The Dictionary of American Regional English (DARE) is a project started in 1965 with a physical survey, and whose digital version is updated yearly and hosted online by the Harvard University Press. Its goal is to document the full array of regional vocabulary across the United States, focusing on how words, phrases, idioms, and pronunciations take on aspects of local culture.

The site's homepage is not behind a pay-wall and allows any visitor and potential subscriber to get a feel for the layout, as well as offers both 100 sample entries from the dictionary for browsing and information on the history and general usage of the DARE survey. The advantages to an individual subscription are not listed directly, but can be seen in the reminder across the top of the main page: an individual subscriber can save both searches and words to personalized lists for later reference.

The homepage is the same for subscribers. The site knows that it will be used primarily as a searchable index (as one would expect to use a dictionary), and has laid out its homepage accordingly. Both methods of searching are available side-by-side, without being overwhelming or cluttering the page itself--a refreshing webpage design. By placing and keeping both of these search options in the same field of vision, the database is handing the reins back to the user, allowing for serendipitous searching while allowing specificity to be defined by the user with only occasional guidance from the dictionary through multiple-choice options.

The first method of searching DARE is the interactive map of the United States. The map itself has been "adjusted to represent population density", which is another factor to consider when consulting the usage and commonality of the entries in DARE; the database itself does not belabor this point within each entry, and seems to think that between this immediate caveat and the back-end FAQ pages, users will keep it in mind of their own accord. The map itself is based on population density from 1965-1970, so of course, it would helpful to have an updated density map, at least reflecting the country after 2006, when the United States reached a population of 300 million. (The population in 1967 was 200 million.) While it is certainly the responsibility of the researcher to understand and evaluate the results of the map and other content (which the database is only responsible for showcasing), were there to be an overall improvement for data evaluation, a toggle option between the original data collection's time period and the current one would be helpful for context.

Once a region or state is selected, a list of regions within that region or state (or, in the case of states only, regions that the state exists within) will appear below the map. After the next level of geographic specificity is selected, the database will navigate away from the homepage and produce a list of dictionary entries whose usage can be found in that region.
A caveat to this interactive map: while the search itself is incredibly intuitive, there isn't a resource on the database that defines the less common names of regions, like "Inland North," "North Central," or "West Midland". For users unfamiliar with these designations, deciphering this will require navigation to another site (like Google) for clarification.

The second method of searching is the "Jump To:" search bar. The randomized snapshot of entries underneath the search bar is a nice way to get a sense of the kind of entries that exist within DARE, but is less helpful to scroll through when something can be directly searched for. The search bar works the way one would expect. The advanced search option is also kept relatively simple, allowing for a keyword search for within more narrowed ranges, such as "parts of speech", "etymologies", and "region". If a user would like to add filters to a search, they would be able to refine their search

to isolate entries that have accompanying audio recordings for pronunciations or that have map illustrations.

These additional map illustrations are the first indication of a haphazard back-end, where resources for the more anthropological-minded users of the database are stored. If a user navigates to either of the "About DARE" or "Resources" tabs (the latter, not the former, of which stores the entry "About the DARE Survey), there are pages detailing how to use DARE through understanding how each entry is broken down and how to efficiently search--yet only the "Anatomy of an Entry" page is featured on the homepage underneath the search bar section. Similarly the index of terms and DARE Maps subpages are well stocked with information, yet lack context for how these could be interpreted by users outside of a group of researchers with prior knowledge.

It is also important to note that the pages detailing the history of DARE offer a rather straightforward (shying just away from self-praise) look into DARE's beginnings, but they do not offer socio-historical context, whether for how (or if) they recalibrated survey intakes when their computer program determined "whether there are disproportionate numbers of speakers" of a certain demographic being represented, or for the demographics of the Survey's original "Fieldworkers" themselves. Such details would surely be relevant to the sociological audience these more in-depth resources are actively catering to. This lack of contextual awareness feels particularly prominent in the list of original DARE informants, where peoples of Asian descent interviewed are still listed under the demographic label "Oriental", and where there is a disproportionately high percentage of white participants. One also hopes that sometime in the future, DARE, which contradicts "the popular notion that American English has become homogenized" and "celebrates the color, richness, and evolution of the English language across America", will also more directly address the racism that continues to affect how "entries" of American English are perceived.

While the database expects a general familiarity with geographic regions of the United States in order to peruse the dictionary and a more developed knowledge of American sociology to utilize its supplementary materials, DARE is a valuable resource to all kinds of users, from linguists to sociologists to authors to the merely curious, and its commitment to preserving even the most recent American Regional English is both admirable and easy to navigate.