# TTS Reference Text - Folk & World Music

This text is specifically designed to maximise coverage of English phonemes while integrating different speaking styles. The text deliberately contains phonetically demanding words. It's not about the content, but the range of speaking styles (and Diphthongs, tongue positions, complex consonant combinations, fricatives and affricates, different vowel sounds)

When reading aloud, the person should take about 50-60 seconds.

**Preperation:**

Be hydrated. Avoid dairy products (mucus and lip smacking noises).

Straighten.   
Relax! Circling the shoulders, stretching the neck, move jaw and mouth.  
Get into good breathing.

**Warm-up (but don’t exhaust your speech muscles):**

Lip fluttering. Humming aloud. Work muscles:   
“Red leather, yellow leather, Read leather, yellow leather. “  
“Unique New York. Unique New York. Unique New York.”   
“England. Britain. Great Britain. United Kingdome.”  
“Fresh fried fish. Fresh fried fish. Fresh fried fish.”  
“Selfish shellfish. Selfish shellfish. Selfish shellfish.”  
“Good blood, bad blood. Good blood, bad blood. Good blood, bad blood.”  
“Toy boat. Toy boat. Toy boat. Toy boat.”   
“Men munch much mash. Men munch much mash. Men munch much mash.”

Text work: Read silently, remember and practise difficult words: “kulning”, “shamisen” Imagine the roles: YouTube blogger vs. documentary speaker - how do pace and energy differ?

Microphone: Find the distance: Usually 15-20cm. Check the level.   
Breathe sideways past the microphone

Choose one of the 3 versions you like.

**If you make a mistake, simply restart. Don’t tense up Stay relaxed!**

Version 1

Hey everyone! Today we’re exploring the extraordinary world of folk and world music – where ancient rhythms meet modern sensibilities.

**[YouTube Style]** So, what makes these genres so incredibly captivating? Well, it’s the way they blend traditional techniques with contemporary expressions and creativity, you know? It’s really quite beautiful when you think about it.

**[Academic Transition]** Music scholars have noticed that folk songs work like time capsules, preserving cultural stories through melodic structures and rhythms. These musical traditions create bridges between different countries and generations.

**[Documentary Narrator]** From the haunting whispers of Celtic ballads to the joyful rhythms of Brazilian forró, each tradition carries the weight of centuries. The duduk’s breathy tones drift through Armenian mountains, while tabla drums beat their intricate patterns in busy city streets.

**[Dynamic Audiobook Style]** Listen! Can you hear it? The thrumming of the mbira, the twelfth-century techniques still breathing life into every plucked note! The strength of these sounds lies not just in their complexity, but in their ability to unite strangers across oceans.

**[News Presenter]** Recent studies indicate that world music festivals have grown exponentially, with attendance figures reaching unprecedented heights.

**[Spontaneous Interview Response]** Um, well… …what really strikes me about, uh, about this music is how it… it just captures something primal, you know? The way a Bulgarian women’s choir can make your chest vibrate, or how a didgeridoo’s drones can, um, transport you to the Australian outback – it’s quite extraordinary, really.

Version 2

Welcome back, music lovers! Let’s dive into the fascinating universe of global folk traditions – *pause* – and discover how musicians around the world express their deepest emotions through song.

**[YouTube Style]** Okay, so here’s what’s really cool about this stuff. Picture a Spanish guitarist sitting by the Mediterranean shore, fingers dancing across steel strings under starlight. That’s the magic we’re talking about!

**[Academic Transition]** Research shows that musical instruments often reflect their environment. The wooden flutes of Ireland capture the misty highlands, while African djembes echo the thunderous power of summer storms across vast savannas.

**[Documentary Narrator]** In Norway’s remote fjords, researchers have documented an ancient vocal technique called ‘kulning’. Farmers historically used these high-pitched calls to communicate across distances of up to five kilometers. The sound waves would reflect off mountain walls, creating natural amplification systems.

**[Dynamic Audiobook Style]** LISTEN! Can you feel it? In bustling Tokyo markets, shamisen players pour their hearts into trembling melodies that dance between major and minor keys. Passion flows like liquid fire through their fingertips – aach plucked note tells stories of samurai, geishas, and cherry blossoms – weeping tales of forbidden love.

**[News Presenter]** Cultural preservation efforts have increased funding for traditional music education programs by thirty percent this quarter.

**[Spontaneous Interview Response]** Oh, um… *pause* …you’re asking about my favorite? Well, it’s probably, uh, probably those haunting bagpipe melodies from Scotland. The way they… they just pierce through your soul, you know? Makes me think of, um, of my grandmother’s stories about the old country.

Version 3

**[YouTube Style]** Hey there, music lovers! Welcome to today’s exploration of extraordinary folk traditions.

**[Documentary Narrator]** The ancient art of traditional music weaves through cultures like golden threads, connecting generations across continents. From Estonia’s haunting kantele melodies to Ireland’s spirited jigs, each rhythm tells unique stories.

**[Spontaneous Interview Response]** Um, well… I was just thinking about how these festivals, you know, they’re really… they’re quite something special, aren’t they? The way musicians gather, sharing their heritage through song and dance. These beautiful traditions survive because passionate artists, uh, they just keep… they keep playing, you know? That’s the magic, really.

**[Academic]** Professional ethnomusicologists recognize approximately thirty-seven distinct Celtic bagpipe variations, each producing subtly different tonal qualities and rhythmic textures.

**[Dynamic Audiobook Style]** Picture this: misty morning fog drifts slowly across the festival grounds as fiddle notes pierce the silence. Children laugh, running between stages where ancient ballads transform modern hearts. The bouzouki’s strings shimmer…

**[News Presenter]** Tonight’s news: Folk music streaming has increased by sixty-five percent this quarter, demonstrating renewed interest in authentic cultural expressions worldwide.