📝 Mastering Sounds Through Practice: Why Phonetic Exercises Matter

Diacritical marks (those small symbols above or below letters) help us know exactly how to pronounce a word. By learning and practicing these symbols, students can improve spelling, pronunciation, and confidence when reading or using a dictionary.

# 🎯 Why Learn Diacritical Marks?

- Say any word correctly using a dictionary
- Spell better by hearing and breaking down sounds
- Understand how letters change sounds in different words
- Build confidence decoding unfamiliar or big words

# 🧠 The Big Idea

To really master spelling and pronunciation, you need to:
- Hear sounds clearly
- Understand their written symbols
- Learn patterns and rules
It’s like learning the secret code of English.

# 🔧 Practice Exercise: Train Your Ear and Brain

1. Open a dictionary (or use an online one with phonetic spelling).

2. Choose 10 random words.

3. Create two columns:
 - Column A: Normal word (e.g., machine)
 - Column B: Phonetic spelling (e.g., mə-shēn)

4. Cover one column and try to recreate the other.

5. Don’t memorize—use rules and patterns you’ve learned to figure them out.

# 🗝️ Pro Tips for Learning

- Check the dictionary’s key often (usually on the bottom of the page or in the front).

- Read the front section of the dictionary—it explains every sound.

- Some sounds have more than one symbol depending on the letter. That’s okay!

- For this course, we use one symbol per sound to keep it simple.

# ✅ Practice: Try It Yourself

Pick 3–5 favorite or interesting words. Write the phonetic form using marks you’ve learned.

Example: machine → /mə-shēn/

Example: rabbit → /răb-ĭt/

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ → \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ → \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ → \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ → \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ → \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_