

How to Sound Like a Native English Speaker

Post-session Reading and Vocab (higher)

Read the following extract from a BBC article, then discuss the questions below:

Accent could affect how intelligent people are thought to be, a new study suggests.

The study, which **matched** accents with **perceived** intelligence, found speaking in a Birmingham accent gives a worse impression than saying nothing at all.

Scientists at Bath Spa University asked 48 volunteers to compare accents.

Dr Lance Workman, who led the team of researchers, said that one of the reasons for doing the study "was to find out about **stereotypes**".

They compared the Yorkshire accent with those from Birmingham and with the clipped **tone** of what is known as Queen's English, or received pronunciation (RP), while looking at photos of female models.

They then repeated the experiment in silence, and while accents had no impact on the perception of beauty, it **significantly** affected the intelligence rating.

The silent test scored higher than the Birmingham "Brummie" accent, with the Yorkshire accent being **rated** the highest.

Questions

1. Do you have different accents or dialects in your language? What are their associations?
2. Do you think that to work in radio or television it is important to have a particular accent?
3. How many different English language accents do you know?
4. Which is your favourite/least favourite?

Vocabulary

Find these words in the text. What do you think they mean? Write your guesses in the table.

matched	
perceived	
stereotypes	
tone	
significantly	
rated	

Tips: Look at the spelling of the word and the words next to it. What type of word do you think it is? e.g. noun, verb, adjective? Does it have a good, bad or neutral meaning? Is it connected to

something else? Does your guess make sense in the context of the whole text?

When you have finished, check your answers in a dictionary. How close were your guesses?