

Narrating with Fluency

When narrating a short story in English, it is important to pronounce all the words correctly and to read aloud with fluency. Here are a few guidelines to follow.

1. Focus on Pronunciation

Make a list of the words in your story that you have difficulty pronouncing. Ask your English teacher to model the pronunciation for you. Look at your teacher's mouth. Repeat the words after your teacher.

You can also use an online dictionary to practise pronunciation. Look up the words on your list at www.dictionary.com and click on the sound icon.

2. Focus on Linking Sounds

Pay attention to the consonant sounds at the end of words. Do not drop these sounds! If the next word begins with a vowel, link the consonant to the vowel.

Notice the examples of linking in this excerpt from one of the 'Shorts' prize-winning short stories, 'The Magic Door'. (Handout 3.3 Recording A)

I lookeddaround, and to my enormous surprise, a magnificent golden phoenix was percheddon the branchessof a tree. Then, to my amazement, the beautiful creature lookeddat me ...

3. Focus on Stress and Rhythm

Pay attention to the stress and rhythm patterns. It may be helpful to draw small dots (●) over the unstressed syllables and large dots (●) over the stressed syllables.

Notice the stress and rhythm patterns in the excerpt from 'The Magic Door'.

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I lookeddaround, and to my enormous surprise, a magnificent golden phoenix was

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●
percheddon the branchessof a tree. Then, to my amazement, the beautiful creature

● ● ●
lookeddat me ...

Practise reading the excerpt aloud saying 'TUM' for each stressed syllable (● = 'TUM') and 'ta' for each unstressed syllable (● = 'ta') so that you can hear the rhythm clearly (Handout 3.3 Recording B).

4. Focus on Intonation

Now listen for the rises and falls in intonation and draw small arrows at the end of each phrase to indicate when the intonation rises (↗) or falls (↘).

Notice the rises and falls in intonation in the excerpt from 'The Magic Door' (Handout 3.3 Recording C).

I lookedaround, and to my enormous surprise, a magnificent golden phoenix was
perchedon the branchess of a tree. Then, to my amazement, the beautiful creature
lookedat me ...

Notice that in this excerpt the intonation tends to rise on the stressed syllables. It then falls at the end of each phrase.

5. Focus on Voice

Now try varying the voice in different ways for dramatic effect as you read the story aloud. Here are some techniques you can try:

- Vary the volume: soft vs loud
- Vary the pace: slow vs fast
- Vary the pitch: high vs low
- Use pausing
- Use different voices for different characters