

Using Standard English

Standard English is formal English which you should always try to use in your written work.

Non-Standard English is a more informal type of English which you can use when you are speaking to your friends, or when you are writing dialogue.

The United Kingdom has a rich landscape of regional dialects. But in regional dialects words are often used that are not understood across the country, or elements of grammar are altered that do not conform to rules of Standard English. There is nothing wrong with regional dialects, but it is important that you can make the distinction.

In the Second World War children were often evacuated far from home and the way they spoke was quite different to their host families. Can you match the regional expressions (that come from across the country) to their Standard English equivalent?

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| ① He's got a right cob on. | You're making a mess of that. |
| ② Stop skrikin' ar kid. | Think about it. |
| ③ Were there owt else? | Who's making a pot of tea? |
| ④ Tha's mekkin' a reet pig's ear o' that. | He's in a very bad mood. |
| ⑤ If tha wants owt doin' reet, do it thissen. | I won't say anything. |
| ⑥ Aa winnet say nowt. | You get on my nerves. |
| ⑦ Hoo's ya fettle? | Stop crying, brother (or sister). |
| ⑧ Use your loaf. | I don't know. |
| ⑨ You get on my wick. | Was there anything else? |
| ⑩ Who's mashing? | If you want something doing properly, do it yourself. |
| ⑪ Quit ya belly-aching. | How are you? |
| ⑫ Ah dinnae ken. | Stop moaning. |

Do you know what regions they come from? Write the numbers of the expressions next to the different regions.

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| ① Scotland | ④ Yorkshire |
| ② North-West | ⑤ Midlands |
| ③ North-East | ⑥ South-East |



Using formal language for letter writing

When you write a letter, it should be in a formal style using language appropriate for formal writing. Language that you use with your friends would not be suitable for most types of letters.

- 1 Below is a letter from a young boy who has just recently been evacuated. You must decide which of the words and phrases in bold are the most appropriate and write the most suitable version on the lines underneath.

Dear Uncle Mervin and Aunty Sheila,

How's it going?/I trust this letter finds you well. I am writing to say **cheers/thank you** for the **money/dosh** you sent me for my birthday. My mum **got/purchased** a new suitcase with the money as the old one was **broken/knackered**. I **needed/required** a new suitcase for my **trip/journey** to Wales where I have been **evacuated/sent**. The train **departed/left** Liverpool early on Monday morning and I am now **residing/living** in Rhyl in North Wales.

I am a bit **narked/rather annoyed** because I wanted to be with my **friends/mates** from school, but they have been **billeted/taken** to **accommodation/digs** on the other side of town. However, the family I have been **put/placed** with are very **pally/friendly** and I **am/I'm** sure life here will be **tolerable/okay**.

Love from your nephew,

Jim x

P.S. I have just **found out/discovered** that Mum forgot to pack my toothbrush. **Could/Can** I **ask/request** that when you next **pop round/visit**, you let her know I **am without a/I've not got no** toothbrush.

P.P.S. Please tell mum that I miss her and I wish she **was/were** here.

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Identifying the subject and object in a sentence

Most sentences are made up of a **subject** and an **object**.

The **subject** of the sentence is the person or thing doing the action.

The **object** is the person or thing having the action done to it.

The subject normally comes first in a sentence. The object usually comes second in the sentence, after the verb.

Many people feared a German attack.

subject verb

object

Underline the subject in the following sentences. (Hint: one sentence has several subjects.)

The Home Guard

- 1 On Friday May 10th, German soldiers attacked Belgium and the Netherlands.
- 2 The Government was worried Britain would be attacked next.
- 3 British troops were fighting in mainland Europe.
- 4 They needed men to protect Britain.
- 5 An urgent appeal was broadcast on the radio.
- 6 They asked for men to join the Local Defence Volunteers (The Home Guard).
- 7 Over one million men volunteered to join the Home Guard.
- 8 Farm workers, bakers, teachers, grocers, bank staff, transport workers joined the Home Guard.
- 9 Men who were too young or too old joined too.



Underline the object in the following sentences. (Hint: there is often more than one object.)

- 1 At the beginning, they had no uniforms and little equipment.
- 2 They had to use pikes instead of rifles.
- 3 The public donated weapons for them to use.
- 4 The Home Guard defended factories, beaches and sea fronts.
- 5 At night, they patrolled fields in which enemy paratroopers could land.
- 6 They couldn't beat well-trained German soldiers.
- 7 But they could slow the soldiers down until help arrived.
- 8 The Germans didn't invade Britain.
- 9 The Home Guard's main job was to capture German airmen whose planes had been shot down.

Have you seen Dad's Army – a comedy programme about the Home Guard?