

## Transcribing English sounds

### Minimal pairs

1. Which of these are minimal pairs in English? Look for one difference.

Which sound(s) is (are) different?

			Minimal pairs? ✓ ✗		Sound change(s)
1.	<i>I went to the ship</i>	<i>I went to the shop</i>			
2.	<i>I bought my car</i>	<i>I brought my car</i>			
3.	<i>Place it here</i>	<i>Base it here</i>			
4.	<i>John went home</i>	<i>Jim went home</i>			
5.	<i>It was a tip</i>	<i>It was a ship</i>			
6.	<i>Bring the cash</i>	<i>Bring the cosh</i>			
7.	<i>Fees are expensive</i>	<i>These are expensive</i>			
8.	<i>He was fraught</i>	<i>He was caught</i>			

### Consonants

2. Match the symbol to the description.		
/k/		The 'l' in 'line'
/t/		The 'n' in 'name'
/p/		The 'm' in 'mag'
/s/		The 'v' in 'vim'
/z/		The 'h' in 'hat'
/d/		The 'c' in 'cite'
/w/		The 'f' in 'foot'
/g/		The 't' in 'top'
/f/		The 'r' in 'rug'
/b/		The 'c' in 'cat'
/j/		The 'p' in 'top'
/v/		The 'd' in 'dig'
/h/		The 'z' in 'zoo'
/m/		The /w/ in 'want'
/n/		The 'g' in 'give'
/l/		The 'b' in 'big'
/r/		The 'y' in 'yes'

What do you notice about /s/, /j/, /w/ and /k/?

3. Now try the special ones		
/ʃ/		The 'dg' in 'hedge'
/ʒ/		The 'ng' in 'ring'
/tʃ/		The 'th' in 'thank'
/dʒ/		The 'th' in 'this'
/θ/		The 's' in 'pleasure'
/ð/		The 'ch' in 'chat'
/ŋ/		The 's' in 'sugar'

## Voicing

4. Put your hand on your throat and pronounce these words, paying attention to the **highlighted letters** and how they sound.

What do you feel?

- miss and quiz
- char and jar
- vole and foal
- cap and gap
- drip and trip
- breath and breathe
- rash and pleasure

What do you notice?

Which words have voiced sounds in them? Make a list.

Voiced	Unvoiced
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
6.	6.
7.	7.
8.	8.

## Vowels

Pure vowels (monophthongs)	Diphthongs
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5. Match the symbol to the description.

/i:/	The 'a' in 'hat'
/ɪ/	The 'i' in 'kid'
/e/	The 'oo' in 'foot'
/ə/	The 'o' in 'hot'
/ɜ:/	The 'a' in 'about'
/ɔ:/	The 'e' in 'bet'
/u:/	The 'oo' in 'goose'
/æ/	The 'u' in 'hurt'
/ʌ/	The 'a' in 'part'
/ʊ/	The 'o' in 'bore'
/ɑ:/	The 'y' in 'happy'
/ɒ/	The 'ee' in 'sheep'
/ɪ/	The 'u' in 'nun'

6. Match the symbol to the description.

/ɪə/	The 'a' in 'hat'
/eə/	The 'ai' in 'fair'
/eɪ/	The 'ou' in 'south'
/əʊ/	The 'o' in 'boy'
/ɔɪ/	The 'a' in 'date'
/aɪ/	The 'oa' in 'boat'
/ʊə/	The 'i' in 'wine'
/aʊ/	The 'ee' in 'beer'