

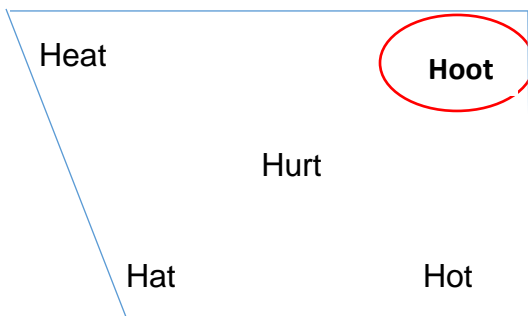
## Pronunciation Focus

### Exercises for Lesson Five: Fool and Fuel

This lesson is a bit different to the other lessons. Here we are not comparing two different sounds, rather we are working with one sound (the long OO sound in Fool) and a slight variation on it (the long YOO sound in Fuel).

#### Vowel Review

Both of these long OO sounds are produced at one of the extreme corners of the vowel trapezoid:



**PRACTISE** going around the four corners a few times, saying: “Hot, Hat, Heat, Hoot.”

**PRACTISE** the top row: “Heat, Hoot, Heat, Hoot.” Then practise this by asking the question: “Heat hurt whom?” Remember that both are long vowel sounds; Heat is said with lips in a smiling position, Hoot is said with lips in a whistling or kissing position. Going back and forth between Heat and Hoot, and exaggerating the difference, will give your mouth a good workout!

**PRACTISE** going across the diagonal, saying: “Hat, Hut, Hurt, Hoot.” Then practise this by saying the sentence, “But Bert took too few!” (In our standard spelling, this would be: “BUt BUHt tVk tOO fYOO!”)

**Long and Short**

Practise these phrases as you tap out the rhythm at the rate of one beat per second:

<b><u>Taps:</u></b>	1	2	3	4	5
Hat Heat, Hot Hoot →	Hat	Heeeeeeeeet	Hot	HOOOOOOOt	
But Bert took two few →	But	BUUUUUHHt	tVk	tOOOOOO	FYOOOOOO
Ruth held herself aloof →		ROOOOOth	held	her- self	a- LOOOOOF

**Standard Spelling: Notice and Identify**

Although it does have alternate spellings, the long OO sound in Fool is often spelt OO.

We shall use that standard spelling to help us notice and identify this sound.

This is the IPA spelling of Fool: /fu:l/

Although it does have alternate spellings, the long YOO sound in Fuel is often spelt with the letter U between two consonants, and followed by the letter E, as in the words *cute* and *dispute*. We shall use YOO as our standard spelling to help us notice and identify this sound. So the word *use* will be spelt YOOz.

This is the IPA spelling of Fuel: /'fju:.əl

\*The letter j is used to represent the Y sound

**EXERCISES:** Say these sentences out loud and write down what you hear. You Should:

- Use the standard spelling OO for the long OO sound in Fool
- Use YOO for the sound in Fuel.
- Mark the stressed syllables by underlining or by making the letters bigger.

1. Julia ruminated on the clues in order to prove her conclusion.

**WRITE YOUR ANSWER HERE:**

2. A fugue is a beautiful yet peculiar piece of music.

**WRITE YOUR ANSWER HERE:**

3. Crowds have queued since noon to see our youthful duchess and our future duke.

**WRITE YOUR ANSWER HERE:**

**ANSWERS**

1. JOOLia rOOminated on the cLOOs in order to prOOve her concLOOsion.
2. A fYOOg is a bYOOtiful yet pecYOOliar piece of mYOOsic.
3. Crowds have kYOOd since nOOn to see our YOOthful duchess and our fYOOture dOOK.

**Rhythm**

Like other long vowel sounds, OO and YOO almost always occur in stressed syllables—syllables that get a strong emphasis like a drumbeat. Here are two rare cases where the OO sound gets a secondary stress, but not the primary stress:

humanity	hYOO <b>man</b> ɪ tee	boom <b>BOOM</b> di dee
brutality	brOO <b>tal</b> ɪ tee	boom <b>BOOM</b> di dee

Both words are long words that have shorter forms where the OO sound does get the primary stress:

human	<b>hYOO</b> mən
brutal	<b>brOO</b> təl

**PRACTISE** the word pairs below, shifting the emphasis as indicated above, but keeping the OO sound long enough to be clearly heard:

<b>hu</b> -man	→	hu- <b>man</b> ity
<b>bru</b> -tal	→	bru- <b>tal</b> ity

**PRACTISE** this word pair, making sure that the long OO sound is clear in both cases:

fuel	<b>fYOO</b> -əl	→	cruel	<b>crOO</b> -əl
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**NOTICE** that in the following word pair, when the YOO sound loses the emphasis, it fades into a schwa:

accuse	ə- <b>kYOOz</b>	→	accusation	ak-yə- <b>ZAY</b> -shən
NOTE: You would sound like a computer or robot if you said:				
ak <b>Yoo ZAY</b> shun				

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**PRACTISE** the following word pairs:

nephew	<b>nE</b> -fYOO	popular	<b>pop</b> -yə-luh
accumulate	ə- <b>kYOO</b> -myə-late	circulate	<b>sUH</b> -kyə-late
cucumber	<b>kYOO</b> -kUm-buh	succulent	<b>sU</b> -kyə-lənt
tribunal	try- <b>bYOO</b> -nəl	tribulation	trib-jə- <b>LAY</b> -shən

**NOTICE** that *Playful Practice: The Abusing Nephews* contains many words like those in the right-hand column—that is, words that may seem to contain a proper YOO sound, but that don't actually, because it falls in an unstressed syllable and becomes a schwa instead.

### **Advanced Topic (DIFFICULT) – Posh Pronunciation**

According to the Cambridge Online Dictionary, the word *assume* should be pronounced like the word *accuse*—that is, both should have a YOO sound:

accuse	ə-kYOOz	assume	ə-sYOOm
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**NOTICE.** However, it is still correct to say: ə-sOOm (without the Y)

This second pronunciation is still correct, but it's not so posh sounding, and sounds more American. Look up these words in the Cambridge Online dictionary and listen to both the British and the American pronunciation.

In British Received Pronunciation (RP), in several other words the YOO sound influences the quality of the preceding consonant. In technical terms, the preceding consonant gets *palatalised*.

**NOTICE** that when you say, “Toe, Tea...Toe, Tea,” the tip of your tongue moves up and touches the roof of your mouth, or palate, for the word *Tea*, but not for the word *Toe*. In technical terms, in the word *Tea*, the consonant T gets palatalised.

This happens automatically, so you don’t have to try to make it happen. However, it will take some effort to pronounce words like *assume* with the YOO sound. This is how to do it, if you want to work on this advanced topic.

Prepare by saying: “Toe, Tea... Toe, Tea,” and become aware of the position of your tongue when you say *Tea*.

Now say the word *Tune*, starting it with your tongue in the “Tea” position—the position you feel your tongue in when you say *Tea*:

Tea, Tune    Tee, tYOO<sup>n</sup>

When you start practising, it might help to say: “Tee-YOO<sup>n</sup>.” Then make the ee sound shorter and shorter until it blends into the Y sound in YOO.

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**PRACTISE** the words below following the same method as above:

<b>Prepare</b>	<b>First try</b>	<b>[Standard spelling]</b>	<b>Goal</b>
Toe, Tea	Tea, Tune	Tee, Tee-YOOOn	tYOOOn
Poe, Pea	Pea, Pewter	Pee, Pee-YOO-tuh	pYOO-tuh
Code, Key	Key, Cute	Kee, Kee-YOOt	kYOOt
So, See	See, Sue	See, See-YOO	sYOO
No, Knee	Knee, New	Nee, Nee-YOO	Nyoo

### Vocabulary

This leads nicely into some words in *Playful Practice: The Abusing Nephews* that may be difficult to pronounce...and you may not be familiar with what they mean.

#### **Words**

#### **Pronunciation practice**

Putative

*Pew* sounds like *Few*

Pee, Pee-YOO, pYOO

**pYOO**-tə-tive

Spurious

*Pure, Spurious* sounds like *Cure, Curious*

Speak, Spew, Spurious

Speek, SpYOO

**spyuh**-ree-us



**NOTICE** that *spurious* does NOT contain a true YOO sound; it has a diphthong sound (a blend of two vowel sounds), which we will practise in a later lesson: Tour and Poor.

### **Definitions**

*Spurious*     Something that seems to be genuine but isn't. False, sham, counterfeit.

Quotation: William Cowper (1782):

“Spurious gems our hopes entice, while we scorn the pearl of price.”

In other words, we are attracted by shining counterfeit jewels, by “bling,” and we ignore the softly glowing pearl that has true and lasting value.

*Putative*     Having a reputation for something. Commonly believed or imagined.  
*Putative* has the same root as the words *reputation* and *dispute*. To dispute something is to argue that, although it has a reputation for one thing, it is actually something else.

*Ruthless*     *Rue* or *Ruth* means pity or compassion. So someone who is ruth-less has no pity or compassion for others...for the other moose in her group.

Quotation: Edmund Spenser in the *Faerie Queene* (1590):

“Die is my due: yet rue my wretched state.”

In other words, “I deserve to die, but please have pity on me! See how miserable I am? Have a little compassion.”