

# Pronunciation activities: Part 9

## by Adrian Tennant

Sound matters: /æ/ and /ʌ/

**Level:** All

**Target age:** Adults and teenagers

**Time needed:** 30–45 minutes

**Summary:** This lesson focuses on the distinction between the phonemes /æ/ and /ʌ/.

### Exercise 1

1. On the board write up the following two words: *cat* /kæt/ and *cut* /kʌt/.
2. Ask a few students to pronounce the two words.
3. If you need to, model the words and make sure students can hear the difference.
4. Explain that you will play a recording with seven sentences. The students' task is to listen and complete each sentence with the word they hear. They will be given a selection to choose from.
5. Get students to read the seven sentences on the worksheet.
6. Play the recording and get students to complete each sentence.
7. Put students in pairs and have them check.

**Key:**

1. *cut*; 2. *much*; 3. *began*; 4. *come*; 5. *such*;
6. *match*; 7. *run*

8. Play the recording again, pausing after each sentence.
9. Have students repeat the sentences they hear.
10. If necessary, drill each sentence to clarify the pronunciation.

**Audioscript:**

1. *I've got a really bad cut.*
2. *He really doesn't have much luck, does he?*
3. *The movie began at eight o'clock.*
4. *What time will you come?*
5. *It was such a lovely summer.*
6. *What time does the match start?*
7. *We've run out of time.*

### Exercise 2

1. Ask students to look at each set of words.
2. Play the recording and ask students to underline the /æ/ or /ʌ/sound in each word.
3. Play the recording again and ask students to circle

the word in each group that has a different sound from the other two words.

4. Check in pairs and then as a class.
5. Finally, practise saying the words.

**Key:**

1. c) does; 2. a) plastic; 3. b) back; 4. c) drunk;
5. b) stand; 6. b) bad

**Audioscript:**

1. *apple, happy, does*
2. *plastic, rung, lovely*
3. *blood, back, come*
4. *traffic, man, drunk*
5. *hurry, stand, up*
6. *much, bad, some*

### Exercise 3

1. Ask students to read the tongue twister while you play the recording.
2. Play the recording again, stopping after each line and ask students to repeat what they hear.
3. Ask students to say the tongue twister.
4. Play the recording again with the students saying it at the same time.

**Audioscript:**

*Sam's an angry man stuck in a bad traffic jam.  
Justine's a happy lass lapping up some summer sun.*

### Extra activity: Sound tennis

1. Demonstrate the game. Say /æ/, and students have three seconds to say a word containing that sound. Now say /ʌ/ and again give them three seconds to come up with a word.
2. Put students in pairs.
3. Tell them to take turns challenging their partner by saying a sound and getting their partner to say a word with that sound in it.
4. Students must not repeat words.
5. Monitor and help when students disagree.

## Worksheet

### Exercise 1



Listen and complete each sentence with one word from the box.

Be careful! There are four extra words.

began begun came cat come cut match much ran run such

1. I've got a really bad \_\_\_\_\_.
2. He really doesn't have \_\_\_\_\_ luck, does he?
3. The movie \_\_\_\_\_ at eight o'clock.
4. What time will you \_\_\_\_\_?
5. It was \_\_\_\_\_ a lovely summer.
6. What time does the \_\_\_\_\_ start?
7. We've \_\_\_\_\_ out of time.



Listen again and repeat each sentence.

### Exercise 2



Listen to the words. Underline the /æ/ or circle the /ʌ/ sound in each word and then circle the word that has a different sound from the other two in each group.

- |    |            |          |           |
|----|------------|----------|-----------|
| 1. | a) apple   | b) happy | c) does   |
| 2. | a) plastic | b) rung  | c) lovely |
| 3. | a) blood   | b) back  | c) come   |
| 4. | a) traffic | b) man   | c) drunk  |
| 5. | a) hurry   | b) stand | c) up     |
| 6. | a) much    | b) bad   | c) some   |

### Exercise 3



Sam's an angry man stuck in a bad traffic jam,  
Justine's a happy lass lapping up some summer sun.