

## It's Charcoal Season!

And about time! After the insane '13-'14 winter, all of us at KB COMM want to go on the record with the opinion that everyone deserves a very excellent summer. To celebrate the season in style, we thought we would highlight some of the amusing differences between American English and the language of our former imperial overlords. Blimey!

## What's Up at KB COMM?

At KB COMM, we provide mission-critical communication and learning services to clients in a variety of industries. Thanks to our established and new clients for keeping us busy. Recent and ongoing projects include:

- Writing and editing numerous information products for a healthcare diagnostics manufacturer, including communications to employees from the CEO and executive leadership team, customer presentations and letters, product marketing brochures and data sheets, and training materials
- Formatting and revising periodically reviewed manufacturing standard operating procedures and work instructions for a pharmaceutical company
- Writing manufacturing reports for a pharmaceutical company
- Drafting CMC modules for electronic submission to health authorities on behalf of a pharmaceutical company
- Reviewing and editing for consistency and accuracy response documents and associated modules for electronic submission to health authorities on behalf of a medical device manufacturing company
- Editing undergraduate and graduate admission application forms for a university

KB COMM LLC is a certified Women's Business Enterprise. We are officially qualified to participate in corporations' woman- and minority-owned vendor programs.

Please keep us in mind for your communication or training projects.

## Tips and Tales

### The Full English

As some readers may know, last year your favorite KB COMMers jetted off for a springtime tour of England, aided by a *Frommer's* guide and much-beloved Volkswagen. We thought we would celebrate the 1-year (and change) anniversary of our trek with this issue of *KB CommEntary*, dedicated to the dastardly differences between American and British English. All together now!

### Part 1: That Crazy Spelling!

We all know that English *colours* and *harbours* contain that extra *u* not found in their American counterparts, and advanced Anglophiles might recognize the bizarre *gaol* as a more British spelling of *jail*, but what's the reason for these differences?

Well, in previous centuries, spelling was a much more subjective matter. Literacy rates, while on the rise, were nowhere close to the near-universal level in the present-day Commonwealth. Dictionaries were invented (in part) to help standardize spelling and thereby promote literacy, but dictionaries could (and often did) disagree on particular words. One of the more radical dictionaries was penned by Noah Webster, an American who believed in spelling "reform" and the simplification of language. His changes—which included removing those *u*'s, among other things—caught on in America but were mostly ignored back in the traditionalist British Isles.

### Part 2: You Would Never Say...

One of the more unsettling aspects of being a tourist in England is knowing that the Anglos will use you to form their opinions about Americans in general. That's a lot of pressure! To avoid confirming stereotypes that we Yanks are a bit daft, familiarize yourself with these localisms:

To the Brits, it's "trousers," not "pants," because the latter exclusively refers to underwear. Saying "I'm going to put on a pair of pants" might evoke some chuckles, because why wouldn't you be wearing them anyway?

Similarly, it's best to avoid the word "fanny." To us, it's another word for *derrière*, but to them it's a little more...frontal.

*Doctor Who* fans will know this one already, but what we call a television "season" is generally referred to as a "series" across the pond. That can get a bit confusing, of course, because in the States "series" generally means "show as a whole," not just a specific season.

Ever quirky, the Brits utilize a strange blend of metric and imperial measurements—*inches*, *miles*, *pints*, and *pounds* cohabit with *meters* and *Celsius*. One truly archaic unit with a surprising amount of current use is the *stone*, a weight measurement equal to 14 pounds.

### Part 3: This Will Be on the Exam

Do you know what these oh-so-British words refer to? Answers at the bottom!

1. Jumper
2. Hob
3. Bap
4. Legacy accounts
5. Rocket

And please remember, *when it has to be right*, KB COMM is here to help.

Sincerely,

*Kathy*

Kathy Breuninger

**KB COMM**

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### Answers:

1. Sweater
2. Stovetop burner
3. Sandwich roll, or sandwich made on one
4. The befuddling British version of "funds remaining"
5. Arugula