

# 1960s slang

Here are some slang words that were used in everyday speech in the 1960s. Compare them to some of the slang words you use today.

<b>Boss:</b>	In the early 60s 'boss' was an adjective. It meant something was really cool, really in style.
<b>Cool:</b>	Great, in style. When something was really, really, cool, it was hot. If it was really hot it was outta' sight!
<b>Fab:</b>	Great, cool
<b>Groovy:</b>	Hip, in style
<b>Fink:</b>	A loser
<b>Hip:</b>	Meaning 'in', in fashion or in style
<b>Far out:</b>	Amazing, weird, great
<b>Square:</b>	Someone who just doesn't understand young people. Parents and teachers were called square.
<b>Swell:</b>	When something was really good, it was swell.

## Activity

1. What are some words you use today to mean 'great', 'wonderful', 'in fashion'?



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2. Ask an adult what words they used to mean 'great' and 'in style' when they were teenagers.



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### Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

### Resources

Copies of the worksheet.

### Using the worksheet

This is just a selection of slang from the 1960s and, of course, these are the non-objectionable words. Students will probably know what slang is, and may snigger a bit when discussing it, thinking of the 'dirty' words. But you can explain that slang is simply any word that is used by a particular group of people (such as young people) or that has a nonstandard meaning. One example would be 'boss' from the 1960s. Its standard meaning is a person who is in charge, but in the 1960s it was used as an adjective to mean 'great'.

You will need to be careful when doing the activity that students do not suggest objectionable words. You may like to explain that you are looking specifically for words that mean 'great', 'fantastic', 'wonderful', 'in fashion', etc, and you are not looking for 'dirty' words.

Slang changes fairly rapidly, and students may be surprised at some of the words here. This is also a chance for you to find out what some of the current slang words are!

### Younger students

You may like to discuss the activity questions as a class exercise. You may like the students to take a survey of some adults to find the slang words they used when they were teenagers.

### Outcomes

The students can:

- Learn some slang words from the 1960s.
- Understand how slang changes over time.
- Understand what slang words they use today that have the same meanings as words from the 1960s.

### Older students

You may like students to do a larger survey of slang words used in previous decades.

### Outcomes

The students can:

- Learn some slang words from the 1960s.
- Understand how slang changes over time.
- Understand what slang words they use today that have the same meanings as words from the 1960s.