

6. [g] gut

Like [p]:[b] and [t]:[d], [k] and [g] are a pair, the only difference in the two sounds being that the first is voiceless, the second voiced. So place your tongue in the same position as for [k] but do not let the air rush out, and control the sound from your vocal cords, which should be vibrating. Until you are quite confident that you can make the correct sound every time, always check for this vibration. Remember to lengthen a preceding vowel.

PRACTICE

A.

(a) go	Gran	grumble	glass	ago	'-gue'
get	great	Grandfather	glove	again	plague
good	grey	grocer	Gladys	begin	league
give	angry	telegram	glade	together	prologue
gold	Greece	disgraceful	igloo	regatta	dialogue
					synagogue

Remember to lengthen the vowel (ba-a-ag)

bag bog target
flag fog organ
sag jog eager

silent 'g'

(g)naw si(g)n
(g)nat campai(g)n
(g)nome forei(g)n

[nj]

poignant
cognac

- (b) (i) Say each column downwards, taking care to make the initial sound exaggeratedly voiced or voiceless.
(ii) Repeat the words, but reading across the page, so that you have alternate voiced/voiceless sounds. Again, make the difference very clear.

pin bin pan ban pay bay
tin din tan Dan Tay day
kin begin can began Kay gay

- (c) To kill the goose that lays the golden egg. As good as gold.
All that glisters is not gold. To give as good as you get.
Go and teach your grandmother to suck eggs.

B. Which is s/he saying?

- (a) Put this in the ^{back,} bag, will you?
(b) I thought I caught a glimpse of the ^{coast.} ghost.
(c) Your ^{class} glass is in there.
(d) I found a ^{cap} gap in the hedge.
(e) You haven't drawn that ^{ankle} angle very well.

Answers: B. (a) back (b) ghost (c) class (d) gap (e) angle



DIALOGUE 6. Eggs from the Greek grocer

GLADYS: Gran, I'm hungry. Can we go home?

GRANNY: Grumbling again, Gladys! A great big girl like you. Now take my grey bag and go and get some eggs from the grocer, there's a good girl.

GLADYS: But Gran . . .

GRANNY: I'm going to send a telegram to your grandfather. Oh, give me my glasses before you go. In the green and gold grosgrain case.

GLADYS: But Granny . . .

GRANNY: Don't giggle, girl, I'm beginning to get angry. Go and get the eggs.

GLADYS: But Gran, it's no good my going to the grocer. He's gone away. He goes back to Greece every August. He's Greek.

GRANNY: Gone to Greece? How disgraceful!

7. Syllable stress

In words of more than one syllable, the syllables do not all have equal stress. There is usually one that has particularly strong stress. This means that on this syllable your voice is louder and usually pitched higher, and you hang on to the syllable considerably longer than on the other syllables of that word. Different stressing can change the meaning of a word or make it completely unrecognisable.

A few general rules

- Always stress the syllable *before* one that's pronounced [ʃn] -ssion/-tion, [ʃs] -cious/-tious, [ʃl] -cial/-tial, etc., e.g. *atténction, spácious, artíficial*.
- In words ending '-ic', '-ical', '-ically', the stress is on the syllable *before* '-ic', *except* *Árabic, aríthmetic, lúnatic, héretic, pólitics, rhétoric* (*but* adjectives: *arithmétiC, herétiC, polítiC, rhetóriC*).
- A great many words are stressed on the last syllable but two, e.g. *illúminate, thermómeter, geólogy, philósopher*. Words ending in '-ólogy', '-ónomy', '-ósophy', '-ólogist', etc., always follow this rule.
- Words ending in '-ese' have the stress on this syllable (*Chinése, journalése*).
- Do not stress the negative prefix attached to an adjective (*póssible, impóssible; líterate, illítérate*) *except: nówhere, nóthing, nóbody, nónsense*.

PRACTICE

A. *Exaggerate the stressing as much as you can—i.e. make the stressed syllable louder, higher and longer than the unstressed ones.*

- completion efficient invasion financial advantageous vivacious
- photogenic scientific materialistic geographical musical technical
- psychology/psychologist meteorology/meteorologist ideology/ideologist
- Chinese Japanese Portuguese Cantonese Balinese Viennese
- organised/disorganised complete/incomplete attractive/unattractive
legal/illegal where/nowhere sense/nonsense

B. *Practise shifting the stress.*

photograph	politics	competing	analyse
photographer	political	competitor	analysis
photographic	politician	competition	analytical

C. *Listen to the dialogue. Where are the stresses?*

photography	develop	photographic	amateurs	political
institute	photographs	possibility	politician	competitive
career	technical	competition	distinguished	politics

Answers: C. photography / institute / career / develop / photographs / technical / possibility / competition / amateurs / politician / distinguished / political / competitive / politics



DIALOGUE 7: Photography or politics?

DIANA: What have you decided to do after college, Jeremy?

JEREMY: I'm going to take up photography. Mr McKenzie's recommended the course at the Institute. He believes I could make a career as a photographer.

DIANA: You'll have to develop your own photographs. That requires technical skill. Jeremy, you're not a technician! And photographic materials are very expensive.

JEREMY: Well, Diana, Mr McKenzie thinks there's a possibility I might win the *Observer* competition. I sent in four entries. All the competitors are amateurs, like myself.

DIANA: I detest competitions. I never agree with the decision of the judges! I'm going to be a politician. I shall become the most distinguished woman on the political scene!

JEREMY: I thought you hated competing! Don't tell me politics isn't competitive!

8. [f] fun

This is an easy sound to make. Bite your bottom lip gently between your teeth. Build up pressure behind this wall of your top teeth and bottom lip, but don't puff out your cheeks, then open your mouth just enough to let air through, and blow, as you did with [p], [t] and [k]. You should be able to blow a feather off your hand. Remember to keep on the aspiration through the vowel that follows.

PRACTICE

A.

(a) fine	fling	fry	awful	left	[fj] few
fox	fly	freeze	thief	lift	fumes
fun	flew	frost	off	loft	fuel
far	float	Freddie	stiff	puffed	future
forest	fluff	Francis	puff	after	furious

'ph' (mainly
from Greek)
philosophy
photograph
telephone
hyphen
Philip

'-gh'

laugh
draught

enough
rough

trough
cough

silent 'f'
halfpenny
[heɪpni]

(b) Now some threesomes to say very quickly:

fat	fox	father	life	lift	gaffer
fit	flocks	feather	leaf	loft	duffer
foot	frocks	further	loaf	left	loofa

(c) Out of the frying pan into the fire.
Fine feathers make fine birds.
Birds of a feather flock together.
Enough is as good as a feast.

Fit as a fiddle.
Laugh and grow fat.
Few and far between.
The fat's in the fire.

B. Which is s/he saying? Put a circle round the right word.

(a) life/like	(c) fail/sail	(e) tough/touch	(g) laughs/last
(b) foot/put	(d) loft/lost	(f) fuel/duel	(h) fry/try

C. Listen to the dialogue. Which are the stressed syllables?

Daphne	afternoon	fiftieth	fabulous
sofa	forest	awful	Felicity
Friday	Fiona	furious	fancy

fabulous
Felicity
fancy

fiftieth
awful
furious

afternoon
forest
Fiona

C. Daphne
sofa
Friday

Answers: B. (a) life (b) put (c) sail (d) loft (e) tough (f) fuel (g) laughs (h) try



DIALOGUE 8. A fine, flashy fox fur

FELICITY: That's a fine, flashy fox fur you've flung on the sofa, Daphne.

DAPHNE: Yes, I found it on Friday afternoon in Iffley Forest.

FELICITY: But, Daphne! That's Fiona's fox fur—her fiftieth birthday gift from Freddie. You are awful! Fiona will be furious.

DAPHNE: Well, if Fiona left her fur in the forest . . .

FELICITY: Fiona leave her fabulous fox fur in the forest? Stuff and nonsense! You're a thief! Take it off!

DAPHNE: Felicity! What a fuss over a faded bit of fluff! Anyway, fancy Fiona in a fur! She's *far* too fat!



9. [v] victory

The position of the mouth is the same as that for [f], but this is a voiced consonant. Remember to try saying it with your hands over your ears, or your fingers on your throat. There must be no vibration with [f] but lots of air; lots of vibrations with [v] but very little air. Some of the air can come out at the sides of your mouth. When you say [v], try to make your lips tingle.

PRACTICE

A. Exaggerate the vibration and hang on to the [v] as long as you can.

- | | | | | | |
|------------|--------|------------|---------|---------|-------|
| (a) Victor | violet | ever | over | approve | five |
| velvet | vodka | travel | envious | leave | drove |
| vivid | verse | university | advise | wave | give |
- N.B. nephews, Stephen—both pronounced [v].

(b) Now, as fast as you can:

- | | | | | |
|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| - van | vast | vowel | live | weave |
| vain | vest | veil | love | wave |
| vine | voiced | vole | leave | wove |

(c) [f]/[v] contrast.

- | | | | | |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
| fat/vat | few/view | Fife/five | safe/save | offer/hover |
| leaf/leaves | calf/calves | half/halves | thief/thieves | off/of |

- (d) An iron hand in a velvet glove. Men were deceivers ever.
 Vanity of vanities, all is vanity. Virtue is its own reward.
 All's fair in love and war.
 If I say it over and over and over again, eventually I'll improve.

B. Which is *she* saying?

- (a) Is that your new ^{Shaeffer?} shaver?
- (b) We'll meet at ^{Fife.} five.
- (c) We managed to get a ^{few} view of the horses across the valley.
- (d) Leave them alone—they're my ^{wife's.} wives.

C. Listen to the dialogue. Which are the stressed syllables?

- | | | | | |
|------------|------------|-------------|-------------|---------|
| Liverpool | marvellous | approve | advise | overdo |
| invitation | overcoat | professors | anniversary | caviar |
| university | enough | disapproval | Valentine | believe |
| creative | reversible | November | invasion | envious |

Answers: B. (a) Shaeffer (b) five (c) view (d) wife's
 C. Liverpool / invitation / university / creative / marvellous / overcoat / enough / reversible / approve / professors / disapproval / November / advise / anniversary / Valentine / invasion / overdo / caviar / believe / envious



DIALOGUE 9. A visit to Vladivostok

OLIVER: Victor, have you ever visited Vladivostok?

VICTOR: Never. In fact, I haven't travelled further than Liverpool.

OLIVER: I've had an invitation from the University of Vladivostok to give a survey of my own creative verse.

VICTOR: How marvellous!

OLIVER: Will my navy overcoat be heavy enough, I wonder? It's long-sleeved and reversible. And I've got a pair of velvet Levis—rather a vivid violet! Do you think they'll approve?

VICTOR: I should think the professors will view violet Levis with violent disapproval. When do you leave?

OLIVER: On the 7th of November.

VICTOR: I don't advise you to travel on the 7th. It's the anniversary of the Valentine Invasion. And for heaven's sake, Oliver, don't overdo the caviar. Or the vodka.

OLIVER: Victor, I do believe you're envious!

10. [w] will

To make this sound, hold your hand vertically in front of your face, nearly touching your nose. Now kiss your hand. Holding this position (you can take your hand away but keep your mouth pursed, looking as in the diagram on right if you look in the mirror) give a long [u:] sound. Keep making the sound but open your jaw about half-way. This will pull your lips apart and change the quality of the sound. It is this sliding movement that makes up the [w] sound. You should be able to put your finger right into your mouth all the time. Remember we are talking of a *sound*, not necessarily represented by the letter 'w'. Syllables ending in [u:], [əʊ] or [aʊ], and followed by a vowel insert a [w] sound, whether this is written or not (*fluent, poetical, ploughing*). This is true even if the vowel is at the beginning of the next word (see Linking, p. 44), e.g. *two^w answers, go^w away*. Words like *flower, power, tower, bowel, towel* are generally pronounced as one syllable, with no [w] sound in the middle—[flaə], [paə], etc.



PRACTICE

A.

'wh'

(a) wind	Edward	what	white	wit	twice	quick	one
waves	Rowena	where	whisper	wet	twin	quite	once
water	blowing	why	whip	what	twain	queen	
world	Orwell	when	whining	wait	twelve	squash	
woods	wonderful	which	whether	white	between	squeeze	

silent 'w'

t(w)o	(w)hom	(w)hole	(w)rite	Chis(w)ick
(w)ho	(w)hose	s(w)ord	(w)rong	ans(w)er

(b) [w]/[v] contrast

wet / vet
wow / vow
west / vest
wine / vine

[w]/[f] contrast

weed / feed
white / fight
wish / fish
warm / form

(c) We weave well at 'The Weavewell'. A well-woven 'Weavewell' weave wears well.
Oh, what a tangled web we weave, when first we practise to deceive.
We never miss the water till the well runs dry.
Wine, women and song. Weak as water.
All the world and his wife were there. Waste not, want not.

B. Practise putting a [w] sound between a syllable ending in [u:], [əʊ] [aʊ], followed by another vowel. Remember, this happens even when the two syllables are in separate words.

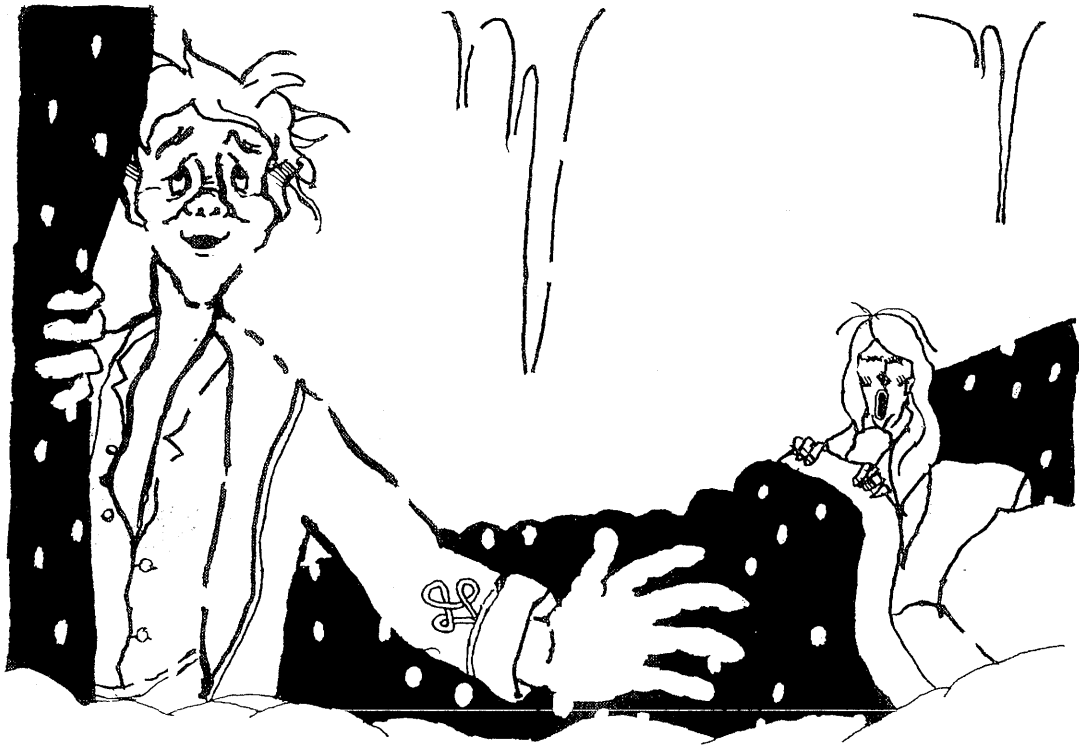
(a) doing	do end	go in	The Plough and the Stars
going	do up	go out	Slough and Windsor
poetical	do answer	go away	thou art a fool

(b) Oh, I do admire your photo album. It's so organised.

Joe and Joanna were going to Amsterdam.

Who agreed to answer the radio advertisement?

Now I wonder how on earth we're going to plough our way through all this!



DIALOGUE 10. Rowena, are you awake?

EDWARD: Rowena! Are you awake?

ROWENA: What? Edward, what's wrong? What time is it?

EDWARD: Oh, about two o'clock.

ROWENA: In the *morning*? Oh, go away! What are you doing?

EDWARD: Come to the window, Rowena. Look—the whole world's white, there's a wicked wind blowing through Orwell Wood, whispering in the willows, whipping the water into waves, while over in the West . . .

ROWENA: Oh, waxing poetical! You *are* off your head! I always knew it! Why are you wearing your wellingtons?

EDWARD: I want to go out and wander in the woods. Come with me, Rowena! I can't wait to go walking in that wild and wonderful weather.

ROWENA: I wish you wouldn't wake me up at two in the morning to go on a wild-geese chase!

EDWARD: Oh, woman, woman! Stop *whining*! What a wet blanket you are!

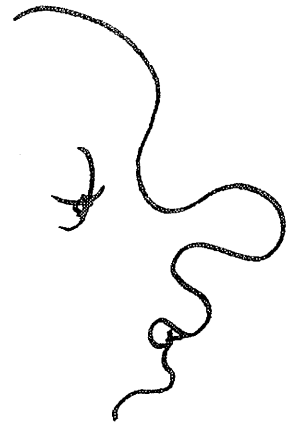
11. [f], [v], [w]

Relative lip positions

[w]



[v]/[f]



PRACTICE

A. [w]/[v]/[f] contrast

wail	: veil	: fail	wire	: via	: fire
worst	: versed	: first	while	: vile	: file
wheel	: veal	: feel	wine	: vine	: fine
wane	: vein	: feign	worn	: Vaughan	: fawn
wend	: vend	: fend	weird	: veered	: feared

B. Which is s/he saying?

- (a) Goodness, that aeroplane's ^{fast!}_{vast!}
- (b) That was the ^{first}_{worst} thing she said.
- (c) Go and see if they've sent the ^{veal,}_{wheel,} will you?
fine
- (d) Is that the vine you were telling me about?
wine

C. In each of the following groups, one word is more strongly stressed than the rest. Can you hear which it is? Is the word acting as a noun or an adjective? (Sometimes a noun takes the function of an adjective.)

Mark all the stressed syllables and then put a line under the strongest stress in each group.

foreign visitors
Wednesday evening
Swedish representatives

watercress soup
white wine sauce
wide variety

fresh fruit soufflé
vanilla wafers
devilled soft roes

fresh fruit soufflé
vanilla wafers
devilled soft roes

watercress soup
white wine sauce
wide variety

foreign visitors
Wednesday evening
Swedish representatives

Answers: B. (a) fast (b) worst (c) veal (d) wine
C. The words with strongest stress are all nouns (but not ones playing at being adjectives!).



DIALOGUE 11. Twenty foreign visitors

EVELYN: What are you giving your foreign visitors on Wednesday evening, Winnie? How many—twelve, is it?

WINNIE: Twenty. Twelve of William's Swedish representatives, eight of them with wives.

EVELYN: And what will you feed them on?

WINNIE: Well, we'll start with watercress soup, then fish in a white wine sauce flavoured with fennel and chives, followed by stuffed veal served with cauliflower and . . . oh, a very wide variety of vegetables.

EVELYN: Mmm. My mouth's watering!

WINNIE: For sweet we'll have fresh fruit soufflé covered with walnuts. And lots of whipped cream, of course, and vanilla wafers. And we'll finish with devilled soft roes.

EVELYN: And finally coffee? What a feast! I wish I was going to be with you!

12. [ə] ('shwa'—the only sound that has a name) among, sofa

This is a very important sound in English; though you might actually call it a non-sound. It is fully relaxed and very short. In fact, it is so short that it sometimes hardly exists at all!

It is the sound you have been making when you make the consonant sounds, for instance [p] and [b], audible. It is the sound you use for all the weak forms (see Units 30–32) (a boy, the girl, etc.) and for the unstressed syllables of so many words (police, contain, success). Try saying these words as if there were no vowel at all between the consonants of the unstressed syllable ([plí:s], [knté:n], [skés]). With some combinations of consonants it is almost impossible not to make a slight sound, but if you concentrate [kónsntreit] on trying to eliminate the sound altogether, the most that will escape will be *shwa* and you will be overcoming the temptation to give the unstressed vowels their full value. When the unstressed syllable is an open one, i.e. at the end of a word with no following consonant sound and no linking with the next word (áctor [æktə], fínger [fɪŋgə], sófa [səʊfə]), it cannot, of course, be swallowed completely but is still very weak.

It is impossible in so short a space to give you all the spellings of syllables that are pronounced *shwa* [ə]. But here are a few general principles:

Before and/or after a strongly stressed syllable, especially the following spellings:

- (a) 'a' initial (about); final (china)
 -acy (legacy) -and (husband) -ain (curtain) ant/-ce (important/-ce)
 -ard (vineyard) -graphy/-er (photography/-er) -ham (Twickenham)
 -land (England) -man (Norman/human)
- (b) 'e' in -el (parcel) -en (dozen) -ent (provident) -ence/-se (sixpence/nonsense)
 -er (after) -ment (government)
- (c) 'i' in -ir (confirmation)
- (d) 'o' especially in words ending in -ody (nobody) -ogy (apology)
 -oly (monopoly) -omy (economy) -on (Devon) -ony (harmony)
 -ophy (philosophy) -or (actor) -ory (hickory) -dom (kingdom)
 -some (handsome) -our (harbour) -ford (Oxford) -folk (Norfolk)
 -don/-ton (Wimbledon/Brighton)
- 'o' beginning: po- (polite) pro- (provide) com- (complain) con- (contain)
 and lots more two-syllable words in which the unstressed syllable contains the letter 'o'.
- (e) 'u': -um/-umn (maximum/autumn) -us (circus) -ur (Saturday)
- (f) Syllables spelt: -tion (relation) -sion (passion) -sion (vision)
 -cian (magician) -ious (spacious) -ous (dangerous, ridiculous)
 -ial (special, partial) -ure (nature, pressure, injure, leisure)
- (g) Unstressed syllables on either side of a stressed one:
 adventure América amusement forgotten permission
 composer narrator performance vacation banana
- (h) All the 'weak forms' that we shall come across in Units 30, 31 and 32.
- (i) Sometimes the unstressed syllable disappears altogether, often for reasons of rhythm.
 Try to be aware of these as you listen:
 comfort [kʌmfət] but comf(or)table [kʌmfətəbəl]
 careful [keəfəl] but caref(u)lly [keəfəlɪ]
 vegetable [vedʒɪteɪt] but vég(e)table [vedʒtəbəl]

Remember that 'shwa' is only used for unstressed syllables.

PRACTICE

A.

(a) about	combine	potato	succession	actor
among	command	police	tradition	doctor
ago	confuse	propose	occasion	motor
water	theatre	extra	human	postman
danger	centre	sofa	woman	Englishman
driver	metre	china	German	gentleman
husband	England	curtain	dozen	student
company	Scotland	certain	written	entertainment
servant	Iceland	Britain	often	intelligent
lesson	adventure	generous	photographer	apology
bacon	future	ridiculous	stenographer	philology
cotton	pleasure	nervous	caligrapher	biology
thorough	Peterborough	St. Joan	Venus	cousin
borough	Edinburgh	St. Ives	asparagus	basin

(b) *The vanishing syllable.*

comf(or)table	caref(u)lly	list(e)ning	rest(au)rant	ord(i)nary
veg(e)table	practic(a)lly	lit(e)rature	cam(e)ra	extr(a)ord(i)n(a)ry
adm(i)rable	strawb(e)rry	med(i)c(i)ne	secret(a)ry	diff(e)rent

(c) A Doctor of Philosophy	The Department of the Environment
A command performance	The Iron Curtain
A picture of innocence	The Listening Library
A baker's dozen	The Garden of Eden

To bet your bottom dollar	To harbour a grudge
To take your pleasures seriously	

Nature is the best healer
 Nothing succeeds like success
 Necessity is the mother of invention

A handsome husband—or ten thousand a year?
 An Englishman's home is his castle
 Here today, gone tomorrow
 Never put off till tomorrow what you can do today
 Never do today what you can get someone else to do tomorrow!

B. *Put a stress mark on the stressed syllables and underline those that are weakened to [ə] ('shwa').*

Twickenham	Addlestone	Brighton	Wimbledon	Norfolk
Bournemouth	Edinburgh	Oxford	Widcombe	Chester

How many more towns in Great Britain do you know that end in -ton, -don, -ham, -ford, -combe, -burgh (or -borough), etc.?

And how many 'shires' (pronounced [ʃə]), e.g. Devonshire?
N.B. In Scotland 'shire' is pronounced [ʃaɪə].

C. Now put stress marks on the stressed syllables and underline the 'shwa' syllables in the names of these countries, and in the adjectives derived from them:

Italy Jordan Brazil Morocco Japan Belgium Peru
Germany Hungary Canada Russia India Argentina Panama

D. A rhyme . . .

Rub-a-dub dub,
Three men in tub.
The butcher, the baker,
The candlestick-maker,
They all jumped over a rotten potater!

. . . and a riddle

As I was going to St Ives,
I met a man with seven wives.
Each wife had seven sacks;
Each sack had seven cats;
Each cat had seven kittens.
Kits, cats, sacks, wives—
How many were going to St Ives?

E. How many of the characters in the dialogues in this book have names that contain 'shwa'?
You'll have to listen to them to get the answers!

Answers: B. Twickenham, Addlestone, Brighton, Wimbledon, Norfolk, Bournemouth, Edinburgh, Oxford, Witcombe, Chester
C. Italy/Itāhan Jordan/Jordānian Brazil/Brazīlian Hungary/Hungārīan Canada/Cānādīan Germany/Gērman Japan/Japanēse Belgium/Belgīan Morocco/Mōrocān Russia/Rūssīan India/Indīan Argentina/Argentīnīan
D. Only one! I was going to St Ives when I met all the others—they were going the other way.
E. Peter, Tessa, Deirdre, Diana, Jeremy, Felicity, Oliver, Victor, Edward, Rowena, Christopher, Ezra, Anthony, Sheila, Patricia, Richard, Arthur, Father, Mother, Hanna, Jonathan, Elizabeth, Serena, Barnabas, Roger, Parker, Celia, Duncan, Cuthbert, Martha, Annabel, Rachel, Theresa, Second Bird Howard, Gentleman, Aaron, Piers, Robert, Sergeant, Policeman, Passer-by, Fisherman.



DIALOGUE 12. Comfort, culture or adventure?

CHRISTOPHER: Going anywhere different for your vacation, Theresa?

THERESA: Ah, that's a million dollar question, Christopher. Perhaps *you* can provide us with the decision. Edward demands his creature comforts—proper heating, constant hot water, comfortable beds, colour television . . .

CHRISTOPHER: What about you, Theresa? Or aren't you too particular?

THERESA: Normally, yes. And usually we combine the open air and exercise with a bit of culture. Last year, for instance, we covered the Cheltenham Festival. The year before, it was Edinburgh. Edward adores Scotland.

CHRISTOPHER: You fortunate characters! Are you complaining?

THERESA: No, but I long to go further afield—something more dangerous—and where the temperature's hotter!

CHRISTOPHER: I wonder if this would interest you. It arrived today. 'A Specialised Tour of Southern America for Photographers. Canoeing up the Amazon. Alligators. And other hazardous adventures.'

THERESA: Christopher, how marvellous! It sounds wonderful.

CHRISTOPHER: No creature comforts for Edward!

THERESA: Separate holidays are an excellent idea—occasionally! Edward can go to Scotland alone.

13. Sentence rhythm

In Unit 7 we discussed the stressing of certain syllables within individual words, ChinESE, compeTition, POLitics, and so on. These stressed syllables are louder and higher and longer than the unstressed ones. In Unit 11 (Ex. C) we saw that both nouns and adjectives have stresses. Do all words have stress? Well, if you listen carefully to the dialogues you will notice that some words are swallowed almost completely. Which words? How does one know what to stress and what not to?

It's easiest to explain by imagining a situation: Jane has been invited to spend the weekend with Elizabeth in the depths of the country. She has to send a telegram to say when she is arriving, and she wants Elizabeth to meet her. Here's her telegram:

ARRIVING BANFORD STATION SATURDAY NOON. PLEASE MEET, LOVE JANE.

Both Jane and Elizabeth know the background, so the telegram contains *all the necessary information*. Originally Jane wrote a quick note, and then thought a telegram was safer. This is what she said in her note:

*I shall be arriving at Banford Station on Saturday at noon. Please can you meet me?
With love from Jane.*

Now listen to the man in the Post Office reading the telegram, and then Jane reading the note she decided not to send.

Did you notice two things?

1. When Jane read her note, the only words you heard clearly were the information-carrying words that she put into the telegram (the 'telegram words') and, within those words, only the syllables that were stressed.
2. When the Post Office clerk read the telegram, he spaced the words so that the stresses came in a very regular beat. And when Jane read her note, the stresses came in the same regular pattern so that, in fact, though the note was so much longer than the telegram, *they both took the same amount of time to say out loud.*

Now listen to Jane and the clerk as they read their bits of paper in unison:

But what about all those words that Jane had to fit in between the 'telegram words'? Let's take a look at them:

I shall be . . . at on . . . at can you . . . me?
With . . . from

If we analyse them we find they are:

- (a) pronouns (I/you/me),
- (b) auxiliary and modal verbs, i.e. not main verbs (shall/be/can),
- (c) prepositions (at/on/With/from).

To these we must add:

- (d) articles (the/a/an),
- (e) conjunctions (and/but, etc.).

So all these unimportant, non-'telegram words' have to be fitted in between the stresses, as well as the unstressed syllables of the 'telegram words' themselves.

How did Jane do it? Even before the first stress, the Post Office clerk had only one unstressed syllable; Jane had **four**:

I shall be arRIV-

The answer is that those four unstressed syllables came out as a rapid sort of mumble, like a

muffled machine gun. This meant that the stressed syllables were still evenly spaced as she spoke. And this gave a rhythm, a sort of music, to her speech.

In real life we don't keep a regular beat throughout the whole of what we're saying; we alter the speed and rhythm from phrase to phrase. However, to begin with it's best to work at sentences, or even whole dialogues, as if they were all one single phrase and therefore being said at the same speed. We'll read Jane's note as if it was all one phrase. The stresses will therefore come at regular intervals of time all the way through. How many unstressed syllables are there between the stresses? (Here ~ shows an unstressed syllable.)

Ī shall bē ārRivīng āt BANförd STAtiön öñ SATurđay āt NOON. PLEASE cān yōu MEET mē, With LOVE fröm JANE

There is only **one** unstressed syllable between 'BAN-' and 'STA-' ('ford') and between 'LOVE' and 'JANE' ('from'), so let's take those to establish our speed—nice and slow to begin with—TUM ti TUM. There are **two** syllables between '-RI-' and 'BAN-', 'PLEASE' and 'MEET', 'MEET' and 'LOVE': so '-ving at', '-tion on', and 'me with' must fit into the same time space as the single syllables '-ford' and 'from'. They will therefore have to be said twice as fast. Remember, they must be regular, too—TUM ti ti TUM. Now '-turday at' has **three** syllables, so it will have to be said at three times the speed of '-ford', and 'from'. 'I shall be a- is **four** unstressed syllables in a row (you have to imagine that there was a stress immediately before them) so each of those syllables must be said at four times the speed of '-ford' and 'from', and twice the speed of each syllable in the two-syllable groups.

Finally, between 'PLEASE' and 'MEET' there are **no** unstressed syllables at all. Do not speed up! These two stresses must still keep their distance. So what we do is hang on to the first word till the rhythm tells us that it's time to say the next: ('ple-e-ease') (see Unit 25).

Try saying the whole of Jane's note as TUM ti TUMS, keeping your TUMS at strictly regular intervals of time:

ti ti ti ti TUM | ti ti TUM | ti TUM | ti ti TUM | ti ti ti TUM | TUM | ti ti TUM | ti ti TUM | ti TUM.

Practise it until you can do it at the same speed as the speaker on the tape, then try to put the words in on top of the TUM ti TUMS on the tape and finally see if you can say it with Jane as she reads the note out again.

Notice that in the dialogue, Chris speaks all the way through in a TUM ti TUM rhythm, Elise in a TUM ti ti TUM one. Until the whole thing comes naturally to you, try to keep the speed regular, even when the rhythms are different, as Chris and Elise do on the tape.

The rule to remember: 'Within each phrase, stresses come at regular intervals of time.'

PRACTICE

A.

(a) *Two nursery rhymes with very different rhythms:*

Jáck and Jíll
Went úp the híll
To féтч a páil of wá-tér.
Jáck fell dówn
And bróke his crówn
And Jíll came túmbling áf-tér.

(b) A fármér went tróttíng upón his grey máre,
Búmpety búmpety búmp (*pause*)
With his dáughter behínd him so rósy and fáir,
Lúmpety lúmpety lúmp.

B. Here are three groups of numbers of different lengths on the paper, but which should take the same amount of time to say:

(a)	twó twénty two hundred	thréé thírty thréé hundred	four fórty four hundred
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(b) *three groups of words of similar difficulty:*

a a a de-	níce lówé-ly lí-cious and	rípe júicy móuth-wat(e)ring	péar mélon píneapple
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(c) *and another three groups, rather more difficult:*

his his an out-	néw látest stánding contri-	boók's nóvel's a dis- bútion to con-	quíte tínt suc- témporary	góod céss lít(e)rature
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C. Which are the stressed syllables? When you've decided, read the passage aloud, exaggerating the stresses and trying to keep them at regular intervals of time. In real speech, as I have said, speed and rhythm vary from phrase to phrase. This exercise is just to get you into the habit of thinking in terms of rhythm and feeling it as you speak, so read the whole passage at the same speed and with strictly regular rhythm.

'Excuse me—er—haven't we met before? Yes, I'm certain we have, I recognise your face. I'm never wrong. I'm terribly bad at names, but I never forget a face. Aren't you a friend of the Joneses—James and Isabel Jones? No? Oh, have I made you miss your bus? I'm so sorry. But I'm sure we've met before. I never forget a face.'

Answer: C. 'Excuse me—er—haven't we met before? Yes, I'm certain we have, I recognise your face. I'm never wrong. I'm terribly bad at names, but I never forget a face. Aren't you a friend of the Joneses—James and Isabel Jones? No? Oh, have I made you miss your bus? I'm so sorry. But I'm sure we've met before. I never forget a face.'



DIALOGUE 13: Elise's hair is green!

CHRIS: I like your hát, Elise.

ELISE: That isn't my hát, it's my háir.

CHRIS: Your háir? You cán't have háir like thát. Elise, it's brílliant gréen!

ELISE: Old wómen can dýe their hair blúe. There are plénty who páint their nails réd.

CHRIS: Thát's nó't the sáme at áll. They ónly stréss what náture meánt. Gréen is . . . gréen is . . . I cánnot fínd the wórds.

ELISE: Unná'tural—is thát what you méan? An appéndix operá'tion is, tóo. And ás for transplánting a heárt . . . ! And I lóve all my émerald háir!

CHRIS: Whát does Péter thínk?

ELISE: Oh Chrístopher! Dídn't you knów? Why, *his* hair is púrples and réd!