

Lesson 14. Language in American Culture

HAND OUT

Language is a major part of cultural identity. It is a part of our lives and may vary based on if we are at home or in a work (or school) setting and our audience. Many countries have named a national language. In the United States of America, we currently do not have a national language.

Activity 1: Reading a Commercial

- View “America Is Beautiful” (<http://youtu.be/RiMMpFcy-HU>), a Coca-Cola commercial from February 2014.
- Share reactions to the commercial in a pair share, then in a whole-class discussion.
- Explore reactions to the commercial (available from <http://cnn.it/1fSRbOM>).

Activity 2: Sacred Writing Time

- Write about your reaction to the commercial, as well as the reactions of others.
- What does the commercial suggest about American culture and language in the United States?
- What do the reactions to the commercial teach us about American culture?

Activity 3: Jigsaw Reading

- In teams, select one of the articles from “Do You Speak American?” (www.pbs.org/speak).
- Read the article, mark it up using reading strategies we have studied this year (such as questioning the text, making connections, writing your reactions next to the text), and discuss it. Remember that you can put the article in a Google Doc and comment on the text (see the Tech Tip in Chapter 1, page 41).
- Identify at least five key ideas from the reading to share with the class. After our reading, you will be sharing your information with other groups, so be sure to take good notes about the article to share with others.
- In small groups, break into new teams, with each person discussing a different article. Take notes on each article.

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Article Name: _____

What are the major points of the article?

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Activity 4: Reflection Time

- What ideas did you learn about language in the United States? What reaction do you have to the reading or the commercial?
- What purpose does controversy have in a culture? How do we learn about controversy in American culture?
- In what various ways do we learn about popular topics? How is research changing in our world today?