

**Observation:  
American vs.  
British English**



For help, use an advanced learner's dictionary.

**SPELLING**

1. The words "curb", "savior" and "story" (etage) from the text are spelt differently in British English. How?
2. Words like "realize" and "fertilize" (also from the story) are usually spelt differently in British English. How?
3. There are many other spelling differences between American and British English. For instance, how do British people spell the American words *color*, *humor*, *behavior*, *theater*, *kilometer*, *catalog* and *dialog*?

**VOCABULARY**

1. Dominick eats "fries" in the story, and Thomas is taken to an "emergency room". What are these things called in Britain?
2. Other specifically American words (or words that have a special meaning in American English) include *apartment*, *elevator*, *truck*, *gas* (benzin), *sidewalk*, *freeway*, *pants*, *rain coat*, *sneakers*, *potato chips*, *check* (regning), *grade* (karakter), *mailman*, *trash can*, *private school*, *public school* and *national holiday*. What words do British people use instead?
3. Write sentences with the words above (*fries*, *emergency room*, *apartment*, etc.) or with their British equivalents – depending on what kind of English you prefer to use in general.

**PRONUNCIATION**

1. How are words like "can't", "secondary" and "library" (again from the text) pronounced in the USA, and how are they pronounced in the UK?
2. Also try to pronounce the words *half*, *glass*, *tomato*, *France*, *secretary*, *military*, *dictionary* and *laboratory* in the two types of English. Do you hear any general differences?
3. In pairs, write a one-page story with as many of the above words as possible (*can't*, *secondary*, *half*, *glass*, etc.) or other words that are pronounced differently in the two types of English.
4. Record yourselves reading the text in an American version and then a British one.
5. Find or create digital images that fit the story.
6. Turn your recording and pictures into a podcast (see the writing exercise on p. 26) and share it with your classmates in a forum they have access to.

**INTRODUCTION**

"Mental health is strongest taboo, says research" is an article from *The Guardian*, a British national newspaper with a reputation for being leftish or liberal. Although not a broadsheet newspaper in format, it is in content; i.e. it is serious more than sensationalist.

Sister papers also published by the Guardian Media Group include *The Observer* (a British Sunday paper) and *The Guardian Weekly* (an international newspaper).

# Mental health is strongest taboo, says research

MARY O'HARA, 20 FEBRUARY 2009

**C**oming out as being gay is easier than admitting to a mental health condition, study shows

People are more reluctant to reveal they have a mental illness than to come out as gay, according to a new study that reaffirms warnings from campaigners that mental illness still faces a persistent social taboo.

In a survey of 2,000 people across Britain, almost 30% said they would find it difficult to admit publicly to having a mental illness, compared with 20% who said they would have difficulty coming out as gay.

Commissioned by the Time to Change campaign, an umbrella group of charities and the Institute of Psychiatry with a remit to challenge stigma, the survey also found that admitting to a mental health condition was deemed harder than confessing to having a drink problem or going bankrupt.

Almost a third of respondents believed someone with a mental health problem couldn't do a responsible job.

"Perhaps it's no surprise that a separate study found fewer than four in 10 employers would feel able to employ someone with a mental health problem," the study's authors say.

gay homoseksuel  
admit indremme

reluctant modvillig, tøvende  
reveal røbe, afsløre  
reaffirm bekræfte på ny  
persistent vedvarende

'survey meningsmåling

commission bestille  
charity velgørende  
organisation  
remit ansvarsområde  
stigma stigmatisering  
confess indremme  
go 'bankrupt gå fallit

respondent svarperson,  
adspurgt

employer arbejdsgiver

'figure tal  
bleak trist, dystert  
reflect afspejle

'impact effekt  
extend strække sig  
boardroom direktionslokale

severe svær, stærk

disability handicap

advocate talsmand

extent omfang

launch sæt i gang

aim stile efter

## Comprehension



"The figures paint a bleak picture that reflects a Britain where mental health problems can stop you getting a job, having social interaction and getting on with life because they are so stigmatised."

The study suggests that the impact of stigma extends well beyond the boardroom and shop floor.

**People are four times more likely to break off a romantic relationship if their partner is diagnosed with severe depression than if they develop a physical disability. [...]**

Tom Bayliss, who has had depression and is an advocate for the Time to Change campaign, says the public needs to be made aware of the extent of discrimination against people with mental health problems.

"I'm Asian, I'm gay, and I have faced discrimination – but not for the reasons most people think," he says. "It was actually when I got depression that I faced most discrimination."

I think it's fantastic we have come so far as a society – in many ways, become less discriminatory – but we have a long way to go on mental health. For me, it's been the biggest taboo."

The Time to Change campaign, launched last year with £16m from the Big Lottery Fund and £2m from Comic Relief, aims to reduce by 5% the discrimination directed towards people with mental health problems by 2012.

1. What survey has been carried out? Who commissioned it?
2. What were the findings of the survey?
3. Who is Tom Bayliss? How does he use his own life to illustrate the survey findings?
4. What change does the Time to Change campaign hope to achieve?

## Analysis



For help, see "Analysis Angles: Non-Fiction Texts".

1. Is the text a news article, a feature article or an opinion piece? How can we tell?
2. Does the text contain these traditional article elements: headline, byline, lead, middle headings and body? If yes, point them out.
3. What is the purpose of a headline and a lead? Do the headline and the lead in this article succeed in this? Try to come up with better ones.
4. Why do you think that the journalist has included the part about Tom Bayliss instead of just writing about the survey findings?
5. Considering what it says about *The Guardian* in the introduction p. 263, does it make sense to you that the article appears in this newspaper? Why/why not?

## Discussion



1. Why is there often a stigma attached to mental health problems?
2. Do you think that mental illness is as stigmatized in Denmark as in the UK? Why/why not?
3. Would you find it harder to admit to having a mental illness than to being gay, bankrupt or an alcoholic? Why/why not?
4. Watch some Time to Change TV ads on the Internet. Do you think that they will reduce the stigma of mental illness? Why/why not?

## Parallels



Do mental health problems seem equally stigmatized and hard to admit in the text "Readin', Ritin' and Ritalin", p. 233?

- \* Use quotes or other examples from the texts to support your answer.
- \* Try to explain whatever difference you find. Consider, for example, cultural differences between the UK and US and the focus of each text.

## Writing



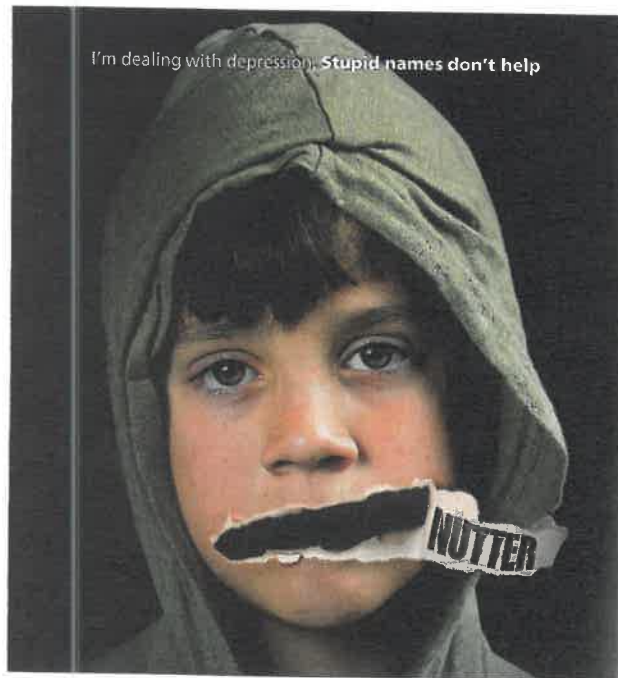
1. In groups of four, write a manuscript for a Time to Change TV ad featuring two characters and a voice-over.
2. The manuscript must include a dialogue, a voice-over monologue and stage (and, if necessary, camera) directions.
3. Stage and film the ad.
4. Each group should show their ad while the rest of the class consider whether the ad will help to reduce the stigma of mental illness.

## Pictures



For help and inspiration, see "Pictures" and "Non-Fiction Texts" in "Analysis Angles".

1. How does the poster from Bring Change 2 Mind below try to get its anti-stigma message across? Among other things, consider the model that has been chosen, his facial expression and clothes, the way the photograph has been manipulated, and the point of view from which the text in the top part is written. Also, what does the poster appeal most to in terms of rhetorical modes – ethos, pathos or logos?
2. Do you find the poster effective? Why/why not?
3. In pairs, think of another group of people that is often stigmatized and create a poster for a campaign that fights their stigma. You may use any material or medium that you have access to. The only formal requirement is that you include some text.
4. Split up, each with a copy of your poster, and circulate in class talking to one or two classmates at a time. You should tell them why your campaign is important and ask them whether they find your poster effective.



Poster from Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust, associated with the British Time to Change campaign that fights the stigma of mental illness