

English Language resources: Bible texts analysis – John 1: 1-14

Questions on two biblical versions

The following texts are from the Gospel of **John 1:1-14**.

Text A is from the *King James Bible*. The *King James Bible (KJB)* was first translated in 1611 and was revised in 1769. This is the version in general use today.

Text B is from the *Good News Bible (GNB)*, published in 1976.

This is the opening of John's Gospel. It announces the coming of Jesus, described as the Word and light of God, heralded by his cousin, John the Baptist.

Task

Divide the class in half and allocate a text version to each. Using the questions below as a guide, they should:

- ❖ Identify interesting language points
- ❖ Present the points to the other group
- ❖ Split into pairs containing one student from each group and produce a comparative poster.

Using the methods for analysis:

1. Consider the texts in detail
2. Explore the ways they show that language has changed over time
3. Refer to relevant ideas from your language study.

Text A

John 1:1-14 KJB

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

² The same was in the beginning with God.

³ All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

⁴ In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

⁵ And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

⁷ The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

⁸ He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

⁹ That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

¹¹ He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

¹² But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

¹³ Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴ And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

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Text B

John 1:1-14 GNB

The Word of Life

¹ In the beginning the Word already existed; the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² From the very beginning the Word was with God. ³ Through him God made all things; not one thing in all creation was made without him. ⁴ The Word was the source of life and this life brought light to people. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has never put it out.

⁶ God sent his messenger, a man named John, ⁷ who came to tell people about the light, so that all should hear the message and believe. ⁸ He himself was not the light; he came to tell about the light. ⁹ This was the real light—the light that comes into the world and shines on all people.

¹⁰ The Word was in the world, and though God made the world through him, yet the world did not recognize him. ¹¹ He came to his own country, but his own people did not receive him. ¹² Some, however, did receive him and believed in him; so he gave them the right to become God's children. ¹³ They did not become God's children by natural means, that is, by being born as the children of a human father; God himself was their Father.

¹⁴ The Word became a human being and, full of grace and truth, lived among us. We saw his glory, the glory which he received as the Father's only Son.