

## British English: Listening Comprehension 10

### *Dinner for Two*



(5:46)

In this video, David has another date with Julia. What I would like you to focus on as you listen to this video is how words in English are linked. In the exercises, *when you fill in the blanks, you will always have to write 2 words that, when spoken, are linked.*

But before we get to the questions, let's review some of the rules for linking in English speech rhythm...

- As you know, when a word ends in a consonant sound and the following word begins with a vowel sound, the two words are linked, for example: “send it” sounds like / sɛn dɪt /.
- In an earlier lesson, we saw that when a word ends in [d] or [t] and the following word begins with a /y/, these sounds combine to form a new sound. The combination of /d/ + /y/ sounds like the sound of the letter [j], for example: “could you” sounds like /cuju/ or /cudju/. The combination of /t/ + /y/ sounds like /ch/, for example: “want you” sounds like /wanchu/ or /wancha/.
- The next rule brings us back to the use of the [r] in British English. As you know, the British typically do not pronounce the [r], except when followed by a vowel, for example: “car park” sounds like /cä päk/ and “car is” sounds like /cä rɪz/. This occurs when the letter [r] is written. However, the British sometimes pronounce the /r/ when one isn't there. This is called the intrusive [r]. When a word ends in one of several vowel sounds—the schwa (as in *sofa*), the “aw” sound (as in *draw*), or the “ah” sound (as in *spa*)—and the following sound is another vowel, the British add an /r/ between the vowels sounds—even though the [r] is not written. Here are some examples with audio:
  - “The sofa is blue” sounds like /the sofa (r) is blue/
  - “I saw a film” sounds like /I saw (r) a film/.
  - “The spa is closed” sounds like /the spa (r) is closed/
- The next rule—in fact the next two rules—is similar to the previous one: a sound will be added between two vowel sounds. This time, the first vowel sound will be /ō/ or /ū/—as in *go* or *you*—

and the second is any other vowel sound. The sound injected between them is /w/, for example: “do it” sounds like /du wit/ and “How are you?” sounds like /how wahr you/.

- Finally, when the long /ē/ or the diphthong /ai/ comes before another vowel sound, the /y/ is inserted between them, for example: “my office” sounds like /mai yah fis/ and “tea and biscuits” sounds like /tee yan bis kits/.

Again, it is not necessary—nor do I (pronounced /du wai/) advise it—to try to change your pronunciation to sound more British. This info is (pronounced /info wiz/) presented to help you understand the Brits when you travel to England.

**Watch the video and answer the following questions. Then try the linking exercises.**

- 1) What was David preparing for dinner? \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) Why couldn't he serve that? \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) What does “hot” mean in the context of this video?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 4) What ingredients does Jane ask for?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 5) Below is a transcript of the video. Listen again—just the audio below—and fill in the blanks. Remember: you will always write 2 words.

**Helen (voice over):** David's preparing a romantic dinner for his girlfriend Julia. Unfortunately, \_\_\_\_\_ the world's most confident cook.

**Helen:** What is it?

**David:** It's Thai chicken with chili.

**Matt:** Mmm, I like Thai food.

**David:** Look, Julia will be here soon. \_\_\_\_\_ going out?

**Matt:** It's not very hot.

**David:** What do you mean? I put lots of chili \_\_\_\_\_.

**Helen:** Here, let me.

**Matt:** I'll get that.

**Helen:** Matt's right. It needs more chili powder.

**Matt:** David, it's Julia.

**David:** Hold on.

**Matt:** Julia's \_\_\_\_\_ the station. She's early.

**Helen:** Matt, no!

**David:** Hey, give that to me.

**Helen:** David, don't!

**David:** What's wrong?

**Helen:** I put some more chili powder in.

**Matt:** So did I. ... Too hot?

**David:** Of course it's too hot. Julia can't eat this and she'll be here in a \_\_\_\_\_ an hour.

**Helen:** I can't cook anything in 15 minutes.

**Matt:** Jane can! She's a fantastic cook.

**David:** Matt, Jane isn't here.

**Matt:** Then phone her.

[They call Jane, who is in yoga class.]

**Jane:** Sorry. Sorry. ... Hello?

**Helen:** Jane, it's Helen. We need your help.

**Jane:** What's wrong?

**Helen:** Julie is coming to dinner, and Matt ruined David's delicious Thai chicken.

**Jane:** Oh dear.

**Helen:** Well, can you think of something?

**Jane:** Is there any \_\_\_\_\_ the cupboard?

**Helen:** Pasta, pasta, yes, there's some pasta.

**Jane:** How much is there?

**Helen:** Half a kilo.

**Jane:** That's plenty. What about tuna?

**Helen:** There are two small tins. ... Matt, are there any mushrooms and onions?

**Matt:** Yes, \_\_\_\_\_.

**Helen:** We've got everything. ... OK, Matt, boil some water.

**David:** Can I do anything? ... It can't be her. It's only ten \_\_\_\_\_.

**Helen:** Don't worry, we can do this. ... What next? ... David, go!

[Julia arrives.]

**Julia:** This is nice.

**David:** Here, sit down. ... Would you like some wine?

**Julia:** Yes, please. ... Why \_\_\_\_\_ sit down?

**David:** I can't. First course.

**Julia:** Oh good, I'm really hungry.

[Scene cuts to Helen in the kitchen for just a moment.]

**Helen:** Fry the onions, yep.

**Julia:** That was delicious. What's the main course? I can't wait.

**David:** It's a surprise. Have some more wine.

**Julia:** Thank you. ... I had a really busy day today. Didn't have time for lunch. It's lovely to be here and have a quiet dinner and simply relax.

**David:** I'll just get the main course.

**Julia:** Great.

**David:** Here \_\_\_\_\_.

**Julia:** Thank you so much.

[Scene cuts to Helen in the kitchen.]

**Helen:** Thank Jane.

**David:** Jane?

**Jane:** Hi.

**David:** Jane, you're wonderful.

**Jane:** No problem. ... Thanks. Thanks.

[and back to the date.]

**David:** Ta-da!

**Julia:** How exciting!

**David:** What is it? It's called *pasta alla Giulia*.

**Julia:** Smells very good.

**David:** Oh, \_\_\_\_\_. I forgot the salad.

**Julia:** This is much nicer than a restaurant. It's more romantic.

**David:** And is the food better, too?

**Julia:** Possibly. Thanks. ... David, this is absolutely delicious. Can you give me the recipe?

**David:** The recipe? I can, but...

**Julia:** But what?

**David:** It's a family secret.

**Julia:** Oh, David, really?

**Helen (voice over):** Matt, Jane and I did a good job for David. Maybe we could open a restaurant.

Here are more examples of linked speech. Write what you hear.

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) \_\_\_\_\_
- 7) \_\_\_\_\_
- 8) \_\_\_\_\_
- 9) \_\_\_\_\_
- 10) \_\_\_\_\_
- 11) \_\_\_\_\_
- 12) \_\_\_\_\_
- 13) \_\_\_\_\_
- 14) \_\_\_\_\_
- 15) \_\_\_\_\_
- 16) \_\_\_\_\_
- 17) \_\_\_\_\_
- 18) \_\_\_\_\_
- 19) \_\_\_\_\_
- 20) \_\_\_\_\_
- 21) \_\_\_\_\_
- 22) \_\_\_\_\_
- 23) \_\_\_\_\_
- 24) \_\_\_\_\_
- 25) \_\_\_\_\_