

Video Activity Worksheet

Unit 4: Language

In Search of America: American Language

Comprehension

Predict

This is a video about American English and some recent additions to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary. Before you watch the video, answer the following question.

Do you know any differences between American and British English? What are they?

Focus

Watch the video. Answer the following question.

When was the first American English dictionary published?

Comprehension A

Circle the best words to complete the paragraph.

The people who compile the classic Merriam-Webster dictionary keep track of how the language is (always changing / becoming easier). They look through newspapers, magazines, books, and the Internet for new words, and new (spellings / meanings) of American words. American English has been (stereotyped / influenced) by wave after wave of immigration. The Merriam-Webster dictionary is updated every (year / day). Noah Webster would be (pleased / self-conscious) to see that Americans honor his work by adapting their language constantly.

Comprehension B

Answer the questions below.

1. Check (✓) the new words recently added to the Merriam-Webster dictionary.

- ___ dollarization
- ___ phat
- ___ dude
- ___ cookie
- ___ plow
- ___ noogie

2. Are these new words informal, formal, slang, or jargon? Who do you think would use these new additions?

Speaking

Choose one of the topics. Record and submit a one-to two-minute response.

- Have you heard of these new words before? Where?
- Why do you think a language continues to change? Where do new words come from? Who creates them?

Writing

Choose a new word from your language and write an entry for the dictionary. Give its possible forms, explain its meaning or meanings, and use it in an example.

