BLUEY - CULTURAL VARIATION IN LANGUAGE

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Syllabus link:

Students will develop knowledge and understanding of the nature of communication through a study of:

- how culture determines the ways individuals encode messages, what mediums they choose for transmitting them, and the ways messages are interpreted
- the impact of changing communication technologies on
    - language use
    - cross-cultural interaction

Syllabus outcome:

P3 identifies and describes relationships and interactions within and between social and cultural groups

Learning Intention:

To understand how language reflects cultural identity and how Australian expressions differ from other English-speaking cultures.

Success Criteria:

By the end of this teaching and learning activity, students will be able to:

- Identify and compare Australian and American slang or phrases.
- Use Australian language features accurately and creatively in a short script.
- Explain how *Bluey* helps share and preserve Australian cultural identity through language.
- Reflect on how technology has changed the way people communicate and use language.

This teaching and learning activity is highly effective because it connects language, culture, and communication technologies through an engaging and familiar text. *Bluey* provides an accessible and humorous lens for students to explore cultural variation in language, encouraging them to notice how words carry social and cultural meaning.

Bluey has also introduced American children to various Australian terms and slang, subtly influencing the language they use in everyday life. While the impact is not as widespread as changing American English, it has led to the adoption of a few Australian words and expressions. For example, some American children who watch *Bluey* have started using the word "dunny" (Australian slang for "toilet") in play or conversation. This illustrates how popular culture and media can transmit aspects of cultural identity across borders and encourage linguistic exchange.

The creative script-writing task allows students to apply this understanding, using Australian slang and technology-driven dialogue to explore continuity and change in communication. By doing so, they strengthen their ability to recognise how culture shapes language use, while also appreciating how media can both preserve and globalise cultural identity.

Bluey - *Cultural Variation in Language*

Suggested YouTube videos that could also be used in the classroom:

VIDEO 1: "Do You Know These Aussie Words in *Bluey*?"

URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bhvpjBlu8u0

This short clip introduces viewers to a range of Australian slang and phrases featured in *Bluey*, such as "brekkie," "bubbler," and "kindy." It provides a great hook activity or recap to help students identify uniquely Australian expressions and reflect on how language conveys cultural identity.

VIDEO 2: "Airport vs. Ehpowt"

URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E_u1Ezofn3Y

This humorous comparison of Australian and American pronunciation (e.g., "airport" vs. "ehpowt") helps students recognise how accents and phonetic patterns form part of cultural communication. It can be used to spark discussion on how pronunciation affects understanding across cultures and how media platforms like TikTok contribute to linguistic exchange.

Bluey - *Cultural Variation in Language*

The use of Australian phrases and slang in *Bluey* has confused many American viewers- *children and adults!*

Complete the table below- *you are required to think of the equivalent* Australian or American term.

AUSTRALIAN	AMERICAN
Brekkie	
	Cookies
Dunny	
	Afternoon
Servo	
	Candy
Oven mitts	
	Trash can
Bubbler	
	Bell peppers
Rock melon	
	Cooler
Kindy	
	Mail carrier
Fairy floss	

ACTIVITY TIME- *Create a Bluey episode!*

In small groups (3-4), write a 1-2 minute long script for a new *Bluey* episode.

- The episode should focus on a scenario where characters interact using different communication technologies (e.g., texting, video calls, social media) compared to older forms of communication (e.g., landline phones).
- Incorporate at least 5 Australian phrases/slang throughout your script.

Reflect and discuss:

- *How does Bluey contribute to the sharing or preservation of cultural language differences?*
- *How has the speed and convenience of communication technologies affected the way we use language?*