

There's a spider

Strong and weak forms 3: Articles, comparatives, 'there'

- A** ^{C57a} Some words have two different pronunciations – a strong form and a weak form. We normally use the weak forms of the words *a* and *an*. We say /ə/ before consonant sounds and /ən/ before vowel sounds. Listen and repeat.

a cup of coffee, please
a piece of cake, please
a lot of visitors
a Thursday morning in November
an invitation to a party
an umbrella in the rain

- ^{C57b} Notice that some words begin with the vowel letter *u* but the consonant sound /j/, so we say *a* before them. Listen and repeat.

a university
a useful present

- B** ^{C58} In comparatives, we use the weak forms of *than* /ðən/ and *as* /əz/, and we pronounce the ending *-er* as the weak vowel /ə/. Listen and repeat.

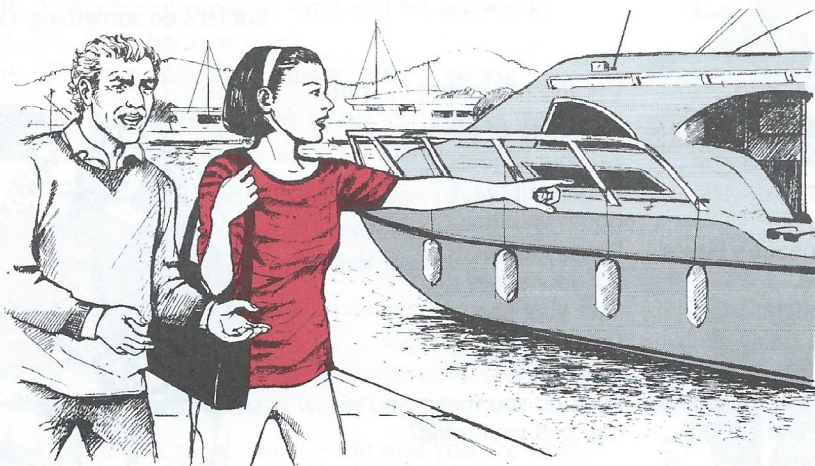
The new computer's better than the old one.
The old computer wasn't as good as the new one.

- C** ^{C59a} In the expressions *there's* and *there are* we normally use the weak form /ðə/. We pronounce *there's* as /ðəz/ and *there are* as /ðərə/. Listen and repeat.

There's a bridge over the river.
There are ten millimetres in a centimetre.

- ^{C59b} But when we use the word *there* to talk about a place, we use the strong form /ðeə/. Listen and repeat.

A: Where are my glasses? B: Over there!



Over there!

Exercises

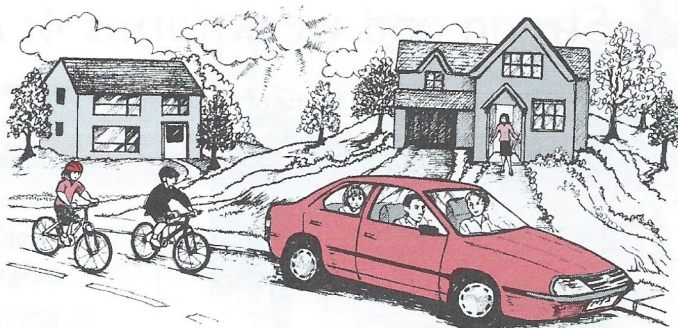
39.1



Listen and circle the mistakes in the picture (there are five mistakes).



Check with the Key. Then listen again and repeat.



39.2



Listen and circle all the /ə/ sounds.

There's a cat on the mat.
There's a fish in a dish.
There's a dog in the fog,
and a mouse in the house.

There's a film on TV.
You can sit on my knee.
There are two cups of tea.
One for you, one for me.

Check with the Key.
Then listen again and repeat.

39.3

Complete the sentences using the words in the box. You will need to use some of them more than once.

tall there there's there are older longer as than

- Tessa's taller than Terry, but she isn't older Ted.
Ted's older Tessa, but he isn't older Terry.
- A: What's the longest tunnel in the world?
B: The Channel Tunnel, between England and France?
A: No, there's a longer one there that.
B: Is there, really?
A: Yes, there's is, in Japan.
- A: How many dollars are there in a pound?
B: I think there's about one and a half ... or maybe there's one and a half pounds in a dollar?



Listen to check your answers. Check with the Key. Then listen again and repeat.

39.4



Listen and mark the underlined words w (weak) or s (strong).

- A: What are you doing there?
B: There's a spider in the room.
A: Is there? Where?
B: There, look!
A: No, there isn't!
B: Yes, there is!
A: Well, actually, there are two – one there and one there!

Check with the Key. Then listen and repeat.

