

Syllabic /

Level: Intermediate and above

Target age: Adults and teenagers

Time needed: 30 minutes

Summary: This lesson practises the pronunciation of syllabic /l/. Normally, a syllable contains a vowel, but sometimes /l/ can form a syllable without any vowel sound, as in *people* /pi:pl/, with the second syllable consisting simply of the sounds /p/ + /l/, with no vowel between them. Syllabic /l/ occurs in a lot of words with the spelling 'consonant + le'. It also occurs when the contraction 'll occurs after a consonant sound, as in *that'll do*.

Activity 1

Put students into pairs. Revise the idea of a syllable by asking each pair to decide how many syllables there are in each word. Students write the number of syllables in the small box next to each word. If they are unsure, say the words yourself or play the recording.

Point out that the last syllables of the words *single*, *final* and *syllable* have a long /l/ sound and no vowel.

Audioscript:

1. sea
2. seat
3. sit
4. sitting
5. sits
6. sing
7. singer
8. single
9. final
10. finally
11. syllable

Key:

1. one
2. one
3. one
4. two
5. one
6. one
7. two
8. two
9. two
10. three
11. three

Activity 2

Play the recording for Activity 2. Students listen and practise saying the words they hear. Depending on the size of the class, this could be a mixture of choral and individual practice.

Audioscript:

<i>people</i>	<i>middle</i>
<i>simple</i>	<i>ankle</i>
<i>countable</i>	<i>articles</i>
<i>double</i>	<i>single</i>
<i>table</i>	<i>awful</i>
<i>syllable</i>	<i>wonderful</i>
<i>battle</i>	<i>survival</i>
<i>little</i>	<i>hassle</i>
<i>settle</i>	<i>drizzle</i>
<i>title</i>	<i>final</i>

Activity 3

Ask students to try to fill the gaps using words from Activity 2. They can do this individually and then check in pairs.

Key:

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1. <i>countable</i> | 11. <i>awful</i> |
| 2. <i>middle</i> | 12. <i>simple</i> |
| 3. <i>settle</i> | 13. <i>articles</i> |
| 4. <i>hassle</i> | 14. <i>single</i> |
| 5. <i>table</i> | 15. <i>ankle</i> |
| 6. <i>survival</i> | 16. <i>double</i> |
| 7. <i>Battle</i> | 17. <i>final</i> |
| 8. <i>little</i> | 18. <i>wonderful</i> |
| 9. <i>people</i> | 19. <i>drizzle</i> |
| 10. <i>title</i> | 20. <i>syllable</i> |

Activity 4

Play the recording for Activity 4. Students listen to check their answers for Activity 3 and practise saying the sentences. In addition to the syllabic /l/, tell students to pay attention to other aspects of pronunciation, such as rhythm and linking between the words.

Audioscript:

1. *Is 'information' a countable noun?*
2. *Not now! I'm just in the middle of making dinner.*
3. *We've got to settle this argument once and for all.*
4. *Sorry for all the hassle we've caused you.*
5. *You can easily get six people round the table.*
6. *Where I work, it's the survival of the fittest.*
7. *When was the Battle of Hastings?*

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8. *I'm afraid it's going to take a little bit longer.*
9. *There were loads of people at the match.*
10. *What's the title of that book you were talking about?*
11. *I thought that film was awful, didn't you?*
12. *This computer's very simple to use.*
13. *I never know when to use articles in English.*
14. *When you say a single ticket, do you mean one-way?*
15. *Nothing serious, I just sprained my ankle.*
16. *They have double-decker buses in Berlin.*
17. *That's my final offer; take it or leave it.*
18. *I've got some wonderful news.*
19. *They said 'some light drizzle' and look: it's pouring down!*
20. *There's only one syllable in 'asked'.*

Activity 5

Ask students to listen while you play the recording for Activity 5, and then practise reading the sentences in pairs. Make sure they use the contracted form, *'ll*, and not the full form, *will*.

Audioscript:

1. *We'd better get a move on, it'll be dark soon.*
2. *We don't need any more, this'll be enough.*
3. *A: Is this one alright?*
B: Yes, that'll do.
4. *This wine'll be even better in a couple of years' time.*
5. *Chris'll be here soon.*
6. *These sentences'll keep you busy.*
7. *I think the best thing'll be to leave it till tomorrow.*
8. *Do you think the shop'll still be open when we get there?*
9. *A: How many bottles shall we buy?*
B: Six'll be enough.
10. *The town'll be crowded at the weekend.*

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PRONUNCIATION SKILLS WORKSHEET

Worksheet

Activity 1

Work with a partner. How many syllables are there in these words?

sea	<input type="checkbox"/>	seat	<input type="checkbox"/>	sit	<input type="checkbox"/>
sitting	<input type="checkbox"/>	sits	<input type="checkbox"/>	sing	<input type="checkbox"/>
singer	<input type="checkbox"/>	single	<input type="checkbox"/>	final	<input type="checkbox"/>
finally	<input type="checkbox"/>	syllable	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Activity 2



Listen and practise saying these words. The last syllable of each should have a long 'i' sound, and no vowel.

people simple countable double table syllable
battle little settle title middle ankle articles
single awful wonderful survival hassle drizzle final

Activity 3

Fill the gaps with words from Activity 2.

1. Is 'information' a _____ noun?
2. Not now, I'm just in the _____ of making dinner.
3. We've got to _____ this argument once and for all.
4. Sorry for all the _____ we've caused you.
5. You can easily get six people round the _____.
6. Where I work, it's the _____ of the fittest.
7. When was the _____ of Hastings?
8. I'm afraid it's going to take a _____ bit longer.
9. There were loads of _____ at the match.
10. What's the _____ of that book you were talking about?
11. I thought that film was _____, didn't you?
12. This computer's very _____ to use.
13. I never know when to use _____ in English.

Worksheet

14. When you say a _____ ticket, do you mean one-way?
15. Nothing serious, I just sprained my _____.
16. They have _____-decker buses in Berlin.
17. That's my _____ offer, take it or leave it.
18. I've got some _____ news.
19. They said 'some light _____' and look, it's pouring down.
20. There's only one _____ in 'asked'.

Activity 4



Now listen and check your answers. Then practise saying the sentences.

Activity 5



Listen and practise the sentences.

1. We'd better get a move on, it'll be dark soon.
2. We don't need any more, this'll be enough.
3. A: Is this one all right?
B: Yes, that'll do.
4. This wine'll be even better in a couple of years' time.
5. Chris'll be here soon.
6. These sentences'll keep you busy.
7. I think the best thing'll be to leave it till tomorrow.
8. Do you think the shop'll still be open when we get there?
9. A: How many bottles shall we buy?
B: Six'll be enough.
10. The town'll be crowded at the weekend.