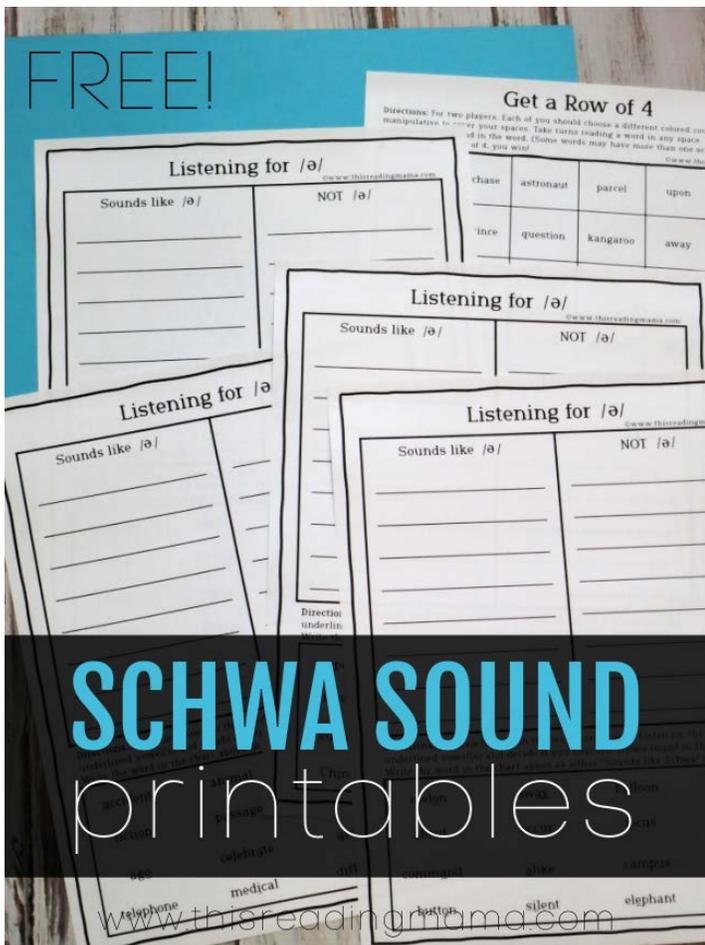


# Listening for & Identifying the Schwa Sound



These schwa sorts and games are an easy, NO PREP way to help your learners practice listening for and identifying the schwa sound in words.

**Not too sure about schwa?**

Be sure to visit [my blog post](#) for an explanation of what schwa is (and isn't).

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If you have any learners who are struggling to identify accented *and* unaccented syllables, visit this blog post for some helpful tips:

<https://thisreadingmama.com/identify-accented-syllables/>

Helping Readers  
**Identify  
Accented  
Syllables**

*this Reading mama*



# SCHWA Sorts

# Listening for /ə/

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Sounds like /ə/	NOT /ə/
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

**Directions:** Read each word in the word bank below. Listen for the sound of the underlined vowel(s) and decide if you hear the schwa sound in that syllable. Write the word in the chart above as either “Sounds like Schwa” or “NOT Schwa.”

<u>u</u> pon	co <u>a</u>	at <u>a</u> s	pres <u>i</u> dent
trav <u>e</u> l	it <u>e</u> m	pan <u>a</u> da	zebr <u>a</u>
suppl <u>y</u>	ba <u>r</u> gain	sal <u>a</u> d	dec <u>i</u> mal
Ch <u>i</u> na	fest <u>i</u> val	med <u>i</u> um	amaz <u>e</u>

# Listening for /ə/

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Sounds like /ə/	NOT /ə/
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

**Directions:** Read each word in the word bank below. Listen for the sound of the underlined vowel(s) and decide if you hear the schwa sound in that syllable. Write the word in the chart above as either “Sounds like Schwa” or “NOT Schwa.”

melon	away	balloon	ninja
about	occur	focus	idea
command	alike	campus	alone
jacket	silent	elephant	bottom

# Listening for /ə/

©www.thisreadingmama.com

Sounds like /ə/	NOT /ə/
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

**Directions:** Read each word in the word bank below. Listen for the sound of the underlined vowel(s) and decide if you hear the schwa sound in that syllable. Write the word in the chart above as either “Sounds like Schwa” or “NOT Schwa.”

<u>a</u> ccident	an <u>i</u> mal	cous <u>i</u> n	focus
fiction <u>o</u> n	opt <u>o</u> ion	o <u>o</u> ccur	en <u>e</u> my
ago <u>o</u>	celebr <u>a</u> te	aw <u>a</u> y	gall <u>o</u> n
teleph <u>o</u> ne	medic <u>a</u> l	diffic <u>i</u> l	sugg <u>e</u> st

# Listening for /ə/

©www.thisreadingmama.com

Sounds like /ə/	NOT /ə/
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

**Directions:** Read each word in the word bank below. Listen for the sound of the underlined vowel(s) and decide if you hear the schwa sound in that syllable. Write the word in the chart above as either “Sounds like Schwa” or “NOT Schwa.”

problem	aware	confess	blanket
reason	freedom	alphabet	enemy
actual	able	around	dinosaur
family	attain	thousand	medium

# SCHWA Games

# Get a Row of 4

**Directions:** For two players. Each of you should choose a different colored counter or manipulative to cover your spaces. Take turns reading a word in any space. Tell where the schwa sound is found in the word. (Some words may have more than one schwa sound!)

When you get a row of 4, you win!

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supply	purchase	astronaut	parcel	upon	magazine
ribbon	convince	question	kangaroo	away	balloon
octopus	campus	attention	command	amount	nickel
little	trampoline	banana	alphabet	afraid	support
xylophone	across	ago	uniform	human	cheetah
camel	direction	iguana	agree	gravel	animal
rocket	account	tomato	envelope	dragon	confess
occur	candle	aware	shovel	harmony	question

# Get a Row of 4

**Directions:** For two players. Each of you should choose a different colored counter or manipulative to cover your spaces. Take turns reading a word in any space. Tell where the schwa sound is found in the word. (Some words may have more than one schwa sound!)

When you get a row of 4, you win!

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against	captain	suggest	funnel	syringe	television
carrot	helmet	problem	award	puddle	manatee
season	alone	magnet	policy	bacon	fountain
middle	friction	eleven	carnival	afford	rabbit
lawful	elevator	around	astronaut	pasta	council
America	lion	decision	company	gorilla	carpet
morsel	action	decimal	racket	travel	suppose
cavity	vinyl	media	opossum	paragraph	legal

# ANSWER KEYS

# Listening for /ə/

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Sounds like /ə/	NOT /ə/
<u>u</u> pon	su <u>p</u> ply
tr <u>a</u> vel	Ch <u>i</u> na
it <u>e</u> m	co <u>l</u> a
fest <u>i</u> val	ba <u>r</u> gain
at <u>a</u> s	pa <u>n</u> da
sal <u>a</u> d	me <u>d</u> ium
pres <u>i</u> dent	de <u>c</u> imal
zebr <u>a</u>	amaz <u>e</u>

**Directions:** Read each word in the word bank below. Listen for the sound of the underlined vowel(s) and decide if you hear the schwa sound in that syllable. Write the word in the chart above as either "Sounds like Schwa" or "NOT Schwa."

<u>u</u> pon	co <u>l</u> a	at <u>a</u> s	pres <u>i</u> dent
tr <u>a</u> vel	it <u>e</u> m	pa <u>n</u> da	zebr <u>a</u>
su <u>p</u> ply	ba <u>r</u> gain	sal <u>a</u> d	de <u>c</u> imal
Ch <u>i</u> na	fest <u>i</u> val	me <u>d</u> ium	amaz <u>e</u>

# Listening for /ə/

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Sounds like /ə/	NOT /ə/
<u>melon</u>	<u>about</u>
<u>jacket</u>	<u>command</u>
<u>occur</u>	<u>away</u>
<u>alike</u>	<u>silent</u>
<u>balloon</u>	<u>focus</u>
<u>campus</u>	<u>ninja</u>
<u>elephant</u>	<u>alone</u>
<u>idea</u>	<u>bottom</u>

**Directions:** Read each word in the word bank below. Listen for the sound of the underlined vowel(s) and decide if you hear the schwa sound in that syllable. Write the word in the chart above as either “Sounds like Schwa” or “NOT Schwa.”

<u>melon</u>	<u>away</u>	<u>balloon</u>	<u>ninja</u>
<u>about</u>	<u>occur</u>	<u>focus</u>	<u>idea</u>
<u>command</u>	<u>alike</u>	<u>campus</u>	<u>alone</u>
<u>jacket</u>	<u>silent</u>	<u>elephant</u>	<u>bottom</u>

# Listening for /ə/

©www.thisreadingmama.com

Sounds like /ə/	NOT /ə/
<u>fiction</u>	<u>accident</u>
<u>animal</u>	<u>ago</u>
<u>medical</u>	<u>telephone</u>
<u>cousin</u>	<u>option</u>
<u>occur</u>	<u>celebrate</u>
<u>away</u>	<u>difficult</u>
<u>focus</u>	<u>enemy</u>
<u>suggest</u>	<u>gallon</u>

**Directions:** Read each word in the word bank below. Listen for the sound of the underlined vowel(s) and decide if you hear the schwa sound in that syllable. Write the word in the chart above as either “Sounds like Schwa” or “NOT Schwa.”

<u>accident</u>	<u>animal</u>	<u>cousin</u>	<u>focus</u>
<u>fiction</u>	<u>option</u>	<u>occur</u>	<u>enemy</u>
<u>ago</u>	<u>celebrate</u>	<u>away</u>	<u>gallon</u>
<u>telephone</u>	<u>medical</u>	<u>difficult</u>	<u>suggest</u>

# Listening for /ə/

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Sounds like /ə/	NOT /ə/
reason	problem
actual	family
freedom	aware
attain	able
confess	alphabet
around	blanket
thousand	dinosaur
enemy	medium

**Directions:** Read each word in the word bank below. Listen for the sound of the underlined vowel(s) and decide if you hear the schwa sound in that syllable. Write the word in the chart above as either "Sounds like Schwa" or "NOT Schwa."

problem	aware	confess	blanket
reason	freedom	alphabet	enemy
actual	able	around	dinosaur
family	attain	thousand	medium

# Get a Row of 4 ANSWER KEY

Directions: For two players. Each of you should choose a different colored counter or

**Note: Schwa vowels are red & underlined in each word below.**

When you get a row of 4, you win!

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supply	purchase	astronaut	parcel	upon	magazine
ribbon	convince	question	kangaroo	away	balloon
octopus	campus	attention	command	amount	nickel
little	trampoline	banana	alphabet	afraid	support
xylophone	across	ago	uniform	human	cheetah
camel	direction	iguana	agree	gravel	animal
rocket	account	tomato	envelope	dragon	confess
occur	candle	aware	shovel	harmony	question

# Get a Row of 4

Directions: For two players. Each of you should choose a different colored counter or

**Note: Schwa vowels are red & underlined in each word below.**

When you get a row of 4, you win!

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<u>a</u> gainst	capt <u>a</u> in	s <u>u</u> ggest	fun <u>n</u> el	s <u>y</u> ringe	tele <u>v</u> ision
car <u>r</u> ot	hel <u>m</u> et	prob <u>l</u> em	<u>a</u> ward	pudd <u>l</u> e <sup>ə</sup>	man <u>a</u> tee
seas <u>o</u> n	<u>a</u> lone	magn <u>e</u> t	pol <u>i</u> cy	ba <u>c</u> on	fount <u>a</u> in
mid <u>d</u> le <sup>ə</sup>	frict <u>i</u> on	elev <u>e</u> n	carn <u>i</u> val	<u>a</u> fford	rabb <u>i</u> t
lawf <u>u</u> l	elev <u>a</u> tor	<u>a</u> round	astr <u>o</u> naut	past <u>a</u>	counc <u>i</u> l
<u>A</u> meric <u>a</u>	li <u>o</u> n	decis <u>i</u> on	comp <u>a</u> ny	gorill <u>a</u>	carpet <u>e</u>
mors <u>e</u> l	act <u>i</u> on	dec <u>i</u> mal	racket <u>e</u> t	trav <u>e</u> l	s <u>u</u> ppose
cav <u>i</u> ty	vinyl	medi <u>a</u>	<u>o</u> poss <u>u</u> m	par <u>a</u> graph	leg <u>a</u> l

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