

VOCABULARY LISTENING CLOZE AND WORD STRESS CHART WITH “INTO THE GARDEN”

This listening activity uses an audio clip from Zach Ladin’s “[Into the Garden](#),” a song from [Sing Out Loud: American Rhythms](#). The language-focused activity asks students to listen for and record discreet vocabulary items in the song and to then analyze the pronunciation qualities of the target words as they hear them. This activity assumes students have some prior basic knowledge of pronunciation concepts such as counting syllables in a word and identifying primary word stress.

This activity also reflects listening fluency-building principles. Students perform supported listening, simultaneously using audio and written texts. Students are also exposed to the listening text more than once.

Ladin’s song “Into the Garden” celebrates the joys of growing and eating fresh vegetables and fruits. It also emphasizes being grateful for the things a healthy earth can provide for us. These themes make this listening activity a good fit in lessons related to food, health, agriculture, or the environment. Teachers can create similar activities using listening texts related to topics in their curriculum that contain the essential vocabulary items.

LEVEL

Upper intermediate and above

LANGUAGE FOCUS

Listening, vocabulary, and pronunciation

GOALS

Students will:

- Listen for and record fruit- and vegetable-related vocabulary items in a short audio text
- Listen to the target vocabulary words again to identify the number of syllables and the primary stressed syllable in each word
- Sort the target words using a stress pattern chart for pronunciation awareness and oral practice

MATERIALS

- Teacher:
 - Whiteboard, chalkboard, or large pieces of paper posted on the wall
 - Markers or chalk
 - “Into the Garden” audio clip (.mp3 – 0:55)
 - Audio player (computer, tablet, mobile phone with speakers)
 - Vocabulary Listening Cloze and Word Stress Chart – Answers (.pdf)

- Students:
 - Pencils or pens, blank writing paper
 - Vocabulary Listening Cloze and Word Stress Chart (.pdf)

PREPARATION

- Download, test, and preview the audio clip on your audio playing device. Confirm the volume will be loud enough for the entire class to hear.
- Review the fruit and vegetable vocabulary in the Listening Cloze. Determine which words, if any, will need to be pre-taught or reviewed before the activity.
- Review the stress and pronunciation of the target words in the Word Stress Chart; if needed, practice reading them aloud to ensure you are comfortable with their pronunciation.
- Copy or print out the Listening Vocabulary Cloze and Word Stress Charts, ideally making enough copies for each student to have his/her own copy of each. To save paper, use two-sided printing and/or have students share one copy of each page per pair.

PROCEDURES

1. Tell students they are going to listen to a clip (a short, incomplete piece) from Zach Ladin’s song “Into the Garden.” Explain that they will need to listen carefully to identify and write down missing vocabulary words in a printed copy of the song’s lyrics. (Note: it is helpful, but not required, to complete this activity after the class has listened to the entire song and identified its key themes and main ideas.)
2. Pre-teach or review any target fruit and vegetable vocabulary items that you identified during the activity preparation stage.
3. Ask student volunteers to pass out the Vocabulary Listening Cloze. (If you used two-sided copies with both handouts on one piece of paper, ask students to only look at the Listening Cloze side during the first part of the activity; the Word Stress Chart lists the missing words in the cloze.)
4. Tell students that as they listen to the audio clip, they should try to fill in the missing fruit and vegetable vocabulary words indicated by blank spaces in the lyrics on the Listening Cloze. Explain that the song’s pace is relatively fast; tell students not to worry because they will listen to the audio clip two or three times. (Note: there are 16 missing items in the cloze. To make this part of the activity easier, put students in pairs and have one student fill in the even-numbered items, while the other fills in the odd-number items. To provide even more support, provide a “word bank” by writing a scrambled list of the missing words on the board.)
5. Tell students to get their pencils or pens ready and then play the audio clip two or three times depending on the needs of the class. Pause for a bit each time the audio ends to allow students to quickly review their answers.
6. Ask students to compare their answers with a neighbor. Play the audio one more time or ask student volunteers to provide the missing words so everyone can check his or her work.
7. Ask student volunteers to pass out the Word Stress Charts. (If you used two-sided copies, tell students to turn their handouts over to the Word Stress Chart.)
8. Explain that students are going to use the chart to sort the vocabulary words from the listening cloze according to their pronunciation features, in this case, the number of syllables in the word and the location of the stressed syllable. Remind students that the primary stress in each word is found the syllable with the vowel that is longest, loudest, and strongest.

9. If this is the first time students have used a word stress chart, explain the symbols used in the chart to represent syllables and stress. (each “o” represents a syllable; O = primary stressed syllable o = unstressed syllable).
10. Complete an example of how to place a word in the chart by using the word “carrots.” Say the word once and then say it aloud a couple of times while you clap your hands, snap your fingers, or stomp feet in time with the two syllables. Ask the class to tell you how many syllables the word has (Answer: 2). Next, ask the class to identify the stressed syllable (the longer, louder, stronger syllable) in “carrots.” You can help students to identify the stress by pronouncing the words with both stress patterns (CARRots and carrOTs) and asking them to choose the correct version. You can also use “empty syllables” to help students distinguish the stress, asking “Does CARRots sound like DAH-dah or dah-DAH? CARRots...DAH-dah...DAH-dah...CARRots. The stress is on the first syllable, right?”) Based on the number of the syllables and the stress location, ask students to place “carrots” in the chart (Answer: under Oo, top row, center box). If needed, do one or two more examples with the students. You can use words in the list or other fruit and vegetable words students know.
11. Read the remaining words in the list aloud several times. The first couple of times you say the word, tell students to determine the number of syllables in the word and to write their answer next to the word in the list on the Word Stress Chart. Encourage students to quietly clap out or tap out the number of syllables in the word as they listen. As they continue to listen to you read the word aloud, students should try to identify and underline the stressed syllable in each word.
12. Next, put students into pairs or small groups. Ask them to compare the information they collected while listening and to use that data to chart the words according to their stress patterns. Again, encourage students to say the words out loud, to listen to each other, and to clap, snap, or stomp while saying the words as they try to chart them. Monitor students’ progress while they work and provide pronunciation models for the words, as needed.
13. Once most of the class is done charting the words, review the answers in each column in a whole class setting. Ask a student volunteers to read aloud all of the words in each box, demonstrating the common pattern among the words.
14. If possible, over the course of a themed unit, ask students to chart newly encountered vocabulary words. As a listening and pronunciation strategy, encourage students to independently chart new vocabulary words or words that they find difficult to pronounce.

Notes:

(1) If students are sharing worksheets, put students in pairs before the worksheets are passed out in Step 3. Ask student pairs to write down the missing words in the listening cloze on a blank sheet of paper. During the Word Stress Chart portion, students can copy down the word list and stress pattern chart on their own paper. This approach also allows you to reuse the worksheets if you remind students not to write on them.

(2) The pronunciation models shown in the “Vocabulary Listening Cloze and Word Stress Chart – Answers” represent American English pronunciation. It is fine to make adjustments to the answers based on the variety of English used by you and your students.