Read the excerpt from the “Author’s Note”. What clues in the excerpt could help you understand the meaning of the phrase “silver tongue”?

Talk with a partner about what you think the phrase means.

Look up the definition on the computer.

Describe Pete Bruce.

Include his physical appearance as well as his character traits.

You can use drawings and labels or write a series of paragraphs.

Do you think Pete Bruce has a silver tongue? Why or why not?

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I was especially delighted when the story was a slickster-trickster tale about some wily character who used his wits to outsmart his opponents. I like to think of each of these slicksters as a cross between a Mississippi bluesman and Brer Rabbit, though there were a few women as well. And whether it was someone fast- or slow-talking, a well-dressed city slicker or an innocent-looking country bumpkin, all were gifted with a silver tongue tarnished by an oily reputation. No matter how bad these characters seemed, however, they managed to charm their victims and disarm their critics with just enough humor to take the edge off their unscrupulousness.

