

## 37

## Hey, wait for me!

### Strong and weak forms 1: Pronouns

## A

Some words have two different pronunciations – a strong form and a weak form. Normally we use the weak form, but if the word is stressed because it is especially important, or because we want to show a contrast, we use the strong form. Most pronouns have strong and weak forms.

|      | weak         | strong |
|------|--------------|--------|
| you  | /jə/         | /ju:/  |
| me   | /mɪ/         | /mi:/  |
| he   | /ɪ/          | /hi:/  |
| she  | /ʃɪ/         | /ʃi:/  |
| him  | /ɪm/         | /hɪm/  |
| her  | /ə/ or /hə/* | /hɜ:/* |
| we   | /wi/         | /wi:/  |
| us   | /əs/         | /ʌs/   |
| them | /ðəm/        | /ðem/  |

\* The r at the end of *her* is pronounced before a vowel (see Unit 22).  
 Give her\_a chance.

## B



Listen to the difference, and repeat.

A: Will you be at the meeting on Friday? (you is weak)

B: Yes. Will you be there? (you is strong)

Can you help me carry this suitcase? (me is weak)

Hey, wait for me! (me is strong)

A: Is he there? (he is weak)

B: Who?

A: The boss.

B: No. Everybody else is working, but he's gone home!  
 (he is strong)

A: She doesn't smoke or drink! (she is strong)

B: Ah, that's what she told you! (she is weak)

A: Look – it's him! (him is strong)

B: Where? I can't see him. (him is weak)

A: Do you know that woman?

B: Her? No, I don't recognise her. (first her is strong,  
 second her is weak)

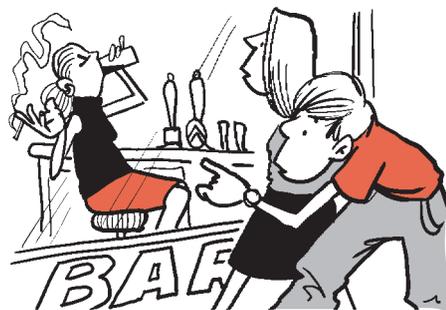
A: I'm afraid we can't stay any longer. (we is weak)

B: What do you mean, 'we'? I've got plenty of time.  
 (we is strong)

A: They told us to go this way. (us is weak)

B: Well, they didn't tell us! (us is strong)

When I said, 'Give them a drink' I didn't mean them,  
 I meant the people. (first them is weak, second them  
 is strong)



She doesn't smoke or drink.



They told us to go this way.



When I said, 'Give them a drink', I didn't mean them, I meant the people.

## Exercises

**37.1** Listen and mark the underlined words *w* (weak) or *s* (strong).

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- 1 A: Are you going to talk to him? B: No, I think he should talk to me first.
- 2 A: Shall I phone her? B: Yes, I think you should.
- 3 A: You see those people over there? Do you know them? B: I know her, but I don't know him.
- 4 A: What are you going to give him? B: I think I'll give him a shirt. What about you?
- 5 Let him come in and ask him what he wants.
- 6 She says she'll bring her money tomorrow.
- 7 I'm tired ... shall we go now?
- 8 Everybody's leaving. What about us? Shall we go, too?
- 9 Tell us when you're ready.
- 10 A: Who broke that window? B: He did! C: No, I didn't, she did!

Check with the Key. Then listen again and repeat.

**37.2** Listen and complete the sentences.

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EXAMPLE

What ..... *did she* ..... say?

- 1 What ..... think about it?
- 2 Where ..... tonight?
- 3 ..... ready ..... now.
- 4 Where .....?
- 5 ..... come in.
- 6 ..... feeling all right?
- 7 Tell .....
- 8 I ..... phone number but not .....

Check with the Key. Then listen again and repeat.

**37.3** Listen and repeat this poem. Be careful to speak with the correct rhythm. Stress the words in **bold**, and use weak forms of the pronouns between them.

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### Comings and goings

|          |               |           |               |
|----------|---------------|-----------|---------------|
| Don't    | <b>What</b>   | did she   | <b>say?</b>   |
|          | <b>send</b>   | her       | <b>away</b>   |
|          | <b>Give</b>   | her a     | <b>chance</b> |
|          | <b>Ask</b>    | her to    | <b>dance</b>  |
|          | <b>Give</b>   | us a      | <b>drink</b>  |
|          | <b>What</b>   | do you    | <b>think?</b> |
|          | <b>Ask</b>    | them to   | <b>wait</b>   |
|          | <b>Tell</b>   | them it's | <b>late</b>   |
|          | <b>What</b>   | shall we  | <b>do?</b>    |
| Shall we | <b>wait</b>   | here for  | <b>you?</b>   |
|          | <b>Please</b> | don't     | <b>delay</b>  |
| Tell me, | <b>what</b>   | do you    | <b>say?</b>   |

