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WORD STRESS

Word Stress is an important feature of English pronunciation. To become a powerful communicator of English, one needs proficiency while using different stress patterns in his communication. Stress is the degree of force with which a syllable or a word is uttered. In English, we do not say each syllable with the same force or strength. In one word, we say one syllable very loudly or with more speed and all the other syllables quietly. For example, 'teacher' is a two syllable word with the first syllable louder than the second. The syllable which is pronounced with greater force, is called the stressed or accented syllable. If a word has two or more than two syllables, one syllable is pronounced with greater force than the others. The stress mark (') is placed before the stressed syllable to identify the word stress as 'teacher and 'mother. Mono syllabic words have no stress marks.

Here are some examples of how words are stressed.

First syllable	Second syllable	Third syllable	Fourth syllable
'always	al'ternative	corre'spondent	environ'mentally
'energy	ap'pear	inter'national	organiz'ation
'everybody	a'vailable	oppor'tunity	responsi'bility
'industry	be'tween	recom'mend	underde'veloped
'popular	com'mittee	disap'point	determi'nation
'programme	ex'tremely	under'stand	exami'nation
'sorry	im'portant	compe'tition	acade'mician
'water	tech'nology	aca'demic	famili'arity
'English	de'velop	demo'cratic	grammati'cally
'Doctor	per'mission	photo'graphic	instrumen'tation

The syllable is the basis for understanding of word stress. You have studied about syllables and division of syllables in your 1st year and at present you are going to learn about word stress and stress marking. Now, you remember the division of syllables.

Division of syllables

A syllable is the smallest unit of speech. Vowels and consonants combine in the structure of a syllable. Syllables are divided into four kinds. They are 1. Mono Syllabic words 2. Di syllabic words 3. Trisyllabic words 4. Polysyllabic words.

Mono Syllabic words	Di-syllabic words	Tri-syllabic words	Poly-syllabic words
good	answer	conviction	alternative
knife	extent	destiny	available
mode	irksome	influence	candelabrum
new	monsoon	impression	establishment
light	perhaps	hemisphere	intelligence
plight	return	objection	machinery
one	season	passenger	petitioner
quite	today	relative	perambulate
reach	weather	recollect	remarkable
storm	English	reluctance	reinforcement
school	employ	beautiful	education
pen	reject	signature	information
bad	police	syllable	responsibility
read	hotel	typical	certificate

Stress Marking

Stress Mark is a small vertical bar('), which is placed before a stressed syllable. It sometimes identifies if the word is a noun, adjective or a verb., It is not required for mono syllabic words.

Rules of Stress marking

- The word stress may shift from one syllable to the other as the function of the word changes. If a word is a noun or adjective the stress is on the first syllable and if the same word functions as a verb, the stress is on the second syllable. Note the stress shift in the following words:

Noun/Adjective

'conduct

'absent

'object

'subject

'suspect

'permit

'progress

'produce

'record

'increase

Verb

con'duct

ab'sent

ob'ject

sub'ject

sus'pect

per'mit

pro'gress

pro'duce

re'cord

in'crease

2. Disyllabic nouns and adjectives and words with a silent 'r', have stress on the first syllable..

'artist	'evening	'answer	'irksome
'always	'journey	'article	'happen
'beauty	'lawyer	'busy	'manners
'common	'novel	'children	'possible
'doctor	'roadside	'danger	'spirit
'father	'water	'actor	'leader

2(a). Tri syllabic words which have stress on the first syllable.

'marvelous	'newspaper	'carefully	'lovingly	'hemisphere
'passenger	'masterpiece	'segregate	'nervously	'wonderful

3. Disyllable words that begin with prefixes like a-, an-, be-, de-, con-, in-, ex-, re-, have stress on the second syllable.

an'tique	de'scribe	a'mong	per'tain	a'dopt
pro'long	a'larm	re'gard	re'main	a'ssure
be'gan	ex'tract	be'lieve	there'fore	for'got
re'ly	be'side	su'ppose	eigh'teen	to'day
ad'vance	be'cause	de'ceive	de'gree	com'bine
per'haps	ex'pense	con'tain	pre'pare	pre'sent
de'crease				

3(a). Tri-syllabic words which have stress on the second syllable.

a'ccustom	a'ccording	De'cember	de'parture
con'tinue	con'ception	in'debted	in'habit
il'lustrate	e'xamined	de'termined	re'luctance

4. Compound words which have stress on the first syllable.

'seasick	'masterpiece	'fig leaves	'call center
'bus stop	'sea port	'farm fresh	'hydropower

5. The words ending with the suffix '-ation' which have stress on the penultimate syllable (second syllable from the end).

civilization	edu'cation	perspi'ration
infatu'ation	communi'cation	vari'ation

6. Words ending with '-ity' which have stress on the ante-penultimate syllable (third syllable from the end).

a'bility	ca'pacity	fu'tility
gene'rosity	elec'tricity	oppor'tunity

7. The derivational suffixes such as -age, -ance, -en, -ess, -ful, -hood, -ice, -ish, -ive, -less, -ly, ment, -ness, -or, -ship, -ter, -ure and -zen do not normally affect the stress. For example:

-age:	'carry	'carriage
	'cover	'coverage
	'marry	'marriage
-ance:	ap'pear	ap'pearance
	at'tend	at'tendance
	per'form	per'formance
-en:	'bright	^ə 'brighten
	'light	'lighten
-er:	be'gin	be'ginner
	'common	'commoner
	per'form	per'former
-ess:	'tiger	'tigress
	'baron	'baroness
-ful:	'beauty	'beautiful
	'colour	'colourful
	re'venge	re'vengeful
-hood:	'brother	'brotherhood
	'priest	'priesthood
	'lively	'livelihood
-ice:	'coward	'cowardice
-ish:	'fever	'feverish
	'yellow	'yellowish
-ive:	at'tend	at'tentive
	con'clude	con'clusive
	per'mit	per'missive
-less:	'colour	'colourless
	'manner	'mannerless
-ly:	'certain	'certainly
	'purpose	'purposely
-ment:	'manage	'management
	a'chieve	a'chievement
	in'volve	in'volvement

-ness:	'bitter	'bitterness
	'truthful	'truthfulness
or:	col'lect	col'lector
	con'duct	con'ductor
-ship:	'author	'authorship
	'scholar	'scholarship
-ter:	'laugh	'laughter
-zen:	'city	'citizen

Exercise

I. Mark the stress on the following words with the help of a good pronouncing dictionary

1.	about	2.	academic	3.	adverse
4.	aeroplane	5.	afraid	6.	among
7.	apology	8.	around	9.	atmosphere
10.	beginning	11.	calendar	12.	character
13.	cinema	14.	college	15.	comment
16.	comparison	17.	competition	18.	condition
19.	consider	20.	consumer	21.	confidential
22.	confusion	23.	continue	24.	conscious
25.	consolidate	26.	convenient	27.	conversation
28.	cooperation	29.	country	30.	criticize
31.	dais	32.	dangerous	33.	decision
34.	describe	35.	development	36.	dialogue
37.	dictionary	38.	direction	39.	discuss
40.	education	41.	electricity	42.	encourage
43.	environment	44.	event	45.	everybody
46.	exam	47.	experiment	48.	expert
49.	failure	50.	genuine	51.	government
52.	grammar	53.	guarantee	54.	holiday
55.	hypocrisy	56.	idea	57.	immediate
58.	important	59.	instruct	60.	information
61.	intermediate	62.	intelligent	63.	introduction
64.	kilometer	65.	laboratory	66.	library
67.	literature	68.	minister	69.	nation
70.	necessity	71.	objection	72.	opinion
73.	parliament	74.	participate	75.	perform

76.	petrol	77.	polite	78.	possibility
79.	prefer	80.	pronunciation	81.	question
82.	remarkable	83.	repeat	84.	romantic
85.	signal	86.	security	87.	sportsman
88.	strategy	89.	student	90.	suggestion
91.	survive	92.	technique	93.	television
94.	theatre	95.	tourism	96.	trophy
97.	umbrella	98.	understanding	99.	university
100.	welcome				

II. Mark the stress in the following words which are taken from your textbook

1.	prevalent	2.	agony	3.	intrepid
4.	celebration	5.	laughter	6.	amputated
7.	business	8.	suffering	9.	profound
10.	preacher	11.	conflict	12.	comrade
13.	betray	14.	pageant	15.	subtle
16.	keystone	17.	ruin	18.	crescograph
19.	misery	20.	reflex	21.	sojourner
22.	incessantly	23.	commandeer	24.	malignant
25.	recreation	26.	impulse	27.	woodland
28.	nobility	29.	inspiration	30.	modern
31.	study	32.	delight	33.	ornament
34.	natural	35.	intellectually	36.	comment
37.	architect	38.	builder	39.	structure
40.	ascending	41.	secure	42.	secret
43.	splendor	44.	tempest	45.	triumphant
46.	indomitable	47.	achievement	48.	research
49.	demonstrated	50.	telegraphy		