

# A Yuletide Quiz

by

*Michael Wallerstein*

The English spoken in these islands has undergone intense Americanisation in the past few decades. All the items below show evidence of this.

Attempt to recover the British English that has been displaced by the American.

Note that, in some cases, the number of phrases that have been supplanted by the single American phrase may be several rather than just the one.

Replies by post or email (go to Contact Us) to arrive by the end of Christmas, 6 January 2010. The winner will be announced on the Edgeways Website on 13 January. Judgement will be by the Brynmill Press Company Secretary: one point per question and bonus points at discretion for wit; the highest scorer will receive a free copy of Michael Wallerstein's book *Dear Mr Howard: the Changing of Modern English*.

- 1 Bye now!
- 2 See you later!
- 3 Thanks a lot!
- 4 You're welcome! (in response to *e.g.* "Thanks!")
- 5 Sure! (in response to a question or remark)
- 6 It / There certainly is! (affirmative response to a question or opinion)
- 7 I guess so.
- 8 I don't remember.
- 9 Me too! / Me neither! (offering agreement with an opinion or suggestion)
- 10 right now (many expressions have been absorbed by this.)
- 11 way back
- 12 Do you have a card / ticket / *etc.*?
- 13 How may I help you?
- 14 Thank you for your custom.
- 15 Don't hassle me.
- 16 a pack of greeting cards (2 Americanisms here)
- 17 articles from around the world
- 18 There are laws around this issue.
- 19 to turn around (*e.g.* a school or a life)
- 20 offers around £235,000
- 21 Classroom sizes just got smaller. (Government advertisement about road accidents)
- 22 The fastest man in the world just got faster. (Headline in *The Times*)
- 23 Why would he do that? (in response to *e.g.* suggestion that "he" intends to do something)
- 24 Place the pizza onto the middle shelf of the oven. (as seen in cooking directions)
- 25 We are now arriving into Paddington. (usual train announcement)
- 26 Store in a cool, dry place. (as seen on food and medicine packets)
- 27 Use by (x date).
- 28 small regular large / a regular coffee
- 29 The engineer has come to fix the boiler.
- 30 Do not park bicycles on the railings. (notice at Sheffield University)
- 31 Be sure to properly install the element. (instructions in a hand-book—N.B. there are 4 Americanisms in this item.)
- 32 senior citizen

- 33 barber shop
- 34 food store
- 35 Sheffield's woodland heritage (Nos. 35, 36 and 37 all show the same type of Americanism but 38 and 39 are different.)
- 36 My wife is the world's worst speller.
- 37 London's East End
- 38 London's High Court (BBC Ceefax)
- 39 London's Place To Be (advertisement in *(The) Financial Times*)
- 40 The students at this school all get good grades. (There are 3 Americanisms here.)
- 41 Justice Minister Jack Straw (There are 2 British English forms possible here.)
- 42 Prime Minister Tony Blair and son Leo (ditto)
- 43 Mr Howard Quits
- 44 the Royals
- 45 Britons (frequently used by newspapers)
- 46 That figures!
- 47 It looks like you're writing a letter. (message appearing on computer screen in "UK English")
- 48 The judge ordered that the defendant be remanded in custody. (Items 48, 49 and 50 illustrate some characteristic American grammar.)
- 49 Also, the judge directed that he report to police when released.
- 50 Instead, he escaped.
- 51 "Oh, she looks absolutely gift-wrapped!" (commentator at the wedding of Princess Diana)
- 52 a baby buggy
- 53 It's a whole new concept.
- 54 Hope you have a really, really good time.
- 55 "My MPs have been working their butts off." (Michael Howard, at the last General Election)
- 56 "If there was a straight fight between Labour and Conservative, Labour would have won." (Tony Blair, after the last General Election)
- 57 Only list people who are resident the majority of time. (entry in the last General Census—this item shows both American grammar and illiteracy.)
- 58 No parking on the street. (*cf.* item 30)
- 59 a freight train
- 60 Well, there you go!
- 61 Is that right? (questioning a surprising statement)
- 62 "There's got to be a key-hole, somewhere." (said by a car salesman to a customer)
- 63 at the turn of the 20th century (the meaning of this is different on the two sides of the Atlantic.)
- 64 Haden Meats (seen on a delivery van in Fulwood in 2008)
- 65 just £29.99 / just £2999.90 / *etc.*
- 66 Holiday Home For Rent / Student Homes For Rent / For Sale or For Rent
- 67 Exit (as seen, for instance, in car parks)
- 68 zero tolerance (what is the meaning of "zero"?)
- 69 Gay Rights
- 70 The world's climate is warming. (American grammar)
- 71 Some Labour MPs are planning to topple Mr Brown.
- 72 Jack Straw says he will not run for Prime Minister.
- 73 Apartments and Town Houses in Prime Locations. (typical announcement in newspaper property sections)
- 74 Smell Gas? (on the back of gas service vehicles)

- 75 Need to contact us? (notice in letter from the “Halifax”)
- 76 For A Free Quote Call Pete On xxx (typical sign on workman’s vehicle—there are at least 4 Americanisms, here)
- 77 The movement consists of mostly women. (American grammar)
- 78 Williamson - Blackwell - Ponsford - Somerfield - John Lewis - Waitrose - *etc.*
- 79 Gilder Auto’s (the name of a local dealer’s)
- 80 A: “Do you know about . . . ?” B: “Yeh, yeh, yeh.”
- 81 Ordnance Survey is Great Britain’s national mapping agency, and now offers members of YHA 20% off maps. (Entry in YHA literature. There are 4 Americanisms here.)
- 82 boxer shorts / camper van / hiker boots (seen at Yeoman’s) / fasteners / pain reliever tablets (now seen on packets of analgesics) / recliner chair (seen at Waitrose)
- 83 designer clothes
- 84 John Worboys, one of Britain’s most prolific sex attackers, was jailed for eight years for drugging and assaulting women in his black cab. (*The Times* 22.04.09 American grammar)
- 85 dumbing down
- 86 Santa (as mythical donor of Christmas presents)
- 87 Importantly, don’t be overly concerned with the present state of English. (2 Americanisms)

To return to Home Page click [www.edgewaysbooks.com](http://www.edgewaysbooks.com)