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Preview

1. Illustration Workshop

- 1 Look at the pictures and discuss the questions. Pay attention to the implied meaning of each picture.



1



"Instead of 'It sucks' you could say,
'It doesn't speak to me.'"

2



"Look, the new emoji* are here."

3

Picture 1: What does the woman really mean?

Picture 2: What point is the mother trying to make?

Picture 3: What is the attitude of ancient Egyptians toward emoji?

* The word *emoji* literally means "picture" (e) + "character" (moji).

- 2 Write down the main message each picture conveys. Then compare your ideas with your classmates'.

Picture 1: _____

Picture 2: _____

Picture 3: _____

- 3 Work in pairs and discuss the common topic explored in all the three pictures.

2. Vocabulary Workshop

The words below are taken from the text that you are going to read. Figure out their meaning and match them with the proper definitions on the right.

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| 1) repugnant | a. relating to a verb form that represents a state not as a fact but as a possibility |
| 2) banishment | b. a sudden feeling or odd desire to do something |
| 3) acquisition | c. to put something in a secure place |
| 4) subjunctive | d. extremely distasteful or unacceptable |
| 5) bizarre | e. the punishment of being sent away |
| 6) whim | f. extremely unusual or odd |
| 7) ensconce | g. the learning or developing of a skill, habit, or quality |
| 8) anarchy | h. a place of ideal perfection |
| 9) Utopia | i. the absence of government |

Key:
1) d 2) e 3) g 4) a 5) f 6) b 7) c 8) i 9) h

Reading and Studying

Inescapably, You Are Judged by Your Language

Ryan Bloom¹

1

Ryan Bloom is a professor in the English department at the University of Maryland, Baltimore. His writings have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *New England Review*, and a variety of other publications. This text is taken from *The New Yorker* (May 28, 2012).

2

Joan Acocella is an American journalist and is a staff writer for *The New Yorker*. She has written books on dance, literature, and psychology.

3

A spoken form of rooting, which means “cheering” here.

1 From the first time we step into an English class, we’re told that the rules matter, that they must be followed, that we must know when it’s appropriate to use a comma and what it means to employ the subjunctive mood. But do these things really matter? Outside of the classroom, what difference does it make if we write “who” instead of “whom” or say “good” instead of “well”?

2 It does make a difference, at least sometimes. In order to determine when those times are, the question must be asked: For whom are you writing? Take that last sentence, for example. As **Joan Acocella**² wrote recently in *The New Yorker*, “Every statement is subjective, partial, full of biases and secret messages.” The above sentence is no exception. Its ostentatious structure and secret message says, “I am one of you.” It also says even sneakier things like “I’m educated, an authority,” and “You can trust me about language usage.” The average *New Yorker* reader recognizes the effort the sentence exerts to maintain grammatical correctness, and in recognizing this, the reader bonds with the writer. “I” becomes “we.” We share a secret now. We’re a team.

3 But how different would things be if I walked into the sports bar down the street on a Sunday afternoon and asked, “For whom are we rooting today?” The wording would not be likely to win me many pals at the pub. The most likely response from the collective would be banishment to a far corner, a shake of the head, and an astonished, “What’d ya mean, who’re we **rootin**’³ for?”

4 Why did it go so wrong? In short, different audience, different dialect. The key to linguistic acceptance is recognition and adaptation. Know thy audience, know thy friends. It’s not a matter of which sentence is “correct”—“for whom are we rooting” versus “who are we rooting for”—so much as which sentence is correct for the given situation.

5 All of the complex linguistic theories of language acquisition and whether grammar is universally hardwired or learned through practice don’t matter one bit in practical everyday living. If “correct” is only a matter of situation, then

what we should really be asking is why we need to be able to use both versions of the sentence. Why should we bother to learn prescriptive English—the grade-school rules—if it isn’t our natural dialect?



6 Repugnant as it may be, the simple answer is that we need to learn prescriptive

English because that’s the way the people in power communicate. As far as daily survival is concerned, it doesn’t matter whether the origins of this linguistic power structure are racist, classist, or elitist, or whether they’re based on the whims of dead white males. This is how the system works right now, today, and in order to best get the attention of those in power, to begin to effect change, we must be able to use their dialect. We must know their rules.

7 People who say otherwise, who say that in all situations we should speak and write however we’d like, are ignoring the current reality. This group, known as descriptivists, may be fighting for noble ideas, for things like the leveling of elitism and the smoothing of social class, but they are neglecting the real-world costs of those ideas, neglecting the flesh-and-blood humans who are denied a job or education because, as wrong as it is, they are being harshly judged for how they speak and write today.

8 Furthermore, as **David Foster Wallace**⁴ points out in his essay “Authority and American Usage,” it’s not at all clear that “society’s mode of expression is productive of its attitudes rather than a product of those attitudes.” In other words, Wallace continues, it’s bizarre to believe that “America ceases to be elitist or unfair simply because Americans stop using certain vocabulary that is historically associated with elitism and unfairness.”

9 This is not even to mention the descriptivists’ dirty little secret. When it comes time for them to write their books and articles and give their speeches about the evil, elitist, racist, wrongheadedness of forcing the “rules” on the masses, they always do so in flawless, prescriptive English. Ensnared behind a mask of noble ends, something obscenely disingenuous is happening here. How easy it is for a person who is already part of the linguistic elite to tell others who are not that they don’t need to be. Or, as Joan Acocella puts it, the descriptivists will “take the **Rolls**⁵. You can walk, though.”

⁴ David Foster Wallace (1962–2008) was an American writer. His novel *Infinite Jest* was listed by *Time* magazine as one of the hundred best English-language novels published between 1923 and 2005.

⁵ Rolls-Royce car. The author is satirizing the descriptivists’ hypocritical behavior: Descriptivists themselves take the Rolls-Royce car, while people who follow them by using descriptive English can only walk.

10 These do-as-you-please linguists imagine themselves to be fighting for the common man, but they don't practice what they preach. Playing the game and being able to deploy the rules has afforded them the luxury of a good education, a steady job, and decent income. It has allowed them to have their noble voices heard in the fight for linguistic equality. But they fight from a good, safe distance. They're not on the front lines, naked and exposed.

11 For the individual looking for a higher education or trying to secure a decent job, what seems more humane: Admitting that, ugly, elitist, and unfair as it is, prescriptivism is currently the dialect of power and being able to manipulate that dialect can help you get ahead, or pretending that Utopia is at hand, that everyone is a revolutionary, that linguistic anarchy will set you free? The choice to use our natural dialects whenever and wherever we please, to live in a world free of language-based racism and classism, may indeed be a worthy end for which to strive, but it's also worth remembering that individuals don't live in the end. They live now.

Reading Comprehension

1) Read the text and decide whether the following statements are true (T) or false (F).

- 1) Grammatical rules learning is considered critical to English learning.
- 2) The statement “For whom are you writing?” (para. 2) carries a social significance.
- 3) The average *New Yorker* reader has the ability to recognize that the author belongs to their social class through his language.
- 4) The author is not well-liked in the sports bar because he reads *The New Yorker*.
- 5) What makes a writer’s language acceptable or not depends on if it matches the audience’s expectation and the social context.
- 6) Prescriptive English is the language we use naturally in everyday situations.
- 7) According to the author, the descriptivists are too idealistic.
- 8) There is a connection between elite language and an unfair social hierarchy.
- 9) In this text, the word “elitist” carries a neutral connotation.

2) Read the text again and complete the following tasks.

- 1) Find and summarize the descriptivists’ and prescriptivists’ views of language in the text.

The descriptivists:

The prescriptivists:

- 2) Answer the following questions.
 - a. What is David Foster Wallace’s opinion on language in the text?
 - b. What is Joan Acocella’s true attitude toward the descriptivist?

- c. What is the difference between the two questions in the third paragraph: “For whom are we rooting today?” and “What’d ya mean, who’re we rootin’ for?”
 - d. How do you understand the language acquisition theory mentioned in the sentence “All of the complex linguistic theories of language acquisition and whether grammar is universally hardwired or learned through practice don’t matter one bit in practical everyday living.” (para. 5) ?
 - e. What does Joan Acocella actually mean by saying that the descriptivists will “take the Rolls. You can walk, though.” (para. 9) ?
- 3) Write a 50-word summary for the main idea of the text.

3 *Looking beyond the text*

“In short, different audience, different dialect. The key to linguistic acceptance is recognition and adaptation. Know thy audience, know thy friends.” (para. 4)

“Why should we bother to learn prescriptive English—the grade-school rules—if it isn’t our natural dialect?” (para. 5)

“Repugnant as it may be, the simple answer is that we need to learn prescriptive English because that’s the way the people in power communicate.” (para. 6)

The quotes above are taken from the text. Work in a group and discuss the following questions. Then share your ideas with your classmates.

- 1) Do you agree that language skills are still a means to move up the social ladder? Why or why not?
- 2) Do you think poor language skills will hold you back in your future career, no matter what the field may be? Why or why not?
- 3) Is Ryan Bloom’s linguistic view relevant in China? For example, does good mandarin matter at school and in the workplace?

Language Focus

- 1) *Complete the sentences with the appropriate words from the box. Change the form when necessary.*

manipulate	strive	humane	employ	preach
collective	practice	exert	flawless	

- 1) My ambitious brother worked hard, _____ against failure at every turn.
- 2) With the poor grades you've gotten so far, you're really going to have to _____ yourself to get an A this semester.
- 3) Her perfect pronunciation and _____ expression impressed everyone present.
- 4) This sort of activity damages the reputation of the _____.
- 5) _____ what you preach—don't smoke if you tell your children not to smoke.
- 6) Health experts are now _____ that even a little exercise is far better than none at all.
- 7) He's accused of trying to _____ the price of the stock.
- 8) The company is accused of _____ questionable methods to obtain the contract.
- 9) They write letters demanding _____ treatment of prisoners.

- 2) *Complete the sentences with the appropriate phrases from the box. Change the form when necessary.*

given situation	no exception	get ahead	be productive of
root for	a matter of	step into	at hand

- 1) The meeting _____ several good ideas.
- 2) The rules are to be followed in any _____.
- 3) Good luck on your upcoming show. Remember that we're all _____ you.
- 4) With your reckless spending behavior, it's only _____ time before you go broke.
- 5) We have a new marketing specialist _____ the business to try and turn the company's profits around.

- 6) Her parties are always elegant, and last night's party was _____.
- 7) If this project goes well, it could really help me to _____ at work.
- 8) I always keep a glass of water _____ when I sleep, because I hate waking up thirsty.

3 *Practicing dictionary skills with key words*

"I'm educated, an **authority**," and "You can trust me about language usage." (para. 2)

- 1) The definition of *authority* in the quote: _____
- 2) Complete the sentence with the correct collocation of *authority*.
Charles was an authority _____ antique musical instrument.
- 3) Match the words *authority* and *master* with their definitions.
 - a. someone who has control over other people: _____
 - b. the power you have because of your official position: _____
- 4) Complete the sentences with the appropriate form of *authority* or *master*.
 - a. They regarded fate as the _____ of their lives.
 - b. State _____ are investigating the disputed election.

If "correct" is only a matter of situation, then what we should really be asking is why we need to be able to use both **versions** of the sentence. (para. 5)

- 1) The definition of *version* in the quote: _____
- 2) Complete the sentence with the correct collocation of *version*.
A film version _____ the novel is being made.
- 3) Match the words *version* and *variation* with their definitions.
 - a. a form of something that is different from the original:

 - b. the existence of differences in amount, number, level, form, etc.:

- 4) Complete the sentences with the appropriate form of *version* or *variation*.

- a. Research has shown wide _____ in the rate that children learn.
- b. A new _____ of the word processing program should be available soon.

This is how the system works right now, today, and in order to best get the attention of those in power, to begin to **effect** change, we must be able to use their dialect. (para. 6)

- 1) The definition of *effect* in the quote: _____
- 2) Match the words *affect* and *effect* with their definitions.
 - a. to make something happen: _____
 - b. to have an effect on something: _____
- 3) Complete the sentences with the appropriate form of *effect* or *affect*.
 - a. The weather _____ everyone's mood.
 - b. The new administration hopes to _____ a peace settlement.

...but they are neglecting the real-world costs of those ideas, neglecting the flesh-and-blood humans who are **denied** a job or education because, as wrong as it is, they are being harshly judged for how they speak and write today. (para. 7)

- 1) The definition of *deny* in the quote: _____
- 2) Complete the sentence with the correct collocation of *deny*.

In order to maintain a healthy weight, the athlete denied _____ the foods that he loves.
- 3) Match the words *deny* and *refuse* with their definitions.
 - a. to say firmly that you will not do something: _____
 - b. to state that something is not true: _____
- 4) Complete the sentences with the appropriate form of *refuse* or *deny*.
 - a. I can't _____ her remarks hurt me.
 - b. Mom flatly _____ to go back into the hospital.

...society's mode of expression is productive of its attitudes rather than a **product** of those attitudes. (para. 8)

- 1) The definition of *product* in the quote: _____

- 2) Match the words *product* and *produce* with their definitions.
- a thing that is the result of an action or process: _____
 - things that have been produced or grown, especially by farming: _____
- 3) Complete the sentences with either *product* or *produce*.
- Food that is grown to be sold is called _____.
 - He is a _____ of his time.

4 Academic vocabulary

A. The following paragraphs are taken from the text you've read. Fill in the blanks with the missing academic words. The general synonym is given in parentheses.

From the first time we step into an English class, we're told that the rules matter, that they must be followed, that we must know when it's 1) _____ (OK) to use a comma and what it means to employ the subjunctive mood. But do these things really matter? Outside of the classroom, what difference does it make if we write "who" instead of "whom" or say "good" instead of "well"?

It does make a difference, at least sometimes. In order to determine when those times are, the question must be asked: For whom are you writing? Take that last sentence, for example. As Joan Acocella wrote recently in *The New Yorker*, "Every statement is subjective, partial, full of 2) _____ (one-sidedness) and secret messages." The above sentence is no exception. Its ostentatious 3) _____ (makeup) and secret message says, "I am one of you." It also says even sneakier things like "I'm educated, an 4) _____ (expert)," and "You can trust me about language usage." The average *New Yorker* reader recognizes the effort the sentence exerts to 5) _____ (keep) grammatical correctness, and in recognizing this, the reader 6) _____ (connects) with the writer. "I" becomes "we." We share a secret now. We're a 7) _____ (group).

B. Translate the following sentences into English, using the expressions in parentheses. Change the form when necessary.

- 1) 她让学生接触不同国家的音乐。(expose...to...)

2) 我讨厌留长发，因为太难打理了。(high-maintenance)

3) 他把大部分钱都投资到股票和证券上了。(stock and bonds)

4) 他是一个古板的人，即便是开玩笑，也常常要严肃地解释。(in... mode)

5) 由于受过诸多专业训练，他很快适应了新环境。(make an adaptation to)

6) 这件事需要个人自己决定。(by the individual)

7) 商界与自然界不同，创造有利于自己发展的环境，才是适者生存的途径。(survival of the fittest)

Reading Skills and Strategies

Assessing the Reliability of Online Resources



Instruction

In an age of Internet, we are exposed to a large quantity of network information every day. However, information available on the Internet is not guaranteed for its quality or accuracy. Therefore, it is particularly important for the individual Internet user to evaluate the information. The following criteria will help you to determine whether the online resources are professional and appropriate for academic use. Start by discovering the resources' expertise:

- 1) Authorship: Who is the author?
- 2) Publication: Where is the information from?
- 3) Currency: When was it posted?

Take the text “Inescapably, You Are Judged by Your Language” for example:

Authorship:

Ryan Bloom is a professor of English at a well-established university, an academic institution, and he is considered a professional in the field of English language teaching and learning. His writing has appeared in a variety of publications in America. These have earned him adequate credentials to back up his knowledge in the text. The author is thus qualified and trustful.

Publication:

The text, a formal publication, is taken from *The New Yorker*, which has both a traditional hard copy magazine and an official website. It is not only internationally read but read by an educated population. The publication is well-known for its rigorous fact checking and copy editing.

Currency:

Although the article was published in 2012, it is not considered obsolete considering the nature of the topic. It discusses a long-time disputed linguistic issue—two opposing views of grammar. The topic is not time-sensitive because it is still under discussion in academic journals such as *Applied Linguistics*, *TESOL Quarterly* and a host of others.

Once you have checked on the source’s credentials, it is crucial to determine the level of accuracy and objectivity of the text. To determine if the source provides an accurate and balanced viewpoint, you need to consider the following three aspects:

- 1) Accuracy: How is it written and presented?
- 2) Objectivity: What facts, quotations and data are used?
- 3) Reference: What references are cited within the article?

Accuracy in writing refers to a writer’s correctness in using language. This entails that the writer’s use of grammar and vocabulary should be correct. Since not all online publications go under the scrutinizing eye of a copy editor, they are prone to technical errors. For some online publications, the language is not of the same quality as the text on page four. The words used in the text are meticulously well-chosen, and the spelling, grammar and text organization are faultless.

When we consider objectivity, we need to ensure that the author’s biased views are not reflected in the article. Readers should be aware of whether the content is backed up with facts or based on opinion and propaganda. This text advocates a prescriptive linguistic view. The author’s arguments stand to benefit a social class which the author (and the publication he is writing for) does not belong to. The author uses

quotations from prestigious writers to back up his arguments. Admittedly, there are satirical expressions, but these are free from emotional propaganda.

Reference could be articles, books and other resources cited within the article. Evaluation of the references provided in this text reveals that they are useful and relevant to the topic discussed. What's more, a web link can also serve as a reference to an online publication. However, the link should proceed to an existing web page; if the link proceeds to a "404" page or "page not found," the content may be outdated, and thus may be unreliable.

- 1 *Undertake a brief research into the text "The Pros and Cons of Cyber-English" in Part C. Evaluate the reliability of the author, the publication and the currency of the article.*
- 2 *Read the passage below and answer the questions.*

Supplements: Nutrition in a Pill?

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans states that your nutritional needs should be met primarily through your diet. But the guidelines go on to say that for some people, supplements may be a useful way to get nutrients they might otherwise lack.

Before you shop for supplements, get the facts on what they will and won't do for you.

Supplements vs. whole foods

Supplements aren't intended to substitute for food. They can't replicate all of the nutrients and benefits of whole foods, such as fruits and vegetables. Whole foods offer three main benefits over dietary supplements:

- Greater nutrition. Whole foods are complex, containing a variety of the micronutrients your body needs.
- Essential fiber. Whole foods, such as whole grains, fruits, vegetables and legumes, provide dietary fiber. As part of a healthy diet, fiber can help prevent certain diseases, such as type 2 diabetes and heart disease, and it can also help manage constipation.
- Protective substances. Many whole foods are also good sources of antioxidants—substances that slow down a natural process leading to cell and tissue damage. It isn't clear that antioxidant supplements offer the same benefits as antioxidants in food. Some high-dose antioxidant supplements have been associated with health risks.