

Phoneme- Grapheme Correspondences

Updated July 2024



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Phonemes vs. Graphemes



A **phoneme** is the smallest unit of spoken sound and is often the one thing that distinguishes one word from another (e.g., what you hear in the sound /k/)



A **grapheme** is the smallest unit of written language, what you see (e.g., the sound /k/ can be written for you to see 5 ways: *c, k, ck, qu, ch*)

Fundamental reading skills involve being able to take words apart and put them back together again to create new words.

Understanding the connection between what words sound like (*phonemes*)  and what they are represented by in writing (*graphemes*)  is a **vital skill** for understanding how to read print.

Phoneme-Grapheme Correspondences: Activity

On the following slides you will hear the sounds of 45 **phonemes** and see their corresponding **graphemes**.

Please note that the **graphemes** for the **phonemes** shown are the most common spellings, but this presentation does not include all possible **graphemes** for each **phoneme**.

To begin, simply start the PowerPoint and you will hear each corresponding sound.



a



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b



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c
k
_ck





d
_ed





e



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f

ff

gh

ph





g

_gg

gh





h

wh





i





j
_dge
_ge





k
c
_ck







m

mb

mn





n
kn_
gn_







p



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qu





r

wr





s

_ss

sc_

ps_





t

_tt

_ed





U





V





W





X

_cks





Y





z

zz

s

x



Long Vowels

When the vowel says its name.



a_e
ai
ay
eigh





ee

e_e

ea

_y

ie





i_e
ie
_y
igh





o_e
oa
oe
ow
o_





u_e
ew



Diagraphs

A combination of two or more letters that work together to make a single sound.



th

*like “**thumb**”





th

*like “feather”





sh





ch





wh



Diphthongs

A sound composed of two vowel sounds, causing your mouth to change positions as you say that sound.



oi

oy





ow

ou





oo

U_e

ue

ew





oo

U





aw

au

ough



R-Controlled Vowels

A vowel immediately followed by the letter 'r' and can no longer be pronounced as a long or short vowel.



ir
er
ur
ear_





ar





or
ore





air
are
_ear



Additional Sounds



/zh/

*s or z





_le





_ng
_nk

