

Appendix B	Pronunciation
-------------------	----------------------

Questions to consider before reading this appendix:

1. In your opinion, how important is pronunciation in speaking ability?
2. Have you ever taught a course in pronunciation? (If you have not taught a course, have you taught a lesson on pronunciation?) Briefly describe the course or lesson. Who were the students? What were the course goals?
3. What are some pronunciation problems that are specific to one group of students (e.g., Japanese learners)?
4. What are some pronunciation problems that are made by many different first language groups?
5. Have you ever had a student who asked you for help with pronunciation? How did you respond?
6. Have you ever noticed that the -s at the end of a noun is not always pronounced as /s/? For example, cats ends with /s/, dogs ends with /z/, and horses ends with /Iz/. Why? What's going on here?
7. Have you ever noticed that the -s at the end of a verb is not always pronounced as /s/. For example, likes ends with /s/, but needs ends with /z/ and washes ends with /Iz/. Why?
8. Have you ever noticed that the -ed at the end of a verb is not always pronounced as /d/? For example, robbed ends with /d/, wrapped ends with /t/, and needed ends with /Id/. Why?

Appendix B Pronunciation

Activity 1. Voiced and Voiceless Sounds

Define the terms voiced and voiceless sounds. Give five consonant pairs that are different only in voicing.

Activity 2. Consonant Sounds

Give examples of common words that illustrate the consonant sounds of English. (You do not have to use special symbols.) Underline the part of the word that illustrates the consonant sounds, e.g., K in class, SH in nation.

Activity 3. Vowel Sounds

Give examples of common words that illustrate the fourteen vowel sounds. (You may not have all these sounds in your dialect of English.)

Activity 4. Difficult English Sounds for One Native Language

Choose a language that is common among your students. Make a list of the most difficult sounds for your students. Give example words for each.

Activity 5. Difficult English Sounds: Teacher Perceptions versus Reality

After you have finished Activity 4, separately interview three students who speak that language. The goal is to compare your list with their lists. After they have given all the examples of difficult sounds that they can, show each student your list of difficult sounds. What is their reaction? How accurate was your list?

Activity 6. Minimal Pairs

Put together a minimal pair list for one of these pairs: /b/ - /v/; /l/ - /r/; /ch/ - /sh/ (any spelling is acceptable); /d/ - /t/; /b/ - /p/; /f/ - /v/; /i/ - /I/.

Activity 7. Range of English Vowels

The book uses the example of words that begin with /b/ and finish with /t/, and have vowels in between—for example, *beat*, *bit*, *bait*. For each of these listed, how many of the fourteen vowels will actually produce real English words?

- a. /d/ ___ /t/
- b. /h/ ___ /d/
- c. /s/ ___ /n/
- d. /l/ ___ /r/
- e. /g/ ___ /sh/ (all spellings)

Activity 8. - s in English

Explain how to pronounce the plural of nouns in English. (This same rule applies to the third person singular ending of verbs as well.) Give examples.

Activity 9. - ed in English

Explain how to pronounce the *-ed* ending in English. Give examples.

Activity 10. Tongue Twisters

Select a small set of sounds (or minimal pairs) that are difficult for your students. Find some tongue twisters that practice these sounds. Be prepared to defend not only the sounds examples in your twister, but also the vocabulary. (Remember: Students will want to know what the words mean, so a twister that has obscure vocabulary is useless.)

Activity 11. Reductions

Tape an episode of a television sitcom or use a song recording. Find examples of reductions.

Activity 12. Error Correction

What should be done about pronunciation errors? When should you correct pronunciation errors and when should you let pronunciation errors go uncorrected—if ever?