

Tutor Come in ...

Amanda Hi.

T Oh hi, Amanda ... You've come to discuss your mid-term assignment, haven't you?

A Yes, that's right.

T So, what have you decided to do?

A Well, I thought I could base my study on pronunciation and get students to do some self-assessment of their own pronunciation skills.

T That's interesting. You mean get them to record themselves ...

A That's right ... then listen back and see where their weaknesses lie.

T Good idea. You could also do some peer evaluation.

A Oh yes ... see whether their assessment of themselves matches what their classmates think.

T Ah-hah. So, how are you planning to do the assignment?

A Well, I'm going to select a short extract from somewhere and ask them to read it aloud. Maybe something from one of the textbooks we're reading.

T Why don't you look up one of my lectures on the website and find a suitable extract there? That way, you'll be using authentic spoken language, rather than written text, and it will be a model for students to listen to.

A Oh yes, that's a much better idea. I'll still have to write it out, though, won't I?

T Yes – I don't think you can expect them to remember it. Even a sentence is hard to recall.

- A** No, and it isn't a memory test ... So when I choose the extract, what features do I need to think about?
- T** Um, first I'd say pick something ... well, something that's about a paragraph long but that makes sense out of the context of the lecture.
- A** Right – a clear, well-structured passage ...
- T** Yes, because to read something well, you've got to be able to understand it, haven't you?
- A** Yes, that might mean taking a while to make the selection ... I guess it shouldn't consist entirely of short words!
- T** No – that's an obvious one. You need to think about what features of pronunciation you're going to focus on. Then make sure that your extract has examples of these.
- A** So some multi-syllable words ... Things like *probably* and *approximately*.
- T** Yes – some challenges! And then there's sentence length.
- A** Mmm – I should include some complex sentences so that the students have to show they know where to pause.
- T** Exactly. I wouldn't worry about how many sentences there are – but what you do need are some obvious main points.
- A** So that they can stress things?
- T** Yes, particular words or phrases should stand out as significant. You know, we've already covered this in our classes over the weeks ...