

Articles – Sounds of Each Letter

Here is a list of the Letter/Sound combinations. While focusing student attention on the letters is not the best way to teach students to read, it is very useful for teaching spelling, because there is a reason for most of the different ways to spell the sounds.

Letter/s	Sound	Name	Other Words
a	/a/	/a/ in apple	at, am, apple, ant
	/ae/	/ae/ in taken	basin, April
	/ar/	Foreign /ar/ in Ma & Pa	drama, sultana
		/ar/ in ask before 2 consonants	task, mask, flask
	/o/	Foreign /o/ in want after a /w/ sound	quality, wash
	/or/	/or/ in call	ball, fall, mall, ball
	/u/	/u/ in away , at the end of a syllable, & in gorilla , at the end of a word	America, Papa, Rilla, Hanna
ae/a e	/ae/	/ae/ in ice cream sundaes plate	Fae, Mae, name
ai/ay	/ae/	/ae/ in mermaid , before the end of a word, & in display , at the end of a word	braid, hail, paid bray, hay, pay
air	/air/	/air/ in airplane	airport, hair, pair
ar	/ar/	/ar/ in star	art, arch, far, car
	/or/	/or/ in war	warm, wart, ward
are/ar	/are/	/are/ in share & shared	glare, blared
au/aw	/or/	Old /or/ in dinosaur paw	Paul, saw, law
ay		See ai/ay	
b	/b/	/b/ in bat and ball	bag, best, rob, rib
c	/k/	/k/ in clamp	cat, disc, music
	/s/	/s/ in pencil	cell, stencil, cycle
cei	/see/	Foreign /see/ in receive	ceiling, deceive
ch	/ch/	/ch/ in chickens peck	chip, French, such
	/k/	Foreign /k/ in monarch	chemist, school
	/sh/	Foreign /sh/ in quiche	chef, crochet

Letter/s	Sound	Name	Other Words
ci	/sh/	Foreign /sh/ in special	facial, social
ck	/k/	2 letter /k/ in duck	clock, stick, quack
d	/d/	/d/ in dog	din, lid, waddle
dge/dg	/j/	3 letter /j/ in badge	bridge, budget
e	/ae/	Foreign /ae/ in cafe	eclair, pate, decor
	/e/	/e/ in egg	end, nest, set, ever
	/ee/	/ee/ in began , at the end of a syllable, & in be , at the end of a few short words	defend, besides me, she, he, the
ea	/ae/	Old /ae/ in steak	break, great
	/e/	Old /e/ in bread	breath, weather
	/ee/	Old /ee/ in eat	bean, peach, flea
ear	/air/	Foreign /air/ in bears	pear, wear, swear
	/er/	Foreign /er/ in search	learn, earth, early
eau	/oe/	Foreign /oe/ in plateau	bureau, chateau
ed		Past tense /ed/, /d/, /t/	
	/ed/	/ed/ in dented	batted, rented
	/d/	/d/ in pried	grinned, opened
	/t/	/t/ in tapped	ripped, stuffed
ee/e e	/ee/	/ee/ in seeds for Eve ,	see, fee, concrete
	/ae/	& in Foreign /ae/ in matinee	Renee, puree
ei/ey	/ai/	Foreign /ae/ in reindeer survey	abseil, survey
	/ee/	Foreign /ee/ in seize honey	protein, money
	/ie/	Foreign /ie/ in heists with eye witnesses	eider, eyeball
elle	/el/	Foreign /el/ in Gabrielle	Estelle, Narelle
enne	/en/	Foreign /en/ in Adrienne	Lucienne, Lilienne
er	/er/	/er/ in letter	her, better, boxer
ette	/et/	Foreign /et/ in brunettes	Georgette, gazette

Letter/s	Sound	Name	Other Words
eu	/ue/	Foreign /ue/ in Europe	feud, eureka
eur	/er/	Foreign /er/ in amateur	chauffeur, masseur
ew	/ooe/	Foreign /ooe/ in Andrew	jewel, chew, drew
	/ue/	Foreign /ue/ in newspaper	newt, few, dew
f	/f/	/f/ in fly swat	fig, frog, off, cuff
g	/g/	/g/ in grab	gust, grip, egg, leg
	/j/	/j/ in gems , before letters e, i, and y	gel, fragile, gym
gh		Foreign /g/ in gh osts weigh their weight & laugh	
	/f/	Foreign /f/ in laugh	laughter, laughing
	/g/	Foreign /g/ in gh osts, at the beginning of a syllable	ghee, Afghanistan
	/-/	Foreign silent /g/ in weigh ing, at the end of a syllable, & in weigh at the end of a word	neigh ing, sleigh ing sleigh, neigh
	/-/	Foreign silent /g/ in weight , before letter t	sleight, daughter
gn	/n/	Foreign /n/ in gnat	gnaw, sign, resign
gu	/g/	Foreign /g/ in guide	guest, rogue, guess
h	/h/	/h/ in here	hip, hop, has, his
i	/ee/	Foreign /ee/ in ski , at the end of a word, & in /ee/ in budgerigar at the end of a syllable	taxi, Naomi Gabriel, Damian
	/i/	/i/ in it's itchy	in, ill, tin
	/ie/	/ie/ in Ivan , at the end of a syllable	silent, writing
		/ie/ in find , before 2 consonants	blind, pint, kind
		Foreign /ie/ in fight	slight, knight
	/y/	Foreign /y/ in brilliantly	union, onion
ie/i e	/ee/	Foreign /ee/ in Marie's magazine	police, trampoline
	/ie/	/ie/ in bow ties inside	die, pie, hide, fine
ir	/er/	Old /er/ in dirty	shirt, girl, first
j	/j/	/j/ in just stop right now	just, jam, jet, jog

Letter/s	Sound	Name	Other Words
k	/k/	/k/ in keys, before letters e, i, and y	kill, kid, milk, sulk
kn	/n/	Old /n/ in knaves & knights	knee, knit, knife
l	/l/	/l/ in ladder	lit, list, hill, sell
le	/l/	Silent e /-/ in wobble	tumble, nimble
m	/m/	/m/ in mountains	me, mug, am, him
n	/n/	/n/ in necklace	net, no, bun, in
ng	/ng/	/ng/ in sing	gang, cling, sitting
	/ng g/	/ng g/ in fingers	Angus, linger
nk/nc	/ngk/	/ngk/ in Pink Zinc®	bank, drink, franc
o	/o/	/o/ in orange	on, off, office, olive
	/oe/	/oe/ in robot , at the end of a syllable, & /oe/ in go , at the end of a word	open, protest no, so, sago, Jo
	/oe/	/oe/ in cold before 2 consonants	sold, gold, fold
	/ooe/	Old /ooe/ in to do	today, undo, redo
	/u/	/u/ in mother , before letters m, n, th, & v	son, brother
oa	/oe/	Old /oe/ in moat	goal, foam, road
oar	/or/	Old /or/ in All aboard!	hoard, soar, roar
oi/oy	/oy/	/oy/ in boil oysters	coil, join, boy, soy
oe/o e	/oe/	/oe/ in toe bone	Joe, hoe, stone
oo	/oo/	/oo/ in look	book, crook, hoof
	/ooe/	/ooe/ in moon	food, moo, roo
oor	/or/	/or/ in floor	door, poor, moor
or	/er/	/er/ in American favor	odor, worm, work
	/or/	/or/ in ordinary dots	born, torn, for, or

Letter/s	Sound	Name	Other Words
ore	/or/	Foreign /or/ in before	carnivore, store
ou	/ooe/	Old /ooe/ in you	youth, troupe, soup
	/ow/	/ow/ in Ouch!	loud, noun, sound
	/u/	Old /u/ in trouble	young, cousin
our	/er/	/er/ in British favour	journal, armour
	/or/	Old /or/ in yours	court, four, tourist
ow	/oe/	Old /oe/ in bow & arrow	grow, low, snow
	/ow/	/ow/ in Ow!	clown, now, cow
oy		See oi/oy	
p	/p/	/p/ in pinch	pot, pit, pup, tap
ph	/f/	/f/ in photo	Joseph, elephant
qu	/k/	Foreign /k/ in conquer	raquet, antique
	/kw/	/qu/(kw) in quarrel	quit, quill, quest
r	/r/	/r/ in roar	rat, rug, rip, dress
rh	/r/	/r/ in rhinoceros	rhubarb, rhumba
re	/r/	Old /er/ in fire	hire, mire, here
s	/s/	/s/ in snake	sit, tints, bits
	/z/	/z/ in his	dresses, quills
sc	/s/	Foreign /s/ in science	scissors, scene
sh	/sh/	/sh/ in shhh	shed, ash, mesh
si	/zh/	/zh/ in explosions	version, Asian
si/ssi	/sh/	Foreign /sh/ in tension & session	expulsion, mission
Silent e	/-/	wobble – so each syllable has a vowel	tumble, nimble
	/-/	impressive – to end words that would end with i, j, u, or v	have, save

Letter/s	Sound	Name	Other Words
Silent gh	/-/	weigh – at the end of a foreign syllable or word	sleighbing, sleigh
	/-/	weight, fight- before letter t & in foreign words	sleight, flight
th	/th/	/th/ in thirsty	thin, thick, fifth
	/the/	/the/ in there's that bird	than, this, smooth
ti	/sh/	/sh/ in nation	carnation, caution
u	/oo/	/oo/ in push	bush, bull, pullet
	/ooe/	Foreign /ooe/ in futons, at the end of a syllable	Susan, influenza
	/u/	/u/ in up	us, under, dust
	/ue/	/ue/ in humans, at the end of a syllable	tunic, duplex
ue/u e	/ooe/	/ooe/ in flue & June	blue, glue, rule, rude
	/ue/	/ue/ in rescue & cute	avenue, mule
ur	/er/	Old /er/ in spur	burglar, surf, fur
uy	/ie/	Old /ie/ in guy	buy, Stuyvesant
v	/v/	/v/ in valley	vet, vest, vat, van
ve	/v/	/v/ in impressive because words can't end in v	give, detective
w	/w/	/w/ in worms wiggle	wok, wig, wet, will
war	/wor/	Old /wor/ in warm	warn, wart, ward
wh	/w/	/w/ in whale	while, wheel
	/hw/	/hw/ in whale (optional)	while, wheel
wr	/r/	Old /r/ in writing	wrap, wrist, wren
x	/ks/	/x/(ks) in axe/ax	fix, six, box, mix
	/z/	Foreign /z/ in xylophone	Xavier, Xerox
y	/ee/	/ee/ in baby, at the end of most multi-syllable words	family, empty
	/i/	Foreign /i/ in Dylan	Olympic, bicycle
	/ie/	Foreign /ie/ in python at the end of a syllable	dynamo, dynamite
		Foreign /ie/ in my - at the end of a short word	fry, fly, dry, cry
	/y/	/y/ in yawn	yet, yell, yum, yak

Letter/s	Sound	Name	Other Words
ye/y e	/ie/	Foreign /ie/ in Goodbye Clydesdale	dye, rye, hairstyle
z	/z/	/z/ in zoom	zip, zag, fizz, buzz