

CHAPTER 6 Stress in Words with Suffixes

OBJECTIVES

In this chapter, you will learn:

- where to stress words with common suffixes.
- the pronunciation of longer, multisyllable words, especially academic, scientific, and technical terms.
- more about vowel sounds in stressed and unstressed syllables.

SUMMARY

Some common suffixes, such as *-er*, *-ment*, and *-able*, do not affect word stress:

em-**ploy** em-**ploy**-er em-**ploy**-ment em-**ploy**-a-ble

Other common suffixes, such as *-ic*, *-ity*, and *-ion*, shift the stress in predictable ways.

spe-ci-fy

spe-**ci**-fic

ma-jor

ma-**jor**-i-ty

ap-**ply**

ap-**pli**-ca-tion

As you learned in Chapter 5, the vowel sounds in stressed syllables are clear and long. The vowel sounds in unstressed syllables are usually short and reduced to the schwa /ə/ sound: *specific* /spə'sɪ fək/.

Notice

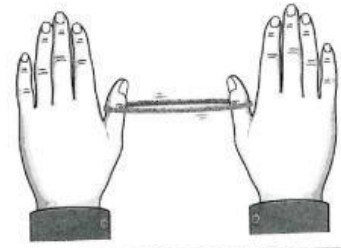
EXERCISE 1 **A**  Listen to the sets of words. Do you hear a pattern of stress in each set?
CD 2; Track 2

1	2	3	4
appli ca tion	curi o sity	strat e gic	volun te er
moti va tion	possi bi lity	spe ci fic	care er
res er vation	crea ti vity	elec t ric	engi ne er
indi ca tion	stab il ity	hist o ric	pion ee r

B  Listen again. Put a large dot over the stressed syllable in each word in part A. CD 2; Track 3

TIP ▼ Pronunciation and Physical Movement

Movement or physical activity can help reinforce the essential contrast between vowels that are stressed and lengthened and vowels that are unstressed and shortened. A wide, thick rubber band is an excellent tool for practicing stress and vowel length in this chapter.*



*Thanks to Judy Gilbert for this idea.

EXERCISE 2

A  Close your book and listen to a passage about a company that wants to send people to live on Mars. Notice the many academic words with suffixes.
CD 2; Track 4

B  Open your book and listen again. Complete the passage with words from the box. CD 2; Track 5

applications
creativity

flexibility
motivation

skeptical
stability

strategic
volunteers

A One-Way Ticket to Mars

Would you sign up for a one-way trip to Mars? A Dutch company called Mars One has developed a (1) _____ plan to send four humans to Mars by 2025. When the company put out a call for (2) _____, it received over 200,000 (3) _____ from around the world. Of those applicants, six teams of four people will be selected based on their (4) _____, (5) _____, (6) _____, health, and mental (7) _____. Some space experts are (8) _____ about the Mars One project, but the biggest concern by far is that there is no plan for the astronauts to return to Earth!