

Unit 1

Identifying English Sounds

In this unit you are learning to listen to and identify the sounds of English.

English has 44 sounds. They are grouped into three groups, namely: consonants, vowels and diphthongs

Exercise 1

Look at the list of words below. The underlined letters show the English consonants. The phonetic symbol of the consonant is given after each word. Listen how they are pronounced.

01. <u>p</u> en	p	09. <u>f</u> all	f	17. <u>h</u> ot	h
02. <u>b</u> ad	b	10. <u>v</u> ery	v	18. <u>m</u> y	m
03. <u>t</u> en.	t	11. <u>th</u> in	θ	19. <u>n</u> o	n
04. <u>d</u> ay	d	12. <u>th</u> ey	ð	20. <u>s</u> ing	ŋ
05. <u>k</u> ey	k	13. <u>s</u> o	s	21. <u>l</u> et	l
06. <u>g</u> et	g	14. <u>z</u> oo	z	22. <u>r</u> ed	r
07. <u>ch</u> ea <u>p</u>	tʃ	15. <u>sh</u> e	ʃ	23. <u>y</u> es	j
08. <u>j</u> ump	dʒ	16. <u>plea</u> s <u>ure</u>	ʒ	24. <u>w</u> et	w

Listen again and repeat how they are pronounced.

Exercise 2

You will hear pair of words containing some of the above words. If the two words in each pair are the same, put a tick (✓) in the brackets. If the words are different, put a cross (X).

01. ()	06. ()
02. ()	07. ()
03. ()	08. ()
04. ()	09. ()
05. ()	10. ()

Exercise 3

Look at the list of words below. The underlined letters show the English vowels. The phonetic symbol of the vowel is given after each word. Listen how they are pronounced.

01. <u>ee</u>	i:	05. <u>a</u> rm	ɑ:	09. <u>oo</u> n	u:
02. <u>i</u> t	ɪ	06. <u>o</u> t	ɒ	10. <u>u</u> p	ʌ
03. <u>e</u> d.	e	07. <u>a</u> w	ɔ:	11. <u>ea</u> rn	ɜ:
04. <u>a</u> n	æ	09. <u>u</u> t	ʊ	12. <u>ab</u> out	ə

Listen again and repeat how they are pronounced

Exercise 4

Look at the list of words below. The underlined letters show the English diphthongs. The phonetic symbol of the diphthong is given after each word. Listen how they are pronounced.

01. page	eɪ	04. <u>no</u> w	aʊ	06. <u>ther</u> e	eə
02. <u>h</u> ome	əʊ	05. <u>bo</u> y	ɔɪ	07. <u>tour</u>	ʊə
03. <u>f</u> ive	aɪ	06. <u>her</u> e	ɪə		

Exercise 5

You will hear pair of words containing some of the above words. If the two words in each pair are the same, put a tick (✓) in the brackets. If the words are different, put a cross (X).

01. ()	06. ()
02. ()	07. ()
03. ()	08. ()
04. ()	09. ()
05. ()	10. ()

Listen again and repeat how they are pronounced

Exercise 6

Look at the pairs of words below. Only one sound is different in each pair (This is called a **minimal pair**). After each pair, one of the words is said again. Underline the word you hear. (If you don't know the meaning of a word, consult the dictionary)

Example: pie /buy

01. put/foot	06. day/they	11. cheap/jeep	16. pot /port
02. boat/vote	07. teeth/teethe	12. leave/ live	17. far/four
03. fan/ van	08. could/good	13. bill /bell	18. hot/hut
04. town/down	09. price/prize	14. men/man	19. cup/cap
05. tin/thin	10. see/she	15. hat/heart	20. walk/work

Exercise 7

Listen to the following words. Listen again, and write the words you hear in the boxes. Notice that some words may have more than one spelling. (If you don't know the meaning of a certain word, consult the dictionary).

01.	06.	11.	16.
02.	07.	12.	17.
03.	08.	13.	18.
04.	09.	14.	19.
05.	10.	15.	20.

Exercise 8

Read the following pairs of sentences. Notice that there is only one word different in each pair. Listen to the sentence that you hear, then put a tick to show it.

- 1a. () She is living with her brother.
b. () She is leaving with her brother.
- 2a. () His cup is very dirty.
b. () His cap is very dirty.
- 3a. () Has the boss arrived yet?
b. () Has the bus arrived yet?
- 4a. () He hit the ball in the garden
b. () He hid the ball in the garden.
- 5a. () What do you think of the prices?
b. () What do you think of the prizes?

Exercise 9

The letters ‘-s’ or ‘-es’ at the end of words can be pronounced in three ways: -|s|, -|z| or -|ɪz|. Listen and look at the following examples:

a. -|s|

books

stops

Frank's

b. -|z|

dogs

sees

Bob's

c. -|ɪz|

glasses

loses

George's

Listen again and repeat how they are pronounced

Exercise 10

Look at the following words and copy each of them in the proper column based on the way the letters 's' or 'es' at the end of each word is pronounced. If necessary stop the cassette to give you time to write.

words	- s	- z	- I z
lives			
watches			
beds			
eats			
says			
coughs			
kicks			
bridges			
boys			
dishes			

Exercise 11

The letters '-d' or '-ed' at the end of words can be pronounced in three ways: - | t |, - | d | or - | I d |. Listen and look at the following examples:

a. - | t |

looked

stopped

touched

b. - | d |

stored

showed

robbed

c. - | I d |

started

added

Listen again and repeat how they are pronounced

Exercise 12

Look at the following words and copy each of them in the proper column based on the way the letters ‘-d’ or ‘-ed’ at the end of each word is pronounced. If necessary stop the cassette to give you time to write.

Words	- t	- d	- ɪd
wanted			
worked			
pushed			
closed			
kissed			
opened			
climbed			
demanded			
played			
hired			

Exercise 13

Some words may have contracted forms in everyday spoken English. Some examples are as follows:

<i>am, is, are:</i>	<i>I am → I'm</i>	<i>you are → you're</i>	<i>he is → he's</i>
<i>shall, will:</i>	<i>I will → I'll</i>	<i>he shall → he'll</i>	<i>we will → we'll</i>
<i>have, has:</i>	<i>I have → I've</i>	<i>she has → she's</i>	<i>you have → you've</i>
<i>had, should, would:</i>	<i>he had → he'd</i>	<i>he should → he'd</i>	<i>they would → they'd</i>

Look at the pair of sentences below. One sentence from each pair will be read. Tick the sentence you hear.

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 01a. () You're here. | b. () You'll here |
| 02a. () We're ready | b. () They're ready. |
| 03a. () She'll go. | b. () She'd go |
| 04a. () I've written | b. () I'd written. |

Exercise 14

The following are some contractions of negative forms.

is + not, was + not: *he is not → he isn't* *she was not → she wasn't*
will + not, *I will not → I won't*
would + not: *they would not → they wouldn't*

Look at the pair of sentences below. One sentence from each pair will be read. Tick the sentence you hear.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 01. a. () They aren't going. | b. () They weren't going. |
| 02. a. () I shan't get it. | b. () I can't get it. |
| 03. a. () You haven't done it. | b. () You hadn't done it. |
| 04. a. () He couldn't do it. | b. () He wouldn't do it. |

Exercise 15

Read the pair of sentences below. Only one sentence from each pair will be read. Write the sentence you hear and its contracted form in the following columns.

Sentences to read	Sentence you hear	contracted form
He's sitting on the floor.		
She's sitting on the floor		
She walked everyday.		
She's walked every day		
He'll finish it later.		
We'll finish it later.		
He hadn't received the money.		
He hasn't received the money.		
I'll buy it for you.		
I'd buy it for you.		
She isn't like her father.		
She doesn't like her father.		
They don't want the books.		
They won't want the books.		
It was a glass.		
It wasn't a glass.		
They can do it.		
They can't do it.		
He isn't washing up.		
He wasn't washing up.		

Sources:

Jordan, R. R. (1984). *Active listening*. London: Collins ELT.