

# Pausing and Stress in English Reading

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# Introduction



[https://corpus.eduhk.hk/english\\_pronunciation/](https://corpus.eduhk.hk/english_pronunciation/)

Imagine you are a cadet...

Hello trainees! I'm your instructor. In order to *help Cantonese learners of English with their pronunciation problems*, I am going to teach you about pausing and stress in the coming two lessons. Let's have fun learning!





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How can our speaking be  
more easily understood?

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if we pause and stress appropriately

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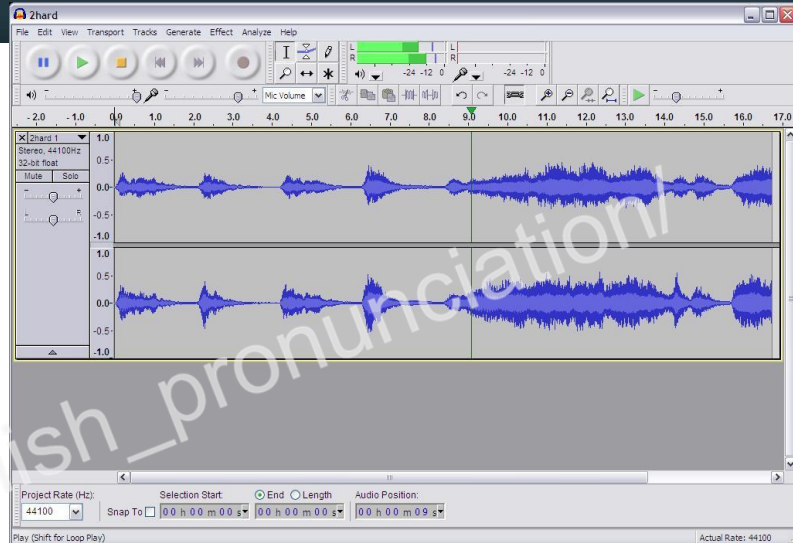


# How's your pausing?

## 1. -Record your speech-

Before we continue, please finish Task 1:

1. take out the [worksheet](#)
2. read aloud the sentences in Task #1
3. record your reading with [Audacity](#)
4. upload your recording to [Google Folder](#)
5. save your files as “Recordings\_Your Name”  
(e.g. Recordings\_Chan Tai Man)





**WELL**

**DONE**

keep going

**YOU'RE**

**GREAT**



# Online English Pronunciation Learning Corpus

Cadets, let me introduce you [the Online English Pronunciation Learning Corpus](#). You can access to abundant recordings in this corpus by searching targeted features.

AND...here's a case study: *Native English vs HK English*

[Click “Search” → “Suprasegmental (passage one)” section  
→ Inappropriate Pausing → Hong Kong Speaker #1 → roll  
down and listen to US/ UK speakers’ recording]



## 2. -Play back and listen-

Now please finish Task 2:

1. Open [the Online English Pronunciation Learning Corpus](#)
2. Look for Hong Kong Speaker #1 and roll down the page
3. Listen to the native speakers' recordings
4. Play back and listen to your own recordings
5. Compare and contrast performances of the recordings

*What are the differences between recordings of the native speakers and yourself?*





## Watch a video


[Pausing within Sentences | English Pronunciation Lesson](https://corpus.eduhk.hk/english_pronunciation/) (0:50-2:40)

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# Chunking

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# What is chunking?

Create chunks in your speech that are separated by pauses/ change in tone

E.g. “Today, I’d like to talk to you about a concept called Chunking. Chunking is a strategy that great speakers use very effectively. It sounds effortless, but in fact, it takes a lot of practice.”

**Suggested answer:** “Today, / I’d like to talk to you about a concept / called Chunking. / Chunking is a strategy / that great speakers use / very effectively. / It sounds effortless, / but in fact, / it takes a lot of practice.”

## Teach on chunking - questions

1. Why do people usually have an accent when they speak a second language?
2. Most native speakers of English can for example recognize people from France by their French accents.

## Teach on chunking - answers

1. Why do people usually have an accent / when they speak a second language?
2. Most native speakers of English can / for example / recognize people from France / by their French accents.



# What is pausing?



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# What is pausing?

= make complete **STOPS** at appropriate places when you talk

Pausing between groups of words (or “*thought groups*”) is significant. It adds power or drama to delivery. You can pause/ fade your voice.

➤ Your silences might actually speak **LOUDER** than words.

Speaking non-stop will only slow down the digestion of your listeners.

Native English speakers do not speak continuously neither. **They pause.**

# Why pausing?

## Speakers:

- Time to breathe.
- Control your pace.
- Make important points stand out.

## Listeners:

- Time to receive.
- Digest the message.
- Prepare for what's next.

Here's an example: (1:10-2:42) [Pause and no pause](#)

THE

# *Right Word*

MAY BE EFFECTIVE

*but* NOTHING HAS EVER BEEN

AS EFFECTIVE

as a RIGHTLY timed

*Pause*

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## Task 3 Practice chunking; listen and cross-check

1. Try chunking with the sentences provided.
2. Form in groups of two and discuss your works.
3. Listen back your recordings of Task 1 and compare their performance with what you have just chunked.



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**HALF TIME**



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## Welcome back!

In the second lesson, we will learn about content words and their categories. You will continue to practice chunking and pausing. Wish you all the best! Have fun.







## Task 4 Review on previous learning

While watching the video [How To Use English Rhythm & Intonation: Chunking Part 2](#) (0:00-1:00), circle the stressed words on your worksheet.

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# Content Words

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# Pause and stress on content words

7 categories of content words carry the meaning of a sentence.

<i>Nouns</i>	<i>adjectives</i>	<i>negatives ("not")</i>	<i>wh-words ("what")</i>
<i>main verbs</i>	<i>adverbs</i>	<i>interjections ("wow!")</i>	

Thus, English speakers are suggested to:

- Pause between thought groups.
- Emphasize the last content word.

Examples of content words from  
Task 1 of your worksheet?

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# List out some content words of Task 1

people

native speakers

change

make progress

have

English

old habits

give up

accent

recognize

hard work

.....

speak

France

manage

second language

French accents

Now, it's your turn!

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# Practice makes progress

Try to come up with as many content words as you can in 1 minute

<i>Nouns</i>	<i>adjectives</i>	<i>negatives</i>	<i>wh-words</i>
<i>main verbs</i>	<i>adverbs</i>	<i>interjections</i>	

→ Write on the back of your worksheet

**TIME'S  
= UP**



**KEEP  
CALM**

**AND**

**KNOW YOU DID  
A GOOD JOB**


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# Final challenge

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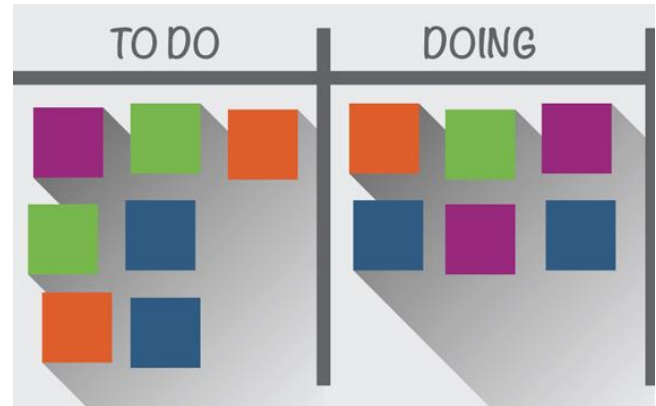
## Watch and learn

- Pay attention to the delivery: what are the content words;
- where did the speakers pause & how did they chunk out phrases

[Lincoln High Slam Poets](#) at TEDx

## Task #5 Final challenge with the poem

1. underline content words of the poem on Worksheet.
2. watch the video again
3. read aloud the poem and record your performance with Audacity.
4. play back your recordings and share your experience with other students.



Evaluation



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# Evaluation

Thank you for finishing all the tasks! Are you still with me?  
Let's do an **evaluation** to see how well you have completed.

Your work will be assessed in 2 ways:

1. Self-evaluation
2. Instructor's evaluation



# Evaluation

## Self-evaluation

Please evaluate yourself with this [Google form](#) and count how many scores you get.



# Instructor's evaluation

You are graded according to the following areas:

<b>Task 2-5</b> <b>(3 points each, 12 points in total)</b>
<b>Completion</b>
<b>Accuracy</b>
<b>Overall quality</b>

You will get **3** points for **Excellent**; **2** points for **Satisfactory**; and **1** Point for **Needs Improvement**. Find your grade in our **class blog**.

# Evaluation

## Grading Scale

Your grade is the sum of points accumulated from the **self-evaluation** (1 to 4 points each, 16 points total) and the **instructor's evaluation**.

<b>26-31 Points</b>	Excellent
<b>20-25 Points</b>	Above average
<b>15-20 Points</b>	Desired
<b>Less than 15</b>	Try to work the WebQuest again or ask the instructor for advice








*That's all Folks!*

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# Conclusion

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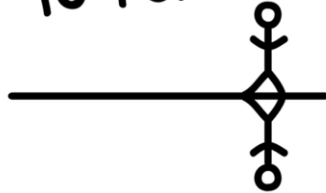
# Conclusion

Upon completion of this WebQuest, **you should be able to:**

- conduct **chunking** within sentences
- **pause** appropriately **between thought groups**
- identify the **seven categories** of **content words**
- **stress** on important content words

I hope you have enjoyed this process of investigation and learning!

Take time  
to reflect



# Conclusion

**Here are some questions for you to think about:**

1. What was something you didn't know about pausing before?
2. What are the reasons behind pausing between thought groups?
3. Where to pause is more appropriate?
4. What are content words? How many categories?



**This is the end of the WebQuest.**

**Thank you for all the hard work!**





Great work cadets.  
See you next time!

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