

## Spotlight on Syllables

In Lesson 5, you learned that lyrics usually follow a uniform pattern of syllables to fit the melody. In this lesson, you will examine the pattern of syllables in more detail by learning about stressed and unstressed syllables.

Our voices naturally emphasize certain syllables of words we speak. **Stressed syllables** are emphasized, while **unstressed syllables** are not emphasized.

### EXAMPLES

In the following list of words, the bold syllables are stressed and the rest are unstressed. Reading the following words aloud will help you hear the difference between stressed and unstressed syllables.

Nouns: **c**ountry, **m**usic, **b**anana, **d**inosaur

Verbs: **r**acing, **t**raveled, **e**mit

Adjectives: **c**lever, **h**ungry, **h**appy, **f**antastic

Adverbs: **c**arefully, **h**opefully, **b**adly, **p**ossibly

Conjunctions: **b**ecause, **e**ither, **w**hether

Prepositions: **t**hrough**o**ut, **u**ntil, **i**nto, **a**bout

Note:

- Every multiple-syllable word will have at least one stressed syllable.
- Most one-syllable nouns, verbs, and adjectives are stressed.
- Most one-syllable pronouns, conjunctions, and prepositions are unstressed.

### ACTIVITY

1. Look at the stressed and unstressed syllables in the following verses from “Home”, co-written and performed by Dierks Bentley. Write a few lines that match the number of stressed and unstressed syllables in the example.

**W**est, on a **p**lane **b**ound **w**est

I **s**ee her **s**tretching **o**ut **b**elow

**L**and, **b**lessed **m**otherland

The **p**lace where I was **b**orn

**S**cars, **y**eah she's **g**ot her **s**cars

**S**ometimes it **s**tarts to **w**orry me

'Cause **l**ose, I **d**on't **w**anna **l**ose

**S**ight of who we **a**re

2. Pick a verse from a recorded song you like. Analyze the verses and note which syllables are stressed and unstressed. Write a new verse and indicate the stressed and unstressed syllables.