

Slang

WORKSHEET A

Exercise 1

The sentences below contain examples of British, American or Australian slang. Can you work out the slang words that match the definitions in the boxes?

1. 'I know **zilch** about computers. I never use them.' (American)
2. 'He's **loaded**. That's why he can eat in expensive restaurants most nights.'
(American)
3. 'It's good **tucker** there, especially the fish. And quite cheap too.' (Australian)
4. 'She's got a great job. Fifty **grand** a year and 30 days' holiday.' (American)
5. 'You know what happened to Steve? He left his coat on a chair with his wallet in the pocket, and someone **nicked** it.' (British)
6. 'She's ... unusual. Not a bad person, just kind of **kooky**.' (American)
7. 'I **flunked** my driving test, so I'm going to have to do it again.' (American)
8. 'Their kitchen is so **manky**. I don't think they've cleaned it for about a month.'
(British)
9. 'I had four hours' sleep last night and only about five the night before. I'm **knackered**.' (British)
10. 'We're having a **barbie** on Sunday if the weather's good. Why don't you come round?' (Australian)
11. 'Do I know Mike? Of course I do! We've been **buddies** for years!' (American)
12. 'The stores are open **24/7** so you can buy stuff whenever you want.' (American)

A	dirty	G	very tired
B	nothing, zero	H	very rich
C	steal	I	strange, crazy
D	food	J	all the time
E	fail (an exam or a course)	K	one thousand pounds
F	friend	L	barbecue

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WORKSHEET B

A conversation in London between Mark, a British man, and Karolina, from the Czech Republic:

Mark:	How's the job going?
Karolina:	At the restaurant?
Mark:	Yeah.
Karolina:	It's OK. The staff are from lots of different countries and I'm the only Czech – so I have to speak English all the time, which is very good practice for me. The money's OK but the hours are long. It's knackered sometimes.
Mark:	Ha! Where did you learn that?
Karolina:	What?
Mark:	'Knackered'?
Karolina:	One of the waitresses says it all the time. Is it wrong?
Mark:	No, but it's slang. It's funny – I don't expect to hear a foreigner use a word like that.
Karolina:	So, to say 'I'm knackered' is also slang?
Mark:	Yeah. But they're words lots of people use, when they're not in formal situations, so it's good to know them. Hey, how much other slang do you know?
Karolina:	Er ...
Mark:	I'll test you. What does 'wicked' mean?
Karolina:	Oh, that's too easy. 'Wicked' means very good.
Mark:	OK, something harder ... What about 'dodgy'?
Karolina:	'Dodgy' is not good. You can say someone you can't trust is dodgy. Or something that doesn't work like it should.
Mark:	Right again. What's it mean if someone is 'minted'?
Karolina:	Er ...
Mark:	It's the same as 'loaded'.
Karolina:	Ah yes – I think it means they are very rich.
Mark:	You're good! What about 'gobsmacked'?
Karolina:	Gob what?
Mark:	Gobsmacked. Like 'I was gobsmacked when she told me'.
Karolina:	No idea.
Mark:	It means very surprised. How about 'zilch'?
Karolina:	No.
Mark:	It means zero, or nothing. But maybe that's not fair – it's more American than British.
Karolina:	You know, there's an Australian chef at work, and he was teaching me Australian slang. So maybe I can test you?
Mark:	I'm sure I've heard it before. Let me guess. Barbie? Tucker?
Karolina:	Yes. And 'chook'.
Mark:	And what?
Karolina:	Chook. What's a chook?
Mark:	I don't know.
Karolina:	A chicken. You see, I've taught you a word in your own language!

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WORKSHEET C

Exercise 2

Decide whether the following statements are true (T) or false (F), or if the text doesn't say (D).

1. Karolina works in a restaurant.
2. Karolina has been in London for about one year.
3. All the people Karolina works with are British.
4. Karolina sometimes finds her job tiring.
5. Mark doesn't think he knows any Australian slang.
6. Karolina didn't know that 'knackered' is slang.
7. Karolina knew what 'dodgy' means.
8. Two of the people Karolina works with are also from the Czech Republic.
9. Karolina is a waitress in the restaurant.
10. In Britain, people would use the slang word 'wicked' to describe something they don't like.

Exercise 3

Answer the questions about the text on Worksheet B.

1. Why does Karolina think it is good that she has to speak English all the time at work?
2. Who taught Karolina the word 'chook'?
3. Who taught Karoline the word 'knackering'?
4. When does Mark say people wouldn't use slang words?
5. Mark says two British slang words that mean the same thing: what are they?
6. What does 'gobsmacked' mean?
7. Why did Mark find it funny when he heard Karolina say 'knackering'?
8. Make a list of all the slang words that appear in the conversation, where they are from, and what they mean.

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WORKSHEET D

Exercise 4

Using the slang from Worksheets A and B, can you complete the gaps in the sentences below?

1. 'I don't know if you should believe what he says. I think there's something _____ about him.' (British)
2. 'Of course I'm angry! She says she's my friend and then what does she do for me when I need help? _____!' (American)
3. 'I won, but it was a very hard game. 7-5, 4-6, 6-4. I was _____ at the end.' (British)
4. 'It's raining, so maybe we should have the _____ tomorrow.' (Australian)
5. 'I cycle to work and back every day – 12 miles in total. It was _____ at first, but now I quite like it. And I've lost 6 kilos.' (British)
6. 'I did OK in history and English, but I _____ math.' (American)
7. 'You should go to that club on Fridays – they have _____ DJs.' (British)
8. 'I think that cooker's _____, you know. Don't use it – you could have an accident.' (British)
9. 'No, it's true, Helen's leaving her job. I was _____ when I heard. Why would she do that?' (British)
10. 'Of course I can't afford it. Where am I going to get two _____ from? You buy it – you're the one who's _____.' (American)