

Patina · Building English

Syllables & Stress

Every word has beats. Clap them and you can say any long word, one piece at a time. Then find the strong beat, the one thing that makes English sound like English.

★ what a syllable is · ★★ count the beats · ★★★ the strong beat · ★★★ write a haiku

A SYLLABLE IS A BEAT ★

Clap the word. One clap for each beat. Put your hand under your chin, it drops for each beat.

○ book 1 beat	○ ○ po · em 2 beats	○ ○ ○ li · bra · ry 3 beats	○ ○ ○ ○ lit · er · a · ture 4 beats
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COUNT THE BEATS ★★

Clap each word. Write how many beats you hear.

1 page	2 teacher	3 story
4 newspaper	5 magazine	6 dictionary

ONE BEAT IS STRONGER ★★★

In English one beat is louder and longer. The big circle is the strong beat. Say it big, and make the other beats small.

● ○ PO · em	● ○ ○ LI · bra · ry	○ ● ○ com · PU · ter
○ ○ ● mag · a · ZINE	○ ○ ● un · der · STAND	○ ○ ● ○ ed · u · CA · tion

WATCH OUT IN YOUR LANGUAGE

THE STRONG BEAT CAN CHANGE THE WORD ★★★

 RE · cord a thing that keeps information	≠	 re · CORD to save sound or video	≠	 PRE · sent a gift	≠	 pre · SENT to give or show something
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WRITE A HAIKU ★★★

A haiku is a poem counted in beats: 5, then 7, then 5. Count on your fingers. It does not rhyme.

I open my book
5

the words are a quiet road
7

I read them aloud
5

NOW WRITE YOUR OWN

5

7

5

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[Suggest a correction or improvement](#)