

Ei (aí)



To make our study of the major vowels sounds complete, we will add two combination sounds, also known as diphthongs: the Au and the Ei, the sounds of the sun and the moon.

The Ei sound (pronounced as *I* in the word glide) corresponds to the Moon. The moon is almost intimately close to the earth, and affects us immediately as we can see through the response of waters and tides to the pull of the moon. In its phases, it affects the rhythms of the night. Yet the moon does not shine with its own light. In constant self-renunciation, the moon always makes itself into a perfect reflector of what is greater than itself, the sun. In this sense, the moon has always been connected with the fertility of the woman, because she makes herself available to be a vessel for what is greater than herself. The moon is also connected to what is known as reflective thinking, as contrasted with original thought.

The sound EI is especially important to native English speakers because the genius of our language developed the use of this sound to

denote the self, I. What does this denote?

If I feel the sound in my throat, I feel how the sound EI begins with an open Ah and ends in \bar{E} . In between the two sounds there are very subtle transition movements in my mouth. The Ei *glides* from the first sound into the other.

Creating your practice

In eurythmy, begin by clothing yourself in the color of the moon, quiet and intense violet. The space around you is a gentle magical silver that feels like moonlight. Begin with a soft Ah, and then let it glide to the side, like a soft whisper. As it moves from Ah into \bar{E} , let your *leading* arm stretch further, and the trailing arm become more transparent.

With this movement, you begin by opening yourself in wonder with Ah, and end with the light of self-knowledge in \bar{E} . You dive into the world, and emerge with new understanding and a different sense of yourself because you have been changed. This experience of the I-am in the English language is truly moon-like, in that the self gets to know its own self (becomes upright, \bar{E}) when it has opened to other things (Ah) and allowed itself to be changed.

The form for the Ei is beautifully created with a small crescent shape that moves from right to left, or left to right.

Finally, stand still and let the Ei resound in you. Feel its illusive nature, its gentle, fine and mysterious self. You may feel this soul response: I experience a gentle fluidity and a heightened sensitivity to my environment as I move into and through the silvery space around me. The I inspires gentleness, so that I do not disturb the magic that surrounds me.

