

Accent: keep it or lose it?

mixes	wax lyrical	one-off	like it or lump it	impede
thick as two short planks		elocution	have the nerve	

Lose it!

I firmly believe that accents do have a strong influence on our social life and affect our career prospects. 1) _____, but most Britons can't accept that a person who doesn't speak with an 'upper-class' English accent isn't 2) _____.

I once went to a lovely social party. My pronunciation always gives people a strong impression of my high level of education. I chatted with a fellow guest; he wanted to know about me, as I was not part of the usual social crowd he 3) _____ with. After a few moments, he wanted to know where I lived. He expected me to say I lived in the upper-social-class area where the party was. I told him my postcode. He could barely hide the utter contempt on his face. He would have gone to the host then and there to demand why I was allowed to come to this party. Only his wife held him back. They seemed shocked that I 4) _____ to have turned up at the party. If I'd spoken with my native scouse [skaʊs] accent (from Liverpool area), they wouldn't have noticed me at all.

Sadly, that incident was not a 5) _____. I've met people who believe that their position in life gives them the right to speak down to me. That's why I strongly believe that all state schools should offer 6) _____ lessons in order to promote social mobility. Strong regional accents are likely to 7) _____ many who seek career advancements. Those who 8) _____ about such accents are effectively saying 'know your place and stay there'.

