



VOWELS





VOWELS AND CONSONANTS

Speech sounds are divided into vowels and consonants.

Vowels can be divided into **pure vowels** (**monophthong**) and **diphthongs** (and possibly **trithongs**).

Vowels and consonants differ in **distribution** and **production**.

In terms of distribution, the vowel is in the center of the syllable and the consonant either precedes or follows the vowel.

Difference between Vowels and Consonants

Vowels	Consonants
are produced with no obstruction in the vocal tract	are produced with a narrow or complete closure in the vocal tract.
are more sonorous	are less sonorous
are voiced	are either voiced or voiceless
are syllabic	are generally not syllabic

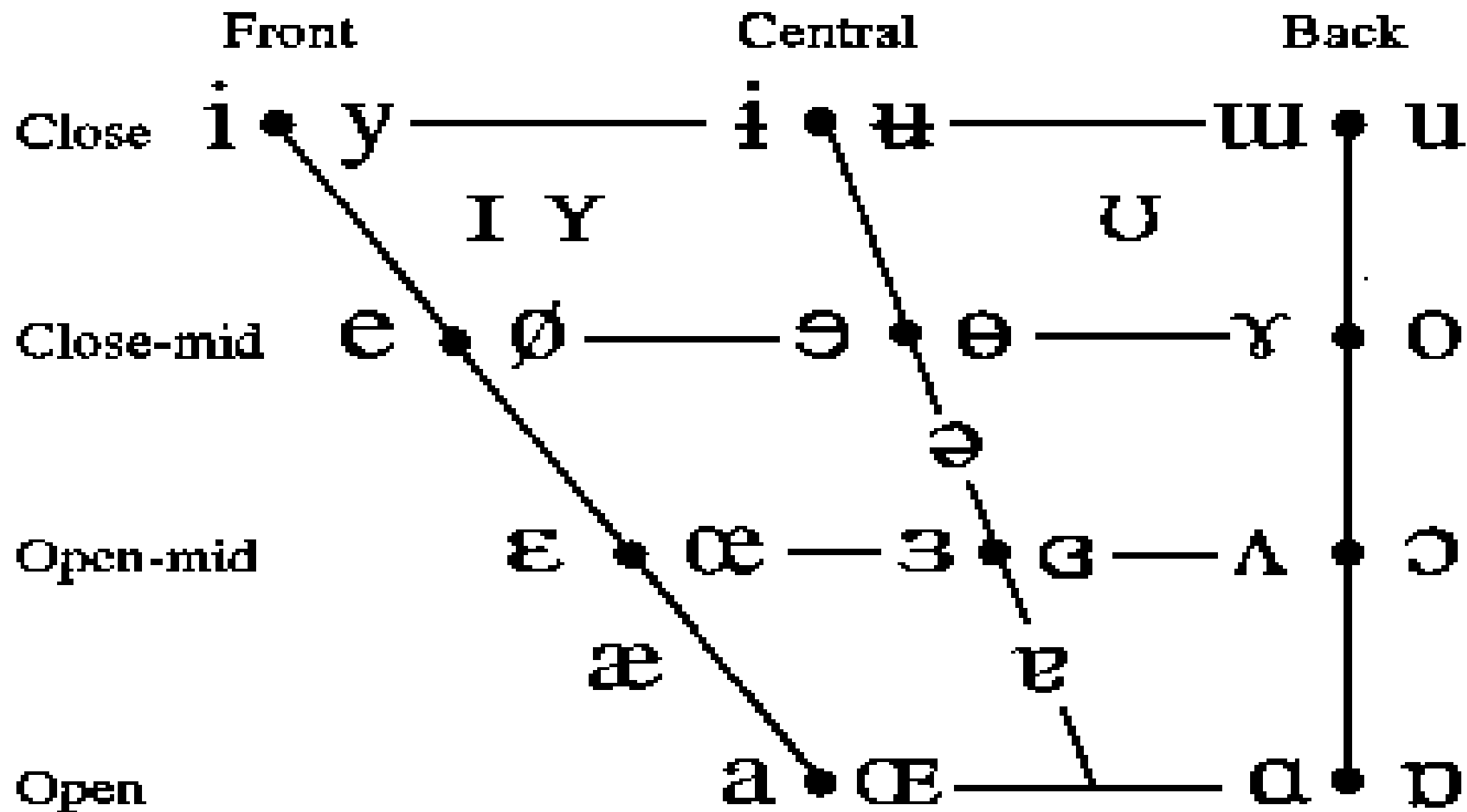


ENGLISH VOWELS

Cardinal vowels



VOWELS



Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the right represents a rounded vowel.

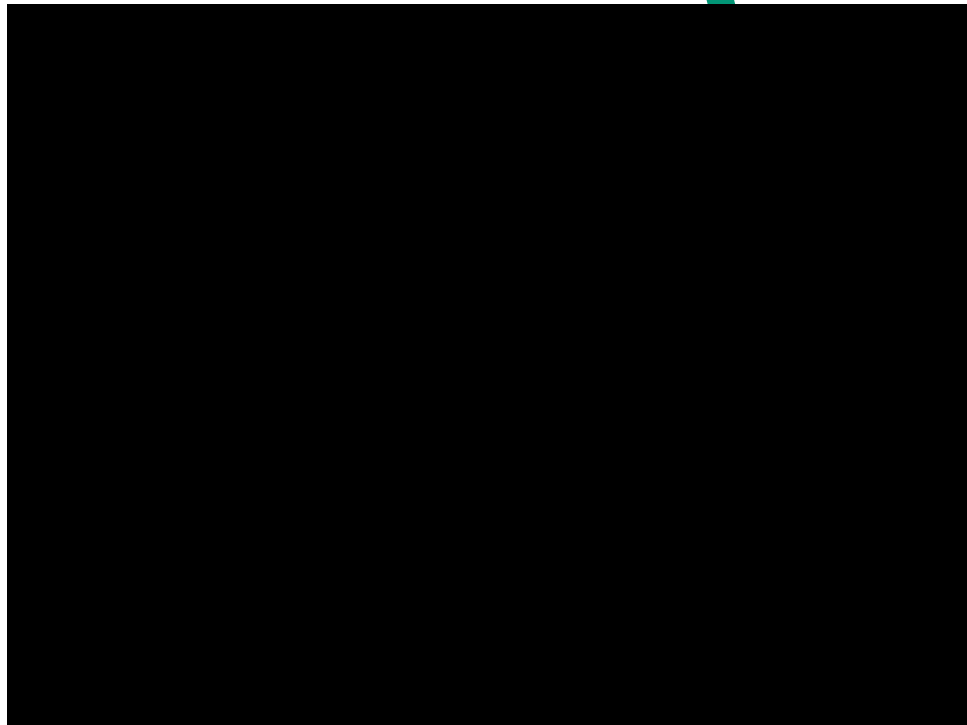


ENGLISH VOWELS

- Cardinal vowels are a set of reference vowels that have predetermined phonetic values




Video : The Cardinal Vowels



Cardinal	IPA	Description
1	[i]	close front unrounded vowel
2	[e]	close-mid front unrounded vowel
3	[ɛ]	open-mid front unrounded vowel
4	[a]	open front unrounded vowel
5	[ɑ]	open back unrounded vowel
6	[ɔ]	open-mid back rounded vowel
7	[o]	close-mid back rounded vowel
8	[u]	close back rounded vowel
9	[y]	close front rounded vowel
10	[ø]	close-mid front rounded vowel
11	[œ]	open-mid front rounded vowel
12	[ɶ]	open front rounded vowel
13	[ɒ]	open back rounded vowel
14	[ʌ]	open-mid back unrounded vowel
15	[ɤ]	close-mid back unrounded vowel
16	[ɯ]	close back unrounded vowel
17	[ɨ]	Close central unrounded vowel

English pure vowels

A vowel is defined as a voiced sound in which the air has a free passage through the mouth, and does not produce any audible friction



A pure vowel is an unchanging sound in the pronunciation of which the organs of speech do not perceptibly change the position throughout the duration of the vowel in a syllable

The raised part of the tongue

- According to which part of the tongue is raised of tongue is raised towards the roof of the mouth), vowels can be **front, central or back**



Front Vowels



There are four front vowels in the English language in the production of which the front of the tongue is raised in the direction of the hard palate.




The front vowels are: /i:/ , /ɪ/ , /e/ and /æ/

Central Vowels



There are vowels intermediate between front and back. We call them **central** vowel sounds. In the articulation of these sounds, the **center (or middle) of the tongue is raised toward the palate**




The central vowels are /ɜ:/ (as in *bird, shirt*), /ə/ (as in *again, along*) and /ʌ/ (as in *sun, run*)

Back Vowels



There are five back vowels in the production of which the back of the tongue is raised in the direction of the soft palate.



The back vowels are: /u:/ (as in *shoe, fool*), /ʊ/ (as in *full, pull*), /ɑ:/ (as in *heart, hard*), /ɒ/ (as in *hot, shock*) and /ɔ:/ (as in *short, folk*).

The height of the raised part of the tongue

- Close vowels
- There are four close (or high) vowels in the production of which one part of the tongue comes close to the palate without touching it and the air passage is narrow, but not so much as to form a consonant.
- The close vowels are /i:/, /ɪ/, /ʊ/ and /u:/.



The height of the raised part of the tongue

- Mid-open / mid-close vowels
- There are 4 mid-open vowels in the production of which the tongue is half-way between its high and low position.
- They are /e/, /ə/, /ɜ:/ and /ɔ:/.

The height of the raised part of the tongue

- Open / Low vowels
- There are 4 open (or low) vowels in the production of which one part of the tongue is very low and the air passage is very wide.
- They are /æ/, /a:/, /ɒ/, /ɔ:/ and /ʌ/.



The lip shape

- According to the lip shapes, vowels can be rounded, neutral or unrounded



Rounded vowels



There are rounded vowels in the production of which the lips are drawn together so that the opening between them is more or less round.



They are /ʊ/, /u:/, /ɒ/, and /ɔ:/.

Neutral vowels



There are **neutral vowels** in the production of which the lips are not noticeably rounded or spread.



They are **/ə/, /ɜ:/ and /ʌ/.**

Unrounded (spread) vowels



There are **unrounded or spread vowels** in the production of which the lips may be spread out so as to leave a long narrow opening between them.

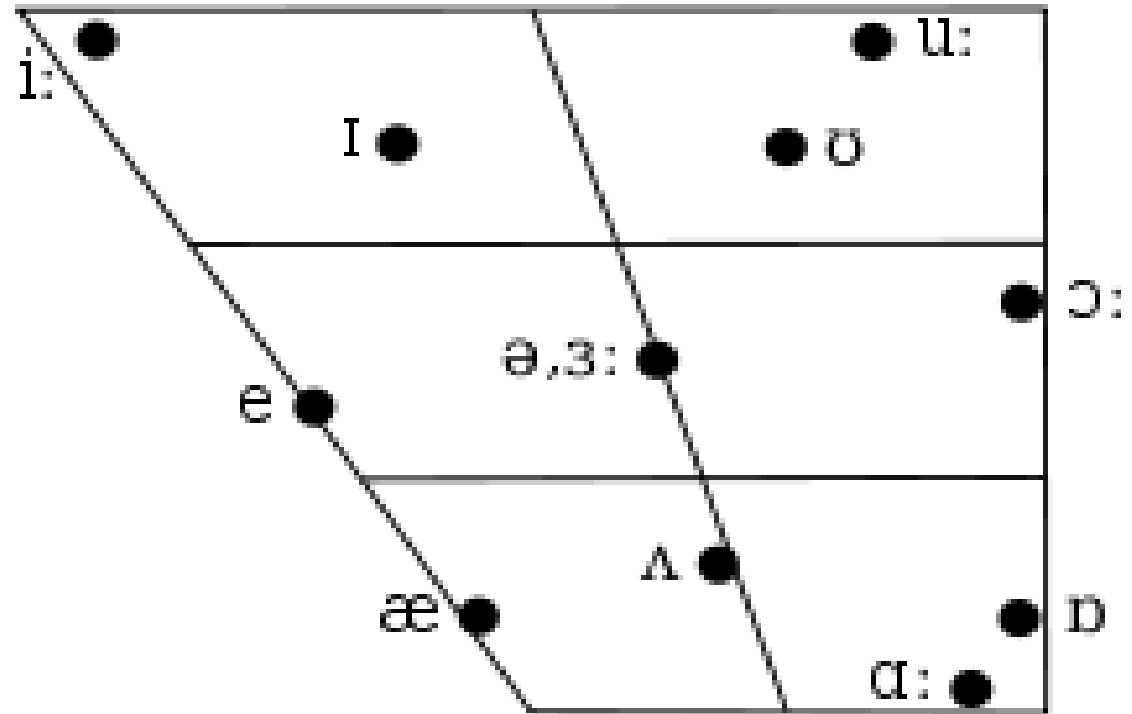


They are ***/i:/, /ɪ/, /e/ and /æ/***.

The Vowel length

- ❑ According to the length vowels may be **long** or **short**. The colon (:) is used with the phonemic symbols for the vowels which are long.
- ❑ The English long vowels are /i:/, /u:/, /ɜ:/, /ɔ:/ and /ɑ:/.

	Front		Central (Mid)		Back	
	long	short	long	short	long	short
Close	i:	ɪ			u:	ʊ
Mid		e	ɜ:	ə	ɔ:	
Open		æ		ʌ	ɑ:	ɒ



Diphthongs

According to Peter Roach , a diphthong is a combination of two vowels pronounced within one syllable

The first element of a diphthong is called the nucleus, the second element is called the glide

In the English language, the nucleus is a strong, clear and distinct vowel sound. The glide is weak in the articulation of a diphthong

Diphthongs

- Diphthongs can be classified into

a- **retracting** (ending in /ʊ/, as in *now, town, go, show*),

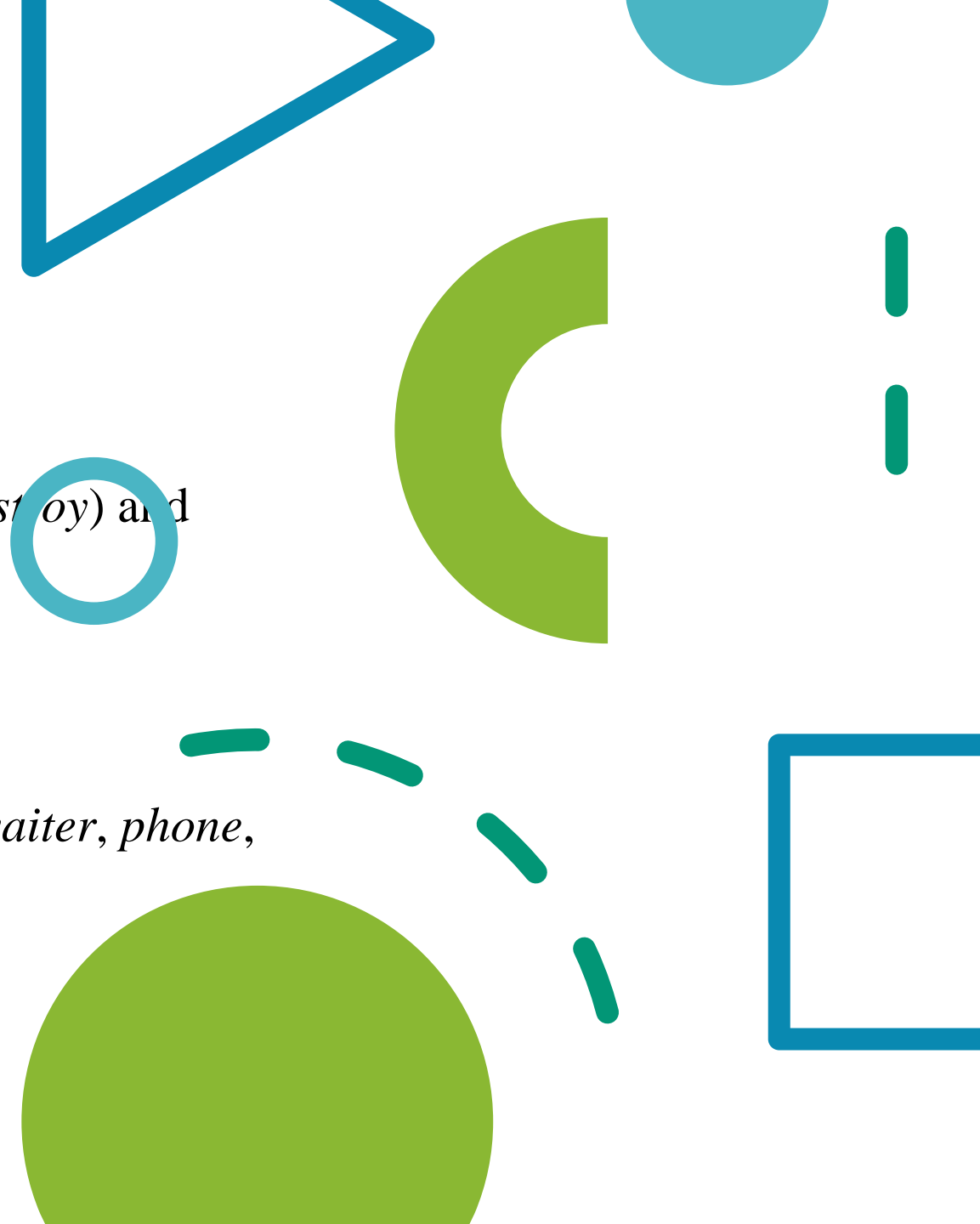
b- **fronting** (ending in /i/, as in *eye, why, say, day, boy, destroy*) and

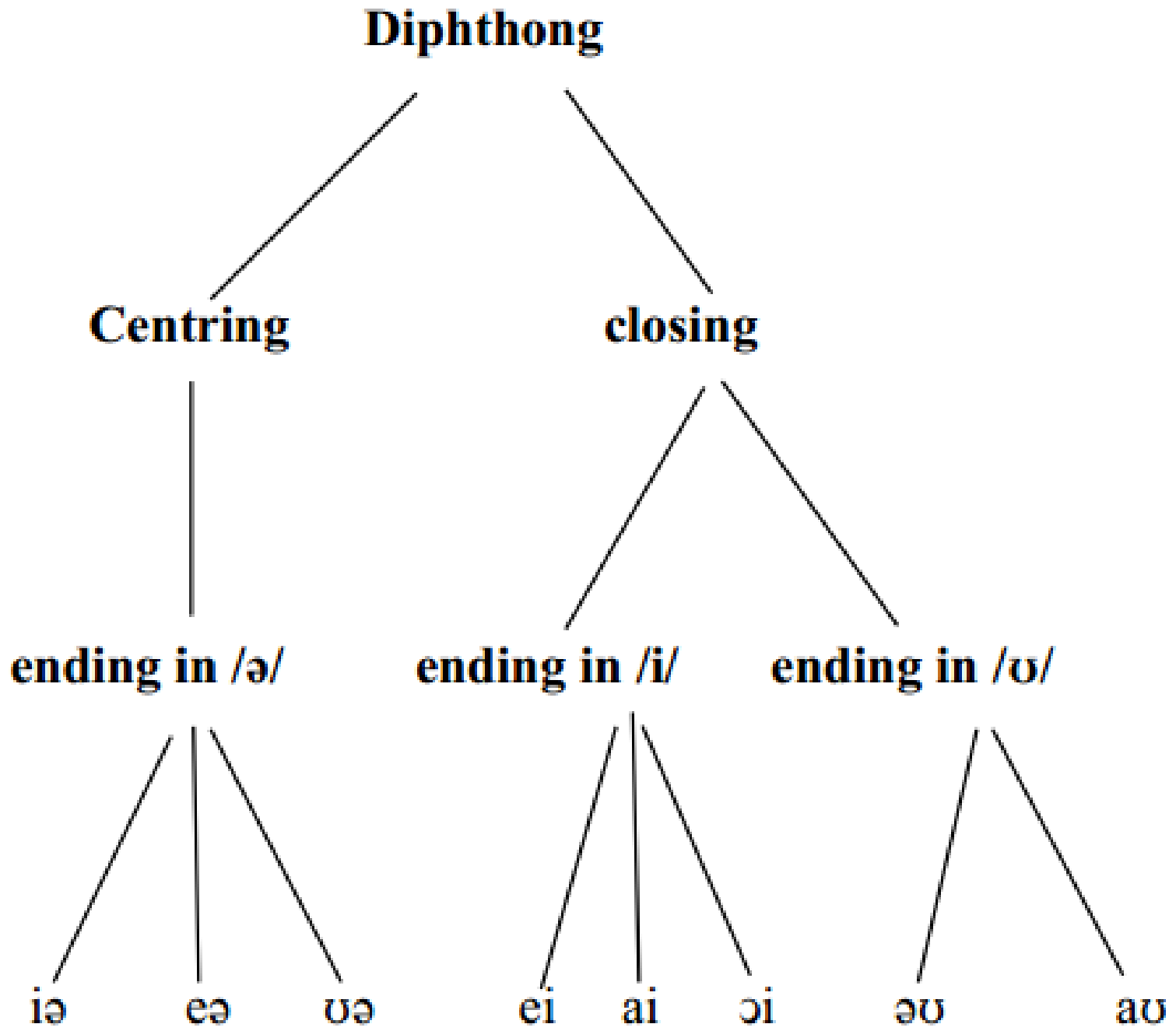
c- **closing** (ending in /ə/, as in *hear, near*).

- Diphthongs can also be classified into

a- **closing** (ending in either /i/ /or /u/, as in *life, like, say, waiter, phone, know*) or

b- **centring** (ending in /ə/, as in *here, near, hair, sure*).





Diphthong	Example	
Closing		
/eɪ/	/beɪ/	bay
/aɪ/	/baɪ/	buy
/ɔɪ/	/bɔɪ/	boy
/əʊ/	/bəʊ/	beau
/aʊ/	/baʊ/	bough
Centring		
/ɪə/	/bɪə/	beer
/eə/	/beə/	bear
/ʊə/	/buə/	boor

Follow-up Activity

- Describe the English pure vowels according to the criteria given

Describe the English pure vowels according to the criteria given:

	Front / central / back	Close/mid/open	Long / Short	Rounded / Unrounded
i:	front	Close / high	long	unrounded

A photograph of a rectangular, light-brown cardboard card with the words "Thank you!" written in a black, cursive font. The card is placed on a light-colored, textured surface, possibly sand or a wooden board. To the right of the card, there are several bright green, serrated leaves of a young plant. A black string is tied around the left side of the card, with a small hole visible. The background is a soft-focus view of more green leaves. The entire image is framed by a solid green border. In the top right corner of the green border, there are three short, dark green dashes. In the bottom left corner, there is a solid green circle.

Thank
you!