

Slanguage of the 1930s

Everyday

Abyssinia: I'll be seeing you
Bash: an attempt
Beat: broke
Butter and egg man: a man with money
Chicago overcoat: coffin
Dil-ya-ble: a phone call
Eggs in coffee: run smoothly
Gasser: a great time; or, something very funny
High-gear road: a road that could be traveled at a steady speed
Horn: telephone
Joe: man
Kibosh: squelch
Middle-aisle it: get married
Mitt me kid: congratulate me
Motor court: early term for a motel
Off the cob: corny
Plonk: cheap or poor quality wine
Plotz: sit down wearily; or, to slouch, loaf around
Put a bee in your bonnet: know something interesting
Sourdough: counterfeit money
Speedo: speedometer
That way for: falling in love
Togged to the bricks: dressed up
Trip for biscuits: a task that yields nothing
Uh-huh: falling in love
You shred it, wheat: you said it

Radio/Jitterbug/Jazz

Clambake: radio program that failed due to lack of rehearsal and on-air mistakes
Crawk: an animal imitator
Dillinger: very hot swing music
Dog house: string bass
Ether: the radio waves
Gitbox: guitar; also called *gitter*, or *guinea'sharp*
Gob stick: clarinet
Grandest Canyon: Broadway in New York; also known as *Hardened Artery*
Groanbox: accordion
Gut-bucket: lowdown blues

Slanguage of the 1930s

Hobo/Dust Bowl

Apple Annie: woman who sold apples on the street to make ends meet
Bank holiday: euphemism for closing a bank that was about to fail
Bazoo: mouth
Big four: a duck-egg omelet, made with 4 eggs, 4 slices of bacon and 4 potatoes
Black blizzard: a sky-darkening dust storm; also called a *black roller*
Blinds: platform of a baggage car
Bone polisher: vicious dog
California blankets: newspapers to sleep on or under; also called *Hoover blankets*
Chuck a dummy: to pretend to faint to get money from sympathetic onlookers
Duster: a dust storm
Flip a rattler: jump into a moving boxcar
Gasoline gypsies: unemployed people who lived and traveled in their cars, looking for work
Gun boat: empty can used for cooking, usually a coffee can
Hoover cars: bodies of broken down cars pulled by mules; also known as *Hoover wagons*
Hoover flags: empty pockets turned inside out
Hoover hogs: wild rabbits that rural people caught for food
Hooverville: a temporary shanty town
House dog: someone who offered to do chores for money
Hungry town: a town known for being stingy with handouts
Jumping the blinds: catching a ride on the platform of a baggage car
Jungle: rural gathering place for hoboes
Punk & gut: bread and sausage
Remittance man: someone paid by his family to stay away
Rent party: gathering where each guest donated money to help pay the rent
Road sister: female hobo
Stack of bones: boiled spareribs
Tin can shows: movies to which viewers brought cans of food for the needy

Hobo/Dust Bowl (cont)

Tin can tourists: migrants from the Great Plains who arrived in other states by car
Yegg: hobo criminal
You gave us beer, now give us water: Dust Bowl farmers' slogan to the government

Soda Fountain

Adam & Eve on a raft: two fried or poached eggs on toast
Baby: glass of milk
Barrel of black mud: chocolate milkshake
Black cow: root beer float
Bossy in a bowl: beef stew
Break it and shake it: put eggs on it
Cat beer: milk
Chaser of Adam's ale: a glass of water
Chewed fine with a breath: hamburger with onion
Cold spot: iced tea
Coney Island chicken: hot dog
Dog soup: water; also called *city juice*
Eighty-six: an expression indicating that a restaurant or soda fountain is out of an item; or, a customer to be refused service
Eve with the lid on: apple pie
Freak: orange Coke
Hold the hail: no ice
Hounds on an island: hot dogs and beans
In the air: a large glass
Mug of murk: coffee, no cream
Nervous pudding: jello
Noah's boy with Murphy carrying a wreath: ham and potatoes with cabbage
On wheels: to go
Scandal soup: tea
Spla: whipped cream
Thirteen: a boss is roaming around
Wreck on a raft: scrambled eggs on toast

Radio/Jitterbug/Jazz (cont)

Hi-de-ho: exclamation of joy used mainly by jazz and dance bands
Hot band: a band playing jazz with improvisation
Iron horn: coronet
Juke: a cheap, roadside establishment providing food, drinks & music for dancing
Kick out: improvise
Long underwear gang: a sweet band
Madame Cadenza: a flighty female vocalist
Quit mugging light and mug heavy: pick up the beat
Speako: speakeasy
Swacked: intoxicated
Sweet band: a band playing jazz scores as written
Town crier: a vocalist who sings too loud
Wang it: play louder

College Joe

Awgwan: I don't believe you; or, oh, go on
Barge around: walk slowly
Biff: failure
Big it: self-centered or conceited person
Bong: to catch on to a joke slowly
Booshwash: empty talk
Bug: hard to understand
Can the twit!: Stop that idle talking!
Dilly: foolish
Dog it: avoid work
Fade: to leave
Fan my brow!: What a surprise!
Frog: to cheat
Here I is: hello
Hops: information
Hot stuff: latest news or trend
H'roo/Hurro: hello
I mean and how: that is so very true
Juicy: enjoyable
No soap!: that isn't possible
Says which?: What did you just say?
Somoa: some more
What's the score?: What are you talking about?
Wren: female
Yowsah: yes sir