

# Clear Speech

From the Start

Basic Pronunciation and  
Listening Comprehension  
in North American English

2<sup>nd</sup> Edition

Judy B. Gilbert



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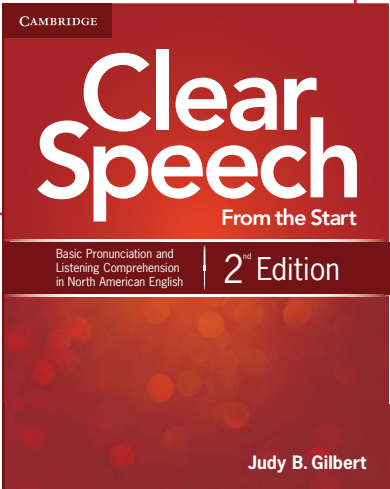
# Clear Speech

The world's favorite pronunciation series

**Clear Speech From the Start** supports students' learning both in the classroom and beyond.

With the **Student's Book** you can learn and practice how to:

- ▶ speak more clearly
- ▶ listen to other people more efficiently
- ▶ guess the pronunciation of written words



With the **Student's Book Audio** available at [www.cambridge.org/clearspeech](http://www.cambridge.org/clearspeech), you can:

- ▶ download the MP3s for all the listening activities in the Student's Book
- ▶ review and practice all the sounds and intonation and rhythm patterns presented and practiced in class



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Scope and Sequence

Unit / Section	Featured Topics	Music of English
1 The Alphabet and Vowels pages 2–6	Listening to the alphabet vowels Saying the alphabet vowels Key words for the alphabet vowels	<i>Cake, please. Tea, please.</i>
2 The Two Vowel Rule pages 7–11	The Two Vowel Rule in a short word Words that end in the letter -e- Words with two vowel letters together Asking how to spell words	<i>How do you spell “time”? T-I-M-E.</i>
3 Syllables pages 12–18	Tapping syllables Counting syllables The Two Vowel Rule for syllables	<i>How many syllables are in “city”? Two. How do you spell “cream”? C-R-E-A-M.</i>
4 The One Vowel Rule Linking with /n/ pages 19–28	The One Vowel Rule Listening to relative vowel sounds Key words for the relative vowel sounds Comparing alphabet and relative vowel sounds Linking with /n/	<i>What does “less” mean? What does “lease” mean? How do you say S-H-A-K-E?</i>
5 Strong syllables Linking with /m/ pages 29–37	The Strong Syllable Rules Listening for strong syllables Saying strong syllables Strong syllables in sentences Extra syllable in the past tense Linking with /m/	<i>What’s that called? It’s a blanket. What’s it for? It’s for keeping you warm.</i>
6 Weak Syllables Linking Vowels pages 38–44	Comparing the vowels in strong and weak syllables The Weak Syllable Rules Saying strong and weak syllables Linking vowels from one word to the next Weak “and,” “of,” and “a” Ordering food	<i>Can I help you? Yes, I’d like a pizza. What size? Elephant-size.</i>
7 The Most Important Word pages 45–53	What makes a word easy to hear? Rules for the Most Important Word Disagreement Misunderstandings Correcting a mistake	<i>What’s the matter? I lost my wallet! California is a city. No, it isn’t. It’s a state. I wanted a cup of tea. Not coffee? Are you going to get up at seven? No, at ten.</i>
8 Stop Sounds /t/ and /d/ and Continuing Sounds /s/ and /z/ Linking with /t/, /d/, /s/, and /z/ pages 54–62	Comparing stop sounds /t/ and /d/ to continuing sounds /s/ and /z/ Listening for plural words ending in /s/ or /z/ Linking with /t/, /d/, /s/, and /z/ Correcting a mistake	<i>How do you spell “fruit”? How do you spell “repeats”? Is she running? No, she’s reading. Is he playing tennis? Yes, he is.</i>
9 Final Sounds /d/ and /l/ Linking with /l/ pages 63–69	Comparing stop sound /d/ to continuing sound /l/ Listening to final sounds /d/ and /l/ Saying final sounds /d/ and /l/ Listening for and saying final /l/ to distinguish present and future Linking with /l/ Counting syllables in sentences	<i>How do you spell “whale”? What does “paid” mean?</i>
10 Final Sounds /l/ and /ld/ Linking with All the Stop Sounds pages 70–74	Listening to final sounds /l/ and /ld/ Using contrasts in questions Listening for and saying final /l/ and /ld/ to distinguish present and past Linking stop sounds to vowels	<i>Did you say “coal”? No, I said “cold.”</i>

11	<b>Final Sounds /t/, /d/, and /r/ Linking with /r/</b> pages 75–83	Comparing /t/ and /d/ to /r/ Listening to final sounds /t/, /d/, and /r/ Saying final sounds /t/, /d/, and /r/ Listening for and saying final sounds /t/, /d/, and /r/ to distinguish present and past Linking with /r/, /t/, /d/, and /l/ Asking for more information	<i>What is it? An ice cube. Where is it? In a glass. Where's that stuff? What stuff? That, um, stuff for the party.</i>
12	<b>Continuing and Stop Sounds + /s/ or /z/ Linking with /s/ and /z/</b> pages 84–93	Listening for final /s/ or /z/ to distinguish singular and plural Giving locations	<i>What's a bank for? It's for saving money. Excuse me, where's the library? It's on Main Street. Thank you. No problem.</i>
13	<b>Numbers Checking and Correcting Mistakes</b> pages 94–102	Saying numbers and years Correcting mistakes about numbers Listening for pauses in telephone numbers Saying telephone numbers Checking information More linking practice	<i>Did you say "ninety"? No, "nineteen." Where is Big Guy? It's at twenty-five B. Twenty-nine B? No, twenty-five B. What does Mr. True sell? Clothes for men. Did you say clothes for teens? No, for men.</i>
14	<b>Final Sounds /n/, /l/, /nd/, and /ld/ Linking with /n/, /l/, /nd/, and /ld/</b> pages 103–108	Comparing final sounds /n/, /l/, and /d/ Listening for final sounds /n/ and /l/ Saying final sounds /n/, /l/, /ld/, and /nd/ Linking with /l/, /n/, /ld/, and /nd/ Checking information The mirror test for /n/ and /l/	<i>What's a trail? A thing to ride in. No, that's a train. What's a trail? It's a path. Right.</i>
15	<b>Final Sounds /s/, /θ/, and /t/ Linking with /θ/</b> pages 109–116	Comparing /s/, /θ/, and /t/ Listening for /s/, /θ/, and /t/ contrasts Saying /s/, /θ/, and /t/ Checking days and dates Linking with /θ/	<i>What's a bath for? To get clean. What's a bat for? To play baseball.</i>
16	<b>Review</b> pages 117–127	Two Vowel Rule One Vowel Rule Strong syllables Final stop sounds Final continuing sounds The most important word	<i>I'd like the Toronto, please. The Toronto? Yes, on white. OK, on white. No, I changed my mind. On whole wheat. OK. One Toronto, on whole wheat.</i>
	<b>Appendices</b> pages 129–135	A Parts of the Mouth B Vowel Rules C How Often Do the Vowel Rules Work? D Tongue Shapes for /t/, /d/, /s/, /z/, /θ/, /l/, and /r/	
	<b>Extra Practice 1</b> pages 136–138	1 The tongue in alphabet vowel sounds 2 The lips in alphabet vowel sounds 3 Practicing the vowel rules	
	<b>Extra Practice 2</b> pages 139–145	1 /v/ and /b/ 2 /r/ and /l/ 3 /n/ and /l/ 4 /θ/ and /t/	

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And to all those whose dedicated professionalism has helped shape this new edition of *Clear Speech From the Start*.

To Jerry, who fixes things.



## Letter to the Teacher

For years before the first edition of this book, teachers had asked me to write a lower-level version of *Clear Speech*, the intermediate-level book of this series, because they felt that teaching pronunciation early would avoid fixed habits that are hard to overcome later. Students get discouraged when their efforts to communicate are misunderstood, so it is psychologically important to help them speak clearly from the beginning. This second edition of *Clear Speech From the Start* follows the same principles developed in the first edition but with new and improved features based on teacher recommendations.

The following pages of this letter outline the new features of the second edition and how they work with the six basic principles and approach of *Clear Speech From the Start*. The letter also provides suggestions for teaching the activities.

I hope that you find using this second edition of *Clear Speech From the Start* to be an enjoyable and professionally rewarding experience.

Judy B. Gilbert

# New Features of *Clear Speech From the Start*, Second Edition

- **A pronunciation pyramid adds new support.** This concept makes it easier for students to understand how the various aspects of spoken English work together. The pyramid is divided into four levels, each with a distinctive color. The base, or foundation, level of the pyramid is the **word group** (a short sentence, a clause, or a phrase). Within that base, there is the **most important word**, which is the focus of the word group. Within the most important word, there is one **strong syllable**. The vowel at the center of this syllable is the **peak vowel**, which is the top of the pyramid and the peak of information. Accuracy is necessary when pronouncing this vowel.

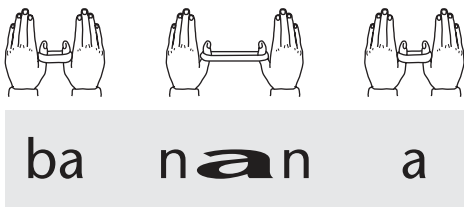


Throughout the book, the pyramid appears at appropriate points to remind students how the specific topic being taught fits into the whole system of spoken English. With the same purpose, Rules and Vowel Work boxes are shaded in the pyramid level color that corresponds to the topic being presented.

- **More support for vowel rules is given.** Sound symbols are used in specific tasks to help students recognize how pronunciation of sounds relates to the spelling rules.
- **Expanded appendices and extra practice are provided.** The back of the book now includes the original appendices with useful information and mouth diagrams and new sections for extra practice with vowels and “problem” consonants.
- **A four-color design adds visual appeal and clarity to presentation and practice.** A color design as well as updated illustrations and graphics make the presentations even clearer and provide more support for the practice tasks.
- **The audio program is available for students to download.** The complete audio program for the Student's Book is available as MP3s on the *Clear Speech* Website ([www.cambridge.org/clearspeech](http://www.cambridge.org/clearspeech)). Students can now download the audio for further practice outside the classroom.

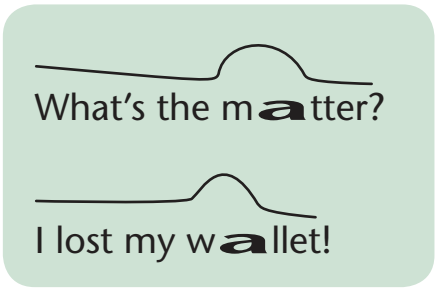
## Six Principles of *Clear Speech From the Start*

- 1 Topics that are the most important are taught first.** This allows you to focus on the elements your students need most, such as how English speakers call attention to the most important words or which vowels need to be extra clear.
- 2 Teaching points are designed to help students with both listening comprehension and intelligibility.** Tasks are presented with plenty of listening preparation before students are asked to speak. Words are presented both in regular spelled form and in special word boxes that show how they sound.
- 3 Spelling and phonics rules are presented to help students guess pronunciation.** Vowel rule boxes provide the spelling and phonics rules adapted to English language students' needs. These rules can help students guess the pronunciation of unknown words and make them much more autonomous learners.
- 4 Visual and kinesthetic modes emphasize key points.** For example, the lengthening of strong (stressed) vowels is presented in the following manner.



This makes the presentation clearer and more memorable for learners, especially visual and kinesthetic ones.

- 5 Signals of spoken English are combined into simple, memorable phrases and sentences.** The Music of English boxes show these simple, yet common phrases and sentences, along with lines that illustrate the use of pitch for emphasis. Practice with these phrases and sentences help fix patterns in memory. A special color is used for these boxes, to indicate that all the levels of the pronunciation pyramid are being practiced at the same time.



- 6 Student pair work is emphasized.** This provides a communicative challenge and gives students the opportunity to practice not only speaking but also practice listening to different voices and pronunciations.

## The *Clear Speech From the Start* Approach

**The relationship between speaking and listening comprehension is made clear.** Students who learn to recognize important signals of the natural rhythms and melodies of English often report improved understanding of speech on TV, in movies, and in face-to-face conversation.

English learners regularly complain, “Native speakers talk too fast.” This often results from difficulty recognizing grammar signals: the plural ending of “books”; the past tense ending of “called”; or the future tense in contractions like “I’ll.” Learners also tend to miss the significance of signals of emphasis, such as the difference between “Did you want a **cup** of soup?” vs. “Did you want a cup of **soup**?” Another problem that slows down learner’s listening comprehension is unawareness of signals of word grouping. For example, when a telephone number is grouped incorrectly, the listener may be unable to understand it. All of these signals make it difficult for learners to process incoming English efficiently and are addressed in this book.

**Students learn how rhythm and melody are used as signals.** In English, rhythm and melody serve as signals to help the listener follow the intentions of the speaker. These signals communicate emphasis and make clear the relationship between ideas so that listeners can readily identify these relationships and understand the speaker’s meaning.

Learners typically do not notice these signals that native listeners count on to help them follow meaning in a conversation. As a result, conversational breakdowns occur. Emphasis that conveys the wrong meaning or word groups that either run together or break in inappropriate places make it difficult for the listener to follow the speaker’s meaning. If the burden becomes too great, the listener simply stops listening. The principle of “helping the listener to follow,” therefore, is a vital one. It is essential to helping students develop “listener-friendly” pronunciation.

**Students are given rhythm training.** It is not usually efficient to teach individual sounds without establishing some basic understanding of the English system of rhythm. People learning new languages tend to practice new sounds in the rhythm of their first language, and this makes it harder to get the target sounds right. Mastering the new rhythm will make it easier for students to say the new sounds clearly.

**Template sentences provide students with simple and transferable patterns.** The essence of the pronunciation pyramid is that all of the levels of the pyramid – the building blocks of the spoken language – work at the same time and are interdependent. However, we can’t teach all of these elements simultaneously. The solution is to teach *template sentences* – the word group that forms the base of the pyramid. These template sentences are found in the Music of English boxes. When templates are solidly placed in long-term memory, they can serve as an accurate resource for analysis of specific aspects of a flowing piece of spoken English.

**Choral repetition reinforces the templates.** The best way to teach template sentences is through *quality repetition*. Repetition, a truly ancient teaching method, fell into disfavor decades ago because teachers felt that it was boring. Repetition practice can indeed be boring, but *quality* repetition creates a momentum that is the opposite of boring and gives the students confidence.

To practice quality repetition, students first need to hear the template a number of times – in varying ways (loud, soft, whisper, etc.) but always at a normal speed retaining all the melodic and rhythmic features of natural English. If the sentence is slowed down, it will tend to lose these essential features.

Choral response gives support to each speaker who, if speaking alone, might falter and lose the rhythm. The auditory support of choral sound and the strengthening effect of repetition give the students confidence and the satisfaction that they are mastering a useful template of spoken English.

## Teaching the Activities in *Clear Speech From the Start*

*Clear Speech From the Start* was designed to be used in a wide range of teaching situations; therefore, you should feel free to choose those activities that are most appropriate for your students. You may also wish to shorten some activities if further practice is unnecessary.

**Listening activities:** Listening tasks such as “Which word do you hear?” and “Which word is different?” can help students learn to recognize particular sounds and stress patterns. When students practice hearing final sounds that make a grammar difference – for example, past tense such as “closed**d**” or plural endings such as “books**s**” – both listening comprehension and pronunciation will improve.

**Student pair work:** The pair-work practice is particularly important, as it gives the students a great deal of realistic interactive speaking and listening. Pair work offers the immediate feedback so important to motivation. Moreover, it places more responsibility for learning where it belongs – with the student.

While students work together in pairs, you can circulate among them, giving help on a more personal basis. To provide variety, the pair-work activities can be used as a listening exercise, with the teacher playing the part of Student A and the whole class playing Student B. Alternatively, one student can be Student A and the rest of the class can be Student B.

**Rhythm practice:** Rhythm is taught mainly through the Music of English boxes, but it is also effective when physical activity is included, such as marking time by tapping the table or moving the body in some way. The Teacher's Resource and Assessment Book suggests a variety of physical activities to reinforce the target rhythm.

**Linking final sounds:** Linking practice helps with listening comprehension, since words in word groups typically run together and are linked as much as possible to keep the group together. Also, this kind of practice helps students concentrate on the particular sound being studied. Linking is shown in this book by linking lines within printed words or by running words together in the gray word boxes.

Another good use for linking practice is to choose any difficult sound, such as /I/. For instance, sometimes it is difficult for learners to combine “tell” with a word that begins with a vowel, like “everybody.” It should sound like “tellev everybody.” The reason this approach can help with a troublesome sound is that it may be easier for students to say this sound at the beginning of a word rather than at the end.

**Pitch patterns:** English language learners usually do not hear intonation very well. When they listen to speech, they are powerfully distracted from paying attention to pitch changes because they are struggling to understand sounds, vocabulary, and grammar. The pitch lines in the Music of English boxes remind students of the importance of pitch patterns in English.

**Games:** Some units include various types of games for extra practice. If class time allows, these tasks can help consolidate the material practiced in the unit.

**Pyramid reviews:** Some units end with review tasks in which students fill in parts of the pronunciation pyramid. These exercises can help students gradually practice noticing the key elements in a word group.

**Extra practice:** If your students need additional work with the vowel sounds and rules, use the exercises in Extra Practice 1, “Vowels,” at the end of the book. If your students need more practice with some common problem consonant sounds, use the exercises in Extra Practice 2, “Problem consonants.”

Use as many visual, kinesthetic, and auditory tools with these tasks as you can think of. There are imaginative tips from teachers included in the Teacher’s Resource and Assessment Book.

## Components of *Clear Speech From the Start*, Second Edition

In addition to this Student's Book, this second edition of *Clear Speech From the Start* also includes the following components:

- **Teacher's Resource and Assessment Book** with practical explanations for the rationale for each lesson, useful classroom procedures, teaching tips, as well as the audio script and answer key for each task. It also includes a listening diagnostic test, a speaking diagnostic test and a student pronunciation profile form, 15 unit quizzes, and all the audio scripts and answer keys.
- **Class Audio and Assessment CDs** with three CDs including the audio for all the listening tasks in the Student's Book and one CD including the audio for all the tasks in the listening test and quizzes.
- **Website** ([www.cambridge.org/clearspeech](http://www.cambridge.org/clearspeech)) with extra materials and information about the series, including the complete audio for all the listening activities in the Student's Book as downloadable MP3s.

Key to Sound Symbols

VOWELS			
Key words	Clear Speech From the Start	Cambridge Dictionary of American English/ International Phonetic Alphabet	Your dictionary
cake, mail, pay	/eʏ/	/eɪ/	
pan, bat, hand	/æ/	/æ/	
tea, feet, key	/iʏ/	/i:/	
ten, well, red	/ɛ/	/e/	
ice, pie, night	/ɑʏ/	/aɪ/	
is, fish, will	/ɪ/	/ɪ/	
cone, road, know	/oʊ/	/oʊ/	
top, rock, stop	/ɑ/	/ɑ/	
blue, school, new, cube, few	/uʊ/	/u:/	
cut, cup, us, rust, love	/ʌ/	/ʌ/	
house, our, cow	/ɑʊ/	/aʊ/	
saw, talk, applause	/ɔ/	/ɔ:/	
boy, coin, join	/ɔʏ/	/ɔɪ/	
put, book, woman	/ʊ/	/ʊ/	
alone, open, pencil, atom, ketchup	/ə/	/ə/	



CONSONANTS			
Key words	Clear Speech From the Start	Cambridge Dictionary of American English/ International Phonetic Alphabet	Your dictionary
bid, job	/b/	/b/	
do, feed	/d/	/d/	
food, safe, leaf	/f/	/f/	
go, dog	/g/	/g/	
home, behind	/h/	/h/	
kiss, back	/k/	/k/	
load, pool, fail	/l/	/l/	
man, plum	/m/	/m/	
need, open	/n/	/n/	
pen, hope	/p/	/p/	
road, card	/r/	/r/	
see, recent	/s/	/s/	
show, nation, wash	/ʃ/	/ʃ/	
team, meat	/t/	/t/	
choose, watch	/tʃ/	/tʃ/	
think, both, teeth	/θ/	/θ/	
this, father, teethe	/ð/	/ð/	
visit, save, leave	/v/	/v/	
watch, away	/w/	/w/	
yes, onion	/y/	/j/	
zoo, these, ease	/z/	/z/	
beige, measure, Asia	/ʒ/	/ʒ/	
jump, bridge	/dʒ/	/dʒ/	

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