HOW TO ENGLISH / GAV & EM

Rice or lice?

A2–B1 / Teens and adults / 25 minutes / Listening and pair speaking

1 One sound changes the message

R

RICE

A grain you can cook and eat.

L

LICE

Tiny insects that can live in hair.

Listen to the first eight seconds of the Gav & Em clip. Which word is food? Which word might someone hear by mistake? Tell your partner why the difference matters.

2 Hear the first sound

Circle the word you hear. Listen to all six words, then check with a partner. Ask to hear one difficult item again.

1 rice / lice

2 right / light

3 road / load

4 light / right

5 load / road

6 lice / rice

Try the mouth positions

/l/ Lightly touch the ridge just behind your top teeth with the tip of your tongue. **/r/** For the model used here, keep your tongue from touching that ridge and round your lips slightly if it helps.

3 Say it and check what your partner heard

Silently choose one word from each pair in Activity 2. Say three words. Your partner points to what they heard. If it's different from your choice, reset your tongue and say the word again. Swap roles.

Send the right message

Student page 2 / Pair speaking and a new listening check

4 Pass on a voice message

Take turns. The speaker chooses one word from each line in their box. Keep your choices hidden. Say “My first word is … My second word is …” Your partner writes both and reads them back.

Student A · Choose one

1 rice / lice

2 right / light

Student B · Choose one

1 road / load

2 light / right

What I heard

If you’re unsure, ask “Could you say that again?” Then check the meaning. For example, “Do you mean the food?” After checking, use one of your words in a real request or question.

5 Before you go

Listen to two new words. Circle what you hear.

1 rock / lock **2** lock / rock

One-minute home practice

Record “turn right” and “turn on the light”. Listen back. Say each phrase again with a clear first sound, then record both in a new sentence.

Teacher notes and answers

Aim / Hear and produce a useful /r/ and /l/ contrast at the start of words

1 Set the scene · 4 min

Play 0:00–0:08 of the Gav & Em clip. For a first listen, hide the captioned video. Key: **rice** is food. **Lice** is the word someone might hear by mistake. Discuss the words without singling anyone out.

2 Check hearing · 5 min

Read the six words below at a natural pace. Keep your mouth out of view during the first read. Give thinking time, then repeat once. Ask learners to show their own answers before pair feedback.

Script and key 1 rice 2 light 3 road 4 right 5 load 6 lice

3 Model and retry · 6 min

Model **light** and **right** slowly. Show the tongue position for /l/ and contrast it with your /r/. If learners miss the words in Activity 2, practise hearing before speaking. If they hear the contrast but their partner misses it, model the mouth position and retry in a short phrase.

4 Pass on a voice message · 7 min

Have pairs shield their choices or sit back to back. The listener reads back both words. If they differ, ask the speaker to repeat the whole phrase before isolating the first sound. Elicit a real request such as “Could you turn on the light?” In one-to-one lessons, take the other role.

5 Check with fresh words · 3 min

Say **1 lock** and **2 rock**. Then ask each learner to say one of the two without showing which. Their partner identifies it. Note whether the next step is listening, articulation or using the sound in a phrase.

If /r/ and /l/ are already clear, reuse the same sequence with another initial sound contrast that changes meaning for your learners.