

Standard English and Varieties

KS3 English · Follows the national curriculum

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

1. Worked example

Turn into Standard English: 'Me and him was late cos the bus never come.'

Step 1 · Subject pronouns

'Me and him' → 'He and I' (subject of the verb).

Step 2 · Verb agreement

'was' → 'were' (plural subject).

Step 3 · Informal word

'cos' → 'because'.

Step 4 · Past tense

'never come' → 'did not come' or 'didn't come'.

Answer: He and I were late because the bus did not come.

Check: Four changes: pronouns, agreement, vocabulary, verb form.

2. Now try one with the steps

Spot and fix the double negative: 'There isn't nobody here.'

Step 1 · Find the two negatives

Step 2 · Standard English uses one

Answer:

3. Practice

Show your working. The marks tell you how much is expected.

1. Is Standard English about accent or about grammar and vocabulary? [1]

2. What is the difference between an accent and a dialect? [1]

3. Write in Standard English: 'We was tired.' [1]

4. Write in Standard English: 'I seen it yesterday.' [1]

5. Write in Standard English: 'She should of told me.' [1]

6. How many negatives does Standard English use in 'I don't want any'? Write the number. [1]

7. What does 'nowt' mean in Yorkshire dialect? [1]

8. What is code-switching? [1]

9. Write in Standard English: 'Me and Josh are going.' [1]

10. Give one situation where Standard English is expected and one where dialect or slang is fine. [2]

11. Why is it wrong to call dialects 'bad English'? [2]

12. Rewrite formally for a letter to a head teacher: 'The new lunch rule is well unfair, innit?' [2]

13. Why might a writer use non-standard English in a poem or a story? [2]

14. English is always changing. Give one example of a word that has entered English recently or changed its meaning. [1]

4. Before you hand it in

'You have to talk posh to speak Standard English.'

Standard English can be spoken in any accent; it is about grammar and vocabulary.

Using dialect forms in formal writing: 'we was', 'I done', 'could of'.

Check verbs and pronouns: 'we were', 'I did / I have done', 'could have'.

Thinking dialects are lazy or incorrect.

Treat them varieties; choose the variety that suits the audience and purpose.

'Me and him went' in an essay.

'He and I went.' Test: you would not say 'me went'.