

Cockney English (British English version)

Today we will be looking at some Cockney English. What's that I hear you ask? Well, it's a form of spoken English that many traditional working class people spoke in the East End of London in places such as Bow, Stepney, Hackney, and Shoreditch Poplar. So what is a Cockney? Well, a true Cockney is a person who was born within the sound of Bow Bells (St. Mary-le-Bow church in Cheapside, in the city of London). However, the term is now loosely applied to those born outside this area, as long as they have a "Cockney" accent or a Cockney heritage. These days the Cockney accent is heard less in Central London but is widely heard in outer London boroughs, the London suburbs and all across South East England including towns like Romford.

The Cockney accent is generally considered to be one of the broadest British accents. While many Londoners may speak with what is referred to as "popular London" they do not necessarily speak Cockney. The "popular London" accent can be distinguished from Cockney in a number of ways, and can also be found outside the capital, unlike the true Cockney accent. By the 17th century the term "Cockney", through banter, came to mean a Londoner. Today's natives of London, especially those in its East End use the term with respect and pride – Cockney Pride.

Today many of these slang expressions are in popular use throughout Britain. Television has raised awareness of Cockney rhyming slang. Classic TV shows like "Minder", "Steptoe and Son", "Till Death us do Part", "Only Fools and Horses" and "The Two Ronnies" have helped spread Cockney slang throughout the world. Is Cockney rhyming slang dead? Not on your Nelly mate! Cockney rhyming slang continues to evolve, with hundreds of new rhyming slang words being created in the last few years alone, with modern Cockney favouring celebrity or famous names.

Famous Cockney rhyming slang (chitty chitty bang bang) includes; apples and pears = stairs, Ayrton Senna = tenner (ten pound note), bacon and eggs = legs, bangers and mash = cash, bricks and mortar = daughter, Britney Spears = beers, Bugs Bunny = money, Calvin Klein = fine, cat and mouse = house, clickety click – sixty-six, dog and bone = phone, how do you do = shoe, how's your father = lather, kippers = slippers, laugh and titter = bitter, Turkish bath = laugh, use your loaf (loaf of bread) = head.

Category: London / Languages / Cockney

Level: Intermediate / Upper Intermediate

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Cockney English (Cockney English version)

Lor' luv a duck! Today we'll be lookin' at some Cockney English. Wot's that I 'ear ya ask? 'eaven and 'ell, it's a fawm ov spoken English wot many tradishunal workin' Bo-le and Glass people spoke in da bloomin' East Round da bend ov London in places such as Ba, Stepney, 'ackney, an' Shawarditch Poplar. So wot is a Cockney? Well, a true Cockney is a Heap of Coke 'oo was born wivin da chuffin' sound ov Ba Bells (St. Mary-le-Ba left in the lurch in Cheapside, in da bleedin' city ov London). 'owever, da term is na loosely applied ter those born outside dis 'rea, as long as they 'ave a "Cockney" accen' awer a Cockney 'eritage. These days da Cockney accen' is 'eard less in Central London but is widely 'eard in outer London boroughs, da London suburbs an' aw across Saarf East England includin' towns loike Romford.

The Cockney accen' is generally considered ter be wahn ov da broadest British accents. While many Londoners may speak wiv wot is referred ter as "popular London" they do not necessarily speak Cockney. The "popular London" accen' can be distinguished from Cockney in a river 'umber ov ways, an' can also be found outside da capital, unlike da true Cockney accent. By da 17^f century da term "Cockney", fruff ban'er, came ter peaches an' cream a Londoner. Today's natives ov London, especially those in its East Round da bend use da term wiv respect an' Jekyll and Hyde - Cockney Jekyll and Hyde.

Today many ov deese Matheson Lang expressions 're in popular use froughaaht Britain. Television 'as raised awareness ov Chitty Chitty Bang Bang. Bottle an' Glassic Buzz Bee shows loike "Minder", "Steptoe an' Son", "Till Dearf us do Part", "Only Fools an' 'orses" an' "The Bo-le of Glue Ronnies" 'ave 'elped spread Cockney Matheson Lang froughaaht da world. Is Chitty Chitty Bang Bang brahn bread? Not on your nelly China plate! Chitty Chitty Bang Bang continues ter evolve, wiv 'undreds ov new rhymin' Matheson Lang dickie birds bein' created in da last few donkeys ears Jack Jones, wiv modern Cockney favaaahrin' celebri'y awer famous names. Know what I mean?

Famous Chitty Chitty Bang Bang includes; apples n' pears = stairs, Ayrton Senna = bill an' benner (ten pound note), bacon an' eggs = legs, bangers an' mash = cash, bricks an' mortar = daughter, Britney Spears = beers, Bugs Bunny = money, Calvin Klein = fine, top 'at and little 'ouse = 'ouse, clicke'y click – sixty-six, Cherry Hog an' Sylvester Stallone = phone, 'ow do you do = shoe, 'ow's your farfer = larfer, kippers = slippers, avin a girarffe an' titter = bitter, Turkish barf = avin a girarffe(laugh), use your loaf (loaf ov bread) = 'ead.

1. Cockney English: What three things do you know about Cockney English? Go round the room swapping details.

2. Geography: England: Where is England? What is its capital? In what part of the country is the capital? Where are Bow, Stepney and Hackney? Draw a map on the board then **look on Google maps** to help you.

3. Dictation: The teacher will read four to six lines of the article slowly and clearly. Students will write down what they hear. The teacher will repeat the passage slowly again. Self-correct your work from page one - filling in spaces and correcting mistakes. Be honest with yourself on the number of errors. Advise the teacher of your total number of errors. Less than five is very good. Ten is acceptable. Any more is room for improvement! More than twenty - you need to do some work!

4. Reading: The students should now read the article aloud, swapping readers every paragraph.

5. Vocabulary: Students should now look through the article and underline any vocabulary they do not know. Look in dictionaries. Discuss and help each other out. The teacher will go through and explain any unknown words or phrases.

6. The article: Students should look through the article with the teacher.

- a) What is the article about?
- b) What do you think about the article?
- c) Think of three differences in England between working class, middle class and upper class people?

7. Let's think! Think of things you know about Cockneys. Then add five things you know about the East End of London. Write them below. Explain to your partner why you chose these.

| Five things about Cockneys | Five things about the East End of London |
|----------------------------|--|
| 1 | 1 |
| 2 | 2 |
| 3 | 3 |
| 4 | 4 |
| 5 | 5 |

The teacher will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

8. Let's discuss: Cockneys and Cockney: In pairs. Think of some artists/groups with Cockney in their name. What Cockney songs do you know? Do you know any Cockney groups/singers? What films/TV programmes do you know with Cockney in them? What do they eat? (You might need to use the internet for this exercise)

The teacher will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

9 . Let's think! In pairs. On the board write as many words as you can to do with the '**Cockney English**'. *One-two minutes*. Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

10. Let's talk! Radio London: *In pairs/groups*. You are in the Radio London studio. One of you is the presenter; the other student(s) is/are one the people in exercise 12**. The interview is about Cockney English and Cockneys. Try to get a balanced interview. *5 minutes*.

11. Let's do 'The Article Quiz': Have the students quiz each other in pairs. They score a point for each correct answer and half a point each time they have to look at the article for help. See who can get the highest score!

Student A

- 1) Name some areas of the East End.
- 2) Name three classic British TV shows that used Cockney.
- 3) What continues to evolve?
- 4) What does modern Cockney favour?
- 5) Where will you find the sound of Bow Bells?

Student B

- 1) What is a Cockney?
- 2) What is the other type of London accent?
- 3) Who used to speak Cockney?
- 4) Who has 'Cockney Pride'?
- 5) Is Cockney rhyming slang dead?

12.** A Cockney Festival in the East End of London: In pairs/groups. Choose to be one of the following people. You are at a Cockney Festival in the East End of London. Create a short story about it. Tell it to your partner/group. Try to make it interesting! Students try to interlink **or** interact student storylines!

| | | | |
|---|--------------|---|------------------------------|
| 1 | A tourist | 3 | A Cockney market seller |
| 2 | A journalist | 4 | A Cockney London taxi driver |

The teacher will choose some pairs to tell their stories in front of the class.

13. Let's write an e-mail: Write and send a 200 word e-mail in English to your teacher about: **Cockney English or Cockneys**. **THEN** use the Cockney translator on page 8 to translate it. Your e-mail can be read out in class.

14. Let's write an e-mail: Write and send a 100 word e-mail **in Cockney** AND also an alternative version of 100 words in British English to your teacher about: **Cockney English**. Your e-mail can be read out in class.

15. Let's Match! In pairs match the following accents/dialects with their region. Then discuss each one. What conclusions do you come to?

| | | | |
|---|----------------|---|----------------------------|
| 1 | Geordie accent | a | South Essex and North Kent |
| 2 | Jock accent | b | Liverpool |
| 3 | Scouse accent | c | Newcastle |
| 4 | Estuary accent | d | Scotland |

The teacher will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

DISCUSSION

Student A questions

- 1) Do you know any Cockneys?
- 2) Do you know any famous Cockneys?
- 3) Have ever visited the East End of London?
- 4) Would you like to visit the church in Cheapside famous for its Bow bells?
- 5) Have you ever seen any of the TV shows mentioned in the article?
- 6) What is your favourite accent and why?
- 7) What accent do you have?
- 8) What accent do you find difficult to understand and why?
- 9) Does the British Queen speak in a Cockney accent? Explain.
- 10) What actor played the Cockney chimney sweep Bert in the movie "Mary Poppins"?

Student B questions

- 1) What do you think about what you've read?
- 2) Would you like to learn Cockney? Why? Why not?
- 3) Have you ever visited London? If yes, when? Where did you go?
- 4) What food do Cockneys eat?
- 5) What's the difference between the East End and West End of London?
- 6) What's the difference between Cockney and Popular London?
- 7) What's the difference between Cockney and the Queens English?
- 8) Have you ever been to Romford? Why? Why not? Would you like to go?
- 9) Does your language include rhyming slang?
- 10) Did you like this discussion?

SPEAKING 1

Let's debate! Should everyone in the world speak English?

Allow 10-15 minutes – As a class / small groups / pairs / 1 to 1

| |
|---|
| Should everyone in the world speak English? |
|---|

The teacher can moderate the session.

SPEAKING 2

London

Allow 10-15 minutes – As a class / small groups / pairs / 1 to 1

| |
|---|
| Think of 10-20 interesting places to visit in London. Include some places where Cockney is spoken |
|---|

The teacher can moderate the session

GAP FILL: READING:

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

Cockney English (British English version)

Today we will be looking at some (1)_____ English. What's that I hear you ask? Well, it's a form of spoken English that many (2)_____ working class people spoke in the East End of London in places such as Bow, Stepney, Hackney, and Shoreditch Poplar. So what is a Cockney? Well, a (3)_____ Cockney is a person who was born within the sound of Bow Bells (St. Mary-le-Bow church in Cheapside, in the city of London). However, the term is now (4)_____ applied to those born outside this area, as long as they have a "Cockney" accent or a Cockney (5)_____. These days the Cockney (6)_____ is heard less in Central London but is widely heard in outer London (7)_____, the London (8)_____ and all across South East England including towns like Romford.

accent

loosely

boroughs

suburbs

Cockney

traditional

true

heritage

The Cockney accent is generally considered to be one of the broadest British accents. While many (1)_____ may speak with what is referred to as "popular London" they do not necessarily speak Cockney. The "popular London" accent can be distinguished from Cockney in a number of ways, and can also be found outside the capital, unlike the true Cockney accent. By the 17th century the term "Cockney", through (2)_____, came to mean a Londoner. Today's (3)_____ of London, especially those in its East End use the term with respect and (4)_____ – Cockney Pride. Today many of these slang (5)_____ are in popular use throughout Britain. Television has raised awareness of Cockney rhyming slang. (6)_____ TV shows like "Minder", "Steptoe and Son", "Till Death us do Part", "Only Fools and Horses" and "The Two Ronnies" have helped spread Cockney slang throughout the world. Is Cockney rhyming slang dead? Not on your Nelly mate! Cockney rhyming (7)_____ continues to (8)_____, with hundreds of new rhyming slang words being created in the last few years alone, with modern Cockney favouring celebrity or famous names.

evolve

banter

Londoners

expressions

natives

classic

pride

slang

GRAMMAR

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

Cockney English (British English version)

Today (3)___ will be looking at some Cockney English. What's that (6)___ hear you ask? Well, it's a form of spoken English that many traditional working class people spoke in the East End of London in places such as Bow, Stepney, Hackney, (2)___ Shoreditch Poplar. (8)___ what is a Cockney? Well, a true Cockney is (5)___ person (7)___ was born within the sound of Bow Bells (St. Mary-le-Bow church in Cheapside, in the city of London). However, (1)___ term is now loosely applied to those born outside this area, as long as they have a "Cockney" accent or a Cockney heritage. These days the Cockney accent is heard less in Central London (3)___ is widely heard in outer London boroughs, the London suburbs and all across South East England including towns like Romford.

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The Cockney accent is generally considered to be one of the broadest British accents. (4)___ many Londoners may speak with what is referred to as "popular London" (8)___ do not necessarily speak Cockney. The "popular London" accent can be distinguished from Cockney in a number of ways, and can (7)___ be found outside the capital, unlike the true Cockney accent. By the 17th century the term "Cockney", (3)___ banter, came to mean a Londoner. Today's natives of London, especially those in its East End use the term with respect and pride – Cockney Pride.

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Today (5)___ of (6)___ slang expressions are in popular use throughout Britain. Television has raised awareness of Cockney rhyming slang. Classic TV shows like "Minder", "Steptoe and Son", "Till Death us do Part", "Only Fools and Horses" and "The Two Ronnie's" have helped spread Cockney slang throughout the world. Is Cockney rhyming slang dead? Not on (1)___ Nelly mate! Cockney rhyming slang continues to evolve, with hundreds of new rhyming slang words being created in the last few years alone, (2)___ modern Cockney favouring celebrity or famous names.



SPELLING TEST

The teacher will ask the class individually to spell the following words that are in the article. Afterwards, check your answers with your teacher, using the following ratings:
Pass = 12, Good = 15, Very good = 18, Excellent = 20

| | | | |
|----|-------------|----|----------------|
| 1 | loosely | 11 | necessarily |
| 2 | respect | 12 | distinguishing |
| 3 | expressions | 13 | banter |
| 4 | awareness | 14 | rhyiming slang |
| 5 | throughout | 15 | classic |
| 6 | generally | 16 | broadest |
| 7 | celebrity | 17 | expressions |
| 8 | favouring | 18 | rhyiming |
| 9 | suburbs | 19 | traditional |
| 10 | especially | 20 | heritage |

LINKS

http://www.phespirit.info/Cockney/slang_to_english.htm

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cockney>

<http://www.Cockneyrhymingslang.co.uk/rabbit>

<http://www.Cockneyrhymingslang.co.uk/blog/>

http://www.phespirit.info/Cockney/english_to_slang.htm

http://www.freelang.net/dictionary/docs/html_Cockney_english.php

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u4bXz9ROhJQ>

<http://www.funtrivia.com/en/subtopics/Maybe-Its-Because-Im-a-Londoner-126824.html>

<http://www.funtrivia.com/en/Humanities/Cockney-4564.html>

<http://www.squidoo.com/Cockneys>

<http://beckyland.wordpress.com/2009/09/04/cockney-rhyiming-atm/>

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