

ORTHOEPIC TRIFECTA (GĪRL, CŪRL, PĒARL) • SYNTAX RECONSTRUCTION

Wheeler Page 61 • 26px Baseline Standard

1. Orthoepic Discovery • Browning Dictation & The Rhyme Trifecta

Lesson 111 • /ɜ:r/ Equivalence

Wheeler's Orthoepic Directive: "Write the following lines from dictation, and put the proper mark over *i* in **gĭrl**; *u* in **cŭrl**; and *e* in **pĕarl**. As these three words rhyme, you will see that these three vowel sounds are nearly alike."

"See the little boys and **girls**,
With rosy cheeks and flaxen **curls**,
And sparkling eyes and teeth like **pearls**."
— ROBERT BROWNING (PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN)

Listen to Lyric

gĭrl

/gɜ:r/

Sound of ĭ as in *sir* • Mark tilde (~)

cŭrl

/kɜ:r/

Sound of ŭ as in *fur* • Mark circumflex (^)

pĕarl

/pɜ:r/

Sound of ĕ as in *her* • Mark tilde (~)

Write Browning's complete poem from teacher dictation on the standard 26px lines below:

3 Lines • 26px Baseline • 13px Dashed Midline

2. Syntax Architecture • Sentence Unscrambling & Punctuation Law

Lesson 112 • Capital Letters & Final Marks

Wheeler's Syntax Directive: "Arrange these words to form three sentences. Remember to begin each sentence with a capital letter. If your sentence asks a question, what kind of a mark should follow it?"

1. winds with the out play at waves are the

Punctuation: [.] or [?]

2. bring the flowers for thirsting showers clouds the

Punctuation: [.] or [?]

3. blue where the beautiful are violets

Punctuation: [.] or [?]

1. Orthoepic & Morphological Matrix (Lessons 111 & 112)

PHONOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

WORD	BASE IPA	WEBSTER MARK	PHONETIC CLASSIFICATION	ORTHOEPIC & ETYMOLOGICAL INSIGHT
girl	/gɜ:rɪ/	gīrl	Tilde Over i (i)	Middle English <i>girle/gerle</i> (young person). Sound of <i>ī</i> as in <i>sir</i> ; vocalic r-merger.
curl	/kɜ:rɪ/	cūrl	Circumflex Over u (û)	Middle English <i>crul</i> (r-metathesis). Sound of <i>û</i> as in <i>fur</i> , <i>burn</i> ; merged phoneme.
pearl	/pɜ:rɪ/	pēarl	Tilde Over e (ē)	Old French <i>perle</i> . Digraph <i>ea</i> represents the sound of <i>ē</i> as in <i>her</i> , <i>fern</i> ; silent <i>a</i> .
flaxen	/ˈflæksən/	flāx'en	Short ä + Suffix -en	Base <i>flax</i> + adjective suffix <i>-en</i> (made of / resembling flax fibre; pale yellow).
sparkling	/ˈspɑ:rkɪŋ/	spārk'ling	Italian ä + Suffix -ing	Frequentative verb <i>sparkle</i> with dropping of silent <i>e</i> before inflection <i>-ing</i> .
cheeks	/tʃi:ks/	chēeks	Digraph ee (/i:/)	Old English <i>cēace</i> . Voiceless affricate <i>ch</i> (/tʃ/) + long <i>ēe</i> + plural <i>-s</i> (/s/).
thirsting	/ˈθɜ:rstɪŋ/	thīrst'ing	Tilde Over i (i)	Old English <i>thyrstan</i> . Shelley lyric allusion; participle modifying <i>flowers</i> .
showers	/ˈʃauərz/	show'ers	Diphthong ow (/au/)	Old English <i>scūr</i> . Plural noun with voiced inflectional suffix <i>-s</i> (/z/).
clouds	/klaudz/	clōuds	Diphthong ou (/au/)	Old English <i>clūd</i> (mass of rock). Plural noun with voiced suffix <i>-s</i> (/z/).
violets	/ˈvaɪələts/	vī'o-lēts	Trisyllable • Long ī	Old French <i>violette</i> , diminutive of Latin <i>viola</i> . Open initial syllable with long <i>/aɪ/</i> .

§ 1. The Great Merger of R-Controlled Vowels (/ɜ:r/)

Why do *girl*, *curl*, *pearl* rhyme perfectly when spelled with different vowels?

- Historic Distinctness:** In Middle English, *i* (/ɪr/), *u* (/ʊr/), and *e/ea* (/ɛr/) sounded distinct. By the 17th century, they merged into one identical central vowel /ɜ:r/.
- Wheeler's Orthoepic Purpose:** Wheeler assigns specific diacritics (tilde *ī*, circumflex *û*, tilde *ē*) so pupils recognize their phonetic identity while mastering their distinct historical spellings!

§ 2. Sentence Architecture & Punctuation Law

How does syntax govern capital letters and terminal marks?

- Declarative Architecture (Sentences 1 & 2):** Statements of fact or nature start with a capital letter and terminate in a **period (.)**.
- Interrogative Inversion (Sentence 3):** A sentence opening with an interrogative adverb (*Where*) and inverted copular verb (*are*) demands a **question mark (?)**.

2. Solved Syntax Reconstruction & Grammatical Anatomy (Lesson 112)

MASTER KEY SOLUTIONS

1. "The winds are out at play with the waves." [Declarative • Ends with Period .]

Anatomy: Subject: *The winds* • Predicate: *are out at play* (idiomatic state) • Prepositional phrase: *with the waves*. Natural personification.

2. "The clouds bring showers for the thirsting flowers." [Declarative • Ends with Period .]

Anatomy: Subject: *The clouds* • Transitive verb: *bring* • Direct object: *showers* • Prepositional modifier: *for the thirsting flowers*. (Allusion to Shelley's *The Cloud*).

3. "Where are the beautiful blue violets?" [Interrogative • Ends with Question Mark ?]

Anatomy: Interrogative adverb: *Where* • Inverted copular verb: *are* • Expanded noun phrase: *the beautiful blue violets*. Must close with question mark (?).

⚠ Common Pupil Pitfalls & Remediation

- Diacritic Confusion:** Confusing tilde (~) with macron (ˉ) or breve (˘). Teach: "Tilde waves like water over *i* and *e* before *r*."
- Punctuation Neglect:** Omitting the terminal period or question mark. Drill: "A sentence without a final mark is like a train without a caboose!"
- Capitalization Lapse:** Forgetting to capitalize *Where* or *The* after unscrambling words.

✓ Socratic Discussion Prompts

- Rhyme Inquiry:** "Close your eyes and listen: *girl*, *curl*, *pearl*. What do they have in common? Why are they spelled with different vowels?"
- Punctuation Test:** "Read Sentence 3 out loud. Does your voice rise at the end? Is it telling us something, or asking us something?"
- Poetic Observation:** "In Browning's poem, what are *curls* made of? (Flaxen). What are teeth compared to? (Pearls)."

📊 Evaluative Scoring Rubric (20 Points Total)

1. Trifecta Marks (5 pts)

Accurately places tilde over *i* in *girl*, circumflex over *u* in *curl*, and tilde over *e* in *pearl*.

2. Browning Dictation (5 pts)

Flawless transcription of the 3-line Browning lyric with correct punctuation, rhythm, and capitalization.

3. Syntax Unscramble (5 pts)

Reconstructs all three sentences with idiomatic English word order and proper capitalization of initial words.

4. Penmanship (5 pts)

Strict adherence to 26px baseline; lowercase letters touch 13px dashed midline; terminal marks properly placed.