

If you can pronounce correctly every word in this poem, you will be speaking English better than 90% of the native English speakers in the world. After trying the verses, a Frenchman said he'd prefer six months of hard labor to reading six lines aloud.

Dearest creature in creation,

Study English pronunciation.

I will teach you in my verse

Sounds like corpse, corps, horse, and worse.

I will keep you, Suzy, busy,

Make your head with heat grow dizzy.

Tear in eye, your dress will tear.

So shall I! Oh hear my prayer.

Just compare heart, beard, and heard,

Dies and diet, lord and word,

Sword and sward, retain and Britain.

(Mind the latter, how it's written.)

Now I surely will not plague you

With such words as plaque and ague.

But be careful how you speak:

Say break and steak, but bleak and streak;

Cloven, oven, how and low,

Script, receipt, show, poem, and toe.

Hear me say, devoid of trickery,

Daughter, laughter, and Terpsichore,

Typhoid, measles, topsails, aisles,

Exiles, similes, and reviles;

Scholar, vicar, and cigar,

Solar, mica, war and far;

One, anemone, Balmoral,

Kitchen, lichen, laundry, laurel;

Gertrude, German, wind and mind,

Scene, Melpomene, mankind.

Billet does not rhyme with ballet,

Bouquet, wallet, mallet, chalet.

Blood and flood are not like food,

Nor is mould like should and would.

Viscous, viscount, load and broad,

Toward, to forward, to reward.

And your pronunciation's OK

When you correctly say croquet,

Rounded, wounded, grieve and sieve,

Friend and fiend, alive and live.

Ivy, privy, famous; clamour

And enamour rhyme with hammer.

River, rival, tomb, bomb, comb,

Doll and roll and some and home.

Stranger does not rhyme with anger,

Neither does devour with clangour.

Souls but foul, haunt but aunt,

Font, front, wont, want, grand, and grant,

Shoes, goes, does. Now first say finger,

And then singer, ginger, linger,

Real, zeal, mauve, gauze, gouge and gauge,

Marriage, foliage, mirage, and age.