

Practice with American English vowels

The purpose of this exercise is to practice discriminating vowel qualities. For this exercise, you will transcribe words (some of them real words, some of them non-sense words). This exercise will not be collected, but it is practice for a final lab exercise that will count as 20 percent of the grade. First listen, concentrating on the differences in vowel quality (examples are read in columns).

(1) The vowels of American English

[tɪjb]	[tɛb]	[tʊb]	[tʌb]	[tɔjb]
[tɪb]	[tæb]	[tɔwb]	[tɑb]	[tawb]
[tejb]	[tuwb]	[tɔb]	[tajb]	[təb]

Vowel pair practice

You will hear five sets of four words each. Each set involves words composed of the same two consonants and two vowels, in different combinations. Transcribe each word. The vowels are: 1) [ij]/[ɪ]; 2) [ɛ]/[e]; 3) [ɛ]/[ɪ]; 4) [ʊ]/[u]; 5) [ʌ]/[ʊ].

More vowel pair practice

You will hear five sets of seven words each, involving the same vowels as in the last section. Transcribe each word.

Practice with all vowels

You will hear the same fifteen words you heard in section 1, but in a different order. Transcribe each word.

Schwa

English has one vowel, [ə], that occurs only in unstressed syllables. Listen to the following examples of words containing schwa, so that you will recognize what it sounds like. Do not transcribe.

(2) [ˌmæ.səˈtʃu.wɪts]
[ˌæ.pəˈleɪ.jə]
[dəˈkɔw.rə]
[ˌoʊ.pəˈlɑː.jkə]
[ˈtɛksəs]

Transcribing words with schwa

You will hear ten words, each of which contains at least one schwa. Transcribe each word.