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| Sentence Stress (Pronunciation): Stress Timing |
| English is called a stress timed language. When we speak, the stressed syllables are said at equal intervals of time. Each segment with a stressed syllable takes the same amount of time to say, even though the segment may have different numbers of syllables in total.  For example, say the following sentences:  *Cows / eat / grass.*  *The cows / have eaten / the grass.*  *The cows / will eat / the grass.*  *The cows / have been eating / the grass.*    Each segment in these sentences takes the same amount of time to say, even though the segments have different numbers of syllables. This is stress timing. |
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*A. Limericks, a special form of poem, demonstrate the* ***stress timing*** *of English. A limerick has five lines. Lines one and two have four beats; lines three and four have two beats; and line five has four beats. HOWEVER, in the lines with four beats, the last beat has no words to it. It is silent.*

*Practice saying the limerick below.\* The sentences have been divided into segments for you. To help you find the rhythm, snap your fingers once for each segment.*

*\*The limerick comes from www.sfu.ca/~finley/hockey.html.*

Though Canucks / should be gentle / not rough / /

There’s one place / where we strive / to be tough. / /

In that game / played on ice /

It pays not / to be nice /

And second / is not / good enough. / /