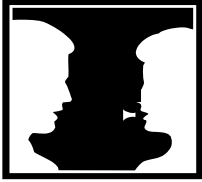
5. It's aw rawt: e's a gentleman: look at his bə-oots.
6. Tə-oo branches o voylets trod into the mad.
7. Ow, eez yə-ooa san, is e? Wal, fewd dan y' də-ooty bawmz a mather should, eed now bettern to spawl a pore gel's flahrzn than ran away athaht pyin.

**Try reading these lines as they would sound in Cockney:**

8. I'm a good girl, I am.
9. He's no right to take away my character. My character is the same to me as any lady's.
10. I know my alphabet. Do you think I know nothing? I don't need to be taught like a child.

## Pygmalion: Dialects

Directions: Read the following samples of dialects. Make assumptions about the speakers.



Character A: "I say, he speaks rawtha strangely."

Character B: "Y'all ta-halk sorta fuhunny. Ah cain't tell wat yer asayin!"

Character C: "Dey don' know nuttin' 'bout dare own langwedje."

These language critics all *read* the same language, but they do not *speak* the same language. Can you understand each one's comment?

Assume that each of the speakers is a character in a novel you are reading. You know that writers often expect readers to make inferences about a character based on his mode of speech. Be a judge. Think about how each of the above characters speaks, and make inferences about each. Think about where they live, what they do, how they behave. **Then, write your assumptions below.**

A.

B.

C.

Which characters would the author expect you to look down upon?

No matter where you live now or where you have lived in the past, you, too, have a distinct dialect--called an *IDIOLECT*--that is uniquely yours. No one else, not even members of your family, speak exactly as you do. Think about these questions. **Write your responses in complete sentences.**

Have you ever been in another part of the country and had people laugh at the way you talked? Have you or others ever made fun of a newcomer who talked differently?

Would the world be better or worse if everyone spoke the same standard of language? Why?

Grammar is part of a dialect. What judgement do we often make about people who use bad grammar?

Many people learn "proper" dialect which they speak fluently but retain their original dialect also. For example, Huey P. Long, who was governor of Louisiana and later U.S. Senator, often spoke in an ungrammatical, "country" dialect while campaigning at home, but he spoke in a very cultured dialect on the floor of the Senate. Can you think of other examples of specific people or types of people who do this? Why would they cling to two dialects?

What influence might a person's dialect have on his job or profession?