

2 Minimal pairs



Sound 1
/ɪə/

ear

The ear isn't good.

Sound 2
/eə/

air

The air isn't good.

/ɪə/ x /eə/



beer

It's a sweet beer.

bear

It's a sweet bear.



pier

That's an old pier.

pear

That's an old pear.



hear

How do you spell 'hear'?

hair

How do you spell 'hair'?



tear

That's a tear.

tear

That's a tear.



Cheers!

'Three cheers!' he said.

chairs

'Three chairs!' he said.



Minimal pair words

B71a a Listen and repeat the words.

B71b b You will hear five words from each minimal pair. For each word, write 1 for /ɪə/ (sound 1) or 2 for /eə/ (sound 2).

EXAMPLE Pair 1: 2, 2; 1, 1, 2

Minimal pair sentences

B72a c Listen to the minimal pair sentences.

B72b d Listen to six of the sentences and write 1 for /ɪə/ (sound 1) or 2 for /eə/ (sound 2).

B73 f Tick the words a) or b) that you hear in the sentences.

- | | | | |
|-------------|--------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|
| 1 a) cheers | <input type="checkbox"/> | b) chairs | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 a) beer | <input type="checkbox"/> | b) bear | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 a) pier | <input type="checkbox"/> | b) pear | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 a) here | <input type="checkbox"/> | b) hair | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 a) dear | <input type="checkbox"/> | b) Dare | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 a) clear | <input type="checkbox"/> | b) Claire | <input type="checkbox"/> |

4 The letter 'r' – pronounced or silent?

When there is no vowel following it, /r/ is silent. This 'rule' only applies to some speakers of English, e.g. in south-east England, South Africa, Australia. But many native speakers always pronounce /r/, e.g. in south-west England, Scotland, America. So you may choose to omit this exercise if you are learning a variety of English where /r/ is always pronounced.

B75 a Listen and repeat.

'r' not pronounced

Claire

a pair

a square chair

'r' pronounced (before a vowel)

Claire_r and Mary

a pair_r of shoes

a square_r envelope

B76 b Read these sentences and decide which words have 'r' pronounced. Then listen and check.

It's there.

They're here.

I've looked everywhere for them.

There it is.

They're under a table.

I've looked everywhere in the house.

5 Spelling

Look back over this unit at words with the target sound, and write what you noticed about how to spell the sound /eə/.

Baker 2006: 73-75