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P18. Word Stress

Student Name: _____ Student ID Number: _____

Instructor: _____ Level: _____ Date: _____

For media links in this activity, visit the LLC ESL Tutoring website for [Pronunciation SDLAs](#).

Find your SDLA number to see all the resources to finish your SDLA.

Section 0: Syllables

In order to understand word stress, let's review what a syllable is first. A syllable is a sound unit or one beat in a word. A word can be separated into syllables based on its vowel sounds. **Remember!** June is spelled with 2 vowels (June), but there is only 1 vowel *sound* because the "e" is silent. Here are more examples of words separated into syllables:

one

• 1 syllable

fro-zen

• 2 syllables

beau-ti-ful

• 3 syllables

feb-ru-ar-y

• 4 syllables

How many syllables are in the following words? Write the correct number of syllables below each of the words. The first one has been done for you.

One Waiting Accident Similar Friendship Activity Thought Conclusion Worry

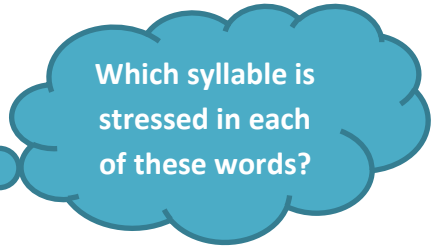
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*Check your answers at the bottom of this page



Section 1: Word Stress

One of the most common pronunciation mistakes that learners make is incorrect syllable stress (Kozyrev, 2005).



Using the dictionary can help you to learn how to pronounce the word with the correct syllable stress.

For example, if you want to check the syllable stress for the word *conclusion*, you can look it up in the dictionary. In the American Heritage Dictionary, for instance, syllable stress is shown with a **BOLD** accent mark **AFTER** the stressed syllable.



Try it out! First, divide the words below into syllables. Then look up the words using www.ahdictionary.com and mark the stressed syllable. The first one has been done as an example.

data 'da-ta

insignificant _____

economy _____

percent _____

illegal _____

respond _____

individual _____

specifically _____

Section 2: Listening for Syllable Stress

Part 1: Listen to the conversation below about registering for classes online. Pay attention to the words in **bold**.

Student 1: Have you **registered** for **classes** for spring semester yet?

Student 2: No. I might do it **tomorrow**. What about you?

Student 1: You **always** wait until the last **minute**. I registered last Tuesday.

Student 2: It's **difficult** for me to make **decisions**. I can't decide if I want to take Speaking or Writing. And I'm not sure if I want to take **morning** or night classes.

Student 1: **Decide** soon, or there won't be any classes left!



English Self-Directed Learning Activities

Language Learning Center 77-1005, *Passport Rewards*

P18. Word Stress

Part 2: After you listen, divide each word into syllables. Then, mark the stressed syllable in each word. The first one is done for you. *Try to do this WITHOUT the dictionary and listen carefully to each word.*

- | | |
|---|--------------------|
| 1. registered ' <u>re - gis - tered</u> | 5. minute _____ |
| 2. classes _____ | 6. difficult _____ |
| 3. tomorrow _____ | 7. decisions _____ |
| 4. always _____ | 8. morning _____ |

Part 3: Stress is also important to discriminate between one word whose meaning is changed based on stress. These types of words are called heteronyms. Stress can change the meaning and part of speech of the word from verb to noun. Here are some examples:

Noun		Verb	Noun		Verb
'con-flict	→	con-'flict	'at-tri-bute	→	at-'tri-bute
'pro-ject	→	pro-'ject	're-ject	→	re-'ject

Part 4: Look at the following sentences and choose which syllable needs to be stressed in the context of the sentence. Put a check mark next ✓ to the syllable to be stressed. Then, decide if the word is being used as a noun or a verb.

- | | Sentence | Noun | Verb |
|----|--|------|------|
| 1. | There's been an in-crease in the number of students attending community colleges this year. | | |
| 2. | Do you need a per-mit to fish here? | | |
| 3. | He es-cort-ed her out of the door and to her car because she parked far away. | | |
| 4. | They went camping for three hot weeks in the Sahara des-ert . | | |
| 5. | The victory was an up-set in the championships. | | |
| 6. | He re-belled against authority to fight for his rights and the rights of others. | | |



Section 3: Repetition



Using your cell phone, **record yourself** reading the words from **Section 2 Part 2** and the **Sentences from Section 2 Part 3**. Save it.

Listen with your eyes closed. Can you understand what you said? Which words are difficult to understand? Write them here.



Optional: Record a second time the correct sentences. Listen with your eyes closed. You can ask a friend to listen with their eyes closed. Can they understand every word? Write down which ones your friend could not understand. Practice those words more.

Section 4: Conversation Practice

Read the conversation below. Are there any words you don't understand? Look them up in a dictionary. Practice reading this to yourself. Practice as both speakers. You will practice this conversation with the tutor later. Concentrate on the pronunciation of the individual words.

You Are your children grown up now, Laura?

Laura Oh, yes. Rachel is married and has three children.

You You're a grandmother? That's great. Congratulations!

Laura Thanks! But I don't see my grandchildren very much. Rachel and her family live in Paris.

You In Paris! Really?

Laura Yeah. Rachel is a reporter for an American newspaper. Her husband is a French photographer. They met when they were reporting on the same story.

You How romantic! And what about Grace? Is she married, too? She was such a bright girl - always reading.





Laura No, she isn't married, but she has a boyfriend. And she still reads a lot. She's a librarian at the public library.

You Wow! It's so nice to hear about your family. They are doing incredible things!



Section 5: Student Self-Assessment

Complete this table BEFORE meeting with a tutor.

Communication Skill	I can't do this YET. 	I can do this WITH help. 	I can do this WITHOUT help. 	I can TEACH this to a classmate. 
I can hear the difference between syllables in words.				
I can identify the stressed syllable of a word.				
I know some words I need to keep practicing.				

Here are some words/phrases I need to practice.

GOOD job!

Now go to the LLC ESL Tutoring Website

www.mtsac.edu/llc/passportrewards/llctutoring




to make an appointment to see a tutor.



Section 6: Practice with a Tutor!

Meet with a tutor, and share this activity with the tutor. To make sure you understand this activity, the tutor will review your answers with you. They will also help you practice the conversation in Section 4. You may also ask the tutor any questions that you might have.

Grading Rubric

Possible Points	Need Practice  (0-1 Point)	Good Job  (2-3 Points)	Excellent Work  (4-5 Points)
Content	Not enough information provided in responses and often does not use correct vocabulary.	Provides most important information in responses and some of the time uses correct vocabulary.	Provides all necessary information in responses and most of the time uses correct vocabulary.
Skill: Speaking	More than 6 mistakes saying words; needs guessing more than 3 times.	Not more than 5 mistakes saying words; needs guessing on 1-2 words or sentences.	Not more than 2 mistakes saying words; needs no guess about meaning.
Oral Fluency	Speaks mostly in phrases, individual words; many pauses.	Sometimes speaks in complete sentences; several pauses.	Speaks in complete sentences; a couple pauses okay.

*Students must receive at least 10 points to move on

Possible Points: _____ / 15

Tutor Comments:

Congratulations! Keep going.

You have successfully completed this SDLA and are ready to continue to the next.

Work on this more.

You have not yet mastered this SDLA. It is recommended that you complete it again.

Tutor Signature: _____

Date: _____