

# ACCENT ACTIVITIES

## Pronunciation Supplement to *Speaking: Oral Language Skills for Real-Life Communication* for Non-Native Speakers of American English

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Begins on page
<b>INTRODUCTION: <i>Getting Acquainted with Accent</i></b> <b>Accent Acquisition Principle: The “Step System” of American Speech Music</b>	<b>1</b>
<i>EXPLANATION &amp; PRACTICE: The “Step System of American Speech Music”</i>	3
<i>EXERCISE 1—THE JUMP UP, STEP DOWN PATTERN</i>	4
<b>EXPLANATION &amp; PRACTICE: <i>Glide Instead of Step Down</i></b>	6
<i>EXERCISE 2—THE JUMP UP, GLIDE DOWN PATTERN</i>	6
<i>EXERCISE 3—SPEECH MUSIC IN SOCIAL CONVERSATION</i>	7
<b>PART ONE: <i>Focusing on Focus</i></b> <b>Accent Acquisition Principle: Phrase &amp; Sentence “Meaning Focus”</b>	<b>13</b>
<i>EXPLANATION, RULES 1-3, &amp; PRACTICE: Phrase &amp; Sentence Meaning Focus (“Normal” End-of-Sentence Focus, Special Emphasis for Meaning Focus, Meaning Focus on Function Words)</i>	13
<i>EXERCISE 1—END-OF-SENTENCE MEANING FOCUS</i>	14
<i>EXERCISE 2—SPECIAL EMPHASIS FOR MEANING FOCUS</i>	15
<i>EXERCISE 3—MEANING FOCUS ON FUNCTION WORDS</i>	17
<i>EXERCISE 4—MEANING FOCUS IN OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS &amp; “SHORT TALK”</i>	18
<i>EXERCISE 5—MEANING FOCUS IN YOUR OWN “SHORT TALK” ANSWERS</i>	20

In **ACCENT ACTIVITIES**: Pronunciation Supplement to the *Speaking Text*, a small picture of an audiocassette indicates that the accompanying material is recorded on audiotape. This 90-minute cassette, recorded informally by native speakers of American English, is available from Authors & Editors, 19736 Jefferson Blvd., PMB 604, Culver City, California 90230-4696. E-MAIL: [authedit@idt.net](mailto:authedit@idt.net).

AUDIOTAPE ISBN 1-891077-28-7



<p><b>PART TWO: Syllables Made Simple</b></p> <p><b>Accent Acquisition Principle: Syllables &amp; Syllable Stress Patterns</b></p> <p><i>EXPLANATION &amp; PRACTICE: Syllables in Words, Phrases, &amp; Sentences</i> 21</p> <p><i>EXERCISE 1—THE NUMBER OF SYLLABLES IN WORDS &amp; PHRASES</i> 22</p> <p><i>EXPLANATION &amp; PRACTICE: Pronouncing Stressed Syllables</i> 23</p> <p><i>EXERCISE 2—PRONOUNCING STRESSED SYLLABLES</i> 23</p> <p><i>EXPLANATION &amp; PRACTICE: Pronouncing Unstressed Syllables</i> 24</p> <p><i>EXERCISE 3—PRONOUNCING UNSTRESSED SYLLABLES</i> 24</p> <p><i>EXPLANATION &amp; PRACTICE: Syllable Stress Patterns in Words</i> 24</p> <p><i>EXERCISE 4—PRONOUNCING WORDS WITH MULTI-SYLLABLE STRESS PATTERNS</i> 25</p> <p><i>EXPLANATION, PRINCIPLES A-E, &amp; PRACTICE: Predicting Syllable Stress Patterns</i> 26</p> <p><i>EXERCISE 5—PREDICTING SYLLABLE STRESS PATTERNS IN MULTI-SYLLABLE WORDS</i> 28</p> <p><i>EXPLANATION: Multi-Syllable Patterns in Context</i> 29</p> <p><i>EXERCISE 6—PRONOUNCING WORDS WITH VARIOUS STRESS PATTERNS IN CONTEXT</i> 29</p>	<p><b>21</b></p>
<p><b>PART THREE: Getting into the Rhythm</b></p> <p><b>Accent Acquisition Principle: The Regular Rhythm of American English</b></p> <p><i>EXPLANATION &amp; PRACTICE: How Stressed &amp; Unstressed Syllables Produce a Regular Rhythm in Fluent Speech</i> 31</p> <p><i>EXERCISE 1—RECOGNIZING &amp; USING REGULAR SENTENCE RHYTHM</i> 32</p> <p><i>EXPLANATION &amp; PRACTICE: Reduced Forms in the Rhythm of Relaxed, Natural Speech</i> 34</p> <p><i>EXERCISE 2—RECOGNIZING &amp; USING REDUCED FORMS IN FLUENT SPEECH</i> 36</p> <p><i>EXPLANATION &amp; PRACTICE: The Rhythm of Verse &amp; Song</i> 37</p> <p><i>EXERCISE 3—RECOGNIZING &amp; USING LANGUAGE RHYTHM IN SIMPLE VERSE &amp; SONG</i> 38</p>	<p><b>31</b></p>
<p><b>PART FOUR: It's Time for Timing</b></p> <p><b>Accent Acquisition Principle: Rhythm or Thought Groups &amp; Pausing</b></p> <p><i>EXPLANATION &amp; PRACTICE: How Timing (Pausing in the Rhythm) Can Make a Difference (1. Numbers and Mathematical Equations. 2. Series of Items. 3. Phrases with Words That Sound Like Conjunctions. 4. Direct Quotations.)</i> 39</p> <p><i>EXERCISE 1—RECOGNIZING MEANING DIFFERENCES CREATED BY TIMING &amp; PAUSING</i> 41</p> <p><i>EXPLANATION &amp; PRACTICE: Kinds of Rhythm or Thought Groups</i> 43</p> <p><i>EXERCISE 2—PRONOUNCING THOUGHT GROUPS AND PAUSING BETWEEN PHRASES</i> 44</p> <p><i>EXERCISE 3—USING TIMING (THOUGHT GROUPS &amp; PAUSING) IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION</i> 46</p>	<p><b>39</b></p>



This **ACCENT ACTIVITIES** book is a Pronunciation Supplement to the *Speaking Text*, designed especially for high intermediate to advanced non-native speakers of English as a second language that want to increase the clarity of their accents.

<p><b>PART FIVE: The Question of Questions</b></p> <p><b>Accent Acquisition Principle: Rising (Jump Up, Step or Glide Up) Intonation</b></p> <p><i>EXPLANATION &amp; PRACTICE: Rising Intonation in Yes/No Questions</i> 47</p> <p><i>EXERCISE 1—THE JUMP UP, STEP OR GLIDE UP PATTERN OF RISING INTONATION</i> 48</p> <p><i>EXERCISE 2—COMPARING RISING WITH FALLING QUESTION INTONATION</i> 50</p> <p><i>EXPLANATION &amp; PRACTICE: Other Meanings of Rising Intonation (Using Rising Intonation with Informational Questions. Checking Unclear Information with Rising Intonation.)</i> 51</p> <p><i>EXERCISE 3—USING RISING INTONATION TO REQUEST CLARIFICATION &amp; REPETITION</i> 52</p> <p><i>EXPLANATION &amp; PRACTICE: The Rising-Falling Intonation of Alternative Questions (Questions about Choices)</i> 54</p> <p><i>EXERCISE 4—USING RISING-FALLING INTONATION IN ALTERNATIVE QUESTIONS</i> 55</p> <p><i>EXERCISE 5—USING APPROPRIATE INTONATION FOR VARIOUS KINDS OF QUESTIONS</i> 56</p>	<p><b>47</b></p>
<p><b>PART SIX: The Missing Links</b></p> <p><b>Accent Acquisition Principle: Sound Linking in Rhythm Groups</b></p> <p><i>EXPLANATION, RULES, &amp; PRACTICE: Sound Linking in Thought &amp; Rhythm Groups (Consonant + Vowel Sound, Vowel + Vowel Sound, Consonant + Consonant Sound)</i> 57</p> <p><i>EXERCISE 1—TELLING A STORY WITH APPROPRIATE PAUSING &amp; SOUND LINKING</i> 60</p> <p><i>EXERCISE 2—TELLING YOUR OWN STORY</i> 60</p>	<p><b>57</b></p>
<p><b>PART SEVEN: The Value of Vowels</b></p> <p><b>Accent Acquisition Principle: Sixteen Vowel Sounds &amp; Vowel Lengthening</b></p> <p><i>EXPLANATION &amp; PRACTICE: The Pronunciation of the 16 Vowel Sounds (Where to Pronounce the 16 “Simple,” or Lax, Vowel Sounds. Where to Pronounce the 16 “Complex,” or Tense, Vowel Sounds)</i> 64</p> <p><i>EXERCISE 1—DISTINGUISHING VOWEL SOUNDS</i> 64</p> <p><i>EXPLANATION &amp; PRACTICE: The Sound Principle of Vowel Lengthening</i> 67</p> <p><i>EXERCISE 2—USING VOWEL LENGTHENING FOR VOWEL-SOUND CLARITY</i> 68</p>	<p><b>61</b></p>

In working to improve their accents, the first goal of most speakers of English is *comprehensibility*. Like native speakers, non-natives want to be able to express themselves so that people of all language backgrounds can listen for *meaning*—without becoming frustrated by the difficulty of deciphering a speaker’s pronunciation. A second goal is *clarity*—being able to talk clearly enough for listeners to understand *easily* (without effort) and therefore to relax and concentrate on communication. Still another purpose is to “polish” their accents so they can convey not only information but also thoughts and feelings precisely, efficiently, and effectively. Some speakers even wish to acquire a *variety* of accents for specific situations—perhaps for higher education, for work or business, and/or for acting. The pronunciation instruction and practice offered in Accent Activities can provide a good start toward any or all of these goals.

<b>PART EIGHT: Concluding with Consonants</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>Accent Acquisition Principle: Voiced &amp; Voiceless Consonant Sounds</b>	
<i>EXPLANATION &amp; PRACTICE: The Pronunciation of 8 Voiced Vs. Voiceless Pairs (Three Pairs of Consonant “Stops,” or Six Sounds. Five more Pairs of Consonants, or Ten Sounds.)</i>	69
<i>EXERCISE 1—CONTRASTING VOICED VS. VOICELESS &amp; FINAL CONSONANTS</i>	72
<i>EXERCISE 2—USING VOICED VS. VOICELESS CONSONANTS IN WORDS</i>	73
<i>EXPLANATION &amp; PRACTICE: The Pronunciation of Other Consonant Sounds (The Eight Other Consonant Sounds)</i>	74
<i>EXPLANATION &amp; PRACTICE: Consonant Sound Clusters &amp; Combinations</i>	75
<i>EXERCISE 3—PUTTING ALL THE SOUNDS TOGETHER</i>	75
<i>EXERCISE 4—PRACTICING PRONUNCIATION WITH RHYMING WORDS</i>	77
<i>EXERCISE 5—USING THE DICTIONARY TO LEARN OR CHECK PRONUNCIATION</i>	78
<b>SOUND-SYMBOLS &amp; SPELLINGS: Phonetic Symbols and Key Words</b>	78

ACCENT ACTIVITIES

# ANSWER KEY

FOR EXERCISES WITH LIKELY ANSWERS NOT INCLUDED IN THE TEXT

<b>PART ONE: Focused on Focus</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>PART TWO: Syllables Made Simple</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>PART THREE: Getting into the Rhythm</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>PART FOUR: It's Time for Timing</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>PART FIVE: The Question of Questions</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>PART EIGHT: Concluding with Consonants</b>	<b>89</b>

Because it is designed for high intermediate to advanced speakers of English (as a second language), this *ACCENT ACTIVITIES* book begins with and concentrates on pronunciation features that are *larger* than the individual sounds of the language—mostly stress, rhythm, and intonation. That is because it is these characteristics that contribute most to the comprehensibility and clarity of a language learner’s speech, as well as his or her ability to communicate intended meaning. Along with the “muscularity” of the pronunciation of the vowel and consonant sounds, these are the elements that comprise “accent”—whether it is natural (learned as a child) or acquired. To achieve or improve the effectiveness of their own chosen ways of talking, learners need to (1) understand the variables of accent, (2) practice the features that influence meaning in “controlled exercises” that provide pronunciation models and suggested answers, and (3) apply effective speech habits to communication in real life.