

A writing activity from

# Grimm & Co



## Accents and Dialects

### You will need:

- Pen and paper or an electrical device to write on
- The ability to listen to the activity instructions (these have been recorded, so you'll need to be able to listen to them through a computer or phone, or through headphones)
- Access to the internet, you may need to search for some things.

**Step one:** In this activity, we are going to be celebrating our own accent and dialect. First, let's find out what these two terms mean:

- **ACCENT:** a distinctive way of pronouncing a language, especially one associated with a particular country, area or social class.
- **DIALECT:** a particular form of a language which is peculiar to a specific region or social group.

**Step two:** Focus on the phrase, '*Cup of tea?*' - The use of the punctuation shows that this is a question; someone asking another person if they would like a cup of tea. Create a list generating all the different ways you can ask this particular question. You might want to consider:

- The different words that also mean '*tea*'.
- You might ask the Queen if she would like a cup of tea in a different way compared to if you asked your friend.
- The type of mood someone is in may affect the way they ask this question.

**Step three:** Now, create another list of all the words in your dialect. For example, I am from South Yorkshire so I will need to write a list of all the words in my dialect (*like mardy bum and face on*). These could be words you speak yourself, or words you hear others say. Can you extend this by adding the definitions to each word on your list?

**Step four:** Many artists have used their accent and dialect as an important part of their art and many people in general feel like accents and dialects contribute to a person's identity.

**Have a listen to the following artists and how they use their accent and dialect as part of their poetry/songs:**

- Dr. Benjamin Zephaniah – a British poet, from Birmingham, whose work is strongly influenced by the music and poetry of Jamaica: [click here](#)
- The Arctic Monkeys – an indie rock band, from Sheffield: [click here](#)
- The Unthanks – a folk group, from Tyneside: [click here](#)
- Kate Rusby – a folk singer-songwriter, from Barnsley: [click here](#)

Could you hear the accents in the way these people performed? The way they intoned the sounds in the words slightly differently? Did any use words that aren't commonly spoken throughout the country?

**Step five:** You are going to write your own spoken word piece about wherever it is you're from. Pretend that someone has arrived to your region and they've never been there before. In fact, they have no idea about this place at all. You are going to take them on a tour with words, accent and dialect. Use the words from your list and add the definitions as well. Play around with this, you can make it silly and fun.

**Step six:** It would be super if you could record your writing in your own accent so that you're presenting it as spoken word and celebrating your awesome accents. No pressure though.

**Step seven:** Share your writing with us! Do this by taking a photo of your handwriting, typing up your work, or audio or video recording yourself reading it aloud (you could also ask someone else to read it aloud for you).

If you're a member of one of our out-of-school writing groups, you should then upload your work to your Seesaw journal.

If you're accessing this activity independently, or through your school, we'd still love to share in the amazing writing you've created! You can post your work on social media, tagging us @GrimmAndCo, or email your work to [grimmapothecary@gmail.com](mailto:grimmapothecary@gmail.com). Happy writing!

