English Spellings
A Lexicon

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English spelling: the myth of its irregularity

Introduction

Spelling in English has long been thought an intractable problem. Over four hundred and fifty years ago John Hart was writing to deplore the difficulties of learning to read and to spell. In both of his books[1], *The Opening of the Unreasonable Writing of Our English Toung* and *A Methode or comfortable beginning for all unlearned, whereby they may be taught to read English, in a very little time, with pleasure,* we get from the titles an idea about Hart's thinking on the matter. In the second book, Hart expounds his belief that orthography or spelling should represent sounds and then goes on to identify the principal problems with the spelling system. To begin with, he informs us that letter names are an obstacle to learning to read and spell! The letters, as he put it, 'are misnamed much from their offices and natures, whereby the desirous are much the more hindered from learning to reade, though they were never so willing' [2]. The second problem was that letters often represent more than one sound and that sounds are frequently spelled in different ways. Hart's solution, like many of those who followed him up to present times, was spelling reform - an alternative we firmly reject[3].

Two hundred years after Hart Dr Samuel Johnson wrestled with precisely the same dilemmas. The starting point for his dictionary was one 'by which the pronunciation of our language may be fixed'[4], a chimera pursued by many before and after Johnson. However, once started on his famous dictionary, Johnson quickly realised the impossibility of achieving fixity in the language and moved to the position, taken up in the Preface to his dictionary, of mocking the 'folly, vanity and affectation' of anyone imagining they could 'embalm' the language. 'Dictionaries,' he added, 'are like watches. The worst is better than none, and the best cannot be expected to go quite true.'[5]

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[1] *The Opening of the Unreasonable Writing of Our English Toung* (1551), *An orthographie, conteyning the due order and reason, howe to write or paint thimmage of mannes voice, most like to life or nature* (1569), and *A Methode or comfortable beginning for all vnlearned, whereby they may bee taught to read English, in a very little time, with pleasure* (1570)

[2] Hart, J., (1570), *A Methode or comfortable beginning for all vnlearned, whereby they may bee taught to read English, in a very little time, with pleasure*

[3] The problem with spelling reform is that it would have to link the spelling of English to one of the accents of English.   It would also mean that all previous writings would have to be transcribed into the new script to make it accessible to learners of the new method.

[4] Johnson, S, (1755) *Dictionary of the English Language.*

[5] Quoted by Kermode, F., in 'Lives of Johnson' in *The New York Review of Books*, Vol LIII, Number II, 22/06/2006.

Although Johnson complained about the great deal of uncertainty in this domain, as David Crystal argues in his *Stories of English*[6], 'orthography had received a great deal of attention prior to the writing of Johnson's dictionary' and, as can be seen from how easy it is to read the titles of Hart's three books, 'three hundred years of steady standardisation in spelling had resulted in enormous consensus… By Johnson's time there was no real evidence of serious 'uncertainty' in orthography.[7]'

Nevertheless, consensus there might be, but the manner in which English speech sounds relate to their spellings appears for many still shrouded in mystery. This booklet was written to demonstrate that, contrary to popular belief, the relationship between the two is much more consistent than is generally believed and, furthermore, that reading and spelling are but two sides of the same coin that can, if the teaching is appropriate, be taught accurately and 'with pleasure', as Hart claimed all those years ago.

How do these long-standing conundrums about English spelling impinge upon us today?

There is a widely held belief that one of the main reasons underlying the high levels of illiteracy in the English speaking world is the irregularity, or irrationality, of English spelling. We intend to demonstrate in this booklet that this belief is completely unfounded. We confidently assert the proposition that, **English spelling is highly regular.**

Why does it matter that spelling is regular?

It matters because the ways in which children are shown how to learn to read and spell in our schools are often underpinned by erroneous beliefs about spelling. These false beliefs have resulted in our common teaching practices being riddled with pedagogic errors resulting in hundreds of thousands of effectively illiterate students leaving our schools each year as a direct consequence of the failings inherent within the literacy tuition they have encountered.

If the English spelling system were irregular this would point to the necessity of a *whole language* approach in which complete words would need to be

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[6] Crystal, D, (2005), *Stories of English*, p.393.

[7] Crystal, D, (2005), Ibid., p393.

photographically stored in visual memory as though they were symbols akin to pictograms. On the other hand, if English is spelled in a regular manner, as we contend, then it is the phonic alphabet code that needs to be unlocked and children must be taught literacy by an accurate and thoroughly consistent approach**.** And, as Diane McGuinness has repeatedly pointed out,

> 'Phonemes are the **basis** for the code, and the letters **are** the code' [8].

As already stated, in this booklet the regularity of English spelling will be demonstrated beyond all reasonable doubt, whilst accepting that, for various historical reasons, English spelling is far more complex than necessary for the purpose of recording our speech and thoughts.
Within this short article English text is carefully scrutinised to unlock the key issues underpinning the current state of English spelling, culminating in a lexicon of examples covering all the main alphabetic encodings of English speech sounds.

Although we shall discuss what needs to be done to teach literacy effectively to ALL our children, with the exception of a few special needs pupils who experience severe mental and/or sensory handicap, this is not a booklet about teaching methods, but one for directing attention to the reasons why certain types of teaching strategies are necessary. The actual principles of 'how' to teach literacy effectively we have already addressed within our literacy tuition programme: Sounds~Write[9].

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[8] McGuinness, D., (2004), *Early Reading Instruction*, MIT Press, p.13.
[9] Case, S, Philpot, D, and Walker, J, (2003) Sounds~Write (Teaching Manual).

A discussion and analysis of English spelling

Writing in English consists of making marks on paper, called letters. It is these letters that represent the sounds of our speech written in the same order as they are spoken. Conventionally these are sequenced from left to right across the page with successive lines progressing from the top to the bottom of the page. The English language, depending on accent, contains 42 to 45 sounds known as phonemes (the smallest distinguishable units of speech that we can hear). All of the common core sounds are shown in the table below together with the way in which we shall represent them in this book.

Table One: The speech sounds of the English language

	Vowels				Consonants	
	Sound	Example			Sound	Example
1	'a'	fl**a**t		1	'b'	**b**ig
2	'ae'	l**a**dy		2	'ch'	**ch**op
3	'ar'	st**ar**		3	'd'	**d**og
4	'air'	p**air**		4	'f'	**f**ig
5	'e'	p**e**t		5	'g'	**g**o
6	'ee'	m**e**		6	'h'	**h**at
7	'er'	h**er**		7	'j'	**j**ug
8	'i'	p**i**n		8	'k'	**k**it
9	'ie'	p**ie**		9	'l'	**l**ip
10	'o'	p**o**t		10	'm'	**m**op
11	'oe'	t**oe**		11	'n'	**n**o
12	'or'	f**or**		12	'ng'	si**ng**
13	'oy'	t**oy**		13	'p'	**p**ig
14	'ow'	c**ow**		14	'r'	**r**un
15	'u'	b**u**n		15	's'	**s**it
16	'ue'	c**ue**		16	'sh'	**sh**op
17	'oo'	b**oo**k		17	't'	**t**ap
18	'<u>oo</u>'	m**oo**n		18	'th'$_{NV}$*	**th**in
19[1]	schwa	**a**bout		19	'th'$_V$**	**th**e
				20	'v'	**v**an
				21	'w'	**w**et
				22[2]	'x'	bo**x** / e**x**am
				23	'y'	**y**et
				24	'z'	**z**oo
				25	'zh'	a**z**ure

[1] If you are uncertain about this, the most common of the English vowels, please see Appendix A, page 21.

[2] The letter < x > encodes **two** sounds, pronounced as either **'ks'** or **'gz'**.

*$_{NV}$ - not voiced
**$_V$ - voiced

Throughout the text speech sounds (*phonemes*) will be indicated by placing them within speech marks and spellings (*graphemes*) within chevron brackets. So, for example, the word **beach** is made up of the following three speech sounds,

'b' 'ee' and 'ch', that are represented by the three spellings: < **b** > < **ea** > & < **ch** >. Please note that, although < **ea** > in this example is comprised of *two letters*, it represents only one sound as does the following < **ch** >. In written English, spellings may be composed of one, two, three or four letters as shown by the following underlinings: <u>**c a t**</u>, <u>**ch ar t**</u>, <u>**m igh t**</u> and <u>**eigh t**</u>. Where appropriate these will be referred to as single-letter, two-letter, three-letter or four-letter spellings. When writing about the two sounds commonly represented by the spelling < **oo** >, to avoid confusion they will be referred to as either '$_b$**oo**$_k$' or '$_m$**oo**$_n$'.

Some words of caution before proceeding:

- If in doubt about the pronunciation of a word, listen to yourself or others saying it WITHOUT looking at the way it is written down, otherwise you may find yourself making your speech conform to your interpretation of the spelling; whereas, of course, the spelling should represent your speech!

- Particular care is recommended when considering the weak vowel sounds (called schwas), which are, in fact, the commonest vowel sounds in English. It is these that cause the most frequent problems for all of us when trying to spell accurately. (See Appendix A, page 21.)

- Regional accents are mainly to do with the pronunciation of some of the vowels. So, for example, in the South-East of England the word **look** rhymes with **shook**, but in the North-West it rhymes with (and is pronounced as) **Luke**. Accent issues do not affect the arguments being put forward in this booklet, but obviously those with different accents to the Received Pronunciation adopted in this document will need to make a few minor adjustments to some of the specific examples quoted. In the same way, teachers who are teaching real (ie linguistic) phonics need to adjust some word groupings according to the pronunciations of their pupils.

In Table 1 attention was drawn to the sounds of English speech. Two specific questions now need to be addressed: what are the spellings (graphemes) used to represent English speech sounds; and what makes a spelling regular?

What are the spellings used to represent our speech sounds?

The alphabetic writing system is a method of converting spoken language accurately into a visual format (code) from which the original speech can be recovered. Many different systems have been attempted throughout history but, due to (a) the limitations of human visual memory for abstract symbols and (b) our apparently

limitless capacity to generate new words*, only ONE approach has proved viable for the English language. That is to say, *an alphabetic system based on the smallest sound units in speech.*

(* The full English dictionary is now well on the way to a million entries!)

Spoken English contains no real silences other than those generated by a need to intake breath, or to insert a dramatic pause into conversation. It is logical to suppose that every letter in every word

will either be a spelling in its own right, or else be part of a spelling composed of two, three or four letters. What does this mean in practice? There is universal agreement that the word **cat** is composed of the three sounds 'k' 'a' 't', and that these are represented by the three spellings < c > < a > < t >. However, analysis of a word such as **know** that is spelled in a slightly more complicated fashion can cause confusion. Traditional 'phonic' approaches tend to look at this word as:
 < **silent k** > < **n** > < **ow** >, with the < **k** > representing nothing, the < **n** > representing the sound '**n**' and the < **ow** > representing the sound '**oe**'. This is completely irrational. There are only two rational possibilities:

(a) both < **k** > and < **w** > are silent, with the < **n** > and < **o** > respectively
      representing the '**n**' and '**oe**' sounds; or

(b) < **kn** > and < **ow** > are both two-letter spellings respectively representing the '**n**'
      and '**oe**' sounds.

Clearly option (b) would be the correct choice because, if letters and combinations of letters represent the sounds of speech, it does not make much sense to say there are silent letters. For many readers, the example < **kn** > will appear to be a new and unusual two-letter spelling of the sound '**n**'. However, this is no more unusual than pairing the letters < **s** > and < **h** > to arrive at < **sh** > as a two-letter spelling for the sound '**sh**' in the word **shop**.[10] If < **kn** > is considered to be a spelling of the sound

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[10] A significant contribution to English spelling was formulated by Ken Albrow. His book *The English Writing System* was part of the project Linguistics and English Teaching in the 1970s. Albrow's aim was to provide a description of the English writing system for teachers based on the British functional tradition in linguistics now associated chiefly with Halliday.
Our approach is in fact similar to Albrow's: he designated the one sound to one letter correspondences as 'simple', and the combinations of one sound to more than one letter as 'complex'. We agree with Vivian Cook's encapsulation: 'All the letters in the written word are either orthographic symbols in their own right or form part of larger orthographic symbols. Nothing is left over that can be called a "silent" letter. Albrow's approach abolishes silent letters by making them part of the orthographic symbols containing more than one letter.'
Cook, V., (2004), *The English Writing System*, Arnold, London.
For a fuller discussion of this point see also McGuinness, D., (2004), Ibid., pp53-59.

'**n**', how does it work in practice? Dictionaries that provide a phonic analysis of words alongside the spellings, such as **knack**, **kneel**, **knife**, **knot**, **doorknob**, etc, make this point a lot more obvious from the above perspective.

What makes the spelling of a speech sound regular?

We propose that any spelling is regular if it appears in more than just one word. Spellings that occur in only one word we will refer to as being unique, and those that occur in no more than two or three words as being unusual. But if a word that contains a unique spelling occurs with high frequency within normal speech (therefore also appearing with high frequency in written texts) we would also regard that as a regular spelling. However, we only know of one such example of a word frequently encountered in both speech and text that contains a unique spelling of a sound: that word is **of**, within which the single-letter spelling < **f** > represents the sound '**v**'. The word **of** occurs so frequently in spoken and written English that it is not possible to do other than consider this unique spelling of '**v**' to be regular.

A spelling such as < **uy** >, which represents the sound '**ie**', is unusual, but it is clearly a regular spelling in English because we often come across it in the words **buy**, **guy** and **Guy**. However, the one-off four-letter spelling < **ough** >, representing the sound '$_m$**oo**$_n$' in the word **through** we would think of as *a unique spelling of the sound* '$_m$**oo**$_n$' that we would not refer to as being regular.

The next step is to begin examining some text to see where the above propositions lead. Obviously if thousands of *'regular spellings of speech sounds'* rapidly emerge, this would make the whole system so complex that it would be impossible to memorise and no-one could possibly be a good speller! On page 6, in Figure One, are shown the first six verses of 'The Walrus and the Carpenter' by Lewis Carroll. This poem has been typed with a space inserted between each spelling of a sound in every word, and three spaces between each word. Each spelling is underlined with the exception of the ***split spellings*** of the sounds '**ae**' '**ee**' '**ie**' '**oe**' and '**ue**'. These are shown as **t a̱ k ē   c o̱ p ē** and **t i̱ m ē**, etc. This should make the spelling of each sound totally transparent to all, including readers who may be new to this type of exercise.

As can be seen, this exercise is not difficult to perform. In Tables 2a and 2b on pages 7-8, the first for consonants and the second for vowels, we show all the spellings that have been 'discovered' in the six verses of 'The Walrus and the Carpenter'. These have been placed in two columns entitled ***Regular spelling*** and ***Unique spelling?*** Where examples of a particular spelling have been found in two or more words, they have been placed in the regular spelling

column along with the first two examples found in the text. In the other column are shown spellings for which only one example was found in the text. However, to save readers searching the dictionary for other examples, one has already been placed in the third column. At this stage readers might like to examine the tables 2a and 2b before returning to the discussion here.

Having inspected tables 2a and 2b, we can see that , within this one short text 96 spellings have been 'discovered' representing 39 of the 45+ English speech sounds. The total number of individual speech sounds in this passage is 639 and it is quite apparent that most of the spellings found are regularly repeated in other words. Furthermore, where only one example of a spelling occurs in the passage it has been quite easy to find other examples from memory. In respect of the starting definition of spelling regularity, all 96 spellings found so far are regular, i.e. they occur in more than one word. So, in these six verses of 'The Walrus and the Carpenter' that contain over six hundred speech sounds, ***not a single one of them*** has been represented by a unique (non regular) spelling. (Other than the sound **'v'** in the word < **of** > referred to earlier.)

The Walrus and the Carpenter, by Lewis Carroll

"The time has come," the Walrus said,
　"To talk of many things:
Of shoes—and ships—and sealing wax—
　Of cabbages—and kings—
And why the sea is boiling hot—
　And whether pigs have wings."

"But wait a bit," the Oysters cried,
　"Before we have our chat;
For some of us are out of breath,
　And all of us are fat!"
"No hurry!" said the Carpenter.
　They thanked him much for that.

"A loaf of bread," the Walrus said,
　"Is what we chiefly need:
Pepper and vinegar besides
　Are very good indeed—
Now, if you're ready, Oysters dear,
　We can begin to feed."

"But not on us!" the Oysters cried,
　Turning a little blue.
"After such kindness, that would be
　A dismal thing to do!"
"The night is fine," the Walrus said.
　"Do you admire the view?

It was so kind of you to come!
　And you are very nice!"
The Carpenter said nothing but
　"Cut us another slice.
I wish you were not quite so deaf—
　I've had to ask you twice!"

"It seems a shame," the Walrus said,
　"To play them such a trick,
After we've brought them out so far,
　And made them trot so quick!"
The Carpenter said nothing but
　"The butter's spread too thick!"

Table 2a: Consonant Sounds found in The Walrus and the Carpenter

Consonant Sound	Regular spelling	Example words	Unique Spelling?	Example word	Another example (not from poem)
'b'	< b >	<u>b</u>oiling <u>b</u>ut	< bb >	ca<u>bb</u>ages	bu<u>bb</u>le
'k'	< c >	<u>c</u>ome <u>c</u>abbages	< x >	wa<u>x</u>	a<u>x</u>le
	< k >	tal<u>k</u> <u>k</u>ings			
	< ck >	tri<u>ck</u> qui<u>ck</u>			
	< q >	<u>q</u>uite <u>q</u>uick			
'd'	< d >	sai<u>d</u> an<u>d</u>			
'f'	< f >	be<u>f</u>ore <u>f</u>or			
'g'	< g >	pi<u>g</u>s vine<u>g</u>ar			
'h'	< h >	<u>h</u>as <u>h</u>ot			
'l'	< l >	Wa<u>l</u>rus sea<u>l</u>ing	< al >	dism<u>al</u>	fin<u>al</u>
'm'	< m >	ti<u>m</u>e <u>m</u>any			
	< me >	co<u>me</u> so<u>me</u>			
'n'	< n >	ma<u>n</u>y a<u>n</u>d			
'p'	< p >	shi<u>p</u>s <u>p</u>igs	< pp >	pe<u>pp</u>er	pu<u>pp</u>et
'r'	< r >	wal<u>r</u>us, c<u>r</u>ied	< rr >	hu<u>rr</u>y	ba<u>rr</u>el
's'	< s >	walru<u>s</u> <u>s</u>aid	< ss >	kindne<u>ss</u>	ki<u>ss</u>
	< c >	ni<u>c</u>e sli<u>c</u>e			
't'	< t >	<u>t</u>ime <u>t</u>o	< ed >	thank<u>ed</u>	jump<u>ed</u>
	< tt >	li<u>tt</u>le bu<u>tt</u>er			
'v'	< v >	<u>v</u>inegar <u>v</u>ery	< f >	o<u>f</u>	
	< ve >	ha<u>ve</u> I'<u>ve</u>			
'w'	< w >	<u>w</u>alrus <u>w</u>ax			
	< wh >	<u>wh</u>y <u>wh</u>ether			
	< u >	q<u>u</u>ite q<u>u</u>ick			
'y'			< y >	<u>y</u>ou	<u>y</u>es
			< i >	v<u>i</u>ew	rev<u>i</u>ew
'z'	< s >	ha<u>s</u> thing<u>s</u>			
'sh'	< sh >	<u>sh</u>oes <u>sh</u>ips			
'ch'	< ch >	<u>ch</u>at mu<u>ch</u>			
'th'_{NV}	< th >	<u>th</u>ings brea<u>th</u>			
'th'_V	< th >	<u>th</u>ey <u>th</u>at			
'ng'	< ng >	thi<u>ng</u>s seali<u>ng</u>	< n >	tha<u>n</u>ked	i<u>n</u>k

Table 2b: Vowel Sounds found in The Walrus and the Carpenter

Vowel Sound	Regular spelling	Example words	Unique spelling?	Example word	Another example (not from poem)
'a'	< a >	h<u>a</u>s <u>a</u>nd			
'ae'	< a-e >	sh<u>a</u>me m<u>a</u>de	< ai > < ay > < ey >	w<u>ai</u>t pl<u>ay</u> th<u>ey</u>	m<u>ai</u>l M<u>ay</u> conv<u>ey</u>
'ar'	< ar > < a >	c<u>ar</u>penter f<u>ar</u> <u>a</u>fter <u>a</u>sk			
'e'	< e > < ea >	carp<u>e</u>nter br<u>ea</u>d r<u>ea</u>dy	< ai > < a >	s<u>ai</u>d m<u>a</u>ny	ag<u>ai</u>n <u>a</u>ny
'ee'	< e > < ee > < y > < ea >	w<u>e</u> b<u>e</u> n<u>ee</u>d ind<u>ee</u>d hurr<u>y</u> chiefl<u>y</u> s<u>ea</u>ling s<u>ea</u>	< ie >	chi<u>e</u>fly	f<u>ie</u>ld
'er'			< ere > < er > < ur >	w<u>ere</u> oyst<u>er</u>s t<u>ur</u>ning	h<u>er</u> c<u>ur</u>l
'i'	< i >	th<u>i</u>ngs sh<u>i</u>p			
'ie'	< i > < i-e >	k<u>i</u>ndness <u>I</u> t<u>i</u>me bes<u>i</u>des	< ie > < y > < igh >	cr<u>ie</u>d wh<u>y</u> n<u>igh</u>t	t<u>ie</u> fl<u>y</u> fr<u>igh</u>t
'o'	< o > < a >	<u>o</u>f h<u>o</u>t wh<u>a</u>t w<u>a</u>s			
'oe'	< o >	n<u>o</u> s<u>o</u>	< oa >	l<u>oa</u>f	t<u>oa</u>st
'or'	< a >	w<u>a</u>lrus <u>a</u>ll	< or > < ore > < al > < ough >	f<u>or</u> bef<u>ore</u> t<u>al</u>k br<u>ough</u>t	c<u>or</u>n st<u>ore</u> w<u>al</u>k n<u>ough</u>t
'oy'			< oy > < oi >	<u>oy</u>sters b<u>oi</u>ling	t<u>oy</u>s s<u>oi</u>l
'ow'	< ou >	<u>ou</u>r <u>ou</u>t	< ow >	n<u>ow</u>	pr<u>ow</u>
'u'	< u > < o >	<u>u</u>s h<u>u</u>rry s<u>o</u>me c<u>o</u>me			
'_boo_k'			< oo > < oul >	g<u>oo</u>d w<u>oul</u>d	l<u>oo</u>k c<u>oul</u>d
'_moo_n'	< o >	t<u>o</u> d<u>o</u>	< oo > < ue > < oe > < ou > < ew >	t<u>oo</u> bl<u>ue</u> sh<u>oe</u>s y<u>ou</u> vi<u>ew</u>	m<u>oo</u>n tr<u>ue</u> can<u>oe</u> c<u>ou</u>pon fl<u>ew</u>
schwa	< a > < e > < er >	cabb<u>a</u>ges <u>a</u> th<u>e</u> b<u>e</u>fore butt<u>er</u>'s pepp<u>er</u>	< ar > < u > < r >	vineg<u>ar</u> walr<u>u</u>s ou<u>r</u>	sug<u>ar</u> cact<u>u</u>s flou<u>r</u>

What happens if this process is continued through other texts looking for more spellings? Clearly the number of new spellings found will keep increasing for a while and then start to tail off. We have completed this work and discovered that the 96 spellings already found is just over half of all the common spellings of English. In fact there are fewer than two hundred common regular spellings of sounds in English and we have listed them all in Table 3 overleaf. Those who doubt these findings can, if they wish, fairly rapidly carry out a similar exercise of their own on any texts they choose and compare their findings with those presented here. In addition to looking at 'The Walrus and the Carpenter', we have also looked at the spellings of the first five hundred sounds written in each of the three novels *Catch 22* by Joseph Heller, *The End of the Affair* by Graham Greene and *Watt* by Samuel Beckett. The combined 1500 sounds of this exercise are **ALL** spelled using **ONLY** the common regular spellings of English shown in Table 3. This is complete regularity with no unique spellings at all. We have also looked through dozens of other texts ranging from government publications to newspaper editorials, articles and obituaries. Wherever we look, we find a similar high degree of regularity. As yet we have found no easily available text where more than one speech sound in any consecutive two hundred is represented by a unique spelling.

Beyond the common spellings shown in Table 3 we found only another 54 before starting to run out of words that any normal reader will encounter in a lifetime - without reading some very specialist literature indeed, or being an expert crossword aficionado. Interestingly we came across very few unique spellings. Most readers will be aware of some common oddities such as the '_b**oo**_k' in w**o**man, the '**i**' in w**o**men and the '**o**' in y**a**cht (or should it be the '**t**' in ya**ch**t?). But these spellings are really quite unusual. In the first two sections of the lexicon we have included words containing unique or unusual spellings of a sound, but as you will see there are not very many of them at all. Why then has English gained its reputation for being irregularly spelled? We would suggest the following five reasons for discussion:

1. **The confusion of irregularity with complexity**

2. **The incorporation of foreign words into the English language**

3. **Changes in word pronunciation over time**

4. **Incorrect analysis of English spelling for teaching purposes**

5. **The fundamentally incorrect Whole Language notion that whole words, rather than speech sounds, are the basic units of literacy.**

Table 3: **The Common Spellings of English**

Vowels		Consonants	
'a'	Bat	**'b'**	bed blubber
'ae'	David grape stain day break vein they eight	**'d'**	dot shudder wriggled
		'f'	fat sniff photo laugh
'ar'	barn calm father laugh	**'g'**	got juggle ghost guest rogue
'air'	air care bear there	**'h'**	head who
'e'	peg tread friend said many	**'j'**	jam gem barge badge suggest
'ee'	he see baby treat thief these key ski ceiling	**'k'**	cup kit quit back school excess account trekking acquire unique
'er'	stern sir curl work vicar earn	**'ch'**	chip stitch
'i'	pin gypsy English build	**'l'**	leg fill bottle panel plural pupil
'ie'	icy pie nine sky night buy	**'m'**	map hammer comb hymn some
'o'	pop want	**'n'**	note runner knee align done
'oe'	only toe rose oak own soul Though	**'ng'**	song drink
		'p'	pen apple
'or'	for jaw more warn pour roar walk Paul caught bought water	**'r'**	rip wrist parrot rhyme
'oy'	toy coin	**'s'**	sock kiss city mice loose scent castle
'ow'	town mouse bough	**'sh'**	ship chef tissue suction special passion
'u'	sun young ton flood	**'t'**	tent mutter doubt raised
'ue'	use unit value news neutron	**'th'**NV think **'th'**V then clothe
'book'	look should put	**'v'**	vat give revving of
'moon'	hoop do you true suit shoe ruin flew flute	**'w'**	wit where penguin
		'y'	yet
schwa	adore the custom upon fashion	**'z'**	zip buzz snooze is cheese possess

NV – not voiced   V - voiced

10

The confusion of irregularity with complexity

British English* contains only 42 – 45 speech sounds depending on accent. A set of only 45 symbols (letters) would therefore be both necessary and sufficient to represent them all. But for many historical reasons we have ended up with a writing system that uses only 26 letters to handle all our speech sounds according to the following ideas.

i. Symbols called letters are used to represent speech sounds
ii. Speech sounds may be represented by ***one, two, three or even four letters*** as in the words: **h e n**   **ch oo se**   **th ere**   **w eigh t**
iii. Sounds may be represented by ***more than one spelling*** as in the words: **b a b y**   **st ai n**   **b r ea k**   **th ey**   **eigh t**
iv. A spelling may represent more than one sound as shown by the use of the single-letter spelling < **a** > in the words: **l a z y**   **w a t er**   **w a s**   **a l ou d**

The English spelling system, as we have indicated, is complex. Nevertheless it can be mastered despite its complexity due to the relatively small number of spellings (graphemes) involved. If the problem was one of irregularity, then in all probability no-one could ever learn to spell accurately.

In some other countries whose languages are written using very few or no examples of ii, iii and iv, literacy instruction is straightforward and results in around 98% of children mastering their written language over the course of only one academic year. These countries do not have vast numbers of dyslexics supported by professionals and societies claiming that fundamental neurological problems underly their illiteracy.

* British English is the way English is predominantly spoken within the UK, rather than World English which includes a number of variations from Africa, North America/Canada, Australia/New Zealand, Asia, the Caribbean and the Pacific Rim.

The incorporation of foreign words into the English language

Complete with abbreviations, the English dictionary is now approaching a million entries. One of the reasons for this is the continual adoption and inclusion of words from other languages. Such additions, frequent in the days of empire, are now increasing due to global

communications and the influence of the internet. These terms retain the spellings used in their language of origin: words for example such as **Sikh** and **yacht**. This results in a cumulating supply of unique/unusual spellings entering the dictionary. Many literacy 'experts' who hold the erroneous belief that English spelling is irregular do so based upon dictionary searches that reveal these 'foreign' words as though they have equal weight and appear with equal frequency to other words in our daily speech and reading. This gives a completely false picture of the regularity of the spelling throughout most English texts.

Changes in word pronunciation over time

Ralph Waldo Emerson once observed that, 'Language is the archives of history.' Many changes in pronunciation have occurred during the long history of the evolution of the English language that have not resulted in parallel spelling changes. A good example is the word **Wednesday,** whose spelling does not completely conform with the sounds that are actually spoken: **'W**' **'e'** **'n'** **'z'** **'d**' **'ae'**. This is because this day of the week was originally named after the Norse God of War, Woden. Originally Wednesday was called **Wodnesdaeg** (Woden's Day). The spelling of the first vowel in Wednesday has been 'correctly' altered to an < **e** >, rather than an < **o** > to accord with modern pronunciation, but the **'d'** and **'e'** sounds in the middle that are no longer spoken have their spellings retained in the written word. Fortunately, although these matters are of great interest to scholars of English and history, there are insufficient common examples to constitute a problem for accurately focused English literacy instruction.

Incorrect analysis of English spelling for teaching purposes

Some 'phonic' programmes have caused great harm to the teaching of literacy by introducing the nonsensical notion of so-called 'silent letters'. This rather strange idea of 'silent letters' negates the whole rationality of English spelling by implying that more or less any letter may or may not be a representation of a sound in a word (see examples in Appendix B, page 23). The upshot is that hundreds of thousands of pupils are trying to read and write words using a process in which they 'simplify' words by guessing at what letters could be omitted if they are silent and then single-letter decoding the remainder – a process that invariably fails. An example from clinical practice is the twelve-year-old with a reading age below seven who believed that the letters < **i** > and the second < **a** > in the word **animal** were both silent, with the word being decoded as: **'a'** '**nuh**' '**muh**' **'l'**. He therefore logically felt that it should be written as **anml**.

There are some English words that do contain a spelling of a sound that is not articulated in speech. For a discussion of this issue please see Appendix C, page 25.

The whole language approach that whole words, rather than sounds, are the fundamental units of literacy

For two thousand years, following the development of the complete alphabet that had been concluded by about the year 800 BC, phonics was the way in which reading and spelling were taught[11]. In 1744, a Frenchman, Abbé Bertaud, invented a sight word programme specifically for teaching children who were *hearing and speaking impaired*. By 1817, this method had been transported to the USA and used by one Thomas Gallaudet to try to teach hearing children to read. By the middle of the nineteenth century, Whole Language, as it later came to be known, had spread throughout the USA and the UK. The method is as simple today as it was when it was first introduced: it involves asking pupils to memorise words as if they were whole pictures. The problem with this approach is that, for at least half of the general population, this is very difficult indeed and leads to failure from the first moment they enter school for some, and by the end of Year 3 for many others. In fact, even for those of us with very good visual memories, there comes a time when memory space runs out (reckoned by most researchers to rise gradually in early life, reaching a maximum in adulthood of only 1500 to 2000 words, far fewer than the estimated 35000 words needed to read the simplest of the tabloid newspapers).

One of the direct implications of belief in a 'Whole language' approach to literacy is that spelling is perceived as a visual memorisation process with the whole word being visually memorised, correctly or not. This belief has led to the common practice amongst both academics and teachers of viewing spelling as a whole word activity. Thus, if a pupil spells the word **spread** as **spred**, then it is the whole word that is usually marked as being wrong rather than just the incorrect spelling of the sound '**e**'. However, the word s**pread** *does* consist of those five sounds '**s**' '**p**' '**r**' '**e**' and '**d**' and the pupil who has written this word as **spred** has actually spelled four of those five sounds in the word correctly. Furthermore, for the fourth sound '**e**', this pupil has chosen one of the only five spellings in English that can represent '**e**' out of a total of nearly two hundred common spellings. On any rational analysis we would have to say that the spelling of **spread** as **spred** is at least 80% of the way to being correct. To approach this pupil's response as though it is all wrong might make sense if the pupil had spelled it as < **cghu** > or something else equally bizarre. But < **spred** > is not only very nearly the correct dictionary spelling, it is a perfect written communication because the pupil and anyone else reading it will receive the intended communicative meaning. It is not an unreasonable alternative to the way it is written in the dictionary. Of course this does not mean that pupils should not be taught correct dictionary

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[11] Rodgers, G.E, (2004), The Born-Yesterday World of the Reading Experts, AuthorHouse, p.11

spellings, but in order to do so one needs a starting point of accurate understanding of what it is that the pupil needs to know in order to read and spell correctly. In the case of **spread**, the pupil who writes it as **spred** either does not know that < **ea** > is one of the alternative spellings for '**e**' in English, or else does know this fact but does not know that it is the < **ea** > spelling of '**e**' required for this particular word. For us to help this pupil we need only to be focused on the spelling of '**e**' and how to enable them to link this word to other English words containing the sound '**e**' that are also represented by the two-letter spelling < **ea** >. For example: **bread**, **feather**, **heavy** and **ready**.

Lack of knowledge and misunderstanding of the above five points have led to quite erroneous and sometimes bizarre ideas about English spelling. The playwright George Bernard Shaw displayed his lack of understanding in the 'witty' remark that the word **fish** could be spelled in English as **ghoti**, because < **gh** > can represent '**f**' as in **cough**, < **o** > represents '**i**' in **women** and < **ti** > represents '**sh**' in words like **motion**. While this is amusing at first glance, with proper analysis it turns out to be a totally fallacious statement: as shown below.

(i) **ghoti**	< **gh** > is a two-letter spelling that represents one of two sounds in English: '**g**' at the *beginning* of some words such as **Ghana gherkin ghetto** and **ghost**; and '**f**' at the *end* of others such as **laugh rough** and **tough**. In the *middle* of a few words it can represent either '**f**' or '**g**': **laughter** and **spaghetti**. There are **NO** examples of < **gh** > representing the sound '**f**' at the beginning of an English word. Traditional spelling 'rules' tend to be very unhelpful because exceptions to them often occur more frequently than the 'rules' themselves. However, in this case, we could construct a perfect rule: within English words that begin with the sound '**f**', that sound '**f**' is **NEVER** represented by the spelling < **gh** > at the beginning of the word!

(ii) **ghoti**	The single letter spelling < **o** > can represent several vowel sounds in English, but it only represents the sound '**i**' in the one word, **women**, where it follows the sound '**w**'. (*The sound '**w**' is actually a vowel being used as though it is a consonant and , in English, the vowel that follows it is often written using a different letter than normally expected, e.g., w**a**s, wom**a**n, w**a**lrus.*)

(iii) **ghoti**	The two-letter spelling < **ti** > only represents the sound '**sh**' in three English suffixes that date back to words derived from Latin, < -**tion** > < -**tious** > and < -**tial** >. There are **NO** examples of < **ti** > representing '**sh**' in any other circumstances. There are, of course, words that end in < **ti** >, such as **yeti**, but in all those words the < **t** > and < **i** > are single-letter spellings, each representing one sound.

So Bernard Shaw's 'clever' remark about English spelling turns out to have no sound basis in fact at all. Sadly though, it is still regularly cited by those with limited phonic understanding and unfortunately misinforms teachers about how literacy should be taught. The last occasion that we noted its appearance for this purpose was in the Department for Education and Skills

document, *Reading Challenge*, issued for primary schools in June 2003, as a demonstration of how unreliable phonics can be![12]

At this point, for any readers who have not already done so, it would be helpful to have a quick look through the following lexicon to get an overview of its contents. These contain many examples of the common spellings shown in Table 3 (page 10), together with many of the other less common ones. While considering the unusual and unique spellings, the point made earlier about the addition of foreign words to the English dictionary without altering their original spellings should become quite clear *(although, of course, these words conform to the alphabet code used in their language of origin)*.

In the alphabetical index to the spellings (Lexicon, pages 92-93) we have shown a total of 245 spellings, only 56 more than in our Table 3 of common spellings. Given that there are only 42 – 45 speech sounds in English, depending on accent, having over two hundred ways of representing them is complicated. But does our claim that, although complex, the English alphabet code is regular, hold water? The English alphabet consists of only twenty-six letter symbols that are used as spellings either singly, or in various combinations of two, three and four of them. The total overall possible number of letter combinations that could be used as spellings in this manner is therefore as shown in the following table:

Number of letters in a spelling		Number of possibilities	
one	→	1 x 26 =	26
two	→	26 x 26 =	676
three	→	26 x 26 x 26 =	17576
four	→	26 x 26 x 26 x 26 =	456796
			Total = 475020

Furthermore, any of these spellings could be used to represent any, or all, of the 45 possible English speech sounds, giving a grand total of 475020 x 45 = 21,375,900 possibilities! But in our analysis so far we have only got to 244 plus a few dozen unique ones *(shown in the vowel and consonant sections of the lexicon).* If we estimate a realistic total of around three hundred or so spellings actually used out of the possible 21,375,900, this represents only 0.00014%. In other words, fewer than one in a hundred thousand of these possibilities are actually used. In fact, not even half of the possible two-letter combinations are used.

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[12]DfES 0293/2003, Reading Challenge, p28.

In the discussion so far the question of whether all these spellings stand in isolation from each other has yet to be addressed. If they are isolated then each and every one would need to be accurately memorised by everyone learning to read and write English. Fortunately this is not necessary. The so-called spelling rules that are often taught in school classrooms are generally worse than useless because there are no simple guaranteed rules at the **WHOLE WORD** level. But if the English spelling system is examined at the **INDIVIDUAL SOUND** level, various patterns can be seen to emerge (*and this is very important because writing is a process of segmenting each word into its component sounds, which are then written [ie **spelled**] in the same sequence as they are spoken).* Some of these patterns are shown below.

1. In Appendix D, pages 26-27, we have given examples of how some consonant spellings are related to each other as follows.

    (i) Two-letter spellings in the form of doubled consonants almost always represent the same sound as the single consonant does on its own. However, because very little is totally simple in English, the two-letter spelling < **cc** > can represent both the sounds **'k'** and **'s'** as does the single-letter < **c** >*.

    (ii) Consonant spellings can often have an < **e** > added to them and still represent the same sound.

    (iii) Consonant spellings can often have an < **h** > added to them and still represent the same sound.

* **Note**: In words such as **ac**celerate, the < **cc** > is NOT a two-letter spelling, it is two consecutive one-letter spellings < **c** >, the first representing the sound **'k'** and the second the sound **'s'**.

2. Each of the twenty-six letters of the alphabet might be used in spellings, wholly or in part, to represent consonants, vowels or both. The actual representations that we do use are shown below, with comment underneath.

Vowels:	*a*			*e*		*gh*	*I*		*I*		*o*		*r*		*t*	*u*		*w*		*y*	
Consonants:		b	c	d	e	f	g	h	I	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z

As can be seen, relatively few letters are used to represent the vowels. Everyone is familiar with < **a e i o** & **u** >, but not always with the others. < **w** > and < **y** >, although used as consonants, are actually very short vowel sounds that are only 'heard' as they slide into the following sound. (*Try holding an* **'ee'** *sound for a few seconds and then following it with* **'e' 's'**. *What you will hear is,* '**eeeeeeeeyes**'. *'w' is a little trickier!*) Given the relative lack of letters assigned to the vowels it cannot be surprising that < **y** > and < **w** > appear in various two-letter vowel spellings together with < **a e o** & **u** >. Readers might also like to consider the following observations.

(i)   < **l** > is only involved in representing the vowel sounds '**ar**' and '**or**' as in c**al**m and ch**al**k? Otherwise it always represents '**l**', which can be spelled as < **l ll al el il ul le** & **lle** >.

(ii)   < **t** > only appears in vowel spellings of 'French' words ending in the two-letter spellings < **et** > (sound '**ae**' in ball**et**) and < **ot** > (sound '**oe**' in Merl**ot**).

(iii) In the words **laugh** and **tough** the final '**f** ' sound is represented by the two-letter spelling < **gh** >.
In the words **gherkin** and **ghost** the initial '**g**' sound is also represented by < **gh** >. Apart from these two situations the letters **g** and **h** only appear together as the final two letters of the three and four-letter vowel spellings < **igh aigh eigh** & **ough** >.

(iv)   Although '**r**' is a genuine consonant, the letter < **r** > appears in over half of the two and three-letter spellings of vowels where letters other than < **a e i o** and **u** > are involved, see table below.

Sound	Spellings
'**air**'	< **aer air ear ere** >
'**ar**'	< **ar** >
'**er**'	< **er ir or ur ear ere urr** >
'**or**'	< **aur or ore our** >
schwa	< **ear er ere ir ur urr** >

Whether or not a word whose spelling includes one of the above is spoken with an included '**r**' sound is normally dependent upon the accent of the speaker. Please see Appendix E (page 28) for a brief explanation of this.

Attention has been drawn to all the above patterns to highlight the fact that learning to read and spell English does not involve having to remember hundreds and hundreds of disconnected

and unrelated spellings. In fact, when considering all the various spellings and the patterns of their constituent letters, the amount of memorisation needed to become a fluent reader and speller is actually much less than might initially be thought from our list of 189 common spellings. This conclusion is of central importance for the tuition of literacy because it points unambiguously at the necessity for **high quality phonic tuition**. Furthermore, the complexity of the system is such that tuition needs to address the complete nature of the English alphabet code, carefully introducing it from its simplest to its most complex conceptual ideas (as shown in the box in the upper half of page 11). Failures in the accuracy of tuition at every point cause significant numbers of pupils to become confused and to retreat to a variety of failing strategies.

In addition to the phonic knowledge and understanding of the alphabet code, pupils also need to be taught the fundamental skills necessary for handling speech sounds: blending, segmenting and manipulation. All fluent and competent readers have developed these three skills to a level of automaticity: meaning that they operate seamlessly in the background, so that when reading the whole of the reader's conscious attention can be directed at the meaning of the text, not the fundamental underlying process of decoding for reading or encoding for writing/spelling. High quality daily practice of all three of these skills is necessary until this automaticity has been fully developed. What we find happens in the pupils we teach is that, when they have grasped the concepts underlying the English alphabet code and their ability to handle speech sounds is approaching automaticity, then their rate of progress starts increasing exponentially. This often happens when we have only formally introduced seventy to eighty of the common graphemes. The rest then start being rapidly filled in as a result of the confident reading of many texts. Much of the information gained by pupils is then understood and manipulated at a level below conscious awareness. As a final point, the memorisation of specific spellings largely comes about by the forging of associative links between words that contain sound(s) that are not represented by the most statistically likely spelling: for example, the names of medical conditions derived from Greek, where the sound 'r' is represented by the three-letter spelling < **rrh** > and the sound 'ee' by the two-letter spelling < **oe** > in **diarrhoea**.

Synopsis of the key ideas underlying the previous discussion.

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1. **English spelling is regular, but *complex*.**

   It is the complexity of spelling that causes many pupils (and teachers) to lose their focus on the real phonic nature of the alphabet code with the resulting unacceptably high levels of illiteracy throughout the English speaking world.

   Always remember that English spelling is far less complex than is generally believed to be the case.

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2. **Reading and spelling need to be considered at the individual sound level rather than at a whole word level.**

   *It is individual sound(s) within words whose spelling may be problematical to remember, not the whole word. For example, the word < **gigantic** > is an eight--sound sequence with all eight sounds represented by single-letter-spellings. Most pupils have little, if any, difficulty with spelling the last seven < **igantic** >, but may use the single-letter-spelling < **j** > to represent the first sound, '**j**'. We do not believe that it makes any sense to say that these pupils cannot spell the word < **gigantic** >, we would just say that they cannot remember (or do not know) which spelling of '**j**' to use at the beginning of the word.*

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3. **There are fewer than 200 common spellings of the 45 English speech sounds.**

   But far fewer than the total of common spellings need to be remembered as independent or discrete spellings, as indicated by the contents of Table 3 on page 10.

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4. **Weak vowel sounds are the commonest sounds in the English language and need very careful attention within literacy tuition.** (see **schwas** in Appendix A, p21)

   Traditionally, weak vowel sounds, and their relationships to the sounds around them within normal English speech rhythms, have been completely ignored in traditional literacy tuition methods.

Our discussion is now followed by a lexicon containing the various spellings of English with examples of words in which they occur. The left hand columns give examples of spellings at the beginnings of words, the central columns for the middles of words and the right hand columns for the endings. For ease of reference, all the information is repeated twice. The first section shows all the spellings for each of the English consonants, the second does the same

for the vowels, and then all the spellings for both consonants and vowels are sequenced in their alphabetical order. In our own training of teachers in how to teach reading and spelling, we find it may take one to two years for any individual to shed all their misunderstandings about the English alphabet code. Remember that if you are uncertain about the sounds in a word you must always *listen* to yourself and others speak it. If you sit studying the way words are spelled you may unwittingly end up trying to alter your speech to conform to the various spellings. This is **NOT** how writing works! Writing is about encoding the speech sounds of every single individual's speech, not about making their speech conform to what is written. This is the very essence of phonics that is the foundation upon which a successful literacy tuition programme must be built! Those who wish to seek further information about the way in which the ideas expressed in this booklet have been developed into a whole school literacy tuition programme should visit the **www.sounds-write.co.uk** website where they will find information about our training courses and the success of the Sounds~Write programme when used in schools.

Appendix A: Schwas – the weak vowel sounds of English

A schwa is a weak vowel sound that is not spelled as it sounds. Schwas are the most common sounds in the English language and vary with accent.[13] The problem with schwas is not that they cause problems for pupils when they are reading; as long as the word is in the pupil's repertoire, they don't. It is when pupils are spelling that the problems occur. There is also sometimes a problem for fluent readers who try to alter their pronunciation to match spelling: for example, we do not say **tant** at the end of **important**! The following word list contains examples of schwas with various spellings of them underlined. Note that, not every underlining will be a schwa for every person that reads it, but most will.

a th**e** **a**bout Ann**a** rand**o**m secr**e**t muse**u**m Arth**ur** curt**ai**n col**our** Rup**e**rt begg**ar** lit**re** murm**ur** fig**ure** cushi**o**n jeal**ou**s.

Because schwas sound something like '**uh**', '**i**' or '**ah**' and no specific single-letter or combination of letters has ever been assigned to them, we have ended up with more ways of representing schwas than any other sound in English. Most of these spellings also represent at least one other sound as well. This makes them quite confusing, especially when we look at a particular word in which the spelling of the schwa starts reminding us of other sounds – and unless we are very careful we start 'tweaking' our speech to see if we can bring it more in line with what the spelling might suggest.

The English language contains schwas because there are natural rhythms to our speech that, particularly in two-syllable and longer words, result in one syllable being dominant and others weaker. This is because English, unlike many other languages, is a stress-timed language. It is the weaker syllables in which we often say and hear schwas. In a word like **chicken**, for instance, the first syllable **chick** is *dominant* and the **en** is the weaker (*subdominant*) syllable. When spoken normally, the word is usually pronounced either as **chickin** or as **chickun** and this is why we see the word misspelled so frequently in one of these two ways. Obviously we do not want to change the way people speak, but when writing words which contain schwas or in which a sound or sounds are elided (see Appendix C), we encourage our pupils to say the word very precisely in a 'spelling voice'.

In addition, many words of more than two syllables often contain more than one schwa or weak vowel sound. These may all cause spelling difficulties unless correct

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[13] Roach, P., (1991), (2nd ed.) English Phonetics and Phonology, CUP., p.76

teaching strategies (see Sounds~Write literacy tuition programme) are put in place to help remember them. ***In order to be effective, all good spelling programmes need to incorporate sensible strategies to cope with schwa sounds.***

Appendix B: The notion that some letters can be silent.

At a very basic level it should be obvious that all letters are silent. They are just marks on paper and are not equipped with lungs and vocal chords. It is human beings that make sounds and human beings that use written symbols (letters) to represent them. This is what the alphabet code was designed for! In order to teach phonically this point needs to be fully understood. When it is not, then literacy tuition stops being phonic and becomes graphemic. Its focus then switches from, **'*How do we represent our speech?*'** to **'*How do we explain our writing?*'** It is easy to see why spelling becomes difficult to understand and devices such as silent letters become employed to try to explain it. Unfortunately, many children who have not grasped the true nature of the English alphabet code become stuck at, or revert to, ***single-letter decoding*** as their predominant strategy for reading words when their whole-word strategies let them down. (**Single Letter Decoding** is attempting to read all words as though each letter within them is a ***single –letter spelling***. For example, trying to read the word **choose** by saying the six sounds **'k' 'h' 'o' 'o' 's' 'e'** and then attempting to blend them all together.)

Some examples of letters that could be analysed as being 'silent' are shown in the table below.

a:	me<u>a</u>t rent<u>a</u>l	j:	Haj<u>j</u>i	s:	kis<u>s</u>
b:	com<u>b</u> bab<u>b</u>le	k:	<u>k</u>nee trek<u>k</u>ing	t:	bet<u>t</u>er this<u>t</u>le
c:	s<u>c</u>ent ac<u>c</u>urate	l:	Dol<u>l</u>	u:	so<u>u</u>p la<u>u</u>gh
d:	ba<u>d</u>ge pad<u>d</u>le	m:	ham<u>m</u>er <u>m</u>nemonic	v:	rev<u>v</u>ing
e:	G<u>e</u>orge n<u>e</u>utron	n:	solem<u>n</u> run<u>n</u>ing	w:	blo<u>w</u>
f:	stif<u>f</u>	o:	le<u>o</u>pard	y:	pla<u>y</u> kidne<u>y</u>
g:	ri<u>g</u>ht	p:	Rip<u>p</u>le	z:	daz<u>z</u>le
h:	w<u>h</u>en r<u>h</u>ubarb	q:	ac<u>q</u>uire		
i:	pa<u>i</u>n f<u>i</u>eld pup<u>i</u>l	r:	ber<u>r</u>y sta<u>r</u>		

(If uncertain about any of the above then check with the lexicon to see if the non-underlined letters can represent all the sounds needed for the word.)

The table shows that a teaching method that uses the concept of silent letters results in the letter < **x** > being the only letter in the English alphabet that can be trusted to be representing a sound. But < **x** > itself is unusual in that it is a single-letter spelling that represents two sounds, not one: **'k' + 's"** or **'g' + 'z'**, depending upon particular words and/or the accent of the speaker.

Clearly the concept of **silent letters** is not one derived from any phonic understanding of the way in which our speech is represented by the English alphabet code. Teaching the notion of silent letters can only cause pupils confusion in respect of their need to understand that English speech is written accurately sound by sound from left to right across the page. We are not pretending here that learning to spell accurately is easy. It isn't! It requires that pupils first and foremost be taught how the English orthographic (spelling) code works and then to have that knowledge reinforced through the medium of carefully structured lessons (e.g. the Sounds~Write mediated learning approach), and finally to give pupils lots of reading to expose them repeatedly to the spellings of all the common words. Unless the way in which spelling works is accurately understood and taught, many pupils are unlikely to achieve the levels of competency necessary for the development of fluent reading and spelling.

Appendix C: Elision: The tendency for native English speakers to shorten and abbreviate words.

Most of us like to speak quickly and efficiently, resulting in some sounds not being articulated. The commonest examples being of the type **she's** and **he's** for **she is** and **he is**. This also happens in words like **sandpit** and **government** where the '**d**' and '**n**' sounds are rarely articulated. We could write these as either **san'pit** and **gover'ment**. These situations are also affected by pronunciation changes that can occur slowly over many centuries and even millennia, resulting in some sounds being represented in the spelling of words although they are no longer used in speech. Local accents result in some words having different pronunciations depending on where you are in the UK, or indeed any of the other English speaking regions of the world. A good example of this is the word **mortgage** that for most of us is pronounced as '**morgage**'; however, in many areas within Yorkshire the '**t**' is clearly articulated and is one of the strongest sounds in the word.

Words where elision has occurred over time are frequently and incorrectly cited by opponents of phonic tuition as contradictions to the idea that our language is written down phonetically sound by sound as it is spoken. These arguments need firmly rebutting. Always remember that, in common English texts, the number of these words constitutes less than half of one percent of the total. When teaching pupils to read and spell we find no difficulty in discussing the above issues with them. They usually find such discussions interesting because it increases their general knowledge and understanding of the English language. Most importantly, it also gives them appropriate memories that facilitate their future accurate spelling of these 'unusual' words.

Appendix D: Patterns to be found in Consonant Spellings.

Spelling 'rules' in English just don't work and cause confusion because, as the Sounds~Write programme makes abundantly clear, there are many ways of spelling most sounds (see Table Three, page 10). The number of spellings (graphemes) for consonants that we have included in the lexicon is 114. Fortunately this is well inside the capacity of human visual memory for these sorts of symbols. Even so 114 is quite a lot for the 24 consonant sounds. Mercifully, there are various patterns that occur in our spellings that reduce the overall amount of complexity. Providing we are taught to read properly in the first place, these patterns considerably reduce and simplify what we need to remember to read accurately. We have noted three of these patterns below involving 47 of the 114 common consonant spellings. Patterns also exist for the vowel spellings and, where necessary, these are taught within the Sounds~Write programme.

1. **A single-letter spelling of a consonant can be doubled and still represent the same sound as in the following examples.**

Sound	Spelling	Example Word	'Doubled' Spellings	Example Word
'b'	b	black	bb	bubble
'k'	c	cat	cc	hiccup
'k'	k	sink	kk	chukka
'd'	d	dream	dd	ladder
'f'	f	fish	ff	staff
'g'	g	glad	gg	giggle
'j'	g	gem	gg	suggest
'j'	j	jam	jj	hajj
'l'	l	lips	ll	swallow
'm'	m	mouse	mm	common
'n'	n	snug	nn	bonnet
'p'	p	topic	pp	kipper
'r'	r	tree	rr	carrot
's'	c	city	cc	flaccid
's'	s	step	ss	missing
't'	t	hat	tt	cattle
'v'	v	level	vv	navvy
'z'	z	zoo	zz	pizza

2. **A consonant spelling can often have an < e > added to it and continue to represent the same sound, as in the following examples.**

< **ch** >	can represent the sound	**'sh'** in	**ch**ef	< **che** >	can represent the sound	**'sh'** in	clo**che**
< **ff** >	can represent the sound	**'f'** in	cli**ff**	< **ffe** >	can represent the sound	**'f'** in	gira**ffe**
< **g** >	can represent the sound	**'j'** in	**g**igantic	< **ge** >	can represent the sound	**'j'** in	**Ge**or**ge**
< **gu** >	can represent the sound	**'g'** in	**gu**est	< **gue** >	can represent the sound	**'g'** in	va**gue**
< **l** >	can represent the sound	**'l'** in	**l**ips	< **le** >	can represent the sound	**'l'** in	app**le**
< **ll** >	can represent the sound	**'l'** in	be**ll**	< **lle** >	can represent the sound	**'l'** in	gaze**lle**
< **m** >	can represent the sound	**'m'** in	fro**m**	< **me** >	can represent the sound	**'m'** in	inco**me**
< **mm** >	can represent the sound	**'m'** in	ha**mm**er	< **mme** >	can represent the sound	**'m'** in	gra**mme**
< **n** >	can represent the sound	**'n'** in	bi**n**	< **ne** >	can represent the sound	**'n'** in	go**ne**
< **nn** >	can represent the sound	**'n'** in	A**nn**	< **nne** >	can represent the sound	**'n'** in	A**nne**
< **qu** >	can represent the sound	**'k'** in	li**qu**or	< **que** >	can represent the sound	**'k'** in	cli**que**
< **s** >	can represent the sound	**'z'** in	wa**s**	< **se** >	can represent the sound	**'z'** in	cau**se**
< **t** >	can represent the sound	**'t'** in	wa**t**er	< **te** >	can represent the sound	**'t'** in	priva**te**
< **th** >	can represent the sound	**'th**$_e$**'** in	**th**en	< **the** >	can represent the sound	**'th**$_e$**'** in	brea**the**
< **tt** >	can represent the sound	**'t'** in	ma**tt**er	< **tte** >	can represent the sound	**'t'** in	case**tte**
< **v** >	can represent the sound	**'v'** in	gra**v**ity	< **ve** >	can represent the sound	**'v'** in	ha**ve**
< **z** >	can represent the sound	**'z'** in	**z**oo	< **ze** >	can represent the sound	**'z'** in	bree**ze**

3. **A consonant spelling can often have an < h > added to it and continue to represent the same   sound, as in the following examples.**

< *b* >	*can represent the sound*	*'b'* in	*o**b**oe*	< *bh* >	*can represent the sound*	*'b'* in	*a**bh**or*
< *c* >	*can represent the sound*	*'k'* in	***c**lip*	< *ch* >	*can represent the sound*	*'k'* in	*e**ch**o*
< *d* >	*can represent the sound*	*'d'* in	***d**ust*	< *dh* >	*can represent the sound*	*'d'* in	*jo**dh**purs*
< *dd* >	*can represent the sound*	*'d'* in	*a**dd***	< *ddh* >	*can represent the sound*	*'d'* in	*Bu**ddh**a*
< *g* >	*can represent the sound*	*'g'* in	***g**et*	< *gh* >	*can represent the sound*	*'g'* in	***gh**erkin*
< *k* >	*can represent the sound*	*'k'* in	***k**ite*	< *kh* >	*can represent the sound*	*'k'* in	***kh**aki*
< *r* >	*can represent the sound*	*'r'* in	***r**est*	< *rh* >	*can represent the sound*	*'r'* in	***rh**ubarb*
< *rr* >	*can represent the sound*	*'r'* in	*e**rr**or*	< *rrh* >	*can represent the sound*	*'r'* in	*dia**rrh**oea*
< *s* >	*can represent the sound*	*'sh'* in	***s**ure*	< *sh* >	*can represent the sound*	*'sh'* in	***sh**op*
< *t* >	*can represent the sound*	*'t'* in	*wa**t**er*	< *th* >	*can represent the sound*	*'t'* in	***Th**omas*
< *w* >	*can represent the sound*	*'w'* in	***w**ith*	< *wh* >	*can represent the sound*	*'w'* in	***wh**en*

Appendix E: The phoneme 'r'.

Try this simple experiment: Say *cart* to yourself and then say *carry*. When you said *cart*, depending on your accent of English, you may or may not have heard the sound '**r**' in the word; whereas in *carry*, you would almost certainly have heard it.

In English, we make a distinction between what are technically called **rhotic** and **non-rhotic** accents. 'Speakers of both types of accent will articulate the '**r**' sound in words like *round* and *carry* (where it occurs before a vowel). Speakers of rhotic accents will also produce an '**r**' when it is not followed by a vowel (as in the words *car* and *cart*).'[14]

When the word *fair* is spoken by those having non-rhotic accents we cannot hear the sound '**r**'. However, when we add the vowel '**ee**' to the word *fair*, thereby turning it into the word *fairy*, we will invariably hear the sound '**r**' being articulated between the '**air**' and the '**ee**'.

*For the purpose of simplicity in this booklet, the following lexicon and in our teaching of literacy, we have decided to treat spellings such as < air > and < ar > as representing one sound even though for those with rhotic accents we can hear them articulate an 'r' at the end of words like **fair** and **car**. In the case of words such as **fairy**, where the sound '**air**' precedes the vowel 'ee' we can hear both of the sounds 'air' and 'r' articulated by rhotic and non-rhotic speakers alike.*

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[14] Graddol, D., Leith, D. and Swann, J, (1996), *English: history, diversity and change*, The Open University and Routledge, London, p264.

The Lexicon
Part 1: The Consonants

	Sound	Example	Page No.
1	'b'	**b**ig	30
2	'ch'	**ch**op	31
3	'd'	**d**og	32
4	'f'	**f**ig	33
5	'g'	**g**o	34
6	'h'	**h**at	35
7	'j'	**j**ug	36
8	'k'	**k**it	38-9
9	'l'	**l**ip	40
10	'm'	**m**op	41
11	'n'	**n**o	42
12	'ng'	si**ng**	43
13	'p'	**p**ig	44
14	'r'	**r**un	45
15	's'	**s**it	46-7
16	'sh'	**sh**op	48-9
17	't'	**t**ap	50-1
18	'th'$_{NV}$ *	**th**in	52
19	'th'$_{V}$ **	**th**en	52
20	'v'	**v**an	53
21	'w'	**w**et	54
22	'y'	**y**et	55
23	'z'	**z**oo	56-7
24	'zh'	divi**si**on	58

(*NV = Not Voiced, **V = Voiced)

'**b**'

b								
'b'	**b**ad	**b**in	al**b**um	co**b**ra	fa**b**re	Ma**b**el	Bo**b**	gra**b**
	band	**b**lend	am**b**er	cu**b**e	fi**b**re	No**b**el	ca**b**	hu**b**
	bang	**b**ottle	am**b**le	de**b**it	ha**b**it	no**b**le	cu**b**	ro**b**
	bean	**b**read	bi**b**le	De**b**ra	ke**b**ab	or**b**it	club	sla**b**
	beaver	**b**ump	ca**b**in	de**b**ug	li**b**el	ro**b**ot	dra**b**	stu**b**
	bend	**b**us	ca**b**le	el**b**ow	Li**b**ra	ta**b**le	fi**b**	tu**b**e

bb						
'b'		a**bb**ey	da**bb**le	ho**bb**y	ra**bb**it	e**bb**
		ba**bb**le	du**bb**in	hu**bb**ub	ri**bb**on	
		bo**bb**in	fi**bb**er	jo**bb**ing	ru**bb**ish	
		bu**bb**le	gi**bb**on	ni**bb**le	stu**bb**le	
		ca**bb**ie	go**bb**le	no**bb**le	wo**bb**ly	
		co**bb**le	ho**bb**le	pe**bb**le	yo**bb**os	

'ch'

ch						
	chain	**ch**oice			ar**ch**	in**ch**
	champ	**ch**oke			bea**ch**	Mar**ch**
'ch'	**ch**ance	**ch**op			ben**ch**	ou**ch**
	child	**ch**ump			bir**ch**	sten**ch**
	chimney	**ch**urch			chur**ch**	tou**ch**
	chin	**ch**urn			ea**ch**	wren**ch**

t						
			adven**t**ure	fix**t**ure	nur**t**ure	sta**t**ure
			cap**t**ure	frac**t**ure	pas**t**ure	tex**t**ure
'ch'			crea**t**ure	fu**t**ure	pic**t**ure	tor**t**ure
			cul**t**ure	ges**t**ure	pos**t**ure	ven**t**ure
			den**t**ure	lec**t**ure	rap**t**ure	ves**t**ure
			fea**t**ure	mix**t**ure	rup**t**ure	vul**t**ure

tch						
			bu**tch**er	pi**tch**er	ca**tch**	i**tch**
			ha**tch**et	ra**tch**et	cru**tch**	ma**tch**
'ch'			i**tch**ing	sa**tch**el	di**tch**	pa**tch**
			ke**tch**up	wa**tch**man	e**tch**	scra**tch**
			ki**tch**en	wi**tch**es	fe**tch**	wa**tch**
			ma**tch**less	wre**tch**ed	ha**tch**	wi**tch**

Unusual/unique spelling: ques**ti**on.

In **Cz**echoslakian the two-letter spelling < **cz** > represents the sound 'ch'.

In Italian the single-letter spelling < **c** > can represent 'ch':   **c**ello and vermi**c**elli.

'd'

d 'd'	**d**ab **d**aily **d**amp **d**eck **d**esk **d**ig	**d**ip **d**o **d**og **d**rift **d**ug **d**ump	A**d**am a**d**mit au**d**io ba**d**ly blin**d**ly Bra**d**ford	ce**d**ar co**d**eine cre**d**it el**d**est gol**d**en In**d**ia	la**d**en ma**d**ly na**d**ir no**d**ule o**d**our o**d**yssey	pa**d**lock pan**d**a ren**d**er roun**d**ers san**d**bag vi**d**eo	an**d** ben**d** brea**d** clo**d** fin**d** goo**d**	lan**d** ma**d**e nee**d** qua**d** ri**d**e ven**d**

dd 'd'			a**dd**er bla**dd**er ca**dd**ie ca**dd**is che**dd**ar cla**dd**ing	cu**dd**ly da**dd**y fi**dd**ly Fre**dd**ie gla**dd**en gri**dd**le	hi**dd**en la**dd**er me**dd**le mi**dd**le mu**dd**y plo**dd**er	ru**dd**er sa**dd**le stra**dd**le shu**dd**er su**dd**enly te**dd**y	a**dd** o**dd** To**dd**	

dh 'd'	**dh**al **dh**ansak **dh**arma **dh**ena **dh**obi **dh**ole	**dh**oti **dh**ow	Jo**dh**pur jo**dh**purs san**dh**i Note also that the trigraph **ddh** represents **'d'** in **Buddha** and its derivatives.				Riya**dh**	

ed 'd'							avow**ed** moan**ed** breath**ed** play**ed** calm**ed** ruin**ed** clos**ed** splatter**ed** groan**ed** train**ed** hammer**ed** veer**ed**	

'f'

f	fabric	flab	afoot	drift	leafy	raft	brief	if
'f'	father	four	after	elfin	left	refer	clef	knife
	fax	fox	awful	fifty	lift	sift	deaf	leaf
	feel	friend	befog	gift	lofty	sofa	elf	oaf
	felon	full	café	hefty	mafia	soft	golf	reef
	fibre	fuse	comfy	infer	often	unfed	half	self

ph	phalanx	philosophy	aphid	elephant	Memphis	caliph	photograph
'f'	phantom	phoneme	camphor	gopher	nephew	glyph	triumph
	pharmacy	phone	cipher	graphic	orphan	graph	
	phenol	photo	Daphne	hyphen	prophet	kaph	
	phenomenon	phrase	Dauphin	Humphrey	Sophie	lymph	
	Philip	physical	dolphin	morphine	sphere	nymph	

ff			baffle	Eiffel	muffle	stuffy	buff	off
'f'			boffin	gaffer	offer	suffer	cliff	riff
			buffet	guffaw	puffin	suffix	duff	staff
			coffee	jiffy	raffle	tiffin	huff	stiff
			coffin	miffed	ruffle	toffee	Jeff	stuff
			differ	muffin	soffit	waffle	quiff	tiff

gh		Coughed	cough	tough
'f'		Draughty	chough	trough
		Laughter	enough	
		Roughly	laugh	
		Toughen	rough	
			slough	

ffe			gaffe
'f'			giraffe

'g'

g 'g'	gag	glad	again	Bengal	dangle	ogre	bag	fog
	gale	glory	ago	bigamy	degree	polygon	beg	gig
	garden	goose	agree	biography	dragon	regal	big	nag
	gear	grab	argue	bugle	figure	segment	bog	log
	gilt	grape	August	bungle	forget	tiger	bug	mug
	give	gum	began	cigar	igloo	ugly	drug	sag

gg 'g'			beggar	giggle	jogger	nugget		
			boggle	goggle	juggle	ragged		
			dagger	haggis	Maggie	reggae		
			digger	hugged	mugger	rugger		
			dogged	jagged	niggle	wagged		
			gagged	jiggle	noggin	wiggle		

gu 'g'	guarantor	guide	beguile	guilty	
	guardian	guillotine	beguine	Guinea	
	guelder	guile	guild	roguish	
	Guernsey	guilty	Guildford	unguard	
	guerrilla	guiser	guillemot		
	guest	guitar	guillotine		

gh 'g'	Ghana	ghetto	Afghan	ugh
	gharry	ghost	aghast	
	ghastly	ghoul	Baghdad	
	ghazi		burgher	
	ghee		sorghum	
	gherkin		spaghetti	

gue 'g'		vaguely	brogue	morgue
			drogue	plague
			fatigue	Prague
			fugue	rogue
			Hague	vague
			league	

x ↓ 'gz'		exacerbate	exasperate	
		exact	exempt	
		exaggerate	exert	
		exalt	exhort	
		examine	exotic	
		example	exist	

'h'

h	hair	herb	adhere	enhance	mishear	
	half	hip	antihero	exhale	mishap	
'h'	has	hiss	anyhow	inhabit	mishit	
	hat	honey	behaviour	inhaler	peahen	
	health	hoop	behind	inherit	rehab	
	hem	hydrogen	egghead	mayhem	sunhat	

wh	who		
	whole		
'h'	whom		
	whose		

'j'

g							
'j'	**g**em	**g**erminate	a**g**ency	e**g**est	ma**g**istrate	Ro**g**er	a**g**e	sta**g**e
	Gemini	**g**esture	a**g**enda	E**g**ypt	re**g**ent	ta**g**etes	ca**g**e	wa**g**e
	gender	**g**iant	a**g**ile	en**g**ender	re**g**iment	ve**g**etable	hu**g**e	
	general	**g**inger	an**g**ioma	en**g**ine	re**g**ion	vesti**g**ial	pa**g**e	
	genetic	**g**ist	di**g**est	lo**g**ical	re**g**ister	vi**g**ilant	ra**g**e	
	gerbil	**g**ypsy	di**g**ital	ma**g**ic	ri**g**idity	wa**g**es	sa**g**e	

dge				
'j'	abri**dge**d	do**dge**m	ba**dge**	ju**dge**
	ba**dge**r	do**dge**r	bu**dge**	le**dge**
	blu**dge**on	he**dge**row	ca**dge**	lo**dge**
	bri**dge**board	ri**dge**way	fri**dge**	sle**dge**
	bri**dge**head	sle**dge**hammer	fu**dge**	smu**dge**
	cu**dge**l	smi**dge**on	he**dge**	tru**dge**

j					
'j'	**j**ab	**j**et	a**j**ar	ma**j**or	Hajji**j**
	Janet	**j**oke	ban**j**o	ob**j**ect	Ra**j**
	jade	**j**ockey	dee**j**ay	pro**j**ect	Ta**j** (Mahal)
	jam	**J**ohn	en**j**oy	ra**j**ah	
	Japan	**j**udge	hi**j**ack	ram**j**et	
	jelly	**j**ust	log**j**am	re**j**ect	

ge			
'j'	**Ge**orge	bur**ge**on	bar**ge**
	Geoffrey	dun**ge**on	bei**ge**
	geography	pi**ge**on	gara**ge**
		sur**ge**on	lar**ge**
		stur**ge**on	ur**ge**

gg			
'j'		exa**gg**erate	
		su**gg**est	

Unusual/unique spelling: gra**d**ual.

Note: In English, single-letter and doubled-letter consonants normally represent the same sound. There are no traditional examples for < **jj** >, but from the Muslim tradition we are now starting to see the word ha**jj**i that refers to a Muslim who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca.

'k'

c — 'k'

camera	cold	acne	incline	pancake	scatter	Arabic	magic
cap	comb	acorn	include	rancour	scold	Baltic	panic
carrot	crab	acre	ocarina	rococo	scorch	clinic	phobic
class	crocus	across	octet	ruction	scorn	fabric	picnic
claw	cuddle	action	October	scampi	scrub	frolic	talc
cliff	cup	exclaim	octopus	scarlet	scuttle	hectic	tragic

k — 'k'

Kansas	kind	ankle	beaker	hiker	parka	baulk	elk
karate	kink	asked	biker	inkling	poker	blank	kapok
Kate	kiosk	awaken	bulky	jerkin	rankle	brook	peke
keg	kit	baker	catkin	joker	token	cake	pink
kettle	krill	banker	donkey	market	working	chalk	plank
kick	kyle	basket	fakir	monkey	yokel	Derek	sink

ch — 'k'

chaos	chiropractor	anarchy	echo	psychology	Czech
charisma	chlorine	anchor	inchoate	scholar	epoch
chasm	choir	architect	Michael	school	eunuch
chelate	chord	archive	ochre	schooner	Munich
chemist	Christmas	bronchitis	orchestra	trachea	stomach
chimera	chrome	cochlea	orchid	Zachery	Zurich

ck — 'k'

		backlog	cockney	heckle	necklace	back	kick
		backup	cuckoo	hockey	nickel	clock	luck
		bicker	docker	jackal	packet	duck	pick
		bucket	fickle	jacket	pickle	fleck	sack
		cackle	gecko	Jackie	reckon	frock	sick
		cockle	hacker	mackerel	trickle	Jack	snack

q — 'k'

Qatar	question	banquet	equator	inquiry	squash	Compaq	
quaff	quick	bequeath	equinox	liquid	squeak	Iraq	
quality	quiet	burqa	equip	niqab	squeeze		
quarrel	quite	eloquent	equity	sequel	squid		
quarter	quiz	enquiry	equivalent	squalid	sequin		
queen	quote	equal	inquest	square	squirrel		

x — ↓ 'ks'

		axis	excuse	expose	proxy	Alex	fox
		axle	Exeter	flaxen	saxifrage	apex	jinx
		axon	exit	hexagon	saxophone	coax	lynx
		boxes	expect	lexicon	text	cox	mix
		dextral	expense	maximum	vexed	flex	relax
		exclaim	expert	oxen	waxy	fix	wax

cc — 'k'

	accord	ecclesia	occult	piccolo
	acclaim	hiccup	occupy	raccoon
	accomplish	Mecca	occur	Rebecca
	account	Meccano	peccadillo	recce
	accurate	occasion	piccallili	stucco
	Eccles	occlude	piccata	toccata

qu 'k'		bou**qu**et li**qu**orice che**qu**er ma**qu**is cli**qu**ey mar**qu**ee con**qu**er par**qu**et cro**qu**et Ra**qu**el li**qu**or yan**qu**is	

que 'k'	**que**ue		anti**que** cli**que** baro**que** mos**que** bar**que** opa**que** Bas**que** pi**que** brus**que** uni**que** che**que**

cq 'k'		a**cq**uaint a**cq**uit a**cq**uaintance a**cq**uitted a**cq**uiesce a**cq**uiescent a**cq**uire a**cq**uisition	

kh 'k'	**kh**adder **Kh**mer **kh**aki **Kh**artoum **kh**amsin **Kh**yber **kh**an **kh**at **kh**edive	gym**kh**ana	An**kh** (*mythical river of the Discworld*) si**kh**

x 'k'		e**x**ceed e**x**cite e**x**cel e**x**cess e**x**celsior e**x**cept e**x**cise	

kk 'k'		chu**kk**a chu**kk**er de**kk**o pu**kk**a tre**kk**ing	

'l'

l ·'l'	lad last late leg let letter	Lily lie log loop Luke lump	alert alter atlas below belt bold	colic Colin delay delta eleven elm	false films fold glass glimpse gold	glue gulp Helen igloo Islam melon	ale boil cool fool goal nail	nil pole reel tail whale wheel
ll ·'l'	llama llano Lloyd		ballet bellow Billy cellar cello dollar	dollop follow frilly grilled jelly lollipop	miller pallet pillar pillow pollen shallow	swallow trellis valley villa wallet yellow	Bill bull cell doll fall grill	Jill pull sell still tall yell
al ·'l'							basal crystal decal fatal final legal	medal metal nasal pedal plural regal
el ·'l'							barbel cancel diesel duffel funnel gospel	gravel hostel kernel marvel morsel nickel
il ·'l'							basil Cecil council fossil gerbil nostril	pencil pupil weevil stencil tendril utensil
le ·'l'							apple beetle bible bottle circle double	fiddle giggle jungle nettle table uncle
lle ·'l'							Annabelle bagatelle Bastille Braille chenille Estelle	gazelle Lucille Moselle nacelle Nashville pastille

Unusual/unique spelling: symb**ol**.

'm'

| m

'm' | mat
melt
middle
mink
mist
moor | most
move
mud
muscle
must
my | admire
amaze
amber
ample
animal
bamboo | bump
cement
comic
damp
Emily
empty | fumble
hamper
human
humbug
jumbo
lemon | member
moment
nomad
Pamela
remark
simple | Adam
alarm
brim
chum
exam
farm | glum
poem
room
seem
swim
term |

| mm

'm' | | comma
common
dilemma
Emma
flummox
glimmer | grammar
grammes
grommet
hammer
mammal
Mohammed | plummet
shimmer
simmer
slimmer
stammer
strummed | summer
summit
swimmer
trammel
trimmer
uncommon | |

| mb

'm' | | bombshell
climber
plumber
thumbnail | aplomb
benumb
climb
comb
corymb
crumb | entomb
lamb
limb
rhumb
thumb
womb |

| me

'm' | | | become
centime
consume
fulsome
income
irksome | lissome
outcome
some
thyme
twosome
welcome |

| mn

'm' | | | autumn
column
condemn
contemn
damn
dislimn | hymn
limn
solemn |

| mme

'm' | | | femme
gramme
kilogramme
oriflamme
programme | |

'n'

n								
'n'	**n**ame	**n**ine	a**n**chor	A**n**drew	i**n**ch	o**n**set	Ala**n**	fer**n**
	nap	**n**ip	a**n**gle	e**n**code	i**n**come	s**n**ails	bar**n**	gai**n**
	need	**n**one	a**n**imal	e**n**ding	I**n**dia	s**n**eeze	bea**n**	iro**n**
	nest	**n**orth	a**n**klet	e**n**ergy	i**n**digo	s**n**are	chi**n**	law**n**
	never	**n**udge	a**n**orak	e**n**gine	i**n**fant	s**n**ug	cor**n**	moa**n**
	nice	**n**ugget	a**n**swer	e**n**joy	o**n**ion	u**n**cle	Daw**n**	nou**n**

nn							
'n'	A**nn**ie	cha**nn**el	i**nn**er	so**nn**et	A**nn**	Talli**nn**
	a**nn**oy	De**nn**is	ke**nn**el	ta**nn**in	Bo**nn**	
	ba**nn**er	fe**nn**el	pla**nn**ed	te**nn**is	dji**nn**	
	bo**nn**et	fla**nn**el	ru**nn**er	thi**nn**er	Gle**nn**	
	Ca**nn**es	ga**nn**et	sca**nn**ed	tu**nn**el	i**nn**	
	ca**nn**ot	gra**nn**ie	si**nn**er	wi**nn**er	Ly**nn**	

gn				
'n'	**gn**arled	**gn**ome	desi**gn**er	ali**gn**
	gnash	**gn**omic	forei**gn**er	beni**gn**
	gnat	**gn**omon	impu**gn**ed	desi**gn**
	gnathic	**gn**ostic	misali**gn**ment	forei**gn**
	gnathite	**gn**u	oppu**gn**er	impu**gn**
	gneiss		si**gn**ed	misali**gn**

kn				
'n'	**kn**ack	**kn**it	bow**kn**ot	
	knead	**kn**ob	door**kn**ob	
	kneecap	**kn**ocker	fore**kn**ow	
	kneel	**kn**ot	mis**kn**ow	
	knife	**kn**ow	slip**kn**ot	
	knight	**kn**uckle	top**kn**ot	

ne					
'n'			anyo**ne**	Dia**ne**	go**ne**
			bor**ne**	engi**ne**	imagi**ne**
			bygo**ne**	fami**ne**	undo**ne**
			carmi**ne**	gami**ne**	Way**ne**

nne					
'n'			A**nne**	Jea**nne**	Roxa**nne**
			caye**nne**	Joa**nne**	Suza**nne**
			Dia**nne**	Lea**nne**	to**nne**
			doye**nne**	Ly**nne**	Yvo**nne**

pn			
'n'	**pn**eumatic		
	pneumatocele		
	pneumatology		
	pneumatosis		
	pneumoconiosis		
	pneumonia		

Unusual/unique spelling: **mn**emonic.

'ng'

n 'ng'		anger	Frank	monkey	tank	
		angler	inky	pink	think	
		bank	jangle	rank	tingle	
		blanket	jingo	singlet	twinkle	
		bingo	junk	sunken	wink	
		drink	link	tangled	wrangle	

ng 'ng'		banging	lungs	tongs		among	giggling
		clingy	singer	twangs		bung	rushing
		gangs	singing	wringer		bring	sing
		gongs	strength			cling	strong
		kings	strings			driving	wring
		length	things			flung	walking

In some accents the sound '**ng**' is only heard in the middle of words where it is represented by the spelling < **n** >. In these accents words ending in < **ng** > the < **n** > and the < **g** > are single letter spellings representing the sounds '**n**' followed by '**g**'.

Note also the four-letter spelling from French: meri**ngue** and to**ngue**.

'p'

p								
'p'	**p**ack	**p**iano	am**p**le	do**p**ey	lu**p**in	re**p**el	bum**p**	parsni**p**
	paste	**p**lug	as**p**ic	im**p**el	mo**p**ed	se**p**ia	cli**p**	qui**p**
	Peter	**p**lot	ca**p**on	im**p**ly	o**p**al	su**p**er	dro**p**	rea**p**
	pen	**p**lum	Ca**p**ri	Ja**p**an	pa**p**er	to**p**ic	fli**p**	stam**p**
	plank	**p**roud	Cu**p**id	ka**p**ok	pu**p**il	vi**p**er	gas**p**	trum**p**
	plot	**p**un	de**p**ot	la**p**el	re**p**ay	whis**p**er	lim**p**	zi**p**

pp				
'p'	a**pp**al	gra**pp**le	pe**pp**er	su**pp**er
	cho**pp**er	hi**pp**ie	pi**pp**in	su**pp**ly
	co**pp**er	hi**pp**o	pu**pp**et	ta**pp**et
	da**pp**er	ki**pp**er	ri**pp**le	u**pp**er
	da**pp**le	mo**pp**et	ski**pp**er	yi**pp**ee
	dri**pp**ed	ni**pp**er	sli**pp**er	zi**pp**er

'r'

r							
'r'	race	rink	agree	cherub	grid	metric	
	radio	riot	Andrea	crab	hooray	outrun	
	rain	roast	anorak	degree	Iraq	petrol	
	rebel	Rosemary	April	drip	iris	pram	
	reflex	ruby	Boris	Eric	Madrid	sacred	
	Ricky	run	brim	free	matrix	tree	

rr							
'r'			barrel	corral	horrid	sparrow	
			barrier	curry	merry	Surrey	
			Barry	Darryl	mirror	terror	
			berry	ferret	quarrel	turret	
			carrot	furry	parrot	warren	
			carry	garret	sorry	worry	

rh				
'r'	rhapsody	rhodium	Durham	The three-letter spelling < rrh > also represents the sound 'r' in a number of medical nouns for rather unpleasant medical conditions such as diarrhoea and cirrhosis.
	rhesus	rhombus		
	rhinitis	rhubarb		
	rhino	rhumba		
	rhizome	rhyme		
	Rhodes	rhythm		

wr				
'r'	wrack	wring		
	wraith	wrinkle		
	wrangle	writing		
	wrapper	wrong		
	wreck	wrote		
	wrench	wrought		

's'

s 's'	sack	sock	absurd	cyst	fast	just	blocks	lumps
	Santa	son	also	desk	foster	lost	claps	notes
	set	spot	basic	discuss	gospel	mascot	ducks	pips
	sink	step	best	dust	hostel	nest	fits	treats
	skip	stuck	casino	east	insect	onset	gaps	takes
	sleep	Susan	cask	Easter	jester	risk	huts	votes

ss 's'			blossom	crossly	Jessie	mussel	abyss	gloss
			bosses	dresser	kissed	odyssey	boss	guess
			chassis	fossil	lesson	possum	bless	press
			classic	glasses	lissom	professor	class	Swiss
			cosset	guesses	massive	Sussex	crass	miss
			crosses	hussar	message	vessel	dress	toss

x ↓ 'ks'			axis	excuse	expose	proxy	Alex	fox
			axle	Exeter	flaxen	saxifrage	apex	jinx
			axon	exit	hexagon	saxophone	coax	lynx
			boxes	expect	lexicon	text	cox	mix
			dextral	expense	maximum	vexed	flex	relax
			exclaim	expert	oxen	waxy	fix	wax

c 's'	Cedric	city	accelerate	acid	incident			
	Ceiling	civil	accept	cancel	incision			
	celery	cyma	accident	eccentric	necessary			
	cell	cygnet	acetate	except	receive			
	cinema	cymbol	acetic	excite	recent			
	cinnamon	Cyclops	acetyl	icicle	recess			

st 's'			apostle	Christmas	jostle	pestle		
			bristle	epistle	listen	rustle		
			bustle	glisten	mistletoe	thistle		
			castle	gristle	moisten	trestle		
			chasten	hasten	nestle	whistle		
			chestnut	hustle	ostler	wrestle		

sc 's'	scene	scientist	descend			
	scenery	scilla	descender			
	scenic	Scilly Isles	fascinate			
	scent	scimitar	nascent			
	sciatica	scissors	rescind			
	science		tumescent			

se 's'			cea**se** hor**se** cha**se** loo**se** cop**se** mou**se** den**se** nur**se** fal**se** pul**se** gee**se** rin**se**

ce 's'			avari**ce** min**ce** choi**ce** pie**ce** da**ce** r**ice** flee**ce** slui**ce** Gree**ce** spru**ce** hen**ce** troun**ce**

ps 's'	**ps**alm **ps**yche **Ps**alter **ps**ychic **ps**eud **ps**ychology **ps**eudonym **ps**ychiatry **ps**ittacosis **ps**ychometry **ps**oriasis **ps**yllium		

cc 's'		fla**cc**id	

sce 's'			coale**sce** remini**sce**

'sh'

| sh 'sh' | shadow
shake
shark
she
shed
shelf | shield
shirt
shock
shop
short
shut | airship
banshee
bishop
bolshee
cashew
cushion | dashed
dishes
earshot
fashion
Fisher
geisha | gumshoe
Joshua
kinship
marshal
pushes
pushup | rasher
rickshaw
upshot
usher
washer
warship | awash
blush
bush
dash
fish
flesh | gnash
posh
marsh
rash
splash
wash |

| ch 'sh' | chagrin
chalet
chamois
chandelier
chassis
chef | chemise
chevron
chic
chiffon
Chopin
chute | cachet
cachou
fiches
flechette
fichu
nachure | machete
machine
Michele
Michigan
ruching
sachet | |

| ti 'sh' | | action
addition
attention
caption
carnation
caution | collection
condition
definition
deviation
direction
education | elation
emotion
essential
evolution
fiction
formation | initial
junction
location
lotion
motion
partial | |

| ci 'sh' | | antisocial
artificial
atrocious
commercial
crucial
delicious | especial
financial
judicial
malicious
official
precious | racial
social
special
specious
vicious
vivacious | |

| si 'sh' | | ascension
aspersion
aversion
dimension
diversion
emulsion | excursion
expansion
expulsion
extension
pension
repulsion | scansion
tension
torsion
version | |

| ssi 'sh' | | accession
admission
discussion
egression
emission
obsession | omission
passion
percussion
permission
recession
scission | |

che 'sh'			cache louche cloche niche creche panache fleche quiche fiche Roche gauche troche

sch 'sh'	schmuck schwa schnapps Schwann schnitzel schnozzle Schubert Schumann	Escher eschew	Kirsch mensch

s 'sh'	Sean sugar sure		

shi 'sh'		cushion fashion	

ss 'sh'		assure tissue fissure issue pressure reassure Russia	

Unusual/unique spellings: fascism   fuchsia   ocean   luxury.

't'

t '_t'							
table	toast	arctic	fitness	mentor	stick	at	just
tag	topic	artery	gratin	motor	stunt	belt	kit
tennis	total	baton	hatbox	nasty	title	bet	hat
tent	treat	blister	jester	poster	voter	cat	lent
tide	trunk	destroy	later	potato	water	dot	mist
tin	twist	enter	matress	rested	winter	flat	right

tt '_t'							
		attach	battle	fettle	Ottawa	bitt	watt
		attack	better	gutter	otter	Brett	
		attain	bitten	kettle	pattern	butt	
		attic	bottle	litter	scatter	putt	
		attire	bottom	motto	tattoo	Scott	
		batter	cattle	nettle	utter	sett	

bt '_t'				
		debtor	subtle	debt
		doubter	subtlety	doubt
		doubtful		misdoubt
		doubtless		redoubt
		indebted		
		redoubtable		

ed '_t'			
		bumped	leaped
		crunched	marked
		finished	pushed
		flinched	talked
		jumped	washed
		knocked	watched

te '_t'			
		baste	private
		carte	route
		cote	salute
		curate	senate
		palate	svelte
		piste	waste

tte '_t'			
		Annette	Colette
		burette	gavotte
		butte	gazette
		casette	matte
		culotte	palatte
		curette	pipette

th 'h' 't'	**Th**ai **Th**omas **Th**ailand **Th**omism **th**aler **Th**ompson **th**alweg **th**yme **Th**ames **th**ebe	An**th**ony Es**th**er	

pt 't'	**pt**armigan **pt**eridology **pt**erodactyl **pt**eropod **pt**erosaur **pt**omaine		

Unusual/unique spelling: **pth**isis.

'th' – not voiced

th 'th'_{NV}	thank thaw theft thick thief	thin think third thorn three thud	Arthur asthma author Bertha Catherine Cynthia	earthly epithet faithful fifthly Gothic isthmus	Luther menthol method methyl monthly mythical	Nathan panther pathos python tenthly urethra	bath breath cloth fourth growth health	Judith length tenth tooth warmth wreath

(note: 'thigh' appears in first column)

'th' - voiced

th 'th'_V	than that the their them then	there these they this those though	another betrothed brother clothed father further	feather Heather hither leather loathing mother	mouthed neither rather rhythms scathing scythes	seething smother teething thither weather whether	smooth	

the 'th'_V			breathe clothe lathe lithe loathe sheathe	soothe sunbathe swathe teethe tithe writhe

'v'

| v

'v' | vacuum   view
valve   visit
venom   vital
Venus   vocal
venue   volt
vermin   vulgar | advent   device   havoc   oven
anvil   evade   ivory   pivot
avoid   even   level   raven
cavern   event   movie savage
civic   favour navy   seven
David   giving   oval   uvula | Gustav |

| ve

'v' | | | above   olive
carve   prove
dove   massive
give   move
have   shove
love   valve |

| vv

'v' | | navvy
revving | |

| f

'v' | | This is the only full entry where the spelling occurs in just a single word. However, as the word **of** is one of the commonest words in English, it would be rather odd to view it as an irregularity! | of |

Unusual/unique spelling: Ste**ph**en.

'w'

| w
'w' | wag
walk
war
weekend
well
west | window
wing
witch
wobble
wolf
wool | airway
awake
away
bigwig
byway
cobweb | Darwin
dwell
earwig
Gwen
kiwi
midway | nitwit
Norway
outwit
Owen
swag
swamp | runway
subway
swift
Taiwan
twig
twin | |

| u
'w' | | | anguish
cuirass
cuisine
equal
equate
equip | Guam
guano
guacomole
languish
Paraguay
quack | question
quiet
quote
sequin
suede
suite | squad
square
squash
squawk
squid
Uruguay | |

| wh
'w' | whale
what
whelk
while
whipped
whirl | whisk
whisker
whistle
white
whoop
why | anywhere   somewhere
cartwheel
elsewhere
flywheel
nowhere
pinwheel | | |

| o
'wu' | once
one
oneness
oneself
onetime | anyone
everyone
someone | |

'y'

y				
'y'	**y**am **y**odel **y**ard **y**oga **y**ear **Y**ork **y**east **y**ou **y**ell **y**ummy **y**es **y**uppies	ban**y**an papa**y**a be**y**ond can**y**on hal**y**ard Ken**y**a mid**y**ear	

Unusual/unique spelling: v**i**ew.

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'z'

z 'z'	Zambia zapper zeal zebra Zen zero	zinc zipper zombie zoom Zulu zygote	Amazon Aztec azure ozone bazaar bezel	Brazil dozen dozing enzyme gazebo gazump	gizmo hazard hazel hazily kazoo lazily	lizard Mozart Nazi razor unzip wizard	ablaze amaze doze faze froze gaze	graze ionize laze maze prize size
s 'z'			absorb basil Bosnia bosom busy casual	clumsy cosmic cosy desert dismal easily	Joseph laser Lesley loser misery mosaic	museum music nasal resent resin Susan	beans begs clubs digs figs frogs	hers his legs pens trends wags
zz 'z'			buzzer dazzled drizzle embezzle fizzle frazzled	grizzly guzzle jacuzzi mezzo mizzen muzzle	nozzle nuzzle piazza pizza puzzle quizzed	razzle sizzled swizzle unmuzzle	buzz fizz frizz fuzz jazz pizazz	whizz
se 'z'							advise blouse cause cheese cruise Louise	noise pause please praise raise whose
ze 'z'							adze Belize breeze bronze freeze frieze	gauze maize ooze sleaze sneeze wheeze
x ↓ 'gz'			exacerbate exact exaggerate exalt examine example	exasperate exempt exert exhort exotic exist				

x	**X**anadu **X**erxes		
'z'	**X**avier **x**ylophone		
	xenophobia		
	xenon		
	xerosis		
	Xerox		

ss		Au**ss**ies	
'z'		po**ss**ess	
		sci**ss**ors	

Unusual/unique spelling: bu<u>si</u>ness.

'zh'

si 'zh'		abrasion abscision adhesion affusion allusion collision	collusion confusion corrosion decision effusion incision	envision excision explosion recision illusion implosion	invasion occasion revision	

s 'zh'		measure pleasure treasure unusual usual visual		

Unusual/unique spellings: **g**enre   sei**z**ure.

The Lexicon

Part 2: The Vowels

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'a'

a 'a'	acid action actor add **A**dam **A**frica	alpha amber ambush and apple at	bag bap camp can cat damp	Dan fat gas hat jam lamp	nanny pack ran reaction sad sat	trap tag tan van vat yap	

Unusual/unique spellings: mer**i**ngue   pl**ai**d.

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'ae'

a 'ae'	acorn aphid acre apricot Aden April agent apron alien Asia angel atrium	baby favour radar table chamber flavour radio Tamar change gravy sacred taxation crazy haste sabre vague David lazy sacred vapour famous paper stable volcano	

a – e 'ae'	age ale ape ate	arcade decade haze rebate became fame invade same behave gale lemonade stale cape game male tape create gate name vale date hate pane whale	

ai 'ae'	aid ailment aimless aitch ain't	bait faint mail Spain baize gain pail stain brain grain pain swain chain mail paint tail daily main rainy train daisy maize raise vain	

ay 'ae'	Ayckbourn Aylesbury	cayenne frayed Playful Cayman layer playoff Clayton mayonaisse playpen crayon okayed strayed drayman playact flayed player	away pay bay say bray slay clay stay day sway gray tray

ei 'ae'		abseil heinous veil beige Leila vein Beirut reign unveil deign rein feign Seine feint skein	

ey 'ae'		heyday Leyden (jar)	bey obey convey osprey grey survey hey they lamprey trey ley whey

eigh	eight	freight	inveigh
'ae'			neigh
			reweigh
			sleigh
			weigh

et			ballet croquet
'ae'			bouquet gourmet
			buffet Monet
			cabaret piquet
			cachet sachet
			chalet sorbet

ea		break	
'ae'		great	
		steak	

Unusual/unique spellings: str**aigh**t   g**au**ge.

'ar'

ar							
'ar'	arc	**ar**mpit	al**arm**	ch**arm**	f**arm**	sh**ar**p	boxc**ar**	j**ar**
	arcade	**ar**my	ap**art**	ch**art**	h**ard**	sm**art**	cavi**ar**	m**ar**
	archer	**ar**mada	b**arb**	Cl**ark**	l**ard**	st**art**	cig**ar**	rad**ar**
	arctic	**ar**tery	b**ark**	d**ark**	p**ar**tner	t**ar**nish	f**ar**	sit**ar**
	argue	**ar**thritis	b**arn**	d**arn**	sc**ar**	t**ar**tan	guit**ar**	son**ar**
	aria	**ar**tist	c**ard**	d**art**	sc**arf**	T**ar**zan	isob**ar**	t**ar**

a						
'ar'	**a**ft	**ar**mada	dis**a**ster	p**a**ss	r**a**ther	In some accents many of these words on the left will be '**a**' rather than '**ar**'
	after	b**a**sket	f**a**ther	p**a**st	s**a**mple	
	amen	c**a**sket	gr**a**ss	p**a**th	str**a**ta	
	ask	ch**a**ncy	l**a**ger	pl**a**ster	tom**a**to	
		ch**a**nt	l**a**ther	r**a**ft	v**a**se	
		cl**a**ss	m**a**ster	r**a**ncher	v**a**st	

al			
'ar'	**al**mond	b**al**m	qu**al**m
	alms	c**al**f	
		c**al**m	
		h**al**f	
		p**al**m	
		ps**al**m	

au		
'ar'	**au**nt	dr**au**ght	In some accents many of these words on the left will be '**a**' rather than '**ar**'
	aunty	l**au**gh	
		l**au**ghter	

ear		
'ar'		h**ear**t
		h**ear**th
		h**ear**ty

er		
'ar'		cl**er**k
		s**er**geant

Unusual/unique spellings: baz**aar**   sh**ah**.

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'air'

air 'air'	**air** **air**lock **air**craft **air**mail **air**crew **air**man **air**frame **air**sick **air**head **air**space **air**less **air**strip	b**air**n c**air**n f**air**y h**air**y st**air**way	aff**air** funf**air** Bl**air** imp**air** ch**air** mid**air** cors**air** moh**air** desp**air** rep**air** fl**air** st**air**

ere 'air'	**ere** **ere**long **ere**now **ere**while	th**ere**abouts wh**ere**abouts th**ere**after wh**ere**as th**ere**fore wh**ere**fore th**ere**in wh**ere**upon th**ere**of wh**ere**with th**ere**upon	elsewh**ere** somewh**ere** th**ere** wh**ere**

ear 'air'	**Ear**hart (*Amelia*)		b**ear** overb**ear** bugb**ear** p**ear** forb**ear** sw**ear** footw**ear** t**ear** forsw**ear** w**ear** mensw**ear**

are 'air'			aw**are** nightm**are** bl**are** sc**are** Cl**are** sh**are** d**are** sn**are** fl**are** sp**are** gl**are** st**are**

aer 'air'	**aer**ial **aer**ometer **aer**obatic **aer**onaut **aer**obic **aer**oplane **aer**odrome **aer**ofoil **aer**ology		

Unusual/unique spellings: **h<u>eir</u>**   m**<u>ayor</u>**   pr**<u>ayer</u>**   th**<u>eir</u>**.

*Note: When the sound '**air**' is followed by another vowel sound this **forces** our Speech production to insert a clear '**r**' sound between the two – as in **fair** and **fairy**.*

'e'

e 'e'	ebony	element	amend	get	mend	tether	
	eddy	elephant	bent	help	offend	unless	
	edge	emerald	crest	ibex	pet	very	
	edit	end	den	jet	quest	wet	
	egg	ever	eventual	kelp	rend	yell	
	elder	exit	felt	letter	sever	zenith	

ea 'e'			bread	feather	leather	ready	
			breakfast	healthy	meadow	treasure	
			dead	heather	measure	wealthy	
			dealt	heaven	peasant	weapon	
			dread	heavy	readily	weather	
			dreamt	instead	Reading	zealous	

a 'e'	any	many	
	anyhow		
	anyone		
	anything		
	anywhere		

ei 'e'		heifer	
		Leicester	
		leisure	

eo 'e'		jeopardy	
		Leonard	
		leopard	

Unusual/unique spellings: **ae**sthetic b**u**ry fr**ie**nd s**ai**d s**ay**s.

Note: The word **said** *is derived from the original past tense of* **say**: **sayed**.

'ee'

ea 'ee'	each eager eagle Ealing ease easel	easily east Easter easy eat eaves	beak beam bean beaten clean feat	heal heap heat Jean jeans leaf	lean meal neatly peace peacock seal	seamer steal team treaty veal weak	cowpea flea guinea lea pea plea	sea tea

e 'ee'	Eden edict Egypt ego egret eject	e-mail emu enate ephor equal evil	anuresis arena beta debrief debunk female	genial genome geodesic hero hexahedron ketone	legal lemur leonine lethal media mediate	medium Mekong neon penalise query reflex	be he me she we	

ee 'ee'	eel eerie		beef been beep beer beet deep	deem feed fleet feel geek geese	heed jeep keel leek meet need	reef seen reel seed seem week	agree coffee fee glee knee payee	rupee scree see three tree trustee

i 'ee'	Ian Ionesco (Eugene)		adios alias albino alien amigo amino	Anita arias audio avian axiom bikini	casino cerise curious Denise Elliot icier	idiom iliac machine odium opium suite	chilli corgi deli Gobi khaki kiwi	Maori mini Miami sushi Toni Vicki

e-e 'ee'	Eden eke Eve even evening		accede breve cede complete Crete delete	effete gene grebe Ilene impede Irene	obese obsolete plebe recede scene secede	stele Steve Swede Thebes theme these		

ie 'ee'			achieve belief brief cashier chief copied	field fiend Frieda grieve niece piece	priest shield siege spiel wield yield			

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y 'ee'	**Y**pres	an**y**how an**y**way bab**y**ish lad**y**bird	Am**y** And**y** arm**y** bab**y** bus**y** cit**y**	funn**y** ic**y** iv**y** jur**y** oil**y** sunn**y**

ae 'ee'	**Ae**olian **ae**on **Ae**sop **ae**sthesia **ae**sthetic	Ach**ae**ans isch**ae**mia cham**ae**leon orthop**ae**dic h**ae**matite p**ae**an h**ae**matology p**ae**diatrics h**ae**maphilia h**ae**mostat	larv**ae**

ei 'ee'	**ei**ther(*I say,you say?*)	c**ei**ling N**ei**l Sh**ei**la rec**ei**pt rec**ei**pt rec**ei**ve rec**ei**ve R**ei**ms R**ei**ms K**ei**th s**ei**ze Mad**ei**ra s**ei**zure	

ey 'ee'			Audr**ey** bim**ey** bog**ey** Dew**ey** doyl**ey** gall**ey**	kidn**ey** lim**ey** mon**ey** monk**ey** Surr**ey** Turk**ey**

Unusual/unique spellings: f**j**ord p**eo**ple qu**ay** Ph**oe**be.

(In Greek < **oe** > represents **'ee'**).

'er'

| ur

'er' | urban
urbane
urchin
Urdu
urge
urgency | urgent
urn
Ursula
urticaria
urticate
urtication | burly
Burma
burnt
burp
bursar
burst | church
churlish
curb
curly
curt
furl | furlong
hurl
hurt
Kurds
lurk
murder | murky
purse
scurvy
surf
turf
Turkey | cur
concur
demur
fur
incur
occur | recur
slur |

| ir

'er' | irk
Irving
Irwen | | birch
bird
birth
chirp
dirk
dirge | dirty
firs
first
flirt
gird
girl | girth
kirk
mirth
shirk
shirt
skirt | smirk
smirth
third
thirst
Virgo
whirl | astir
bestir
fir
sir
smir
stir | |

| er

'er' | erg
ergo
ergot
erk
ermine
erne | Ernest
erst | adverb
adverse
advert
assert
astern
Berlin | berth
Bertha
Bertie
cervix
fern
gerbil | germ
herb
merger
nerve
permit
person | Serbia
sermon
serve
term
verbose
vermin | aver
defer
her
refer | |

| ear

'er' | earl
early
earn
earnest
earnings
earth | earthworks
earthworm | dearth
heard
hearse
learn
pearl
search | yearn
unearth | | | | |

| or

'er' | | | word
work
worker
world
worm
worse | worship
worst
wort
worth
worthy | | | | |

| urr

'er' | | | burr
churr
curr
purr | | | | | |

Unusual/unique spellings: chauff**eur**   j**our**ney   m**yr**tle   w**ere**.

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'i'

i						
'i'	idiocy	inhibit	bit	grin	pin	sit
	if	into	din	hip	pit	tip
	ignite	Islam	engine	lift	quit	trip
	illicit	irritate	fifty	lily	ripple	video
	imitate	it	fist	little	risk	wit
	index	itch	gin	nifty	sift	zip

y						
'i'	ytterbium	acrylic	glyph	mystery	pygmy
		bicycle	gypsy	mystical	rhythm
		calypso	hymn	myth	sympathy
		crypt	lymph	nymph	symphony
		cynic	lynch	onyx	tricycle
		cyst	lyric	physics	typical

u		
'i'		busily
		business
		busy
		minute

ui		
'i'		build
		built
		biscuit

Unusual/unique spellings: English   seive   women.

*Note: Depending on accent, some weak vowel sounds (schwas) can be
realised in speech as either an '**i**' or a schwa ('**uh**' – sound).*

'ie'

i 'ie'	I	iodine	align	China	friar	quiet	alibi	fungi
	icy	ion	bible	cider	giant	rhino	alkali	Gemini
	Idaho	Iowa	briar	climb	grind	slimy	alumni	hi-fi
	idea	irate	blind	Diana	Orion	spicy	cacti	loci
	identity	ire	bison	drier	phial	trial	cumuli	nuclei
	idol	irony	child	final	prior	wild	foci	rabbi

y 'ie'			asylum	dryad	hyena	scythe	by	sky
			bryony	dryer	lying	shyly	dry	sly
			Bryant	dyke	plywood	skyway	fly	spy
			bylaw	flyby	stylus	slyest	July	try
			byte	fryer	psyche	stymie	my	why
			cycle	glycol	rhyme	thyme	shy	wry

igh 'ie'		airtight	eyesight	midnight	tight	high
		alright	fanlight	might	tonight	nigh
		bright	fright	right	twilight	sigh
		daylight	gaslight	skylight	upright	thigh
		delight	insight	slight	uptight	
		dogfight	knight	sunlight	Wright	

i-e 'ie'	ice	bide	dime	gibe	life
	iceberg	bike	dine	hide	like
	icebox	bile	dive	hike	lime
	icecap	bite	file	hive	mice
	Iceland	cite	fire	jive	Mike
		dice	five	knife	nice

ie 'ie'		allied	fries	tiepin	belie	untie
		denied	piebald	tried	die	vie
		dieback	piechart		lie	
		diehard	plied		magpie	
		dried	spies		pie	
		flies	tieback		tie	

ai 'ie'	aisle	baiza	taiga	bonsai
	aioli	banzai	taipan	Kawai
	aikido	haiku	Taipei	
		naiad	Taiwan	
		Sinai		
		Tai		

eye 'ie'	eye **eye**ball **eye**glass **eye**lash **eye**let **eye**lid	buck**eye** sock**eye** cock**eye** wall**eye** dead**eye** frog**eye** pink**eye** shut**eye**	Note that both < **eye** > & < **igh** > are three-letter spellings that represent the sound '**ie**'.

ei 'ie'	**Ei**ffel (*Tower*) **Ei**ger (*Mountain*) **Ei**nste**i**n (*Albert*) **Ei**senhower (*Dwight*) **ei**steddford (*Wales*) **ei**ther (*I say,you say?*)	f**ei**sty Pl**ei**ades H**ei**di R**ei**ch h**ei**st s**ei**smic L**ei**bniz s**ei**smology l**ei**tmotif On**ei**da	

ay 'ie'	**ay**ah **ay**atollah **Ay**mara	M**ay**a M**ay**akovsky	Paragu**ay** Uragu**ay**

ye 'ie'			b**ye** d**ye** N**ye** *(Bevan)* r**ye** Sk**ye** *(The Isle of)*

uy 'ie'			b**uy** g**uy** G**uy**

Unusual/unique spellings: **ais**le h**eigh**t **is**land.

'o'

o						
'o'	**o**blong **o**ctet **o**dd **o**ffice **o**ften **o**live	**o**nline **o**nset **o**nyx **o**pt **o**strich **O**xford	B**o**b b**o**g b**o**ttle b**o**x c**o**g d**o**g	d**o**t f**o**ssil g**o**d g**o**ne h**o**p j**o**b	j**o**g l**o**ck l**o**g l**o**t l**o**tto m**o**p	n**o**t pl**o**t r**o**t s**o**ggy T**o**m t**o**pic	

a					
'o'	Note that the single-letter spelling < **a** > representing **'o'** is following the sound **'w'**, not just the single-letter spelling < **w** >!	sw**a**b sw**a**mp sw**a**n sw**a**p sw**a**stika Sw**a**tch	qu**a**d qu**a**ff qu**a**lity qu**a**ndary qu**a**ntify qu**a**ntum	qu**a**rry tw**a**ddle w**a**d w**a**ft w**a**ltz w**a**n	w**a**nt w**a**s w**a**sh w**a**sp w**a**tch wh**a**t	

au			
'o'	**au** (revoir) **Au**stralia **Au**stria **Au**stronesia	bec**au**se l**au**rel s**au**sage	

Unusual/unique spellings: c**ou**gh   kn**ow**ledge.

'oe'

o 'oe'	obese Oklahoma obey omega ocean only ogle open okay oval oldest over	bold bolt bony both clover cold	comb don't fold ghost Gobi golf	hobo hold host most noble notice	post Rover Rowan sober total volt	ago also biro duo go echo	Euro hero Hugo jumbo photo solo

oa 'oe'	oaf oak Oakland oast oat oath	bloat cloak coal coax croak float	foal foam goal goat groan hoax	Joan load loaf loan moan moat	road roast soak soap toad toast	cocoa whoa	

o-e 'oe'		abode alone chose cone cope cove	dome dose globe hope hose joke	lobe lope mole nose note quote	rode Rome rope sole vole vote	

ow 'oe'	own owner	bowl slowly blown glowing grown known rower			aglow oxbow below pillow borrow show elbow snow glow throw know widow

oe 'oe'			aloe oboe doe pekoe floe sloe foe throe hoe tiptoe Joe toe

ou 'oe'		boulder soul mould mouldy moult poult shoulder	

au 'oe'	**au** (gratin)	m**au**ve t**au**pe	

ol 'oe'		f**ol**k y**ol**k	

ough 'oe'			d**ough** th**ough**

Unusual/unique spellings: b**eau**   br**oo**ch   **owe**   s**ew**   y**eo**man.

'or'

aw 'or'	awful awfully awkward awl awn awning	bawdry bawl brawl brawny dawn drawer	drawn gawky hawk hawse lawn pawky	pawl pawn prawn shawl sawn tawdry	tawny tawse trawler yawl yawn	bylaw caw claw draw flaw gnaw	jigsaw macaw outlaw paw raw thaw

or 'or'	or orb orbit organ orgone orient	Orlando ornate ornament orphan Orpheus orthotic	acorn adorn born chorus corm dormant	dormitory dormouse force Ford horn horse	lord morning north port short shorn	sort sport storm torn worn York	decor for

au 'or'	auburn Auckland auction audible audit auger	August auk austere author auto autumn	baud cause Claud daub daunt faun	fraud gaudy Gaul gauntlet gauze haul	laud maul Paul Saul taunt		

a 'or'	all also alter	ball befall call catcall dewfall fall	eyeball hall halter holdall icefall install	netball overall pinball pitfall recall seawall	small squall stall tall walk water		

augh 'or'	aught	caught　　naughty daughter　slaughter distraught　taught fraught　　Vaughan haughty naught					

ore 'or'					ashore before bedsore core encore explore	ignore more score sore spore restore	

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oar 'or'	oar	board coarse cupboard hoard	boar hoar roar soar uproar
ough 'or'	**ough**t	bought wrought brought fought nought sought thought	
our 'or'		bourne mourne course Osbourne court fourth	four pour
ar 'or'		award warm dwarf wart swarm	war
aur 'or'			dinosaur pterosaur gorgosaur stegosaur heterodontosaur tyrannosaur
al 'or'		chalk talk stalk walk	
awe 'or'	**awe** **awe**some **awe**struck		
oor 'or'		door floor poor *(accent?)*	

Unusual/unique spelling: br**oa**d.

'oy'

| oi

'oy' | **oi**k   **oi**ly
oil   **oi**nk
oilcan   **oi**ntment
oiled
oilskin
oilstone | an**oi**nt   cl**oi**ster   gr**oi**n   n**oi**se
app**oi**nt   c**oi**l   h**oi**st   ov**oi**d
av**oi**d   c**oi**n   inv**oi**ce   qu**oi**t
b**oi**l   cub**oi**d   j**oi**n   sp**oi**l
br**oi**l   d**oi**ly   l**oi**n   tr**oi**ka
ch**oi**ce   f**oi**l   l**oi**ter   v**oi**d | h**oi**-pol**oi** |

'oy'

| oi
'oy' | **oi**k   **oi**ly
oil   **oi**nk
oilcan **oi**ntment
oiled
oilskin
oilstone | an**oi**nt cl**oi**ster gr**oi**n n**oi**se
app**oi**nt c**oi**l h**oi**st ov**oi**d
av**oi**d c**oi**n inv**oi**ce qu**oi**t
b**oi**l cub**oi**d j**oi**n sp**oi**l
br**oi**l d**oi**ly l**oi**n tr**oi**ka
ch**oi**ce f**oi**l l**oi**ter v**oi**d | h**oi**-pol**oi** |

| oy
'oy' | **Oy**l *(Olive)*
oyster | B**oy**d Ll**oy**d
b**oy**s l**oy**al
destr**oy**er l**oy**alty
enj**oy**s r**oy**al
Fl**oy**d s**oy**a
gr**oy**ne | ah**oy** j**oy**
conv**oy** R**oy**
cowb**oy** tann**oy**
dec**oy** t**oy**
destr**oy** Tr**oy**
enj**oy** vicer**oy** |

Unusual/unique spelling: b**uoy**.

'ow'

ow 'ow'	**ow**l **ow**let **ow**lish	bl**ow**sy b**ow**els br**ow**n br**ow**se cl**ow**n c**ow**er	cr**ow**d dr**ow**n dr**ow**sy fl**ow**er f**ow**l gl**ow**er	g**ow**n j**ow**l p**ow**er pr**ow**l ren**ow**n sc**ow**l	sh**ow**er t**ow**el t**ow**n tr**ow**el v**ow**el y**ow**l	all**ow** br**ow** ch**ow** **cow** dh**ow** end**ow**	h**ow** n**ow** pr**ow** r**ow** sc**ow** v**ow**

ou 'ow'	**ou**ch **ou**nce **ou**r **ou**st **ou**t **ou**tlaw	b**ou**ncy c**ou**ch c**ou**nty d**ou**bt d**ou**se f**ou**nd	g**ou**ge h**ou**nd h**ou**se j**ou**st l**ou**sy m**ou**nt	m**ou**se m**ou**th n**ou**n p**ou**ch p**ou**nd r**ou**nd	r**ou**se s**ou**nd s**ou**th st**ou**t t**ou**t v**ou**cher		

au 'ow'		g**au**ss pil**au** t**au** s**au**erkr**au**t uml**au**t					

ough 'ow'		dr**ough**t				b**ough** Sl**ough**	

'u'

| u

'u' | ugly
Ulster
ultra
umbra
umbrella
umpire | under
unjust
until
upset
upwards
us | bug
bus
but
cup
cuff
drum | dust
fun
fuss
grumpy
gun
hut | jug
lump
mummy
nun
pun
runner | stub
sudden
sun
thumb
tug
tusk | |

| o

'u' | other
otherwise
oven | above
among
become
borough
brother
colour | come
comfort
cover
discover
done
doth | dove
glove
London
love
monk
monkey | month
mother
none
nothing
shovel
some | son
thorough
ton
tongue
won
worry | |

| ou

'u' | | country   rough
couple   touch
cousin   tough
double   trouble
Douglas   young
enough   youngest | |

| o
↓
'wu' | once
one
oneness
oneself
onetime | anyone
everyone
someone | |

| oo

'u' | | blood
flood | |

'ue'

u	ufology	unisex	acuity	duel	fury	studio	
	ukulele	unit	acumen	duet	fusion	stupid	
'ue'	Ukraine	uranium	amulet	duo	futile	stupor	
	unicorn	Utah	Cuba	duty	intuit	Stuart	
	unicycle	utopia	document	fuel	monument	unusual	
	unique	uvula	dual	fugitive	sputum	usual	

u-e	use	accuse	Danube	huge	obtuse	
	useful	ampule	deduce	immune	puke	
'ue'	useless	amuse	deluge	induce	rebuke	
		astute	depute	infuse	refuge	
		attune	dune	misuse	refuse	
		cube	excuse	module	tube	

eu	eucalyptus	eunuch	aleurone	neurone	
	Eucharist	euphemize	Beulah	neuter	
'ue'	euchre	euphonium	feudal	neutral	
	Euclid	euphoria	neural	neutron	
	eugenic	Euphrates	neuroma	pneumatic	
	eulogy	eureka	neuron	pneumonia	

ew	ewer	dewy	newly	
		hewn	news	
'ue'		fewer	newt	
		mewl	newton	
		mews	pews	
		newel	pewter	

ue		Tuesday	argue	miscue
			avenue	queue
'ue'			cue	revue
			due	statue
			fondue	undue
			issue	venue

Unusual/unique spellings: b**eau**ty   n**ui**sance.

*Note: The sound '**ue**' is actually two sounds, '**y**' running into '_m**oo**_n' sounding like the word **you**.*
So the spellings above are actually representing two sounds. This is a second example
*example of an English letter, < **u** >, acting like < **x** > in that it is representing two*
sounds, both of which have other spellings that can represent them.
*There is also an accent issue, with '**ue**' and '_m**oo**_n' often being interchangeable*
*dependent upon local accent. For pragmatic purposes, maintaining this little '**fiction**'*
*that '**ue**' is a single sound makes the spelling easier to follow and much simpler for*
young children i*n their initial learning about how the spelling system works – by the time*
some of them sense this anomoly their spelling accuracy has already been secured!

'_b<u>OO</u>_k'

u '_bOO_k'	**u**mlaut	armf**u**l	dutif**u**l	hatef**u**l	painf**u**l	
		awf**u**l	fearf**u**l	helpf**u**l	pitif**u**l	
		balef**u**l	fretf**u**l	hopef**u**l	ruef**u**l	
		bashf**u**l	f**u**ll	joyf**u**l	R**u**fus	
		b**u**ll	gleef**u**l	Kab**u**l	usef**u**l	
		caref**u**l	harm**fu**l	lawf**u**l	wilf**u**l	

oo '_bOO_k'		af**oo**t	g**oo**d	sh**oo**k	w**oo**f	
		b**oo**k	h**oo**k	s**oo**t	w**oo**l	
		br**oo**k	h**oo**kworm	st**oo**d		
		c**oo**k	l**oo**k	st**oo**k		
		cr**oo**k	n**oo**k	t**oo**k		
		f**oo**t	r**oo**k	w**oo**d		

oul '_bOO_k'		c**oul**d				
		sh**oul**d				
		w**oul**d				

Unusual/unique spelling: w**o**man.

'_mOO_n'

oo '_moo_n'	**oo**mpah **oo**ps **oo**ze	al**oo**f ball**oo**n bl**oo**m c**oo**l f**oo**d g**oo**se	h**oo**f h**oo**ligan h**oo**pla l**oo**m l**oo**p m**oo**d	m**oo**n n**oo**n p**oo**l pr**oo**f r**oo**f r**oo**t	sm**oo**th sn**oo**ker s**oo**n st**oo**l wh**oo**per z**oo**m	bamb**oo** b**oo** cuck**oo** kaz**oo** igl**oo** kangar**oo**	shamp**oo** skidoo tab**oo** tatt**oo** t**oo** z**oo**

ou '_moo_n'	**ou**bliette **Ou**se **ou**zo	B**ou**dicca c**ou**gar c**ou**p c**ou**pe c**ou**pon cr**ou**p	cr**ou**pier d**ou**che gh**ou**l G**ou**da j**ou**le L**ou**ie	L**ou**ise m**ou**sse r**ou**ble r**ou**ge r**ou**te s**ou**p	t**ou**can w**ou**nd y**ou**th	bij**ou** y**ou**	

u '_moo_n'		bl**u**ish Br**u**nei br**u**nette br**u**tal cr**u**et Dr**u**ids	fl**u**ent fl**u**id fr**u**gal F**u**ji gl**u**ing h**u**la	ins**u**lin In**u**it j**u**do J**u**dy J**u**ly L**u**cy	r**u**in sc**u**ba s**u**et tr**u**ant tr**u**ism tr**u**th	fl**u**	

u-e '_moo_n'		all**u**d**e** ass**u**m**e** Br**u**c**e** br**u**t**e** ch**u**t**e** coll**u**d**e**	cr**u**d**e** del**u**d**e** dil**u**t**e** enth**u**s**e** excl**u**d**e** extr**u**d**e**	fer**u**l**e** incl**u**d**e** intr**u**d**e** J**u**n**e** per**u**s**e** pr**u**n**e**	r**u**d**e** r**u**l**e** sal**u**t**e** spr**u**c**e** vol**u**t**e**		

ew '_moo_n'		j**ew**eller j**ew**fish J**ew**ish l**ew**d L**ew**is s**ew**er	s**ew**age str**ew**n str**ew**th			Andr**ew** cash**ew** fl**ew** gr**ew** Hebr**ew** J**ew**	revi**ew** scr**ew** shr**ew** thr**ew** y**ew**

ue '_moo_n'		gr**ue**some r**ue**ful				accr**ue** bl**ue** cl**ue** constr**ue** ens**ue** fl**ue**	gl**ue** purs**ue** r**ue** s**ue** tr**ue**

'$_m$oo$_n$'		lose womb move prove tomb whom whose	ado do into onto to who

ui '$_m$oo$_n$'		bruise recruit cruise sluice fruit suit juice suitor lawsuit sunsuit pursuit	

eu '$_m$oo$_n$'		pseudo Rheubin rheum rheumatism sleuth	

oe '$_m$oo$_n$'			canoe shoe

Unusual/unique spellings: l**ieu**   man**oeu**vre   thr**ough**.

schwa

a schwa	**a** **a**bout **a**far **a**fraid **a**gree **a**jar	**a**larm **a**like **A**laska **a**nnoy **a**ttack **a**void	clim**a**te cur**a**te curr**a**nt frig**a**te Germ**a**ny import**a**nt	magn**a**te merch**a**nt Par**a**guay par**a**llel par**a**mount pir**a**te	prel**a**te prim**a**te priv**a**te rearr**a**nge reptili**a**n rot**a**ry	sal**a**d the**a**tre touc**a**n vagr**a**nt val**a**nce	are**a** ari**a** Coca-Col**a** com**a** Cub**a** dat**a**	flor**a** lav**a** raffi**a** replic**a** Tong**a** yog**a**

er schwa			Alb**er**t cav**er**n des**er**t din**er**s dinn**er**s div**er**s	exp**er**t gov**er**n mod**er**n oth**er**s pap**er**s pli**er**s	Rup**er**t Sev**er**n tav**er**n tow**er**s tun**er**s ulc**er**s		add**er** aft**er** ang**er** bak**er** car**er** Dov**er**	fev**er** giv**er** jok**er** met**er** nev**er** Rog**er**

e schwa			ankl**e**t annul**e**t ass**e**gai ball**e**rina car**e**t cat**e**gory	cel**e**ry cin**e**ma dribbl**e**t Hel**e**n leg**e**nd lysog**e**n	marvell**o**us my**e**lin nic**e**ty nutl**e**t on**e**rous op**e**n	pal**e**tte secr**e**t solen**o**id tal**e**nt	genr**e** th**e**	

o schwa			Aar**o**n apr**o**n ars**o**n bac**o**n bar**o**n bat**o**n	bis**o**n bott**o**m cart**o**n c**o**llude cust**o**m cott**o**n	dem**o**n Dev**o**n her**o**n lem**o**n mutt**o**n nyl**o**n	pist**o**n pyl**o**n rand**o**m Sim**o**n ten**o**n wag**o**n		

u schwa			abac**u**s cact**u**s cens**u**s cons**u**l Cypr**u**s dict**u**m	disc**u**s exod**u**s foet**u**s fung**u**s geni**u**s gyps**u**m	heli**u**m humm**u**s Juli**u**s litm**u**s magn**u**m medi**u**m	mog**u**l muse**u**m nimb**u**s on**u**s op**u**s sput**u**m		

ou schwa			anxi**ous** cauti**ous** consci**ous** curi**ous** delici**ous** ferr**ous**	furi**ous** hide**ous** jeal**ous** malici**ous** nerv**ous** noxi**ous**	obvi**ous** omin**ous** preci**ous** vexati**ous** vici**ous** vivaci**ous**			

ar schwa			altar lunar beggar mortar bursar peculiar collar pedlar dollar sugar hangar vulgar

or schwa		comfort	actor motor arbor prior author razor doctor sailor error tenor major tractor

our schwa			candour harbour clamour honour colour odour favour parlour fervour tumour glamour vapour

r schwa	Some authorities include a phoneme **'eer'** amongst English speech sounds. This 'sound' comprises an **'ee'** running into a **schwa**. We think that both sounds can easily be heard and therefore treat them as *two distinct sounds*.	cheer near clear peer deer smear fear sneer gear veer hear year

re schwa			cadre kilometre calibre litre centimetre ochre centre sabre fibre sceptre goitre sepulchre

ure schwa			conjure lecture feature nurture figure pasture future picture fixture stature gesture texture

ur schwa		jodhp**ur**s	Arth**ur** sidd**ur** fem**ur** Wilb**ur** kron**ur** lem**ur** murm**ur** samb**ur**

ai schwa		capt**ai**n fount**ai**n cert**ai**n mount**ai**n curt**ai**n	

yr schwa			mart**yr** Merth**yr** zeph**yr**

Unusual/unique spellings: Mich**ae**l   bor**ough** / thor**ough**

List of all spellings in alphabetical order

Page	Spelling	Sound	Page	Spelling	Sound	Page	Spelling	Sound
94	a	'a'	**100**	ch	'sh'	**106**	f	'f'
	a	'ae'		che	'sh'		f	'v'
	a	'ar'		ci	'sh'		ff	'f'
	a	'e'		ck	'k'		ffe	'f'
	a	'o'		cq	'k'		g	'g'
	a	'or'		d	'd'		g	'j'
	a	schwa		dd	'd'		ge	'j'
95	a-e	'ae'	**101**	dge	'j'	**107**	gg	'g'
	aer	'air'		dh	'd'		gg	'j'
	ae	'ee'		dj	'j'		gh	'f'
	ai	'ae'		e	'e'		gh	'g'
	ai	'ie'		e	'ee'		gn	'n'
	ai	schwa		e	schwa		gu	'g'
	air	'air'		ea	'ae'		gue	'g'
96	al	'l'	**102**	ea	'e'	**108**	h	'h'
	al	'ar'		ea	'ee'		i	'i'
	al	'or'		ear	'er'		i	'ee'
	ar	'ar'		ear	'ar'		i	'ie'
	ar	'or'		ear	'air'		i-e	'ie'
	ar	schwa		ed	'd'		ie	'ee'
	are	'air'		ed	't'		ie	'ie'
97	au	'ar'	**103**	e-e	'ee'	**109**	igh	'ie'
	au	'o'		ee	'ee'		il	'l'
	au	'oe'		ei	'ae'		ir	'er'
	au	'or'		ei	'e'		j	'j'
	au	'ow'		ei	'ee'		k	'k'
	augh	'or'		ei	'ie'		kh	'k'
	aur	'or'		eigh	'ae'		kk	'k'
98	aw	'or'	**104**	el	'l'	**110**	kn	'n'
	awe	'or'		eo	'e'		l	'l'
	ay	'ae'		er	'ar'		le	'l'
	ay	'ie'		er	'er'		ll	'l'
	b	'b'		er	schwa		lle	'l'
	bb	'b'		ere	'air'		m	'm'
	bt	't'		et	'ae'		mb	'm'
99	c	'k'	**105**	eu	'ue'	**111**	me	'm'
	c	's'		eu	'$_m$oo$_n$'		mm	'm'
	cc	'k'		ew	'ue'		mme	'm'
	cc	's'		ew	'$_m$oo$_n$'		mn	'm'
	ce	's'		ey	'ae'		n	'n'
	ch	'ch'		ey	'ee'		n	'ng'
	ch	'k'		eye	'ie'		ne	'n'

Page	Spelling	Sound	Page	Spelling	Sound	Page	Spelling	Sound
112	**ng**	'ng'	**118**	**ps**	's'	**124**	**u**	$'_bOO_k'$
	nn	'n'		**pt**	't'		**u**	$'_mOO_n'$
	nne	'n'		**q**	'k'		**u**	'w'
	o	'o'		**qu**	'k'		**u**	schwa
	o	'oe'		**que**	'k'		**u-e**	'ue'
	o	'u'		**r**	'r'		**u-e**	$'_mOO_n'$
	o	'wu'		**r**	schwa		**ue**	'ue'
113	**o**	$'_mOO_n'$	**119**	**re**	schwa	**125**	**ue**	$'_mOO_n'$
	o	'schwa'		**rh**	'r'		**ui**	'i'
	oa	'oe'		**rr**	'r'		**ui**	$'_mOO_n'$
	oar	'or'		**s**	's'		**ur**	'er'
	o-e	'oe'		**s**	'z'		**ur**	schwa
	oe	'oe'		**s**	'sh'		**ure**	schwa
	oe	$'_mOO_n'$		**s**	'zh'		**urr**	'er'
114	**oi**	'oy'	**120**	**sc**	's'	**126**	**uy**	'ie'
	ol	'oe'		**sce**	's'		**v**	'v'
	oo	'u'		**sch**	'sh'		**ve**	'v'
	oo	$'_bOO_k'$		**se**	's'		**vv**	'v'
	oo	$'_mOO_n'$		**se**	'z'		**w**	'w'
	oor	'or'		**sh**	'sh'		**wh**	'w'
	or	'er'		**shi**	'sh'		**wh**	'h'
115	**or**	'or'	**121**	**si**	'sh'	**127**	**wr**	'r'
	or	schwa		**si**	'zh'		**x**	'k'
	ore	'or'		**ss**	's'		**x**	'z'
	ou	'oe'		**ss**	'sh'		**x**	'gz'
	ou	'ow'		**ss**	'z'		**x**	'ks'
	ou	'u'		**ssi**	'sh'		**y**	'y'
	ou	$'_mOO_n'$		**st**	's		**y**	'ee'
116	**ou**	schwa	**122**	**t**	't	**128**	**y**	'i'
	ough	'oe'		**t**	'ch		**y**	'ie'
	ough	'or'		**tch**	'ch		**ye**	'ie'
	ough	'ow'		**te**	't'		**yr**	schwa
	oul	$'_bOO_k'$		**th**	't'		**z**	'z'
	our	'or'		**th***	'th'NV		**ze**	'z'
	our	schwa		**th****	'th'V		**zz**	'z'
117	**ow**	'oe'	**123**	**the**	'th'V			
	ow	'ow'		**ti**	'sh'			
	oy	'oy'		**tt**	't'			
	p	'p'		**tte**	't'			
	ph	'f'		**u**	'i'			
	pn	'n'		**u**	'u'			
	pp	'p'		**u**	'ue'			

(*NV = Not Voiced, **V = Voiced)

a 'a'	acid action actor add Adam Africa	alpha amber ambush and apple at	bag bap camp can cat damp	Dan fat gas hat jam lamp	nanny pack ran reaction sad sat	trap tag tan van vat yap	

a 'ae'	acorn acre Aden agent alien angel	aphid apricot April apron Asia atrium	baby chamber change crazy David famous	favour flavour gravy haste lazy paper	radar radio sacred sabre sacred stable	table Tamar taxation vague vapour volcano	

a 'ar'	aft after amen ask		armada basket casket chancy chant class	disaster father grass lager lather master	pass past path plaster raft rancher	rather sample strata tomato vase vast	In some accents many of these words on the left will be **'a'** rather than **'ar'**

a 'e'	any anyhow anyone anything anywhere	many		

a 'o'	Note that the single-letter spelling < **a** > representing **'o'** is following the *sound* **'w'**, not just the single-letter spelling < **w** >!	swab swamp swan swap swastika Swatch	quad quaff quality quandary quantify quantum	quarry twaddle wad waft waltz wan	want was wash wasp watch what	

a 'or'	all also alter	ball befall call catcall dewfall fall	eyeball hall halter holdall icefall install	netball overall pinball pitfall recall seawall	small squall stall tall walk water	

a schwa	a about afar afraid agree ajar	alarm alike Alaska annoy attack avoid	climate curate currant frigate Germany important	magnate merchant Paraguay parallel paramount pirate	prelate primate private rearrange reptilian rotary	salad theatre toucan vagrant valance	area aria Coca-Cola coma Cuba data	flora lava raffia replica Tonga yoga

a-e 'ae'	age ale ape ate	arcade became behave cape create date	decade fame gale game gate hate	haze invade lemonade male name pane	rebate same stale tape vale whale	

aer 'air'	aerial aerometer aerobatic aeronaut aerobic aeroplane aerodrome aerofoil aerology		

ae 'ee'	Aeolian aeon Aesop aesthesia aesthetic	Achaeans ischaemia chamaeleon orthopaedic haematite paean haematology paediatrics haemaphilia haemostat	larvae

ai 'ae'	aid ailment aimless aitch aint	bait baize brain chain daily daisy	faint gain grain mail main maize	mail pail pain paint rainy raise	Spain stain swain tail train vain	

ai 'ie'	aisle aioli aikido	baiza banzai haiku naiad Sinai Tai	taiga taipan Taipei Taiwan	bonsai Kawai

ai schwa		captain fountain certain mountain curtain	

air 'air'	air airlock aircraft airmail aircrew airman airframe airspace airhead airstrip airless airsick	bairn cairn fairy hairy prairie stairway	affair funfair Blair impair chair midair corsair mohair despair repair flair stair

al 'l'			basal medal crystal metal decal nasal fatal pedal final plural legal regal

al 'ar'	almond alms	balm qualm calf calm half palm psalm	

al 'or'		chalk stalk talk walk	

ar 'ar'	arc armpit arcade army archer armada arctic artery argue arthritis aria artist	alarm charm farm sharp apart chart hard smart barb Clark lard start bark dark partner tarnish barn darn scar tartan card dart scarf Tarzan		boxcar jar caviar mar cigar radar far sitar guitar sonar isobar tar	

ar 'or'		award dwarf swarm warm wart	war

ar schwa			altar lunar beggar mortar bursar peculiar collar pedlar dollar sugar hangar vulgar

are 'air'			aware nightmare blare scare Clare share dare snare flare spare glare stare

au 'ar'	aunt aunty	draught laugh laughter	In a few accents some, or all, of these words on the left will be **'a'** rather than **'ar'**

au 'o'	au (revoir) Australia Austria Austronesia	because laurel sausage	

au 'oe'	au (gratin)	mauve taupe	

au 'or'	auburn August Auckland auk auction austere audible author audit auto auger autumn	baud fraud laud cause gaudy maul Claud Gaul Paul daub gauntlet Saul daunt gauze taunt faun haul	

au 'ow'		gauss pilau tau umlaut	

augh 'or'	aught	caught naughty daughter slaughter distraught taught fraught Vaughan haughty naught	

aur 'or'			dinosaur gorgosaur heterodontosaur pterosaur stegosaur tyrannosaur

aw 'or'	awful awfully awkward awl awn awning	bawdry bawl brawl brawny dawn drawer	drawn gawky hawk hawse lawn pawky	pawl pawn prawn shawl sawn tawdry	tawny tawse trawler yawl yawn	bylaw caw claw draw flaw gnaw	jigsaw macaw outlaw paw raw thaw

awe 'or'	awe awesome awestruck						

ay 'ae'	Ayckbourn Aylesbury	cayenne Cayman Clayton crayon drayman flayed	frayed layer mayonaisse okayed playact player	playful playoff playpen strayed		away bay bray clay day gray	pay say slay stay sway tray

ay 'ie'	ayah ayatollah Aymara	Maya Mayakovsky				Paraguay Uraguay	

b 'b'	bad bin band blend bang bottle bean bread beaver bump bend bus	album amber amble bible cabin cable	cobra cube debit Debra debug elbow	fabre fibre habit kebab libel Libra	Mabel Nobel noble orbit robot table	Bob cab cub club drab fib	grab hub rob slab stub tube

bb 'b'		abbey babble bobbin bubble cabbie cobble	dabble dubbin fibber gibbon gobble hobble	hobby hubbub jobbing nibble nobble pebble	rabbit ribbon rubbish stubble wobbly yobbos	ebb	

bt 't'		debtor doubter doubtful doubtless indebted redoubtable	subtle subtlety			debt doubt misdoubt redoubt	

c							
'k'	**c**amera **c**ap **c**arrot **c**lass **c**law	**c**old **c**omb **c**rab **c**rocus **c**uddle **c**up	a**c**ne a**c**orn a**c**re a**c**ross a**c**tion ex**c**laim	in**c**line in**c**lude o**c**arina o**c**tet O**c**tober o**c**topus	pan**c**ake ran**c**our ro**c**oco ru**c**tion s**c**ampi s**c**arlet	s**c**atter s**c**old s**c**orch s**c**orn s**c**rub s**c**uttle	Arabi**c** Balti**c** clini**c** fabri**c** froli**c** hecti**c**	magi**c** pani**c** phobi**c** picni**c** tal**c** tragi**c**

c				
's'	**C**edric **C**eiling **c**elery **c**ell **c**inema **c**innamon	**c**ity **c**ivil **c**yma **c**ygnet **c**ymbol **C**yclops	ac**c**elerate ac**c**ept ac**c**ident a**c**etate a**c**etic a**c**etyl	a**c**id can**c**el ec**c**entric ex**c**ept ex**c**ite i**c**icle	in**c**ident in**c**ision ne**c**essary re**c**eive re**c**ent re**c**ess

cc		
'k'		a**cc**ord a**cc**laim a**cc**omplish a**cc**ount a**cc**urate E**cc**les	e**cc**lesia hi**cc**up Me**cc**a Me**cc**ano o**cc**asion o**cc**lude	o**cc**ult o**cc**upy o**cc**ur pe**cc**adillo pi**cc**allili pi**cc**ata	pi**cc**olo ra**cc**oon Rebe**cc**a re**cc**e stu**cc**o to**cc**ata

cc	
's'	fla**cc**id

The two-letter spelling < **cc** > can represent either **'k'** or **'s'**, but the two adjacent single-letter spellings < **c** > < **c** > always represent **'ks'** never **'sk'**! Egs: a**cc**ent, a**cc**elerate and a**cc**ident.

ce		
's'		avari**ce** choi**ce** da**ce** flee**ce** Gree**ce** hen**ce**	min**ce** pie**ce** ri**ce** slui**ce** spru**ce** troun**ce**

ch							
'ch'	**ch**ain **ch**amp **ch**ance **ch**ild **ch**imney **ch**in	**ch**oice **ch**oke **ch**op **ch**ump **ch**urch **ch**urn	a**ch**ieve an**ch**ovy ar**ch**way ben**ch**mark dis**ch**arge laun**ch**er	prea**ch**er ran**ch**er re**ch**arge tea**ch**er trea**ch**ery wheel**ch**air		ar**ch** bea**ch** ben**ch** bir**ch** chur**ch** ea**ch**	in**ch** Mar**ch** ou**ch** sten**ch** tou**ch** wren**ch**

ch						
'k'	**ch**aos **ch**iropractor **ch**arisma **ch**lorine **ch**asm **ch**oir **ch**elate **ch**ord **ch**emist **Ch**ristmas **ch**imera **ch**rome		anar**ch**y an**ch**or ar**ch**itect ar**ch**ive bron**ch**itis co**ch**lea	e**ch**o in**ch**oate Mi**ch**ael o**ch**re or**ch**estra or**ch**id	psy**ch**ology s**ch**olar s**ch**ool s**ch**ooner tra**ch**ea Za**ch**ery	Cze**ch** epo**ch** eunu**ch** Muni**ch** stoma**ch** Zuri**ch**

ch 'sh'	chagrin chemise	cachet machete	
	chalet chevron	cachou machine	
	chamois chic	fiches Michele	
	chandelier chiffon	flechette Michigan	
	chassis Chopin	fichu ruching	
	chef chute	nachure sachet	

che 'sh'			cache louche
			cloche niche
			creche panache
			fleche quiche
			fiche Roche
			gauche troche

ci 'sh'		antisocial especial racial	
		artificial financial social	
		atrocious judicial special	
		commercial malicious specious	
		crucial official vicious	
		delicious precious vivacious	

ck 'k'		backlog cockney heckle necklace	back kick
		backup cuckoo hockey nickel	clock luck
		bicker docker jackal packet	duck pick
		bucket fickle jacket pickle	fleck sack
		cackle gecko Jackie reckon	frock sick
		cockle hacker mackerel trickle	Jack snack

cq 'k'		acquaint acquit	
		acquaintance acquitted	
		acquiesce	
		acquiescent	
		acquire	
		acquisition	

d 'd'	dab dip	Adam cedar laden padlock	and land
	daily do	admit codeine madly panda	bend made
	damp dog	audio credit nadir render	bread need
	deck drift	badly eldest nodule rounders	clod quad
	desk dug	blindly golden odour sandbag	find ride
	dig dump	Bradford India odyssey video	good vend

dd 'd'		adder cuddly hidden rudder	add
		bladder daddy ladder saddle	odd
		caddie fiddly meddle straddle	Todd
		caddis Freddie middle shudder	
		cheddar gladden muddy suddenly	
		cladding griddle plodder teddy	

| dge

'j' | | abri**dge**d   do**dge**m
ba**dge**r   do**dge**r
blu**dge**on   he**dge**row
bri**dge**board   ri**dge**way
bri**dge**head   sle**dge**hammer
cu**dge**l   smi**dge**on | ba**dge**   ju**dge**
bu**dge**   le**dge**
ca**dge**   lo**dge**
fri**dge**   sle**dge**
fu**dge**   smu**dge**
he**dge**   tru**dge** |

| dh

'd' | **dh**al   **dh**oti
dhansak   **dh**ow
dharma
dhena
dhobi
dhole | Jo**dh**pur   jo**dh**purs   san**dh**i

Note also that the three-letter spelling < **ddh** > represents **'d'** in **Buddha** and its derivatives. | Riya**dh** |

| dj

'j' | **Dj**ango
djellaba
Djerba
Djibouti
djinn | a**dj**acent   a**dj**udicate   a**dj**uvant
a**dj**ective   a**dj**unct
a**dj**oin   a**dj**ure
a**dj**oint   a**dj**ust
a**dj**ourn   a**dj**ustment
a**dj**udge   a**dj**utant | |

| e

'e' | **e**bony **e**lement
eddy **e**lephant
edge **e**merald
edit **e**nd
egg **e**ver
elder **e**xit | am**e**nd g**e**t m**e**nd t**e**ther
b**e**nt h**e**lp off**e**nd unl**e**ss
cr**e**st ib**e**x p**e**t v**e**ry
d**e**n j**e**t qu**e**st w**e**t
ev**e**ntual k**e**lp r**e**nd y**e**ll
f**e**lt l**e**tter s**e**ver z**e**nith | |

| e

'ee' | **E**den **e**-mail
edict **e**mu
Egypt **e**nate
ego **e**phor
egret **e**qual
eject **e**vil | anur**e**sis g**e**nial l**e**gal m**e**dium
ar**e**na g**e**nome l**e**mur M**e**kong
b**e**ta g**e**odesic l**e**onine n**e**on
d**e**brief h**e**ro l**e**thal m**e**dia
D**e**bunk h**e**xahedron m**e**dia m**e**dia query
f**e**male k**e**tone m**e**diate r**e**flex | b**e**
h**e**
m**e**
sh**e**
w**e** |

| e

schwa | | ankl**e**t cin**e**ma my**e**lin secr**e**t
annul**e**t dribbl**e**t nic**e**ty sol**e**noid
ass**e**gai Hel**e**n nutl**e**t tal**e**nt
ball**e**rina leg**e**nd on**e**rous
car**e**t lysog**e**n op**e**n
cat**e**gory marv**e**llous pal**e**tte | genr**e**
th**e** |

| ea

'ae' | | br**ea**k
gr**ea**t
st**ea**k | |

ea 'e'		bread	feather	leather	ready	
		breakfast	healthy	meadow	treasure	
		dead	heather	measure	wealthy	
		dealt	heaven	peasant	weapon	
		dread	heavy	readily	weather	
		dreamt	instead	Reading	zealous	

ea 'ee'	each	easily	beak	heal	lean	seamer	cowpea	sea
	eager	east	beam	heap	meal	steal	flea	tea
	eagle	Easter	bean	heat	neatly	team	guinea	
	Ealing	easy	beaten	Jean	peace	treaty	lea	
	ease	eat	clean	jeans	peacock	veal	pea	
	easel	eaves	feat	leaf	seal	weak	plea	

ear 'er'	earl	earthworks	dearth	yearn	
	early	earthworm	heard	unearth	
	earn		hearse		
	earnest		learn		
	earnings		pearl		
	earth		search		

ear 'ar'		heart	
		hearth	
		hearty	

ear 'air'	Earhart (*Amelia*)		bear	overbear
			bugbear	pear
			forbear	swear
			footwear	tear
			forswear	wear
			menswear	

In speech it is normal for sounds to vary slightly according to the sounds that precede and/or follow them. Although we can usually write < **ed** > at the end of a verb to indicate the past tense, in speech the sound we make is either **'d'** or **'t'** depending on the sound that comes before it. (Our mouths get '*forced*' into producing one or the other.)

ed 'd'			avowed	moaned
			breathed	played
			calmed	ruined
			closed	splattered
			groaned	trained
			hammered	veered

ed 't'			bumped	leaped
			crunched	marked
			finished	pushed
			flinched	talked
			jumped	washed
			knocked	watched

e-e	Eden	accede	effete	obese	stele	
	eke	breve	gene	obsolete	Steve	
'ee'	Eve	cede	grebe	plebe	Swede	
	even	complete	Ilene	recede	Thebes	
	evening	Crete	impede	scene	theme	
		delete	Irene	secede	these	

ee	eel	beef	deem	heed	reef	agree	rupee
	eerie	been	feed	jeep	seen	coffee	scree
'ee'		beep	fleet	keel	reel	fee	see
		beer	feel	leek	seed	glee	three
		beet	geek	meet	seem	knee	tree
		deep	geese	need	week	payee	trustee

ei		abseil	heinous	veil	
		beige	Leila	vein	
'ae'		Beirut	reign	unveil	
		deign	rein		
		feign	Seine		
		feint	skein		

ei		heifer	
		Leicester	
'e'		leisure	

ei	either(*I say,you say?*)	ceiling	Neil	Sheila	
		codeine	receipt		
'ee'		deceit	receive		
		geisha	Reims		
		Keith	seize		
		Madeira	seizure		

ei	Eiffel (*Tower*)	feisty	Pleiades	
	Eiger (*Mountain*)	Heidi	Reich	
'ie'	Einstein (*Albert*)	heist	seismic	
	Eisenhower (*Dwight*)	Leibniz	seismology	
	eisteddford (*Wales*)	leitmotif		
	either (*I say,you say?*)	Oneida		

eigh	eight	freight	inveigh
			neigh
'ae'			reweigh
			sleigh
			weigh

The four-letter spelling < **eigh** > can often represent '**ee**' at the end of place names and surnames. (Also '**ie**' as in h**eigh**t.)

el 'l'			barbel gravel cancel hostel diesel kernel duffel marvel funnel morsel gospel nickel

eo 'e'		jeopardy leopard	

er 'ar'		clerk sergeant	

er 'er'	erg Ernest ergo erst ergot erk ermine erne	adverb berth germ Serbia adverse Bertha herb sermon advert Bertie merger serve assert cervix nerve term astern fern permit verbose Berlin gerbil person vermin	aver deter her refer

er schwa		Albert expert Rupert cavern govern Severn desert modern tavern diners others towers dinners papers tuners divers pliers ulcers	adder fever after giver anger joker baker meter carer never Dover Roger

ere 'air'	ere erelong erenow erewhile	thereabouts whereabouts thereafter whereas therefore wherefore therein whereupon thereof wherewith thereupon	elsewhere somewhere there where

et 'ae'			ballet croquet bouquet gourmet buffet Monet cabaret piquet cachet sachet chalet sorbet

eu 'ue'	**eu**calyptous **eu**nuch **Eu**charist **eu**phemize **eu**chre **eu**phonium **Eu**clid **eu**phoria **eu**genic **Eu**phrates **eu**logy **eu**reka	al**eu**rone n**eu**rone B**eu**lah n**eu**ter f**eu**dal n**eu**tral n**eu**ral n**eu**tron n**eu**roma pn**eu**matic n**eu**ron pn**eu**monia	
eu '$_m$oo$_n$'		ps**eu**do Rh**eu**bin rh**eu**m rh**eu**matism sl**eu**th	
ew 'ue'	**ew**er	d**ew**y n**ew**ly h**ew**n n**ew**s f**ew**er n**ew**t m**ew**l **new**ton m**ew**s p**ew**s n**ew**el p**ew**ter	
ew '$_m$oo$_n$'		j**ew**eller s**ew**age j**ew**fish str**ew**n J**ew**ish str**ew**th l**ew**d L**ew**is s**ew**er	Andr**ew** revi**ew** cash**ew** scr**ew** fl**ew** shr**ew** gr**ew** thr**ew** Hebr**ew** y**ew** J**ew**
ey 'ae'		h**ey**day L**ey**den (jar)	b**ey** ob**ey** conv**ey** ospr**ey** gr**ey** surv**ey** h**ey** th**ey** lampr**ey** tr**ey** l**ey** wh**ey**
ey 'ee'			Audr**ey** kidn**ey** bim**ey** lim**ey** bog**ey** mon**ey** Dew**ey** monk**ey** doyl**ey** Surr**ey** gall**ey** Turk**ey**
eye 'ie'	**eye** **eye**ball **eye**glass **eye**lash **eye**let **eye**lid	big**eye** red**eye** buck**eye** shut**eye** cock**eye** sock**eye** dead**eye** wall**eye** frog**eye** pink**eye**	Note that both < **eye** > & < **igh** > are three-letter spellings that represent the sound '**ie**'.

f 'f'	fabric	flab	afoot	drift	leafy	raft	brief	if
	father	four	after	elfin	left	refer	clef	knife
	fax	fox	awful	fifty	lift	sift	deaf	leaf
	feel	friend	befog	gift	lofty	sofa	elf	oaf
	felon	full	café	hefty	mafia	soft	golf	reef
	fibre	fuse	comfy	infer	often	unfed	half	self

f 'v'		This is the only entry where the spelling occurs in just a single word. However, as the word **of** is one of the commonest words in English, it would be rather odd to view it as an unusual spelling!	of

ff 'f'		baffle	Eiffel	muffle	stuffy	buff	off
		boffin	gaffer	offer	suffer	cliff	riff
		buffet	guffaw	puffin	suffix	duff	staff
		coffee	jiffy	raffle	tiffin	huff	stiff
		coffin	miffed	ruffle	toffee	Jeff	stuff
		differ	muffin	soffit	waffle	quiff	tiff

ffe 'f'			gaffe
			giraffe

g 'g'	gag	glad	again	Bengal	dangle	ogre	bag	fog
	gale	glory	ago	bigamy	degree	polygon	beg	gig
	garden	goose	agree	biography	dragon	regal	big	nag
	gear	grab	argue	bugle	figure	segment	bog	log
	gilt	grape	August	bungle	forget	tiger	bug	mug
	give	gum	began	cigar	igloo	ugly	drug	sag

g 'j'	gem	germinate	agency	egest	magistrate	Roger	age	stage
	Gemini	gesture	agenda	Egypt	regent	tagetes	cage	wage
	gender	giant	agile	engender	regiment	vegetable	huge	
	general	ginger	angioma	engine	region	vestigial	page	
	genetic	gist	digest	logical	register	vigilant	rage	
	gerbil	gypsy	digital	magic	rigidity	wages	sage	

ge 'j'	George	burgeon		barge
	Geoffrey	dungeon		beige
	geography	pigeon		garage
		surgeon		large
		sturgeon		urge

gg 'g'		beggar giggle jogger nugget boggle goggle juggle ragged dagger haggis Maggie reggae digger hugged mugger rugger dogged jagged niggle wagged gagged jiggle noggin wiggle	
gg 'j'		exaggerate suggest	
gh 'f'		coughed draughty laughter roughly toughen	cough tough chough trough enough laugh rough slough
gh 'g'	Ghana ghetto gharry ghost ghastly ghoul ghazi ghee gherkin	Afghan aghast Baghdad burgher sorghum spaghetti	ugh
gn 'n'	gnarled gnome gnash gnomic gnat gnomon gnathic gnostic gnathite gnu gneiss	designer foreigner impugned misalignment oppugner signed	align benign design foreign impugn misalign
gu 'g'	guarantor guide guardian guillotine guelder guile Guernsey guilty guerrilla guiser guest guitar	beguile guilty beguine Guinea guild roguish Guildford unguard guillemot guillotine	
gue 'g'		vaguely Note the unusual four-letter spelling (from the original French) of < ngue > in the words **gangue** and **tongue (**pronounced **gang** and **tung)** standing for 'ng' as in si<u>n</u>k and sa<u>n</u>k.	brogue morgue drogue plague fatigue Prague fugue rogue Hague vague league

h					
'h'	hair herb	adhere	enhance	mishear	
	half hip	antihero	exhale	mishap	
	has hiss	anyhow	inhabit	mishit	
	hat honey	behaviour	inhaler	peahen	
	health hoop	behind	inherit	rehab	
	hem hydrogen	egghead	mayhem	sunhat	

i					
'i'	idiocy inhibit	bit grin	pin sit		
	if into	din hip	pit tip		
	ignite Islam	engine lift	quit trip		
	illicit irritate	fifty lily	ripple video		
	imitate it	fist little	risk wit		
	index itch	gin nifty	sift zip		

i						
'ee'	Ian	adios	Anita	casino	idiom	chilli Maori
	Ionesco (Eugene)	alias	arias	cerise	iliac	corgi mini
		albino	audio	curious	machine	deli Miami
		alien	avian	Denise	odium	Gobi sushi
		amigo	axiom	Elliot	opium	khaki Toni
		amino	bikini	icier	easier	kiwi Vicki

i						
'ie'	I iodine	align	China	friar	quiet	alibi fungi
	icy ion	bible	cider	giant	rhino	alkali Gemini
	Idaho Iowa	briar	climb	grind	slimy	alumni hi-fi
	idea irate	blind	Diana	Orion	spicy	cacti loci
	identity ire	bison	drier	phial	trial	cumuli nuclei
	idol irony	child	final	prior	wild	foci rabbi

i-e					
'ie'	ice	bide	dime	gibe	life
	iceberg	bike	dine	hide	like
	icebox	bile	dive	hike	lime
	icecap	bite	file	hive	mice
	Iceland	cite	fire	jive	Mike
		dice	five	knife	nice

ie				
'ee'		achieve	field	priest
		belief	fiend	shield
		brief	Frieda	siege
		cashier	grieve	spiel
		chief	niece	wield
		copied	piece	yield

ie					
'ie'		allied	fries	tiepin	belie untie
		denied	piebald	tried	die vie
		dieback	piechart		lie
		diehard	plied		magpie
		dried	spies		pie
		flies	tieback		tie

igh		airtight	eyesight	midnight	tight	high
		alright	fanlight	might	tonight	nigh
'ie'		bright	fright	right	twilight	sigh
		daylight	gaslight	skylight	upright	thigh
		delight	insight	slight	uptight	
		dogfight	knight	sunlight	Wright	

il			basil	pencil
			Cecil	pupil
'l'			council	weevil
			fossil	stencil
			gerbil	tendril
			nostril	utensil

ir	irk		birch	dirty	girth	smirk	astir
	Irving		bird	firs	kirk	smirth	bestir
'er'	Irwen		birth	first	mirth	third	fir
			chirp	flirt	shirk	thirst	sir
			dirk	gird	shirt	Virgo	smir
			dirge	girl	skirt	whirl	stir

j	jab	jet	ajar	major	Although we have not included it as a regular English spelling, the two-letter spelling < **jj** > does represent the sound **'j'** in the words **hajj**, **hajji** and **Hajjaj**.	Hajjaj
	Janet	joke	banjo	object		Raj
'j'	jade	jockey	deejay	project		taj
	jam	John	enjoy	rajah		
	Japan	judge	hijack	ramjet		
	jelly	just	logjam	reject		

k	Kansas	kind	ankle	beaker	hiker	parka	baulk	elk
	karate	kink	asked	biker	inkling	poker	blank	kapok
'k'	Kate	kiosk	awaken	bulky	jerkin	rankle	brook	peke
	keg	kit	baker	catkin	joker	token	cake	pink
	kettle	krill	banker	donkey	market	working	chalk	plank
	kick	kyle	basket	fakir	monkey	yokel	Derek	sink

kh	khadder	Khmer	gymkhana		ankh	
	khaki	Khartoum	Given that both the single-letter spellings < **c** > and < **k** > represent the sound **'k'**, and that < **ch** > can also represent **'k'**, as in **school**, then logically < **kh** > should also be able to represent it – and it does!		Ankh	*(mythical river)*
'k'	khamsin	Khyber			lakh	
	khan				sikh	
	khat					
	khedive					

kk		chukka	
		chukker	
'k'		dekko	
		markka	
		pukka	
		trekking	

kn 'n'	**kn**ack **kn**it **kn**ead **kn**ob **kn**eecap **kn**ocker **kn**eel **kn**ot **kn**ife **kn**ow **kn**ight **kn**uckle	bow**kn**ot door**kn**ob fore**kn**ow mis**kn**ow slip**kn**ot top**kn**ot	

l 'l'	**l**ad **L**ily **l**ast **l**ie **l**ate **l**og **l**eg **l**oop **l**et **L**uke **l**etter **l**ump	a**l**ert co**l**ic fa**l**se g**l**ue a**l**ter Co**l**in fi**l**ms gu**l**p at**l**as de**l**ay fo**l**d He**l**en be**l**ow de**l**ta g**l**ass ig**l**oo be**l**t e**l**even g**l**impse Is**l**am bo**l**d e**l**m go**l**d me**l**on	a**l**e ni**l** boi**l** po**l**e coo**l** ree**l** foo**l** tai**l** goa**l** wha**l**e nai**l** whee**l**

le 'l'			app**le** fidd**le** beet**le** gigg**le** bib**le** jung**le** bott**le** nett**le** circ**le** tab**le** doub**le** unc**le**

ll 'l'	**ll**ama **ll**ano **Ll**oyd	ba**ll**et do**ll**op mi**ll**er swa**ll**ow be**ll**ow fo**ll**ow pa**ll**et tre**ll**is Bi**ll**y fri**ll**y pi**ll**ar va**ll**ey ce**ll**ar gri**ll**ed pi**ll**ow vi**ll**a ce**ll**o je**ll**y po**ll**en wa**ll**et do**ll**ar lo**ll**ipop sha**ll**ow ye**ll**ow	Bi**ll** Ji**ll** bu**ll** pu**ll** ce**ll** se**ll** do**ll** sti**ll** fa**ll** ta**ll** gri**ll** ye**ll**

lle 'l'			Annabe**lle** gaze**lle** bagate**lle** Luci**lle** Basti**lle** Mose**lle** Brai**lle** nace**lle** cheni**lle** Nashvi**lle** Este**lle** pasti**lle**

m 'm'	**m**at **m**ost **m**elt **m**ove **m**iddle **m**ud **m**ink **m**uscle **m**ist **m**ust **m**oor **m**y	ad**m**ire bu**m**p fu**m**ble **m**ember a**m**aze ce**m**ent ha**m**per **m**oment a**m**ber co**m**ic hu**m**an no**m**ad a**m**ple da**m**p hu**m**bug Pa**m**ela ani**m**al E**m**ily ju**m**bo re**m**ark ba**m**boo e**m**pty le**m**on si**m**ple	Ada**m** glu**m** alar**m** poe**m** bri**m** roo**m** chu**m** see**m** exa**m** swi**m** far**m** ter**m**

mb 'm'		bo**mb**shell cli**mb**er plu**mb**er thu**mb**nail	aplo**mb** ento**mb** benu**mb** la**mb** cli**mb** li**mb** co**mb** rhu**mb** cory**mb** thu**mb** cru**mb** wo**mb**

me			become	lissome
			centime	outcome
'm'			consume	some
			fulsome	thyme
			income	twosome
			irksome	welcome

mm	comma	grammar	plummet	summer	
	common	grammes	shimmer	summit	
'm'	dilemma	grommet	simmer	swimmer	
	Emma	hammer	slimmer	trammel	
	flummox	mammal	stammer	trimmer	
	glimmer	Mohammed	strummed	uncommon	

mme			femme
			gramme
'm'			kilogramme
			oriflamme
			programme

mn			autumn	hymn
			column	limn
'm'			condemn	solemn
			contemn	
			damn	
			dislimn	

n	name	nine	anchor	Andrew	inch	onset	Alan	fern
	nap	nip	angle	encode	income	snails	barn	gain
'n'	need	none	animal	ending	India	sneeze	bean	iron
	nest	north	anklet	energy	indigo	snare	chin	lawn
	never	nudge	anorak	engine	infant	snug	corn	moan
	nice	nugget	answer	enjoy	onion	uncle	Dawn	noun

n		anger	Frank	monkey	tank	
		angler	inky	pink	think	
'ng'		bank	jangle	rank	tingle	
		blanket	jingo	singlet	twinkle	
		bingo	junk	sunken	wink	
		drink	link	tangled	wrangle	

ne			anyone	famine
			borne	gamine
'n'			bygone	gone
			carmine	imagine
			Diane	undone
			engine	Wayne

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ng 'ng'		banging clingy gangs gongs kings length	lungs singer singing strength strings things	tongs twangs wringer	From French we also get the four-letter spelling of **'ng'** as < **ngue** > In meri**ngue** and to**ngue**	among bung bring cling driving flung	giggling rushing sing strong wring walking
nn 'n'			Annie annoy banner bonnet Cannes cannot	channel Dennis fennel flannel gannet grannie	inner kennel planned runner scanned sinner	sonnet tannin tennis thinner tunnel winner	Ann Bonn djinn Glenn inn Lynn	Tallinn
nne 'n'							Anne cayenne Dianne doyenne Jeanne Joanne	Leanne Lynne Roxanne Suzanne tonne Yvonne
o 'o'	oblong octet odd office often olive	online onset onyx opt ostrich Oxford	Bob bog bottle box cog dog	dot fossil god gone hop job	jog lock log lot lotto mop	not plot rot soggy Tom topic	
o 'oe'	obese obey ocean ogle okay oldest	Oklahoma omega only open oval over	bold bolt bony both clover cold	comb don't fold ghost Gobi golf	hobo hold host most noble notice	post Rover Rowan sober total volt	ago also biro duo go echo	Euro hero Hugo jumbo photo solo
o 'u'	other otherwise oven	above among become borough brother colour	come comfort cover discover done doth	dove glove London love monk monkey	month mother none nothing shovel some	son thorough ton tongue won worry	
o 'wu'	once one oneness oner oneself onetime	anyone everyone someone				

o 'ₘOOₙ'		lose womb move prove tomb whom whose				ado do into onto to who

o schwa		Aaron apron arson bacon baron baton	bison bottom carton collude custom cotton	demon Devon heron lemon mutton nylon	piston pylon random Simon tenon wagon	

oa 'oe'	oaf oak Oakland oast oat oath	bloat cloak coal coax croak float	foal foam goal goat groan hoax	Joan load loaf loan moan moat	road roast soak soap toad toast	cocoa whoa

oar 'or'	oar	board coarse cupboard hoard				boar hoar roar soar uproar

o-e 'oe'		abode alone chose cone cope cove	dome dose globe hope hose joke	lobe lope mole nose note quote	rode Rome rope sole vole vote	

oe 'oe'						aloe oboe doe pekoe floe sloe foe throe hoe tiptoe Joe toe

oe 'ₘOOₙ'						canoe shoe

oi	oik	oily	anoint	cloister	groin	noise	hoi-poloi
	oil	oink	appoint	coil	hoist	ovoid	
'oy'	oilcan	ointment	avoid	coin	invoice	quoit	
	oiled		boil	cuboid	join	spoil	
	oilskin		broil	doily	loin	troika	
	oilstone		choice	foil	loiter	void	

ol		folk			
		yolk			
'oe'					

oo		blood		
		flood		
'u'				

oo		afoot	good	shook	woof	
		book	hook	soot	wool	
'_bOO_k'		brook	hookworm	stood		
		cook	look	stook		
		crook	nook	took		
		foot	rook	wood		

oo	oompah	aloof	hoof	moon	smooth	bamboo	shampoo
	oops	balloon	hooligan	noon	snooker	boo	skiddoo
'_mOO_n'	ooze	bloom	hoopla	pool	soon	cuckoo	taboo
		cool	loom	proof	stool	kazoo	tattoo
		food	loop	roof	whooper	igloo	too
		goose	mood	root	zoom	kangaroo	zoo

oor		door		
		floor		
'or'		poor (*accent*)		

or		word	worship	
		work	worst	
'er'		worker	wort	
		world	worth	
		worm	worthy	
		worse	woundwort	

or 'or'	**or** **or**b **or**bit **or**gan **or**gone **or**ient	**Or**lando **or**nate **or**nament **or**phan **Or**pheus **or**thotic	ac**or**n ad**or**n b**or**n ch**or**us c**or**m d**or**mant	d**or**mitory d**or**mouse f**or**ce F**or**d h**or**n h**or**se	l**or**d m**or**ning n**or**th p**or**t sh**or**t sh**or**n	s**or**t sp**or**t st**or**m t**or**n w**or**n Y**or**k	dec**or** f**or**	
or schwa							act**or** arb**or** auth**or** doct**or** err**or** maj**or**	mot**or** pri**or** raz**or** sail**or** ten**or** tract**or**

ore 'or'							ash**ore** bef**ore** beds**ore** c**ore** enc**ore** expl**ore**	ign**ore** m**ore** sc**ore** s**ore** sp**ore** rest**ore**

ou 'oe'		b**ou**lder m**ou**ld m**ou**ldy **mou**lt p**ou**lt sh**ou**lder	s**ou**l		

ou 'ow'	**ou**ch **ou**nce **ou**r **ou**st **ou**t **ou**tlaw	**bou**ncy c**ou**ch c**ou**nty d**ou**bt d**ou**se f**ou**nd	**gou**ge h**ou**nd h**ou**se j**ou**st l**ou**sy m**ou**nt	**mou**se m**ou**th n**ou**n p**ou**ch p**ou**nd r**ou**nd	**rou**se s**ou**nd s**ou**th st**ou**t t**ou**t v**ou**cher	

ou 'u'		c**ou**ntry c**ou**ple c**ou**sin d**ou**ble D**ou**glas en**ou**gh	r**ou**gh t**ou**ch t**ou**gh tr**ou**ble y**ou**ng y**ou**ngest		

ou 'ₘOOₙ'	**ou**bliette **Ou**se **ou**zo	B**ou**dicca c**ou**gar c**ou**p c**ou**pe c**ou**pon cr**ou**p	cr**ou**pier d**ou**che gh**ou**l G**ou**da j**ou**le L**ou**ie	L**ou**ise m**ou**sse r**ou**ble r**ou**ge r**ou**te s**ou**p	t**ou**can w**ou**nd y**ou**th	bij**ou** y**ou**

| **ou** schwa | | anxi**ous**   furi**ous**   obvi**ous**
cauti**ous**   hide**ous**   omin**ous**
consci**ous**   jeal**ous**   preci**ous**
curi**ous**   malici**ous**   vexati**ous**
delici**ous**   nervo**us**   vici**ous**
ferr**ous**   noxi**ous**   vivaci**ous** | |

| **ough** 'oe' | | | d**ough**
th**ough** |

| **ough** 'or' | **ough**t | b**ough**t   wr**ough**t
br**ough**t
f**ough**t
n**ough**t
s**ough**t
th**ough**t | |

| **ough** 'ow' | | dr**ough**t | b**ough**
Sl**ough** |

| **oul** '_bOO_k' | | c**oul**d
sh**oul**d
w**oul**d | |

| **our** 'or' | | b**our**ne
c**our**se
c**our**t
f**our**th
m**our**ne
Osb**our**ne | f**our**
p**our** |

| **our** schwa | | | cand**our**   harb**our**
clam**our**   hon**our**
col**our**   od**our**
fav**our**   parl**our**
ferv**our**   tum**our**
glam**our**   vap**our** |

ow 'oe'	**ow**n **ow**ner	b**ow**l sl**ow**ly bl**ow**n gl**ow**ing gr**ow**n kn**ow**n r**ow**er	agl**ow** oxb**ow** bel**ow** pill**ow** borr**ow** sh**ow** elb**ow** sn**ow** gl**ow** thr**ow** kn**ow** wid**ow**

ow 'ow'	**ow**l **ow**let **ow**lish	bl**ow**sy cr**ow**d g**ow**n sh**ow**er b**ow**els dr**ow**n j**ow**l t**ow**el br**ow**n dr**ow**sy p**ow**er t**ow**n br**ow**se fl**ow**er pr**ow**l tr**ow**el cl**ow**n f**ow**l ren**ow**n v**ow**el c**ow**er gl**ow**er sc**ow**l y**ow**l	all**ow** h**ow** br**ow** n**ow** ch**ow** pr**ow** c**ow** r**ow** dh**ow** sc**ow** end**ow** v**ow**

oy 'oy'	**Oy**l *(Olive)* **oy**ster	B**oy**d Ll**oy**d b**oy**s l**oy**al destr**oy**er l**oy**alty enj**oy**s r**oy**al Fl**oy**d s**oy**a gr**oy**ne	ah**oy** j**oy** conv**oy** R**oy** cowb**oy** tann**oy** dec**oy** t**oy** destr**oy** Tr**oy** enj**oy** vicer**oy**

p 'p'	**p**ack **p**iano **p**aste **p**lug **P**eter **p**lot **p**en **p**lum **p**lank **p**roud **p**lot **p**un	am**p**le do**p**ey lu**p**in re**p**el as**p**ic im**p**el mo**p**ed se**p**ia ca**p**on im**p**ly o**p**al su**p**er Ca**p**ri Ja**p**an pa**p**er to**p**ic Cu**p**id ka**p**ok pu**p**il vi**p**er de**p**ot la**p**el re**p**ay whis**p**er	bum**p** parsni**p** cli**p** qui**p** dro**p** rea**p** fli**p** stam**p** gas**p** trum**p** lim**p** zi**p**

ph 'f'	**ph**alanx **ph**ilosophy **ph**antom **ph**oneme **ph**armacy **ph**one **ph**enol **ph**oto **ph**enomenon **ph**rase **Ph**ilip **ph**ysical	a**ph**id ele**ph**ant Mem**ph**is cam**ph**or go**ph**er ne**ph**ew cy**ph**er gra**ph**ic or**ph**an Da**ph**ne hy**ph**en pro**ph**et Dau**ph**in Hum**ph**rey So**ph**ie dol**ph**in mor**ph**ine s**ph**ere	cali**ph** photogra**ph** gly**ph** trium**ph** gra**ph** ka**ph** lym**ph** nym**ph**

pn 'n'	**pn**eumatic **pn**eumatocele **pn**eumatology **pn**eumatosis **pn**eumoconiosis **pn**eumonia		

pp 'p'		a**pp**al gra**pp**le pe**pp**er su**pp**er cho**pp**er hi**pp**ie pi**pp**in su**pp**ly co**pp**er hi**pp**o pu**pp**et ta**pp**et da**pp**er ki**pp**er ri**pp**le u**pp**er da**pp**le mo**pp**et ski**pp**er yi**pp**ee dri**pp**ed ni**pp**er sli**pp**er zi**pp**er	

ps	psalm	psyche		
's'	Psalter	psychic		
	pseud	psychology		
	pseudonym	psychiatry		
	psittacosis	psychometry		
	psoriasis	psyllium		

pt	ptarmigan		
't'	pteridology		
	pterodactyl		
	pteropod		
	pterosaur		
	ptomaine		

q					Compaq
	Quatar	question	banquet	equator	inquiry	squaw	Iraq
'k'	quaff	quick	bequeath	equinox	liquid	squeak	
	quality	quiet	burqa	equip	niqab	squeeze	
	quarrel	quite	eloquent	equity	sequel	squid	
	quarter	quiz	enquiry	equivalent	squalid	squint	
	queen	quote	equal	inquest	square	squirrel	

qu		bouquet	liquorice	
		chequer	maquis	
'k'		cliquey	marquee	
		conquer	parquet	
		croquet	Raquel	
		liquor	yanquis	

que	queue		antique	clique
			baroque	mosque
'k'			barque	opaque
			Basque	pique
			brusque	unique
			cheque	

r	race	rink	agree	cherub	grid	metric	
	radio	riot	Andrea	crab	hooray	outrun	
'r'	rain	roast	anorak	degree	Iraq	petrol	
	rebel	Rosemary	April	drip	iris	pram	
	reflex	ruby	Boris	Eric	Madrid	sacred	
	Ricky	run	brim	free	matrix	tree	

r	Some authorities include the sound 'eer' amongst English phonemes. This sound comprises an 'ee' running into a schwa. We think that both sounds can easily be heard in normal speech and therefore treat them as *two distinct sounds*.	cheer	near
schwa		clear	peer
		deer	smear
		fear	sneer
		gear	veer
		hear	year

re schwa			cadre calibre centimetre centre fibre goitre	kilometre litre ochre sabre sceptre sepulchre

rh 'r'	rhapsody rhodium rhesus rhombus rhinitis rhubarb rhino rhumba rhizome rhyme Rhodes rhythm	Durham	The three-letter spelling < rrh > also represents the sound 'r' in a number of medical nouns for rather unpleasant conditions such as diarrhoea and cirrhosis.	

rr 'r'		barrel barrier Barry berry carrot carry	corral curry Darryl ferret furry garret	horrid merry mirror quarrel parrot sorry	sparrow Surrey terror turret warren worry	

s 's'	sack sleep Santa son scent spot set step shed stuck sip Susan	absurd also basic best casino cask	cyst desk discuss dust east Easter	fast foster gospel hostel insect jester	just lost mascot nest onset risk	blocks claps ducks fits gaps huts	lumps notes pips treats takes votes

s 'z'		absorb basil Bosnia bosom busy casual	clumsy cosmic cosy desert dismal easily	Joseph laser Lesley loser misery mosaic	museum music nasal resent resin Susan	beans begs clubs digs figs frogs	hers his legs pens trends wags

s 'sh'	Sean sugar sure		

s 'zh'		measure pleasure treasure unusual usual visual	

sc 's'	**sc**ene **sci**entist **sc**enery **sc**illa **sc**enic **Sc**illy Isles **sc**ent **sc**imitar **sc**iatica **sc**issors **sc**ience	de**sc**end de**sc**ender fa**sc**inate na**sc**ent re**sc**ind tume**sc**ent	

sce 's'			coale**sce** remini**sce**

sch 'sh'	**sch**muck **schwa** **sch**napps **Schwa**nn **sch**nitzel **sch**nozzle **Sch**ubert **Sch**umann	E**sch**er e**sch**ew	Kir**sch** men**sch**

se 's'			cea**se** hor**se** cha**se** loo**se** cop**se** mou**se** den**se** nur**se** fal**se** pul**se** gee**se** rin**se**

se 'z'			advi**se** noi**se** blou**se** pau**se** cau**se** plea**se** chee**se** prai**se** crui**se** rai**se** Loui**se** who**se**

sh 'sh'	**sh**adow **sh**ield **sh**ake **sh**irt **sh**ark **sh**ock **sh**e **sh**op **sh**ed **sh**ort **sh**elf **sh**ut	air**sh**ip da**sh**ed gum**sh**oe ra**sh**er ban**sh**ee di**sh**es Jo**sh**ua rick**sh**aw bi**sh**op ear**sh**ot kin**sh**ip up**sh**ot bol**sh**ee fa**sh**ion mar**sh**al u**sh**er ca**sh**ew Fi**sh**er pu**sh**es wa**sh**er cu**sh**ion gei**sh**a pu**sh**up war**sh**ip	awa**sh** gna**sh** blu**sh** po**sh** bu**sh** mar**sh** da**sh** ra**sh** fi**sh** spla**sh** fle**sh** wa**sh**

shi 'sh'		cu**shi**on fa**shi**on	

si 'sh'		ascension excursion scansion aspersion expansion tension aversion expulsion torsion dimension extension version diversion pension emulsion repulsion				

si 'zh'		abrasion collision envision invasion abscision collusion excision occasion adhesion confusion explosion recision affusion corrosion illusion revision allusion decision implosion cohesion effusion incision				

ss 's'		blossom crossly Jessie mussel bosses dresser kissed odyssey chassis fossil lesson possum classic glasses lissom professor cosset guesses massive Sussex crosses hussar message vessel	abyss gloss boss guess bless press class Swiss crass miss dress toss		

ss 'sh'		assure tissue fissure issue pressure reassure Russia				

ss 'z'		Aussies possess scissors				

ssi 'sh'		accession omission admission passion discussion percussion egression permission emission recession obsession scission				

st 's'		apostle Christmas jostle pestle bristle epistle listen rustle bustle glisten mistletoe thistle castle gristle moisten trestle chasten hasten nestle whistle chestnut hustle ostler wrestle				

t 't'								
table	toast	arctic	fitness	mentor	stick	at	just
tag	topic	artery	gratin	motor	stunt	belt	kit
tennis	total	baton	hatbox	nasty	title	bet	hat
tent	treat	blister	jester	poster	voter	cat	lent
tide	trunk	destroy	later	potato	water	dot	mist
tin	twist	enter	matress	rested	winter	flat	right

t 'ch'				
adventure	fixture	nurture	stature
capture	fracture	pasture	texture
creature	future	picture	torture
culture	gesture	posture	venture
denture	lecture	rapture	vesture
feature	mixture	rupture	vulture

tch 'ch'				
butcher	pitcher	catch	itch
hatchet	ratchet	crutch	match
itching	satchel	ditch	patch
ketchup	watchman	etch	scratch
kitchen	witches	fetch	watch
matchless	wretched	hatch	witch

te 't'		
baste	private
carte	route
cote	salute
curate	senate
palate	svelte
piste	waste

th 't'			
Thai	Thomas	Anthony	
Thailand	Thomism	Esther	
thaler	Thompson		
thalweg	thyme		
Thames			
thebe			

th 'th'_{NV} not voiced								
thank	thin	Arthur	earthly	Luther	Nathan	bath	Judith
thaw	think	asthma	epithet	menthol	panther	breath	length
theft	third	author	faithful	method	pathos	cloth	tenth
thick	thorn	Bertha	fifthly	methyl	python	fourth	tooth
thief	three	Catherine	Gothic	monthly	tenthly	growth	warmth
thigh	thud	Cynthia	isthmus	mythical	urethra	health	wreath

th 'th'_V voiced						
than	there	another	feather	mouthed	seething	smooth
that	these	betrothed	Heather	neither	smother	
the	they	brother	hither	rather	teething	
their	this	clothed	leather	rhythms	thither	
them	those	father	loathing	scathing	weather	
then	though	further	mother	scythes	whether	

the 'th'ᵥ voiced			breathe soothe clothe sunbathe lathe swathe lithe teethe loathe tithe sheathe writhe

ti 'sh'		action collection elation initial addition condition emotion junction attention definition essential location caption deviation evolution lotion carnation direction fiction motion caution education formation partial	

tt 't'		attach battle fettle Ottawa attack better gutter otter attain bitten kettle pattern attic bottle litter scatter attire bottom motto tattoo batter cattle nettle utter	bitt watt Brett butt putt Scott sett

tte 't'			Annette Colette burette gavotte butte gazette casette matte culotte palatte curette pipette

u 'i'		busily business busy minute	

u 'u'	ugly under Ulster unjust ultra until umbra upset umbrella upwards umpire us	bug dust jug stub bus fun lump sudden but fuss mummy sun cup grumpy nun thumb cuff gun pun tug drum hut runner tusk	

u 'ue'	ufology unisex ukulele unit Ukraine uranium unicorn Utah unicycle utopia unique uvula	acuity duel fury studio acumen duet fusion stupid amulet duo futile stupor Cuba duty intuit Stuart document fuel monument unusual dual fugitive sputum usual	

u '₍b₎OO₍k₎'	umlaut	armful	dutiful	hateful	painful	
		awful	fearful	helpful	pitiful	
		baleful	fretful	hopeful	rueful	
		bashful	full	joyful	Rufus	
		bull	gleeful	Kabul	useful	
		careful	harmful	lawful	wilful	

u '₍m₎OO₍n₎'		bluish	fluent	insulin	ruin	flu
		Brunei	fluid	Inuit	scuba	
		brunette	frugal	judo	suet	
		brutal	Fuji	Judy	truant	
		cruet	gluing	July	truism	
		Druids	hula	Lucy	truth	

u 'w'		anguish	Guam	question	squad	
		cuirass	guano	quiet	square	
		cuisine	guacomole	quote	squash	
		equal	languish	sequin	squawk	
		equate	Paraguay	suede	squid	
		equip	quack	suite	Uruguay	

u schwa		abacus	discus	helium	mogul	
		cactus	exodus	hummus	museum	
		census	foetus	Julius	nimbus	
		consul	fungus	litmus	onus	
		Cyprus	genius	magnum	opus	
		dictum	gypsum	medium	sputum	

u-e 'ue'	use	accuse	Danube	huge	obtuse	
	useful	ampule	deduce	immune	puke	
	useless	amuse	deluge	induce	rebuke	
		astute	depute	infuse	refuge	
		attune	dune	misuse	refuse	
		cube	excuse	module	tube	

u-e '₍m₎OO₍n₎'		allude	crude	ferule	rude	
		assume	delude	include	rule	
		Bruce	dilute	intrude	salute	
		brute	enthuse	June	spruce	
		chute	exclude	peruse	volute	
		collude	extrude	prune		

ue 'ue'		duel				argue	miscue
		fuel				avenue	queue
		Tuesday				cue	revue
						due	statue
						fondue	undue
						issue	venue

ue 'mOOn'		gruesome rueful	accrue glue blue pursue clue rue construe sue ensue true flue

ui 'i'		build built biscuit	

ui 'mOOn'		bruise recruit cruise sluice fruit suit juice suitor lawsuit sunsuit pursuit	

ur 'er'	urban urgent urbane urn urchin Ursula Urdu urticaria urge urticate urgency urtication	burly church furlong murky Burma churlish hurl purse burnt curb hurt scurvy burp curly Kurds surf bursar curt lurk turf burst furl murder Turkey	cur recur concur slur demur fur incur occur

ur schwa		jodhpurs	Arthur siddur femur Wilbur kronur lemur murmur sambur

ure schwa			conjure lecture feature nurture figure pasture future picture fixture stature gesture texture

urr 'er'		burr churr curr purr	

uy					buy
'ie'					guy
					Guy

v	vacuum	view	advent	device	havoc	oven	Gustav
	valve	visit	anvil	evade	ivory	pivot	
'v'	venom	vital	avoid	even	level	raven	
	Venus	vocal	cavern	event	movie	savage	
	venue	volt	civic	favour	navy	seven	
	vermin	vulgar	David	giving	oval	uvula	

ve			above	olive
			carve	prove
'v'			dove	massive
			give	move
			have	shove
			love	valve

vv		navvy	
'v'		revving	

w	wag	window	airway	Darwin	nitwit	runway	
	walk	wing	awake	dwell	Norway	subway	
'w'	war	witch	away	earwig	outwit	swift	
	weekend	wobble	bigwig	Gwen	Owen	Taiwan	
	well	wolf	byway	kiwi	swag	twig	
	west	wool	cobweb	midway	swamp	twin	

wh	whale	whisk	anywhere	somewhere	
	what	whisker	cartwheel		
'w'	whelk	whistle	elsewhere		
	while	white	flywheel		
	whipped	whoop	nowhere		
	whirl	why	pinwheel		

wh	who		
	whole		
'h'	whom		
	whose		

wr 'r'	**wr**ack **wr**ing **wr**aith **wr**inkle **wr**angle **wr**iting **wr**apper **wr**ong **wr**eck **wr**ote **wr**ench **wr**ought		

x 'k'		e**x**ceed e**x**cite e**x**cel e**x**cess e**x**celsior e**x**cept e**x**cise	

x 'z'	**X**anadu **X**erxes **X**avier **x**oanon **x**enophobia **x**yloid **x**enon **x**ylophone **x**erosis **X**erox		

x 'gz'		e**x**acerbate e**x**asperate e**x**act e**x**empt e**x**aggerate e**x**ert e**x**alt e**x**hort e**x**amine e**x**otic e**x**ample e**x**ist	

x 'ks'		a**x** E**x**calibur E**x**eter Sa**x**on a**x**is e**x**cavate e**x**it e**x**pose a**x**le e**x**change e**x**pect he**x**agon a**x**olotl e**x**chequer e**x**pense le**x**icon a**x**on e**x**claim e**x**pert ma**x**imum a**x**oplasm e**x**cuse sa**x**ifage o**x**en	Ale**x** fo**x** ape**x** hoa**x** coa**x** jin**x** co**x** lun**x** fle**x** mi**x** fi**x** wa**x**

y 'y'	**y**am **y**odel **y**ard **y**oga **y**ear **Y**ork **y**east **y**ou **y**ell **y**ummy **y**es **y**uppies	ban**y**an papa**y**a be**y**ond can**y**on hal**y**ard Ken**y**a mid**y**ear	

y 'ee'	**Y**pres	an**y**how an**y**way bab**y**ish lad**y**bird	Am**y** funn**y** And**y** ic**y** arm**y** iv**y** bab**y** jur**y** bus**y** oil**y** cit**y** sunn**y**

y	ytterbium	acrylic	glyph	mystery	rhythm		
		bicycle	gypsy	mystical	sympathy		
'i'		calypso	hymn	myth	symphony		
		crypt	lymph	onyx	tricycle		
		cynic	lynch	physics	typical		
		cyst	lyric	pygmy			

y	ylem	asylum	dryad	hyena	shyly	by	sky
		bryony	dryer	lying	skyway	dry	sly
'ie'		Bryant	dyke	plywood	slyest	fly	spy
		bylaw	flyby	psyche	stylus	July	try
		byte	fryer	rhyme	stymie	my	why
		cycle	glycol	scythe	thyme	shy	wry

ye						bye
						dye
'ie'						Nye (*Bevan*)
						rye
						Skye (*The Isle of*)

yr						martyr
						Merthyr
schwa						zephyr

z	Zambia	zinc	Amazon	Brazil	gizmo	lizard	ablaze	graze
	zapper	zipper	Aztec	dozen	hazard	Mozart	amaze	ionize
'z'	zeal	zombie	azure	dozing	hazel	Nazi	doze	laze
	zebra	zoom	ozone	enzyme	hazily	razor	faze	maze
	Zen	Zulu	bazaar	gazebo	kazoo	unzip	froze	prize
	zero	zygote	bezel	gazump	lazily	wizard	gaze	size

ze						adze	gauze
						Belize	maize
'z'						breeze	ooze
						bronze	sleaze
						freeze	sneeze
						frieze	wheeze

zz		buzzer	grizzly	nozzle	razzle	buzz	whizz
		dazzled	guzzle	nuzzle	sizzled	fizz	
'z'		drizzle	jacuzzi	piazza	swizzle	frizz	
		embezzle	mezzo	pizza	unmuzzle	fuzz	
		fizzle	mizzen	puzzle		jazz	
		frazzled	muzzle	quizzed		pizazz	