

Spellings of Vowel Sounds

Circle the most highly regular sound-spelling correspondences in each of these groups.



Sound	Letter	Examples
short a	a	am cat black
short e	e	egg tell bed
	ea	head health wealth
short i	i	into live hill
	y	only many happy
short o	a	wash what watch
	o	off doll fox
short u	o	son won ton
	u	up but cup

Sound	Letter	Examples
ar	ar	arm start far
oi	oi	oink coin boil
	oy	boy toy enjoy
short oo	oo	look book good
	u	put push pussy
long oo	ew	drew flew grew
	oo	moon school too
	ue	blue glue true
	u-e	use rule rude
or	al	always talk salt
	au	August caught taught
	aw	saw paw claw
ou	or	fork horse sport
	ou	loud about house
schwa uh	ow	owl cow town
	a	ago away alone
	er	water father farmer

Sound	Letter	Examples
long a	a-e	ate make name
	ai	aim rail train
	ay	day May play
long e	e	eve me she
	ea	eat clean sea
	ee	see street tree
long i	ie	pie tie die
	i-e	five side kite
	y	cry why reply
long o	oa	boat coat road
	o-e	bone nose smoke
	ow	snow slow pillow
long u	ew	few new dew
	ue	duel fuel Tuesday
	u-e	cube tune cute

You may consider teaching the most highly regular sound-spelling correspondences first.

The most highly regular sound-spelling correspondences are:

short a : a long a : a-e
 short e : e long e : e
 short i : i long i : i-e
 short o : o long o : o-e
 short u : u long u : u-e

Information from:
 Crystal D., 1987. *The Cambridge Encyclopaedia of Language*.
 UK: Cambridge University Press. p.215

PHONICS IN ELT

This leaflet is prepared to provide a quick reference to teachers on what phonics is and how it can be used to enhance learning. The list of "English Letter Sounds" is for teachers' reference only. It is not a prescribed list for learners.

Phonics is a useful tool to help learners gain proficiency in reading aloud and spelling. However, it may not always help learners make sense of a reading text, particularly in a second or foreign language environment. Teachers also need to help learners develop skills in reading for meaning.



English Section
 Curriculum Development Institute
 Education Department

English Letter Sounds

Letter	Sound	Examples		
a	short a	am	cat	black
a	short o	wash	what	watch
a	schwa uh	ago	away	alone
a-e	long a	ate	make	name
ai	long a	aim	rail	train
al	or	always	talk	salt
ar	ar	arm	start	far
au	or	August	caught	taught
aw	or	saw	paw	claw
ay	long a	day	May	play
b	b	ball	bird	crab
c	hard c (=k)	car	come	music
c	soft c (=s)	cent	cinema	once
ch	ch	chair	child	which
d	d	door	ride	said
e	short e	egg	tell	bed
e	long e	eve	me	she
ea	short e	head	health	wealth
ea	long e	eat	clean	sea
ee	long e	see	street	tree
er	schwa uh	water	father	farmer
ew	long oo	drew	flew	grew
ew	long u	few	new	dew
f	f	fell	after	leaf
g	hard g	go	again	big
g	soft g (=j)	giant	larger	George
h	h	head	here	home
i	short i	into	live	hill
ie	long i	pie	tie	die
i-e	long i	five	side	kite
j	j	jam	jelly	January
k	k	keep	take	talk
l	l	like	milk	kneel
m	m	mother	some	ham
n	n	not	under	own
ng	ng	song	sing	bring

Letter	Sound	Examples		
o	short o	off	doll	fox
o	short u	son	won	ton
oa	long o	boat	coat	road
o-e	long o	bone	nose	smoke
oi	oi	oink	coin	boil
oo	short oo	look	book	good
oo	long oo	moon	school	too
or	or	fork	horse	sport
ou	ou	loud	about	house
ow	long o	snow	slow	pillow
ow	ou	owl	cow	town
oy	oi	boy	toy	enjoy
p	p	picture	open	jump
ph	f	phone	photo	graph
qu	qu	queen	quick	quiet
r	r	round	three	friend
s	s	so	sister	bus
s	z	as	was	his
sh	sh	ship	should	fish
t	t	to	late	rabbit
th	voiced th	this	they	with
th	unvoiced th	thin	thick	teeth
u	short oo	put	push	pussy
u	short u	up	but	cup
ue	long oo	blue	glue	true
ue	long u	duel	fuel	Tuesday
u-e	long oo	use	rule	rude
u-e	long u	cube	tune	cute
v	v	van	over	give
w	w	walk	awake	work
wh	w	what	where	when
x	x	exit	next	box
y	y	yes	year	young
y	short i	only	many	happy
y	long i	cry	why	reply
z, zz	z	zero	zoo	buzz