Schwa Exercise

A What is schwa? Answer true or false

1. Schwa sounds like a grunt or short burp. ☐ ☐
2. The phonetic symbol for schwa is /ə/. ☐ ☐
3. It is essential to use schwa for people to understand you. ☐ ☐
4. Nearly all English teachers know about schwa. ☐ ☐
5. Knowing about schwa helps English students improve their listening skills. ☐ ☐
6. Native speakers use it more than people who learn English when adults. ☐ ☐
7. Many auxiliary verbs contain schwa in affirmative sentences but not in short answers (e.g. can). ☐ ☐
8. Schwa makes native spoken English difficult to understand. ☐ ☐
9. Using schwa makes you speak more slowly. ☐ ☐
10. It’s impossible for a stressed syllable to contain schwa. ☐ ☐

B Underline the syllable that contains schwa in each word or phrase.

1. ago
2. mother
3. The man
4. Fish and chips
5. Oh no. Not again.
6. What’s for lunch?
7. He can play football.
8. Look at that funny man.
9. What’s it all about then?
10. I’m sorry but she’s not in.
11. Did they go to New York?
12. She can’t come from Sydney.
13. Can she come back tomorrow?

C Circle all the prepositions in B. What do you notice?
Answers
A
1-T  2-T  3-F  4-F  5-T  6-T  7-T  8-T  9-F  10-T
B
1 ago
2 mother
3 The man
4 Fish and chips
5 Oh no. Not again.
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