

# USING STANDARD WRITTEN ENGLISH

In your written schoolwork, it is expected that you use **Standard English**. This should be grammatically correct, and should avoid informal words or phrases often referred to as 'colloquial language' or 'slang'.

All external examinations require the ability to write in **Standard English**, so it is advisable to make this the norm in your writing at school.

**For instance:**

‘We was’ – the correct Standard English is  
‘We were’.

‘Them things’ – the correct Standard English is  
‘Those things’.

Avoid using **slang** terms in normal written English. Slang may also be referred to as informal language, colloquial language, dialect or even ‘chavvy’ language.

**Slang terms** or **colloquialisms** often help abbreviate sentences and speed up communication. They may add colour to communication but tend to go in and out of fashion.

**They should be used sparingly and the person using them should be aware that they are non-standard.**

It is important to know the difference between informal and formal English.

**Common terms to avoid or use sparingly:**

‘loads of’

‘gonna’

**For example:**

The sentence ‘When I go out I’m gonna see loads of my friends’ is much better written as

‘When I go out I will see many of my friends’.

Can you think of any other slang terms that you use or that you have heard from other people?

**Slang can also lead to grammatical errors.**

How might you write the following sentence using **Standard English**?

‘Laura scored a **wicked** goal against **them losers down the road.**’

The bold words indicate slang:  
**wicked, losers**

There is also a grammatical mistake:  
**them** should read **those**

Informal language in this case:  
**down the road**

Using Standard English, the sentence might be:

‘Laura scored a brilliant goal against the local opposition.’

**Try the same exercise with these sentences:**

‘When we done our science experiment the water went all bubbly.’

‘Shakespeare’s this bloke what wrote some plays like *Macbeth*.’