

## Pronunciation: Silent letters

- 10** 1 Do you know how to pronounce these English towns and cities? It may not be as you expect because they are not pronounced exactly as they are written. Only one of these place names is pronounced as you would probably expect. What is it?

Leicester Newcastle Reading Greenwich Plymouth Cambridge

- 2 Listen and underline the letters representing the following sounds:

- a** /e/ (there are three)  
**b** the schwa, /ə/ (there are two)  
**c** the diphthong /eɪ/ (there is one).

- 3 Listen to Track 23 again. Notice that in the first four place names some letters are not pronounced.

- 11** 1 There are a large number of words in English with silent letters. For this reason it is important to learn the pronunciation of words, not just guess the pronunciation from the way the words are spelt. Highlight the silent letters in words 1–10 below.

- |               |               |
|---------------|---------------|
| 1 island      | 6 vineyard    |
| 2 calm        | 7 walk        |
| 3 camera      | 8 Wednesday   |
| 4 half        | 9 foreigner   |
| 5 interesting | 10 restaurant |

- 2 Listen to check your answers. Then repeat the words.

### IELTS Speaking Exam: Part 3

- 12** You are going to hear questions that are typical of Part 3 of the exam. Answer them and record your answers. Ask a friend or teacher to listen carefully to your recording. Are there any words you pronounced incorrectly? Practise saying the words with accurate pronunciation. Keep a list of words you have mispronounced and test yourself frequently.

Now listen to the sample answers.

**Exam tip:** You will have noticed that the sample answers contain contractions, e.g. *I'm* (for *I am*). Contractions are extremely common in spoken English, and using them can make your English sound more natural and fluent. Check how to pronounce them, however, or your English could become unclear.

Some contractions are very informal and are better avoided in the exam, e.g. *ain't* and *init* (for *isn't it*). Studying the sample answers will show you which contractions are suitable.