



Help with Pronunciation Unit 9 and 10 – Teacher's notes

Introduction to exercise

This exercise looks at the unstressed syllables and the sounds /ə/ and /ɪ/. The first sound is called a 'schwa' and you may want to highlight this to your students by calling it the 'glorious schwa' or some such other nickname to help them remember it. You can explain that it is almost not really a sound because of its short relaxed nature, but as it is present so frequently in spoken language is also one of the most useful for students to learn to recognise and pronounce.

Resources needed

Photocopied worksheets

The weak vowels /ə/ and /ɪ/

Tasks 1 and 2

Look at the weak syllable words to be worked upon in these exercises. You may want to use these lists, prior to handing out the Worksheet, as board-work if you think your students may have problems with meaning.

Introduce students to the sound by modeling it yourself, if you feel comfortable so doing. If not, there are sites on the internet which will help you to model the sound by showing a video of a mouth in close up or you can use the auditory model given you in the Macmillan Pronunciation Dictionary or on the One Stop English website.

Monitor the students either by asking them to say the words out in front of the class or by monitoring whilst working individually or a combination of the two. When you feel that the students have an understanding of these two sounds you can move onto the next task.

Task 3

You may want to extend this exercise by encouraging students to build pronunciation lists around some of the words featured below:

e.g. **luggage** but also baggage, manage, advantage, disadvantage, but interestingly not fuselage in some English accents

Mountain, curtain, fountain but not terrain

System, problem, tandem, etc.

Answers

Unstressed syllable = /ə/	Unstressed syllable = /ɪ/
bea <u>con</u>	limit
err <u>or</u>	de <u>velop</u>
instru <u>ment</u>	de <u>sc</u> ent
ob <u>sta</u> cle	lugg <u>a</u> ge
author <u>ity</u>	
techno <u>logy</u>	
transpon <u>der</u>	
system <u> </u>	
ter <u>ra</u> in	
dat <u>a</u>	
pur <u>ch</u> ase	
de <u>vel</u> op	
detec <u>tor</u>	
ab <u>o</u> rt	
proced <u>ure</u>	

Task 4

Explain to students how connected speech often sounds different from how it would if we said each word separately. Indeed, if we say each word separately and with the same emphasis, English sounds unnatural. Explain that prepositions and pronouns, because they are less important to the meaning of the phrase, often become weak syllables.

Answers

- C Polarar 69. Roger. Report turning final, runway 29. Wind 320 at 10 kts.
- PNF Report turning final, runway 29. Wind 320 at 10 kts.
- PF Numberer one doesn't sound good. We're not running short of fuel, are we? We should have plenty of fuel.
- PNF We'e've got fuel...but fuel flow should be much higher. Torque pressure is meant to be at 100, not 40