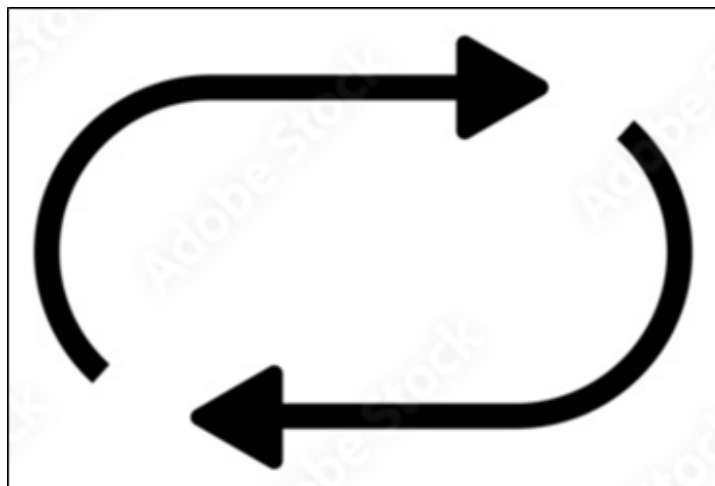


PLAY IT AGAIN...AND AGAIN...AND AGAIN!

Samples of different dialects are everywhere. And thanks to the voice memo app that comes with your smartphone, you can capture soundbites of any accent you may encounter anytime, anyplace, anywhere—even if you don't have reception!

Once you find the audio sound bites you want to perfect, make them “a thing.” Import them into an audio program. Some like **Audacity** are available to download for free on a PC or Mac. You can paste the audio and create a playback loop to hear the sound on repeat. Coaches often refer to this snippet as a “springboard” or a “way in” to an accent.



FIVE STEPS TO WORKING WITH YOUR SPRINGBOARD

- 1) **Listen only**—Just take in the sounds without thinking too critically about them. Do this 10-20 times, or more, until you feel you've gotten the feel for it.
- 2) **Transcribe the script and analyze**—Write out the script word-by-word and start making notes on it—about the consonants, vowels, interesting

phonological patterns, intonation, rhythm, and anything unexpected. Do this as many times as you need to capture the notes effectively, in a way that you can easily access it. If you know IPA symbols, this is a great time to incorporate that skill.

3) **Repeat quietly**—Say the words along with the speaker by reading your script. Try to copy the speed, pitch, and anything else you can mimic. Make sure you can hear the voice louder than yours. Think of this as your best imitation—as if you get a point for everything you copied accurately—even if it feels a little silly. Do this 10-20 times or until you feel like your progress has plateaued.

4) **Repeat loudly**—Do the same as the above, but match the volume of the speaker. You should now sound very confident from practicing in Step 3! Do this until you feel you've pretty much memorized it.

5) **Repeat without the audio**—Do the same as the above, but without the audio! You now have the script, your notations, and your very crisp, clear memory of the authentic speaker.

BONUS TIP:

To take on a larger project, but avoid having to transcribe it all, find a famous speech that has already been written and published on the Internet. Or use music and the corresponding lyrics. Use the same method – but for Step 5, you could go on YouTube and find a karaoke version of the song to practice. Rap music will be better for copying intonation (since intonation and tone are affected by a song's melody).

