**Pronunciation: 500 Words Reading Practice**

**Measurements for the House**  
**When** my wife and I bought our new house, we took **measurements** of **every** room. A**gain** and a**gain**, we **measured** the rooms to make sure we would not have **problems** with any furniture. I **held** one **end** of the **measuring** tape and my wife **held** the other. Sometimes we would **measure** to the **center** of the room, **then** the other half. It was interesting because I **never** knew how large square footage really was.

Soon we were **ready** to bring our furniture **sets**. Luckily, my wife and I had **several** **special** **sets**, different from each other. For **example**, I had a living room **set** and he had a **bedroom** **set**. We **tested** each large piece of furniture in one or two rooms, **then** **let** the movers **head** home. We had to change a few things our**selv**es, but overall, our move **went** **very** **well**. We now have a small, **yellow** house with **plenty** of furniture.

**House in the South**

My wife and I were looking for a new house in the south part of town. Our real estate agent found thousands of possibilities. We narrowed it down to about fifteen houses. We found a beautiful house with round staircases and a view of the mountains. But the agent said that the power bill was outrageous. We continued to pound the cement for our dream home.

For hours we inspected houses and grounds until we almost gave up. Then the agent said, "how about living in the north?" We did not like the sound of that at first, but our agent took us to a house. We were wowed. We only worried about the names of the streets in the county, which came from a Native American language. We had no idea how to stress the words or how to pronounce the vowels.

**T after N (silent) words are in bold**. T before N (hard N sound) words are underlined.  
Last **winter,** I needed to buy a new curtain for our front window which has a wonderful view of the mountains. Though the errand was important to me, I had forgotten to buy the curtain during several weekend shopping trips. At last I had written a note to myself, and soon I was on the **interstate**, heading to an outlet **center** on the edge of town. I found a store with many wonderful materials that could be used for everything from curtains to **winter** mittens. However, I could not find the shade of cream that I **wanted**.

I went to the front **counter** and asked the clerk to check the store's other **twenty** locations on the **internet** to see if she could find that shade of cream. She **listened** to me with patience, but she said, "I **don't know**. That's certainly a tall order. Are you sure that you can recognize the color that you want online?" I had written a few **sentences**\* about the cream I **wanted**. After she read them, she said, "All right. I'll **enter** this into the computer and see what happens." Soon she had a lengthy **printout** with several options I could find at the other stores. I travelled south and found exactly what I **wanted**. There were also some lovely garden ornaments, and I bought a small bird fountain for only thirty dollars.

**L sounds**

**Language Learning**

It is always difficult, not at all simple, to learn a new language. Language learning is a lifelong process of listening for the sounds of vowels and consonants and developing one's knowledge about language rules. Most people have to complete several classes to speak clearly. While learning new rules, some problems reveal little differences between languages. These subtle points can feel almost laughable, but they tell of culture choices that happen when people are living in different worlds. A student will only be truly glad when real progress leads to fluent speech.

**The Galapagos**

The Galapagos Islands are famous for their animals. The whole ecosystem is special. The islands have plains or fields where the komodo dragons stride across the land.  In the water there are coral reefs with bright yellow and blue colors. Seals play and slip from one place to another.  Sea turtles travel for miles to the Galapagos to lay their eggs. They leave their eggs in the sand and slowly return to the sea. The Galapagos Islands also have special bird species, such as the flightless cormorant and the swallow-tailed gull. Most gulls are diurnal, but the Galapagos swallow-tailed gulls are nocturnal. At night, they fly in circles over the sea and look for squid and nocturnal fish.

**R Sounds**

**Children**

Children like to play in different ways. Some children play pretend games with dolls and stuffed animals. Some build multi-floored buildings with wooden blocks. Some like to watch airplanes flying through the clouds. Some like to steer remote controlled planes through schoolyards and playgrounds. Young athletes will lift themselves on parallel bars or line up for relay races. Many children like being told old stories by aunts, uncles or other family members. Still other kids love to watch the flames of a fire. At long last, the flames lie low and there is only a golden glow.

**Art Classes for Children**

For early learners, art classes vary between those that have directed activities and those that have free form activities. An example of a directed activity would be drawing a rabbit with circles that indicate parts of the rabbit's body. Another example would be to draw a road by a rocky river in rainy weather.  Even harder yet, learners could draw a still life of a room with a round rug and bread on a nearby table or a horse that runs through the morning fog.

Such realistic classes teach the patterns of lines and the power of working with dimension. When art teachers prefer more free form activities, there are many choices. You can ask learners to respond to a mathematical problem with interesting colors and clear pictures, but no numbers. You can ask learners to produce a short story in pictures that show characters both near and far. Children can draw dreams that they remember or vacation travels from their early years.

**Girls in America**

It is difficult for girls in America to prepare for the future. Many girls watch too much TV and as a result believe that dressing well, driving a great car, having a lot of friends and being pretty will guarantee success in life. However, they are too young to realize that these values arise from the wealth of TV actors. As they become more grounded and grow up, they can see that product-advertising clearly dictates the appearances on TV. Of course, some girls have a hard time accepting reality and carry their dreams of material fortune into adulthood. Only later do they realize how a person can be strong through moral character.

**Th Sounds**

**Spring Baby**

This woman has a new baby. Her name is Ruth. The baby’s name is Theo. Ruth buys many things for Theo. When she is at the drugstore, she buys this and that. When she is at the mall, she buys this and that. Theo’s date of birth is May 6, 2009. Ruth wanted Theo’s birthday to happen in Spring. Ruth’s favorite month is May. Theo is her first baby.

**The Office**

This is a downtown office. It is Thursday. There are many people at the office. There is a long line of people. It is a doctor’s office. This doctor is expensive. In the months of January and February, he is cheap. He helps poor people in the winter months. There is a stethoscope around his neck. There is a pen in his shirt pocket.

**The Dentist**

This woman has very bad teeth. She brushes her teeth a lot, but she likes chocolate and sugary drinks. She is always seeing the dentist. This is because the dentist  always finds cavities during her checkups. Over the years, she also had several root canals. She did not put caps on the teeth because she could not afford them.

The dental insurance plans usually cover $1,500, if that much. $1,500 is the total needed for both a root canal and a cap for one tooth. She even had one tooth removed because it was so rotten. They gave her a lot of painkillers and yanked the tooth from her mouth. She does not like all these tooth problems. Anyway, she is thankful that she lives in an age of painkillers and clean offices!

**Taking the Bus**

This family takes the bus every day. They take the bus to their English class. These are the adults in the family. They are between thirty and fifty years old. Every day they take bus number three. They get on the bus and think. They look at all the other people. People are wearing everything from thick jackets to thin hats. It is autumn and the weather is changing. It is difficult to choose a jacket that is not too thick and not too thin. Many people wear several shirts in the morning. Then they take off one or two shirts when the sun is high in the sky.

**W Sounds**

**Cure for HIV**

An HIV positive American was cured through a bone marrow transplant that used cells from a doner with a rare genetic mutation. Though this cure cannot work well for everyone, scientists are encouraged to persevere in their efforts to find a cure. HIV was first discovered 30 years ago, and fortunately this virus is no longer a death sentence. Antiretroviral AIDS drugs now allow people to live relatively normal lives. Still, scientists worldwide are searching for a cure with renewed vigor.

**First Syllable Stress: pronounce these vocabulary words by stressing the first syllable.**

**Ancient**: very old, often related to past centuries, though informally used to exaggerate oldness.

In **ancient** times, people had to suffer through many diseases.  
Sorry, but your stove is **ancient**. You really need to buy a new one.

**Brilliant**: radiating a lot of light, more commonly used to describe high-level intelligence

The stars are **brilliant** tonight. You can see thousands of them.  
That's a **brilliant** idea. I'm sure everyone will agree.  
I'm going to a concert tonight. Everyone says that this pianist is a **brilliant** musician.

**Celebrated**: well-known, famous

He's a **celebrated** mathematician. Everyone in mathematics knows who he is.

**Commonplace**: very normal, related to normal, everyday things

The professor said that my essay was **commonplace**. He wants me to try harder.  
In southern American states, the use of colorful idioms is **commonplace**.

**Critical**: reasonable and unemotional, analytical, often used in a somewhat negative sense

Please don't be too **critical** of my essay. I wrote it last night between 1am and 4am.   
She walked around the museum and looked at all the paintings with a **critical** eye.

**Curious:** having wonder about something, wanting to know how something works or why something is there

Our two-year old was very **curious** about the swingset. She did not want to swing, but wanted to watch and observe for a long time.

**Delicate:** sensitive, fragile, being easy to break, anything with those symbolic qualities

I handled the old, **delicate** china, and I was very nervous about dropping it.  
The president is negotiating with our neighboring country. These are **delicate** negotiations.

**Rigid:** very stiff, having stiff quality, inflexible

His mustache was quite **rigid.** It never moved when he spoke.   
Some parents believe in **rigid** family rules while others are more flexible.

**Vital:** having life, being very important

Her **vital** signs were failing. Then the doctors performed surgery.  
It is **vital** that we have a meeting as soon as possible. Our company is at risk.

**Wide**: having a large mass from side to side, symbolically having a lot of space

Our company invites workers from many countries. Our doors are **wide** open.

**Practice: Complete the sentences with the correct word**

1. The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ author has published 20 novels and appeared on many talk shows.
2. My husband is worried about seeing his uncle. His uncle is always \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and does not acknowledge my husband's accomplishments.
3. I'll introduce you to my account. He's \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_! He helped us save a lot of money last year.
4. Her mother sent her a teapot for Christmas. Only later, she learned it was an \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ family heirloom.
5. I know you liked that book, but I thought it was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I feel as if I have read many other books just like it.
6. She is a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ person. She is always having health problems.
7. Please do not be late tomorrow. It is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ that you arrive on time.
8. I am very \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ about your business. How does it work?
9. The new grocery store has \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ aisles. It is easy to walk through.
10. No one wants to work at that company. Their policies are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and inflexible.

**Stress the 1st Syllable of These Nouns.**

**caution**: safety, related to being safe

Please use **caution** when working with that machine.

**challenge**: a difficulty that a person deals with, used in positive ways.

She likes **challenges**. They help her learn and grow.

**core**: center or basic part of something

Seeds are near the **core** of an apple.  
She did exercises for her **core**: her stomach and hips.

**course**: a class, also a route, either by road or symbolically, similar to "track"

He is taking a difficult physics **course**.  
He is on a new **course**. He has a new job and new friends.

**crack**: a rip or tear in something hard, such as rock or concrete

There were many large **cracks** in the sidewalk. It needed repair.

**harvest**: the time when fruits and vegetables are ripe and they are taken from the fields.

This is the time of **harvest**. Everything is ripe.

**intrigue**: drama, mystery and suspense

The movie had a lot of **intrigue**. The main character was a spy who betrayed her friends.

**mirror**: a place where you see your reflection, anything symbolic of reflection

She sees her age in the **mirror**. She cannot deny her many years.

**particle**: a very small biological thing

There are many **particles** of dust in the air. I feel like I will sneeze.

**Stress the 2nd Syllable**

**abroad**: out of one's native country

We're going **abroad** next year. We plan to visit Japan and China.

**advice**: words given to assist another person

I welcome your **advice**. Any ideas you have could help me to make a wise decision.

**Stress the 3rd Syllable**

disapproval: dislike or lack of acceptance

He expressed his disapproval of the new governor's budget.

**Practice Using These Nouns**

1. I think you are on the right \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Everything seems right.
2. The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ was wonderful. There were many large and healthy foods.
3. The biologist examined specimens from the pond in a microscope. He found many interesting \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
4. I won't give you \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ about marriage. You have to figure things out for yourself.
5. There were many \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in the stone wall. It needed repair.
6. He faced many \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ when starting his new job. He had to learn fast and prove himself.
7. Do use \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ when crossing the street. Drivers are often distracted.
8. We're travelling \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ this summer. We will visit Amsterdam.
9. Life does not have to be full of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. You can live simply, without too many difficulties.
10. She placed a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ on her dressing table.
11. She spoke with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ about the tax increase.
12. Many people do exercises on their \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. It helps when the center of the body is strong.