

## Confused vowel sounds

Speakers of many languages in Sub-Saharan Africa have problems distinguishing between different vowel sounds.

This confusion is often between long and short vowels, which means the following words are often pronounced the same:

- 'bed' and 'bird'
- 'cat' and 'cut'
- 'pull' and 'pool'.

One way to help learners understand the difference is through a game called [Test the teacher](#). On the board write a set of words that have confusing sounds. For example:

- head heard
- bat but
- hat hut
- full fool
- fit feet
- lips leaps
- red read
- sun soon

Say: 'I will ask you to say a word from the list on the board. I will point to the word I hear. If I am correct, say 'Well done!' If I point to the wrong word say 'No' and say the word again.'

Point to a learner and say: 'Say a word.' Repeat the process with other learners.

Once they understand, learners can then play this in pairs or small groups.

**Author: British Council**