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World Connections Inc.

Pronunciation Assessment Report

This pronunciation report shows how you well pronounce each English phoneme. We also check how well you speak English with stress-timed rhythm and linking.

Please note that this report is based on your ability to speak American English.

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Assessee: Taro Yamada

Words Test

You did a good job with the [ɑ] sounds in words like ‘hot’ and ‘mop’, but the [ʌ] sound in words like ‘hut’ and ‘mud’ sounded a little off so that the first word sounded almost like ‘hat’, and the second sounded like the previous [ɑ] sound.

[æ] in the words ‘mad’ and map did not sound quite open enough, to the point where the vowel sounded close to [ɛ] as a result.

The [oʊ] in ‘low’ started a little too open and sounded a little bit like [aʊ] (‘sound’), and I suspect that you may need to use stronger lip rounding to get this sound right. This is also true for the [u] in ‘pool’.

The words ‘ship’ and ‘sheep’ should not have any significant difference in length. The difference is vowel quality, so while your vowel sound in ‘sheep’ was good, it just sounded like a short [i] in ‘ship’, when it should be a more lax [ɪ] sound.

The l-sound at the end of ‘pool’ should be replaced with a “dark-l”. Also, ‘pull’ sounded a bit like ‘pole’, so your mouth is probably a little too open and too round for the correct sound.

To me, ‘hurt’ sounded like you were saying ‘heart’, so your mouth is a bit too open initially. On the other hand, you dropped the r-sound from ‘heart’ and it ends up sounding like ‘hot’.

While you did a good job of using the vowel [ʊ] in ‘hood’, the problem was that you replaced the [h] with a [ɸ] (the h-like sound in Japanese ふ), which would make the word sound like ‘food’ to a native speaker. You had a very good and strong [f] sound in ‘food’, but your lips were not rounded enough for the [u] sound to make it sound native like.

Good job with the [v] sound in ‘very’ as well. It sounded distinct from ‘berry’. However, strengthening of the r-sound in both words would be beneficial.

You also did a good job with [θ] (th-sound) in ‘think’. However, ‘si’ and ‘shi’ words appear to be difficult for you. They end up sounding the same, and similar to the Japanese し sound. English ‘sh’ sounds are much deeper, and our ‘si’ sounds are more distinct.

With ‘breath’ and ‘breeze’, both words were distinct, and I could hear both the [z] and th-sounds. The ‘br’ sound did not sound like they were connected though, and again, the r-sound was a little off.

I could not hear the ‘d’ in ‘seeds’. This is a very tricky sound for learners. It often ends up as just a [z] sound without a ‘d’, when it should be [dz]. Also, note that the vowel in ‘seize’ should also be [i].

For both ‘pole’ and ‘tell’, you should be aspirating the initial consonant a bit stronger.

'light' and 'right' were very good. I think /r/ is more challenging for you in the middle of a word, such as 'bright'.

Excellent job with the /ji/ sound in 'year'. This is one of the hardest sounds for Japanese natives to learn.

With both 'win' and 'wing', you should be using an [ɪ] sound instead of an [i]. Also, 'wing' has what's called a velar nasal sound (the "ng" part), but it does NOT mean that there should be a strong [g] sound at the end.

'woos' and 'ooze' sounded the same to me. You will have to round your lips tighter and open wider to get that [wu] sound.

Be sure to use an [ɛ] in 'pleasure' and not an [eɪ] sound.

'see' and 'she' sounded backwards to me. Again, I think this may be a difficult point for you, but here we should have a softer 's' sound for 'see', and a deeper and more harsh "sh" sound for 'she'. It is NOT the same "sh" sound found in Japanese し.

The vowels in the last set 'make' and 'bed' sounded good to me.

Reading Test

First, there were a few words where your pronunciation was off. I will list them all here:

The **stress** (accent) was off on the word 'Los **Angeles**'.

'hardly' (over pronouncing the [d] sound when it should be unreleased)

'Seattle' (should be a [si] sound. Also, stress is on the second syllable. [si.'æ.rəl])

Dropping of the final 's' in 'tickets'

While using a [t] sound for 'eighty' is not incorrect, Americans would replace this sound with a **flap t** and say ['eɪ.rɪ]

You need to strengthen the second syllable of 'dollars'. The [lər] combination is very tricky for Japanese natives.

The [ʌ] in 'month' sounded like an [ɑ] instead. Same thing in 'wonderful'.

The [wu] sound in 'Hollywood' became an [u] sound instead. Same in the word 'would'.

The name 'Sarah' is actually pronounced with an [ɛ] sound like ['sɛ.rə], not [sara].

You did a good job with the stress of most words, but sometimes you were sometimes inconsistent with your length. For the most part, each stressed syllable should be the same length. But on a few words like 'lately', 'friends', and 'month'.

Sometimes your intonation was a little off. "Tickets are going on sale soon, but a hundred..." should not sound like two separate sentences, and the break should be small, with a small rise in intonation where the comma is, and NOT a long pause. Intonation is usually falling at the end of a sentence, so it should not be rising after 'New York'.

You seem to have an understanding of **function words** and **content words**, at least to some extent. Grammatical words are called function words, and they do not receive the same amount of stress that content words do. For the most part, you did a good job of this in your reading, but sometimes applied stress to a function word, such as the pronoun 'me' in "If you would have me, it would...". A native speaker would not stress this word in this instance.

In some instances, you did a great job of linking two words, making the sentence flow sound more natural. This is very tough for Japanese natives, who tend to say each word one by one. There were a few times when you did not properly link words, such as "beenenjoying", "goingl", and a few other spots. Overall, quite good though.

Overall, I would say the main thing here that should be worked on (besides consonant/vowel pronunciation) would be timing. English is a stress timed language, so understanding the concept of **function words** and their weak forms, as well as linking, will help give you even better rhythm than what you currently have.