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Introduction

In English, the 26 letters of our alphabet can create between 40 and 44 basic phonemes (sounds). English is not a phonetic language (one sound is represented by one symbol), unlike Russian or Spanish which follow the alphabetic principle quite closely. In English, **spelling is not pronunciation**. More words in English are not spelled phonetically than words that are.

Knowing some of the spelling/phonetic inconsistencies can help students understand why they are having trouble in spelling or pronunciation. For example:

- A sound can be represented by more than one spelling, and the / f / sound in *fan*, *photograph*, and *rough*.
- The same letter can represent several different sounds as the / o / in *women*, *cone*, *got*, *love*, and *cork*.
- Two letters may be combined to represent one sound, as in *watch*.
- "Silent" letters represent no sound at all, as in *bake*. The "silent" letters may also influence the sound of other letters, as the long a sound in *bake*.

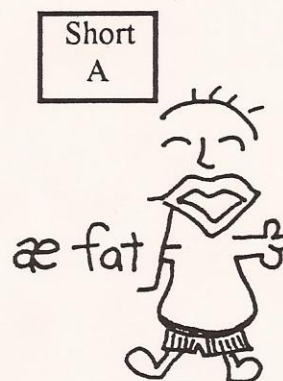
Moreover, because English has borrowed so many of its words from other languages, a systematic method of spelling and pronunciation cannot be applied. There is also the problem of regional dialects, which introduce additional discrepancies between spelling and sound.

Section II is designed to be used as a workbook of speech drills for use by students of all levels. Each page begins with a key word that represents a "target" sound in English. Common spellings are also listed for each target sound. Examples of the sound in different positions follow. The section on contrasting pairs is set up to develop the students' ability to discriminate the difference between the target sound and similar sounds. In this way we begin to introduce the idea that sounds are not made in isolation but are part of a specific context. The phrases and complete sentences demonstrate how the sounds are used in common speech as well as giving students practice in sound production.

Teachers are encouraged to add their own words, phrases, and sentences to the list. By no means is the material assembled here comprehensive. We hope we have provided a firm base for additional exercises and practice.



Common Spellings	
a	man
au	laugh



Production of Short A :

The tongue is relaxed, flat, and low behind the lower teeth. The bottom jaw drops and the sound is voiced (low position).

Words:

(INITIAL)

as
add
attic
answer

(MEDIAL)

fat
dad
hat
sad

Contrasting Pairs:

at/eat
at/ate
and/end

mat/met
pan/pen
mass/mess

map/mop
cat/cot
hat/hate

Phrases:

cat in the hat
land on sand
magic hat
hand in hand
fat cat

answer the question
ants in your pants
Spanish class
adjectives and adverbs
ham sandwich

Sentences:

Fat Pat sat on the mat.
Ann and Max had candy.
Andy was sad because Cathy was mad.



Common Spellings	
e	egg
a	any
ue	guess
ai	said
ea	head

Short
E



Production of Short E:

The relaxed tongue is in the middle of the mouth. The jaw and face are also relaxed. Open the mouth and drop the lower jaw slightly making a voiced sound (mid position).

Words:

(INITIAL)

any
enter
energy
Emily

(MEDIAL)

set
men
Wednesday
pet

Contrasting Pairs:

end/and
ex/ax
Ed/add

bet/bat
set/sat
men/man

pet/pit
wet/wit
ten/tin

Phrases:

set the table
no energy left
men's room
guess again
ready, set, go

best friend
bet your life
dead-end
Federal Express
get ahead

Sentences:

Emily entered the contest Wednesday.
Ed likes eggs every day.
November eleventh is Ellen's anniversary.



Common Spellings	
i	sit
hy	rhythm
y	cyst

Short
I



Production of Short I:

Raise the tongue high and to the front of the relaxed mouth. Open the mouth only slightly. Make a voiced sound (high position).

Words:

(INITIAL)

it
if
is
interest

(MEDIAL)

sit
give
quick
his

Contrasting Pairs:

it/at
it/eat
is/ease

sick/seek
pick/peek
fill/feel

sit/set
hid/had
hit/hot

Phrases:

bit my lip
knit mittens
pet the kitten
ship-shape
inner belt

skinny dip
hit-skip
flip my lid
British English
in the city

Sentences:

Is it difficult?
Bill lives in the middle of the city.
Phil will sit still and take his pill.



Common Spellings	
o	hot
a	want
a (r)	garden

Short
O



Production of Short O:

The tongue is relaxed in a wide open mouth with the jaw dropped. The tongue is resting on the bottom of the mouth. The sound is voiced.

Words:

(INITIAL)

art
odd
October
occupation

(FINAL)

ma
pa
spa
ha ha

(MEDIAL)

hot
cop
watt
father

Contrasting Pairs:

on/an
are/ore
rot/rat

pot/pat
pot/putt
lock/luck

bomb/bum
hot/hut
tot/taught

Phrases:

hop scotch
hot shot
drop the mop
odd jobs
crop-top

fox trot
stop and shop
hot spot
50 watt bulb
ma and pa

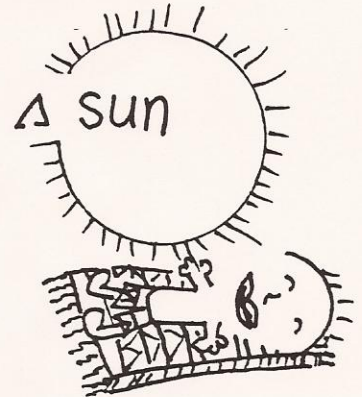
Sentences:

Usually October is not hot.
"Artists are an odd lot," said Arthur.
Bob and his father shop at the garden center.



Common Spellings	
u	up
ou	trouble

Short
U



Production of Short U:

The mouth is opened slightly and the tongue is relaxed. The sound is voiced.

(INITIAL)

us
ugly
other
umbrella

(MEDIAL)

cut
ton
stuck
mother

Contrasting Pairs:

putt/pot
cut/cot
cup/cap

bug/bag
luck/lock
tug/tag

buck/book
cuff/cough
cut/caught

Phrases:

under the sun
ugly duckling
undone
enough is enough
some fun

mud puddle
a month ago
funny bunny
cut the cake
honey bun

Sentences:

The ugly mutt jumped into the mud puddle.
Honey buns cost too much money.
Doug is as snug as a bug in a rug.



Common Spellings	
a - e	take
ai	daily
ay	may
ey	hey
ea	break

Long
A



Production of Long A:

The tongue is tense and in a middle position with the lips slightly parted in a tiny smile. The tongue tip touches the front bottom teeth.

Words:

(INITIAL)

ate
age
ape
eighteen

(FINAL)

say
pay
may
holiday

(MEDIAL)

date
paper
break
main

Contrasting Pairs:

age/edge
late/let
pain/pen

bait/bat
mate/mat
wait/wet

ace/ice
pain/pin
raid/red

Phrases:

pay day
baby face
main gate
take a break
bake a cake

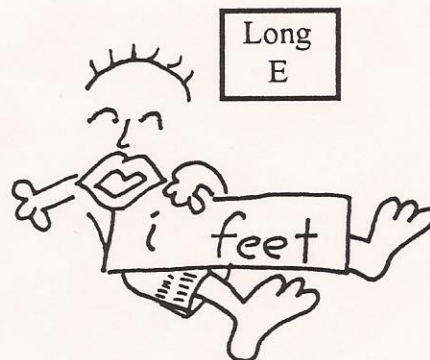
shake and bake
make my day
stay away
wide awake
potato pancakes

Sentences:

Jane placed her daisies in the gray vase.
Nate played with Jay all day.
Katie ate cake from a paper plate.



Common Spellings	
e - e	Pete
ei	either
ea	each
ee	seen
y	Mary



Production of Long E:

The tongue is high leaving only a tiny space with the mouth almost shut. The teeth are close together with a tense chin and mouth. The lips form a smile and the sound is voiced.

Words:

(INITIAL)

eat
equal
east
even

(FINAL)

flea
agree
cookie
baby

(MEDIAL)

feet
meal
week
peel

Contrasting Pairs:

eel/ill
sheep/ship
meat/mitt

weak/wick
feel/file
seat/sit

beat/built
feel/fell
meal/Mel

Phrases:

tea and cookies
peach tree
be a sweetie
agree with me
three times a week

keep the peace
please be neat
green beans
lean on me
breathe deep

Sentences:

Jeannie and Mandy teach reading to people.
"Bees can be mean and sting," said Steve.
Sleet falls every week of January.



Common Spellings	
ei	height
i - e	mile
uy	guy
y	fly



Production of Long I:

The tongue is low in the mouth, then lightly touches the bottom front teeth with the tip. Lower the jaw and open lips wide. Raise jaw and make a voiced sound.

Words:

(INITIAL)

I
eye
iris
island

(FINAL)

tie
sky
shy
reply

(MEDIAL)

diet
file
height
invite

Contrasting Pairs:

I'll/oil
tie/toil
tie/tea

height/heat
might/meet
time/team

bite/bit
sight/sit
fight/fit

Phrases:

pie in the sky
sty in my eye
high and dry
might makes right
don't fight

I cried and cried
I'm shy
fly by night
bye-bye
Friday, July 9th

Sentences:

I'm five foot nine.
I invited Iris for pie and ice cream.
The fire was inviting on a cold night.



Common Spellings	
o	no
o - e	vote
oa	boat
oe	toe
ow	row
ew	sew
ough	dough

Long
O



Production of Long O:

Round lips and place tongue low in the mouth. Raise the tongue toward the roof of the mouth. Make a voiced "oh" sound.

Words:

(INITIAL)

old
own
ocean
over

(FINAL)

show
mow
dough
sew

(MEDIAL)

cold
hold
foam
hope

Contrasting Pairs:

row/raw
so/saw
phone/fawn

low/law
sewn/sun
bone/bun

tone/ton
show/shoe
blow/blue

Phrases:

overcoat
overdue books
oh, no!
know the ropes
hold the phone

row your boat
mow the lawn
go slow
roller coaster
blow your nose

Sentences:

Tomorrow Joan will go to the ocean.
Joe wrote home for dough.
Does Flo know the way home?



Common Spellings	
u	uniform
u - e	cute
oo	boot
ew	few
ui	fruit
oe	shoe

Long
U



Production of Long U:

Lips are rounded with tongue midway in the mouth. Make a long voiced sound.

Words:

(INITIAL)

unit
United States
uniform
use

(FINAL)

due
true
blue
through

(MEDIAL)

cool
group
boot
recruit

Contrasting Pairs:

cool/coal
tool/toll
boot/boat

flute/float
crew/crow
boot/but

Luke/luck
soon/son
shoe/should

Phrases:

blue moon
overdue
true blue
duty first
bluegrass music

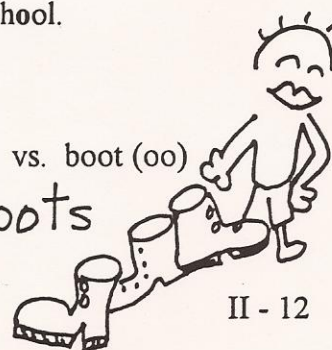
new recruits
new shoes
boot camp
threw the ball
cool school

Sentences:

Ruth wanted new blue shoes for school.
Luke and Sue had a cool drink.
The bluebird flew due south.

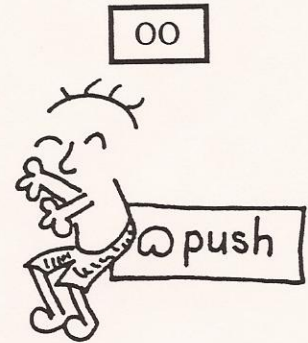
* oo is sometimes classified separately from long u. cute (yoo) vs. boot (oo)

u boots





Common Spellings	
oo	book
ou	should
u	sugar



Production of OO:

Lips are pushed out and slightly rounded. The tongue is midway. A short voiced sound is made.

Words:

(MEDIAL)

book
woman
could
crook

Contrasting Pairs:

could/coal
could/cool
should/shoot

took/tool
full/fool
should/show

cook/kook
foot/food
soot/suit

Phrases:

push a cart
took a look
push and pull
look out
good looking

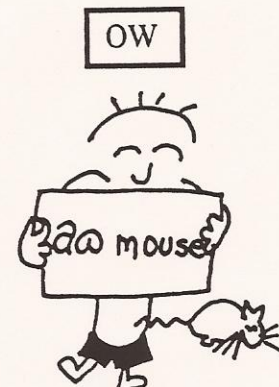
cookbook
shook up
took my book
catch the crook
wool coat

Sentences:

She shook her right foot.
You should use a cookbook.
The woman took a good look at the crook.



Common Spellings	
ow	how
ou	our



Production of OW:

The tongue is low and against the bottom teeth. The mouth is wide open, then closed, making a puckered shape. A voiced sound is made.

Words:

(INITIAL)

out
owl
hour
ouch

(FINAL)

cow
now
how
allow

(MEDIAL)

pout
house
towel
announce

Contrasting Pairs:

out/oat
how/hoe
now/no

our/or
down/done
pout/putt

mouth/moth
bough/bought
town/ton

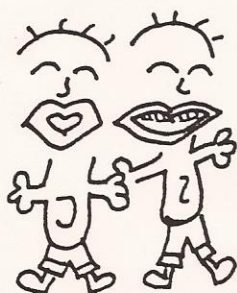
Phrases:

our cow
hour by hour
no parking allowed
shower announcement
foul ball

out and about
townhouse
downtown
clown around
ground round

Sentences:

I found flowers **out** on the ground.
A shout is a **loud** sound.
How did the **brown** mouse get into the **house**?



Common Spellings	
oi	oil
oy	toy



Production of OI:

Start with *aw* where the tongue is low and tense, the lips tight, and the jaw dropped. Slide into *e* by moving the tongue high and tensing the tongue and cheek muscles. The mouth pulls into a smile.

Words:

(INITIAL)

oil
oyster
ointment
oink

(FINAL)

toy
boy
joy
Roy

(MEDIAL)

boil
point
voice
appointment

Contrasting Pairs:

boy/blow
choice/chess
royal/roll

voice/vow
joy/jaw
oil/earl

toil/toll
foil/foul
coil/call

Phrases:

toys bring joy
boiling point
rubbing ointment
joyful noise
point it out

foiled again
boys will be boys
royal treatment
good choice
Detroit River

Sentences:

The toys brought joy to the boys.
Bring oil only to the boiling point.
After cooking oysters, wrap them in foil.



Common Spellings	
ir	fir
er	mother
ur	urban
or	harbor
ear	learn
R - controlled vowels *	

ER

curtain



Production of ER Stressed & Unstressed:

Cheek muscles are tightened and make a voiced "err" sound from the throat.

Words:

(INITIAL)

urban
earth
early
urge

(FINAL)

doctor
harbor
father
sister

(MEDIAL)

injured
curtain
work
surgery

Contrasting Pairs:

stir/stay
work/weak
first/fist

burn/barn
word/wired
bird/beard

turn/toil
further/father
her/hair

Phrases:

mother and father
pull the curtain
fur collar
help your mother
sister and brother

higher and higher
professional photographer
November thirtieth
early bird
first birthday

Sentences:

Honor your father and mother.
Lower the curtain during the night.
Kurt's injured leg still hurts.

* Depending on the source, this is considered between one and five sounds. We have chosen to combine them.



Common Spellings	
au	taught
ou	cough
aw	saw
o	song
al	all

AW



Production of AW:

The tongue is tense and low away from the teeth. The lips are tense. The bottom jaw drops as you make a voiced sound.

Words:

(INITIAL)

August
awful
autumn
automatic

(FINAL)

paw
law
draw
saw

(MEDIAL)

call
bought
wrong
thought

Contrasting Pairs:

call/cole
hall/hole
law/low

saw/sew
taught/tot
caught/cot

paw/pow
gnaw/now
awed/odd

Phrases:

awful fall
lost cause
tall order
daughter-in-law
call for help

bought a lot
long fall
Santa Claus
wrong number
automatic withdrawal

Sentences:

Paul took a long walk through the mall.
Auggie cut the lawn twice in August.
He thought Dawn was an awful cook.



Common Spellings	
a	ago
e	open
i	medicine
o	opinion
u	upon



Note:

Vowels occurring in unstressed syllables often become the neutral vowel sound "uh". This causes a great deal of confusion for students. In their native languages vowels do not often change like this. By carefully pronouncing each vowel, they change both the rhythm and the sound, becoming even less understandable. According to Dixon, students will be much better understood if the accented syllable is stressed strongly and all remaining vowels are obscured.

Production of Schwa (uh):

The lips are relaxed and open slightly, and the tongue is in mid-position. The sound is voiced.

Words:

(INITIAL)

alone
another
above
occur

(FINAL)

sofa
China
drama
zebra

(MEDIAL)

spaghetti
demon
moment
popular

Phrases:

golden opportunity
together again
professional photographer
Christmas ornament

fattening dessert
porcelain china
telephone number
what's happening

Sentences:

Sudden noises often frighten my dog.
Kevin slept on the second sofa.
The other set of plates is fine china.



Common Spellings	
b	baby
bb	rubber

B



Production of B:

Both lips are closed; the air is stopped at the lips, then the lips open. There should not be any puff of air. This will give a voiced sound. P is identical but voiceless.

Words:

(INITIAL)

beat
bit
bet
but

(FINAL)

job
robe
cab
cub

(MEDIAL)

subject
member
maybe
absent

Contrasting Pairs:

base/pace
bath/path
beach/peach

lab/lap
cob/cop
pub/pup

swab/swap
big/pig
amble/ample

Phrases:

by the bay
baby baboon
remember Bill
probably so
big boy

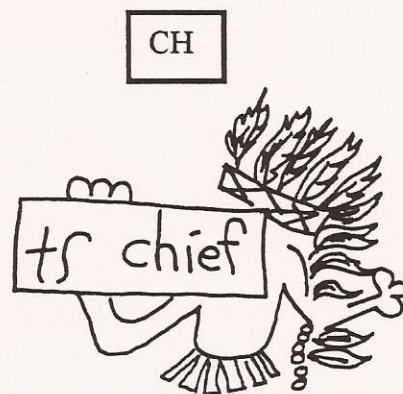
both of us
bread and butter
boring job
rubber band
burn your bridges

Sentences:

Bob will probably become a **B**oy Scout.
Barbara buys fresh bread and butter from the baker.
Betty's baby boy has blond hair and blue eyes.



Common Spellings	
ch	chin
tch	match
tu	future



Production of CH:

This sound is a combination of the t and the sh sounds. The front of the tongue is raised firmly to the gum ridge for the t sound. Lips protrude while the airstream is restricted there, the sh is added before releasing the ch sound. This gives a voiceless sound.

Words:

(INITIAL)

chair
chance
change
child

(FINAL)

each
rich
catch
watch

(MEDIAL)

picture
kitchen
century
nature

Contrasting Pairs:

cheap/jeep
churn/turn
chin/tin

hunch/hunt
arch/art
etch/edge

choke/joke
batches/badges
cheat/sheet

Phrases:

fat chance
loose change
made for each other
rich and famous
watch out

turn of the century
chunk of cheese
pitcher and catcher
cheapskate
catch forty winks

Sentences:

A **child** can **choke** on a **chunk** of **cheese**.
Chuck paid for the **church** picture by **check**.
 Choose the **chicken** sandwich for **lunch**.



Common Spellings	
d	did
dd	ladder

D



d drum

Production of D:

The tip of the tongue is placed behind the upper front teeth on the front end of the gum ridge. The air is stopped briefly at the gum ridge and then released pushing the tongue away, which gives a voiced sound. T is identical but voiceless.

Words:

(INITIAL)

day
deep
does
decide

(FINAL)

bed
road
wood
need

(MEDIAL)

leader
president
window
modern

Contrasting Pairs:

dad/bad
date/bait
dark/bark

pedal/pebble
bride/bright
nod/not

drain/train
ladle/label
bad/bat

Phrases:

big deal
down in the dumps
past due
don't know
daily dose

third degree
laid an egg
divide the donuts
good condition
under the weather

Sentences:

My wedding dress is old.
I heard a bird sing under my window today.
The old lady decided to do the laundry.



Common Spellings	
f	fan
ff	offer
gh	laugh
ph	telephone

F



Production of F:

Hold the upper front teeth lightly against the bottom lip, and push air out. F is voiceless. V is identical but voiced.

Words:

(INITIAL)

fear
fall
far
forget

(FINAL)

giraffe
cough
off
half

(MEDIAL)

after
coffee
laughter
careful

Contrasting Pairs:

face/vase
fuse/views
fail/veil

safe/save
life/live
leaf/leave

half/have
belief/believe
fat/pat

Phrases:

fame and fortune
fifty-five feet
fat chance
funny feeling
forget it

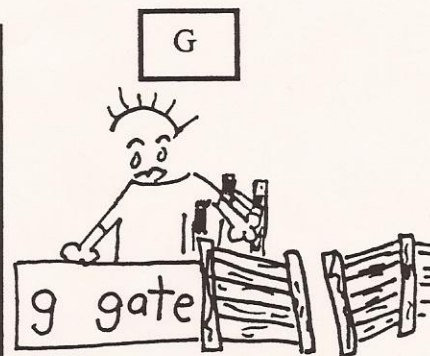
flow freely
fair-weather friends
fresh coffee
first place
photo finish

Sentences:

Fred coughed and sniffed.
Frank fell off the front steps into the flower bed.
Professor Franklin photographed the firefly.



Common Spellings	
g	go
gg	egg
Hard g (g followed by o, a, u)	



Production of G:

The tongue is raised in order to touch the back of the mouth. Air is released quickly, breaking the contact, which produces a voiced sound. K is identical but voiceless.

Words:

(INITIAL)

got
gave
guide
give

(FINAL)

big
egg
dog
bug

(MEDIAL)

sugar
alligator
muggy
igloo

Contrasting Pairs:

good/could
goat/coat
guard/card

bag/back
dug/duck
peg/peck

grain/crane
glue/clue
grow/crow

Phrases:

guessing game
go get it
good as gold
give a gift
ground hog

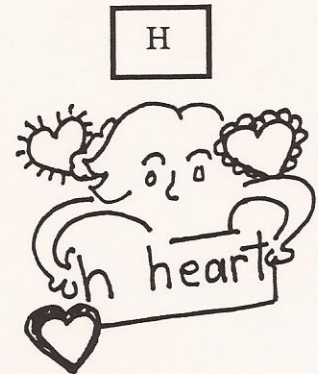
figure it out
green grass
get along
great suggestion
go golfing

Sentences:

The green grass grows in August.
Greg guides the group by the golden gate.
The girl forgot to get sugar and eggs for her grandmother.



Common Spellings	
h	hat
wh	who



Production of H:

Open the mouth and push out a puff of air without vibrating the vocal cords.

Words:

(INITIAL)

had
head
him
home

(MEDIAL)

behind
ahead
doghouse
inhale

Contrasting Pairs:

him/whim
hail/whale
heel/wheel

hid/kid
horse/course
hill/ill

head/fed
her/fur
hat/at

Phrases:

ahead of her
happy birthday
hurry home
ho-ho-ho
head over heels in love

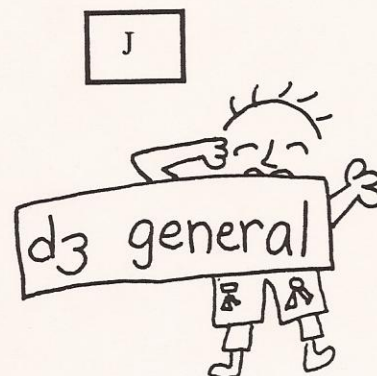
high hopes
have a heart
how are you
in the doghouse
over the hill

Sentences:

Heather is hopelessly head over heels in love.
Harry has a head of healthy hair.
Have a happy holiday.



Common Spellings	
j	joy
dge	bridge
di	soldier
gg	suggest
<u>soft "g"</u> (after g, i, y)	
gi	region
ge	gem
gy	gym



Production of J:

The tip of the tongue touches behind the ridge behind the upper teeth. Lips are pushed out. The sound is voiced.

Words:

(INITIAL)

general
joy
job
giant

(FINAL)

age
bridge
edge
judge

(MEDIAL)

major
magic
subject
danger

Contrasting Pairs:

badge/bash
jell/yell
jest/zest

jet/yet
jay/yeah
edge/etch

juice/use
gin/chin
jeep/cheap

Phrases:

legal age
general rule
jump for joy
orange juice
judge and jury

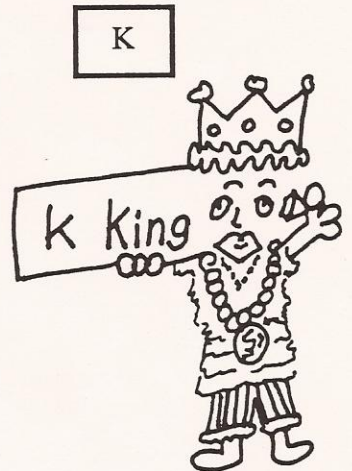
judge for yourself
dangerous journey
job hunting
college subject
genuine gentleman

Sentences:

George enjoys jokes.
The general and his soldiers jumped off the bridge.
Julie's jewelry is just gorgeous.



Common Spellings	
c	cat
k	kid
cc	account
ch	chaos
ck	pick



Production of K:

Raise the back of the tongue to touch the soft part at the back of the roof of the mouth. The air is stopped there, then released quickly. K is voiceless. G is identical but voiced.

Words:

(INITIAL)

king
coat
call
can

(FINAL)

sick
music
neck
book

(MEDIAL)

quickly
mechanic
doctor
discover

Contrasting Pairs:

call/gall
curl/girl
cold/gold

back/bag
bicker/bigger
tucking/tugging

clean/glean
crow/grow
frock/frog

Phrases:

of course
call me
crystal clear
well known fact
coffee cake

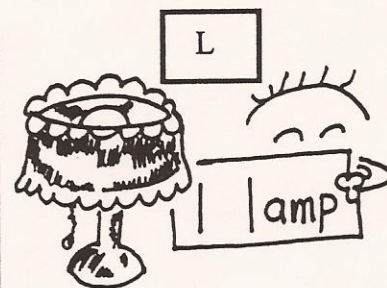
practice makes perfect
cash a check
squeaky clean
Christmas card
cook book

Sentences:

Carrying coal is back-breaking work.
The kitchen cook quickly cut a piece of chicken.
Cathy carries both cash and credit cards.



Common Spellings	
l	low
ll	filling



Production of L:

Before vowels, place the tip of the tongue on the upper gum ridge, just behind the teeth. The middle of the tongue is high. After vowels, the back of the tongue is high as the tip of the tongue touches the teeth. L is a voiced sound.

Words:

(INITIAL)

let
law
leave
last

(FINAL)

ill
all
tell
full

(MEDIAL)

college
almost
realize
silver

Contrasting Pairs:

lock/rock
let/wet
line/wine

lay/ray
light/right
rolling/roaring

glass/grass
collect/correct
late/rate

Phrases:

leave me alone
silver lining
wall to wall
lots of luck
rolling in dough

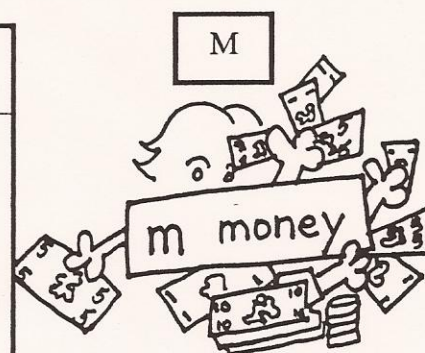
last leg
truly wonderful
beautiful smile
whole wide world
live and let live

Sentences:

"Lilies of the Field" is a classic film.
Michelle has the most beautiful smile in the world.
Laws don't allow pets loose in public places.



Common Spellings	
m	me
mb*	comb
mm	comma
mn*	Autumn



Production of M:

Place lips together. The air flows into the nasal cavity and thus produces a voiced humming sound.

Words:

(INITIAL)

met
miss
man
must

(FINAL)

some
came
him
them

(MEDIAL)

lemon
damage
almost
example

Contrasting Pairs:

men/when
met/wet
mall/ball

might/bite
mat/bat
more/bore

remind/rewind
make/wake
them/then

Phrases:

wait a minute
in the middle
most of all
make a mess
second attempt

M & M's
keep it simple
met my match
sometimes I wonder
bad example

Sentences:

Mary comes home on Monday **m**ornings.
Mike and Mark **m**ade their camp near the **m**ountain.
My **m**other **m**akes delicious **m**eat balls and lemon **m**eringue pie.

* common silent letters



Common Spellings	
n	no
nn	banner
gn*	sign
kn	knot
pn*	pneumonia



Production of N:

The tip of the tongue is raised to the upper gum ridge; the air is pushed into the nasal cavity, sending out a voiced sound through the nose.

Words:

(INITIAL)

name
know
new
none

(FINAL)

in
ten
sun
common

(MEDIAL)

corner
evening
danger
banana

Contrasting Pairs:

no/low
knit/lit
nice/mice

not/dot
near/dear
mine/mile

dine/dime
snack/slack
snow/slow

Phrases:

native country
well-known
wrong number
around the corner
count on me

do not enter
on the phone
turn around
not now
once in a while

Sentences:

No news is good news.
Nick never wears new neckties.
Ned enjoys his New England chowder without any onions.

* common silent letters



Common Spellings	
ng	sing
nk*	ink



Production of NG:

The back of the tongue moves toward the back part of the roof of the mouth and touches it firmly, which forces the air to flow into the nasal cavity. This results in a voiced sound.

Words:

(INITIAL)

(FINAL)

(MEDIAL)

king
long
among
coming

jungle
linger
angry
tango

Contrasting Pairs:

hung/hum
bang/bag
clang/clam

rung/rug
hang/ham
bang/bank

lung/luck
hang/hand
ring/rig

Phrases:

bring it along
among old friends
hang up
everything looks great
think Spring

single file
king of the hill
long ago
jungle gym
young and strong

Sentences:

The English language makes me angry.
The king has a single ring on his finger.
The singer sang songs of Spring.

* nk is often added as a variation of this sound.



Common Spellings	
p	port
pp	supper



Production of P:

Both lips are closed, the air is stopped at the lips, then the lips open. There should be a puff of air that comes out. The sound is voiceless. B is identical but voiced.

Words:

(INITIAL)

paid
pick
part
pass

(FINAL)

shape
lip
top
hope

(MEDIAL)

upper
apple
napkin
deposit

Contrasting Pairs:

pale/bale
pat/bat
pit/bit

tap/tab
rope/robe
cap/cab

rapid/rabid
staple/stable
simple/symbol

Phrases:

peace and prosperity
pay the price
pick up the pace
pass the peas
piece of paper

step up
except me
purple plum
button your lip
powder puff

Sentences:

Pumpkin pie is popular
Peter forgot to prepare his report.
Newspapers print political pictures.



Common Spellings	
r	red
rr	merry
wr*	write
rh*	rhyme

R



Production of R:

Before vowels, R is produced by raising the tip of the tongue toward the roof ^{of} the mouth. The tongue does not touch the roof and does not vibrate. After vowels, the back of the tongue is raised up but does not touch the roof. R is voiced.

Words:

(INITIAL)

red
real
write
roof

(FINAL)

bear
clear
car
four

(MEDIAL)

zero
merry
several
forward

Contrasting Pairs:

rest/west
rinse/wince
rent/went

door/dough
bear/bell
run/won

bright/light
fry/fly
crowd/cloud

Phrases:

turn of the century
run around
every other
charge card
tried and true

rock and roll
railroad crossing
golden rule
right and wrong
four-door car

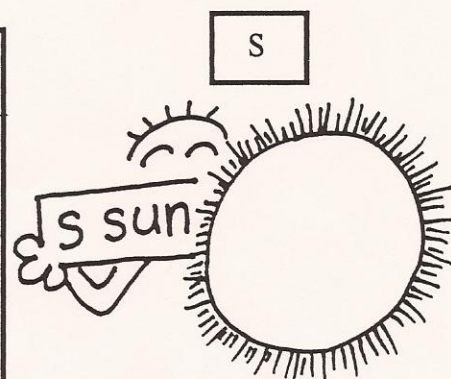
Sentences:

Knowing right from wrong is important.
Gregory and his brother really like **rock-and-roll** music.
The three friends ran in the race on Thursday, November thirteenth.

*common silent letters



Common Spellings	
c	race
s	say
z	pretzel
ps*	psalm
sc*	scissors
ss	mass
st*	listen
<u>Soft "c" sound</u>	
ce	ci cy



Production of S:

The tip of the tongue is raised to the upper gum ridge constricting the airstream, producing a sharp "hissing" sound. This is voiceless S sound. Z is identical but voiced.

Words:

(INITIAL)

set
city
sun
sea

(FINAL)

yes
pass
kiss
office

(MEDIAL)

outside
gasoline
decide
glossy

Contrasting Pairs:

some/thumb
sink/think
sue/zoo

tense/tens
tense/tenth
close/clothes

loose/lose
lacy/lazy
rice/rise

Phrases:

set the standards
sit still
sun rise, sun set
sail the seven seas
endless supply

first base
pass the test
sweet sixteen
doctor's office
slow dance

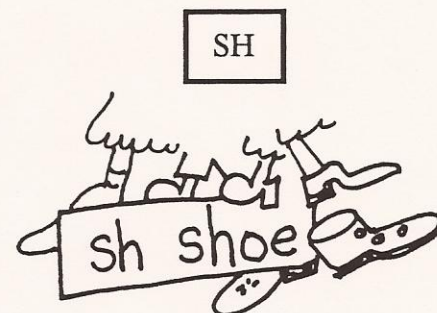
Sentences:

Sam sails the seven seas.
Students recite an endless supply of silly sentences.
Stop dancing and listen to this song.

* common silent letters



Common Spellings	
c	oceanic
ch	Chicago
s	sugar
ci	special
sc	conscious
sh	shy
si	emulsion
su	sugar
ti	nation



Production of SH:

Push out the lips. The tip of the tongue forms a groove close to the gum ridge but not touching it. Air is pushed out to make a voiceless sound.

Words:

(INITIAL)

show
she
shop
sure

(FINAL)

wish
fresh
wash
finish

(MEDIAL)

action
issue
special
washing

Contrasting Pairs:

sheep/cheap
sheet/seat
ship/sip

shell/sell
fashion/fasten
shin/chin

cash/catch
marsh/march
dish/ditch

Phrases:

show off
get into shape
shop around
ship shape
shame on you

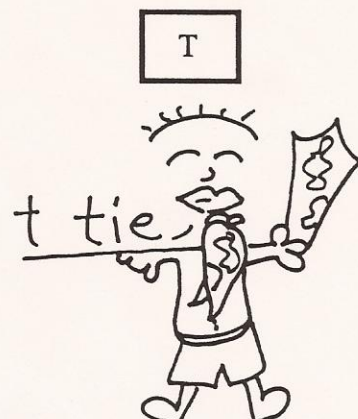
fresh fish
short shorts
cash and carry
shine your shoes
finish line

Sentences:

She bought a bushel of delicious apples.
Sharon took a vacation on the ocean.
The **shop** had a special on fresh-water fishing gear.



Common Spellings	
t	tea
ed	walked
bt*	debt
pt*	receipt
tt	mitt
th	Thomas



Production of T:

The tip of the tongue is placed behind the upper front teeth. Air is stopped briefly at the gum ridge, then released. There should be a puff of air. This produces a voiceless sound.

D is identical but voiced.

Words:

(INITIAL)

take
tell
tie
two

(FINAL)

eat
night
late
visit

(MEDIAL)

continue
enter
until
empty

Contrasting Pairs:

tank/thank
team/theme
tick/thick

try/dry
debt/dead
toot/tooth

tree/three
true/threw
right/ride

Phrases:

take turns
don't tell
too tight
stand tall
tattle tale

night light
hot temper
it's important
let's eat
twenty-two

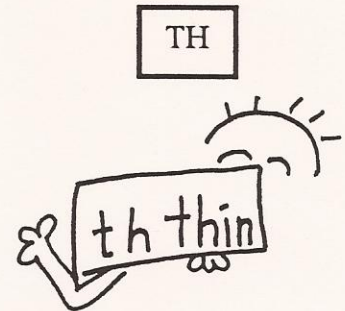
Sentences:

Ted's hot temper got him into a fight.
Sometimes Tracy talks too much.
Our computer training material is terrific.

* common silent letters



Common Spellings	
th	think



Production of TH:

Place the tip of the tongue firmly against the cutting edge of the upper front teeth and puff air out. While the air is pushed out, make a voiceless sound without making the vocal cords vibrate. Hint: Have the student exaggerate by sticking the tongue out more than necessary.

Words:

(INITIAL)

thin
thank
thought
third

(FINAL)

earth
both
youth
mouth

(MEDIAL)

healthy
birthday
toothbrush
anthem

Contrasting Pairs:

thin/tin
through/true
thirst/first

death/deaf
moth/moss
oath/oat

three/free
thrill/frill
mouth/mouse

Phrases:

think thin
thank goodness
well thought out
three-thirty
three in one

happy birthday
both of us
take a bath
through thick and thin
healthy diet

Sentences:

I think the thimbles will fit my thumb.
He thanked both of us for everything
Theo's birthday party is on Thursday, the thirteenth.



Common Spellings	
th	this



Production of **th** (voiced):

The tip of the tongue is placed against the cutting edge of the upper front teeth. The air is pushed out, making the vocal cords vibrate (a voiced sound). Hint: Have the student exaggerate the sound by sticking the tongue out more than necessary. O is identical but voiceless.

Words:

(INITIAL)

there
those
this
they

(FINAL)

bathe
breathe
smooth
soothe

(MEDIAL)

neither
another
feather
mother

Contrasting Pairs:

there/tear
those/doze
they/day

breathe/breath
either/ether
teethe/teeth

worthy/wordy
other/udder
clothing/closing

Phrases:

more than that
breathe in deeply
this-n-that
mother and father
worthy cause

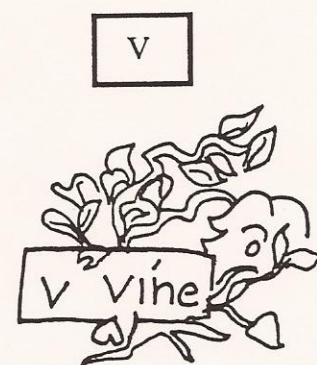
another one
one of these days
those were the days
all of these
either one

Sentences:

Neither brother likes this weather.
The father and mother would rather go together.
This leather is better than that one.



Common Spellings	
f	of
v	very



Production of V:

Place the upper front teeth on the bottom lip and push air out (voiced). Hint: Having the student bite lightly down on the lower lip might help. F is identical but voiceless.

Words:

(INITIAL)

visit
very
voice
view

(FINAL)

leave
give
move
above

(MEDIAL)

divide
advance
seventeen
movie

Contrasting Pairs:

view/few
vat/bat
very/berry

vote/boat
wave/waif
shovel/shuffle

reviews/refuse
relieve/relief
leave/leaf

Phrases:

good value
brief visit
thank you very much
voice your opinion
divided evenly

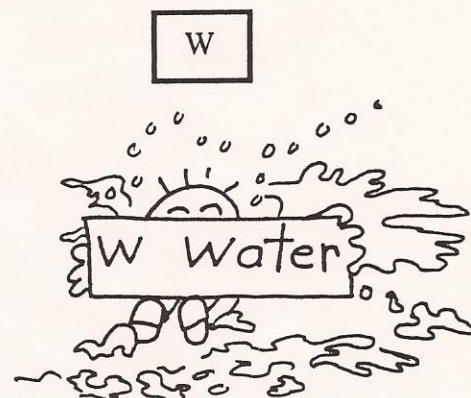
favorite flavor
over and above
move over
love of my life
old wives' tale

Sentences:

Love me or leave me.
Every November eleventh is Veteran's Day.
Very careful drivers avoid swerving into curves.



Common Spellings	
w	way
u	persuade
ui	quiet
wh*	white



Production of W:

Push the lips forward and blow out air to produce a voiced sound.

Words:

(INITIAL)

will
way
were
water

(FINAL)

meow
ow

(MEDIAL)

always
forward
sandwich
homework

Contrasting Pairs:

why/rye
wet/vet
wise/rise

west/vest
way/ray
wait/rate

wine/vine
wipe/ripe
wheel/veal*

Phrases:

will power
wash and wear
woodwork
homework
watch your step

weeping willow
don't dwell on it
within reasons
one way
in the whole wide world

Sentences:

Wash and wear is wonderful.
The Winter wind blows from the West.
We won't wait for Willy on Wednesday.

* Some people pronounce the wh sound with an "h" puff of air. "Which" and "witch" for example sound differently when spoken this way.



Common Spellings	
y	yes
ia	Italian
ni	opinion

Y



Production of Y:

The lips are spread. The front of the tongue is raised toward the roof of the mouth and the tip of the tongue is behind the lower teeth. This produces a voiced sound.

Words:

(INITIAL)

yes
yard
young
year

(MEDIAL)

onion
canyon
million
opinion

Contrasting Pairs:

yell/jell
yolk/joke
yard/jarred

yam/jam
you'll/jewel
yet/jet

you/chew
yellow/jello
yes/chess

Phrases:

yard sale
young and old
year after year
valued opinion
not yet

beyond control
a million to one
yours truly
yellow yarn
pearl onion

Sentences:

Yellow onions and yams are yummy.
The canyon is one million years old.
Union soldiers were often young.



Common Spellings	
z	zone
zz	buzz
s	was

z



Production of Z:

Raise the tip of the tongue to the upper gum ridge, then vibrate the vocal chords by making a buzzing voiced sound.

Words:

(INITIAL)

zebra
zipper
zoo
zinc

(FINAL)

twins
eyes
rose
please

(MEDIAL)

daisy
closed
pleasing
razor
fuzzy

Contrasting Pairs:

closed/close
plays/place
graze/grace

rise/rice
zoo/Sue
trays/trace

razor/racer
peas/peace
prize/price

Phrases:

zigzag
close your eyes
a dozen roses
grows like a weed
easy does it

closed down
razor sharp
fizzled out
raisin bread
fingers and toes

Sentences:

Zebras are always grazing at the zoo.
Roses and daisies blow in the breeze.
Zak uses his razor on his fuzzy face.



Common Spellings	
si	vision
zi	glazier
su	pleasure
ge	beige

ZH



Production of ZH:

Push out the lips. Raise the front of the tongue to the upper gum ridge making a voiced buzzing sound. Sh is identical but voiced.

Words:

(FINAL)

beige
rouge
garage
massage

(MEDIAL)

vision
measure
leisure
usually

Contrasting Pairs:

measure/mesher

Phrases:

red rouge
parking garage
beige color
usually right
watching television

clear vision
beyond measure
at your leisure
business or pleasure
hidden treasure

Sentences:

We usually treasure pleasurable trips.
His decision usually causes confusion.
Watching television is a leisure activity.

NOTABLE EXCEPTIONS, DELETIONS, AND SIMPLIFICATIONS

w/wh Some linguists classify these as two sounds. Some people pronounce which and witch differently.

qu Since "q" is always followed by a "u" in English, this becomes a "kw" combination. Practice these words:

quiet	queen
quick	quiver
quilt	quit

x "x" at the beginning of words is almost always pronounced as "z" in English. Some linguists classify medial "x" as a different sound. It is a combination of g/s or k/s. Practice these words:

extra (ks)	external (ks)	example (gs)
excited (ks)	excellent (ks)	exact (gs)
	excuse (ks)	exhausted (gs)

ar "A" combined with "r" is sometimes classified as a separate sound (a as in arm). It is very similar to a short o/r combination. Practice these words:

arm	artificial
army	artery
article	ark
art	party

oo is sometimes classified separately from the long u sound.

cute	vs.	boot
(yoo)		(oo)