

Phonetics & Phonology

Or: Why "Ghoti" sounds like "Fish"

Intro Quiz: Trust Issues

Q: Why shouldn't you trust English spelling?

A

Option A

Because "ough" has 9 different pronunciations.



Option B

Because "phonetic" isn't even spelled phonetically.



Option C

Because the alphabet was designed by chaos demons.

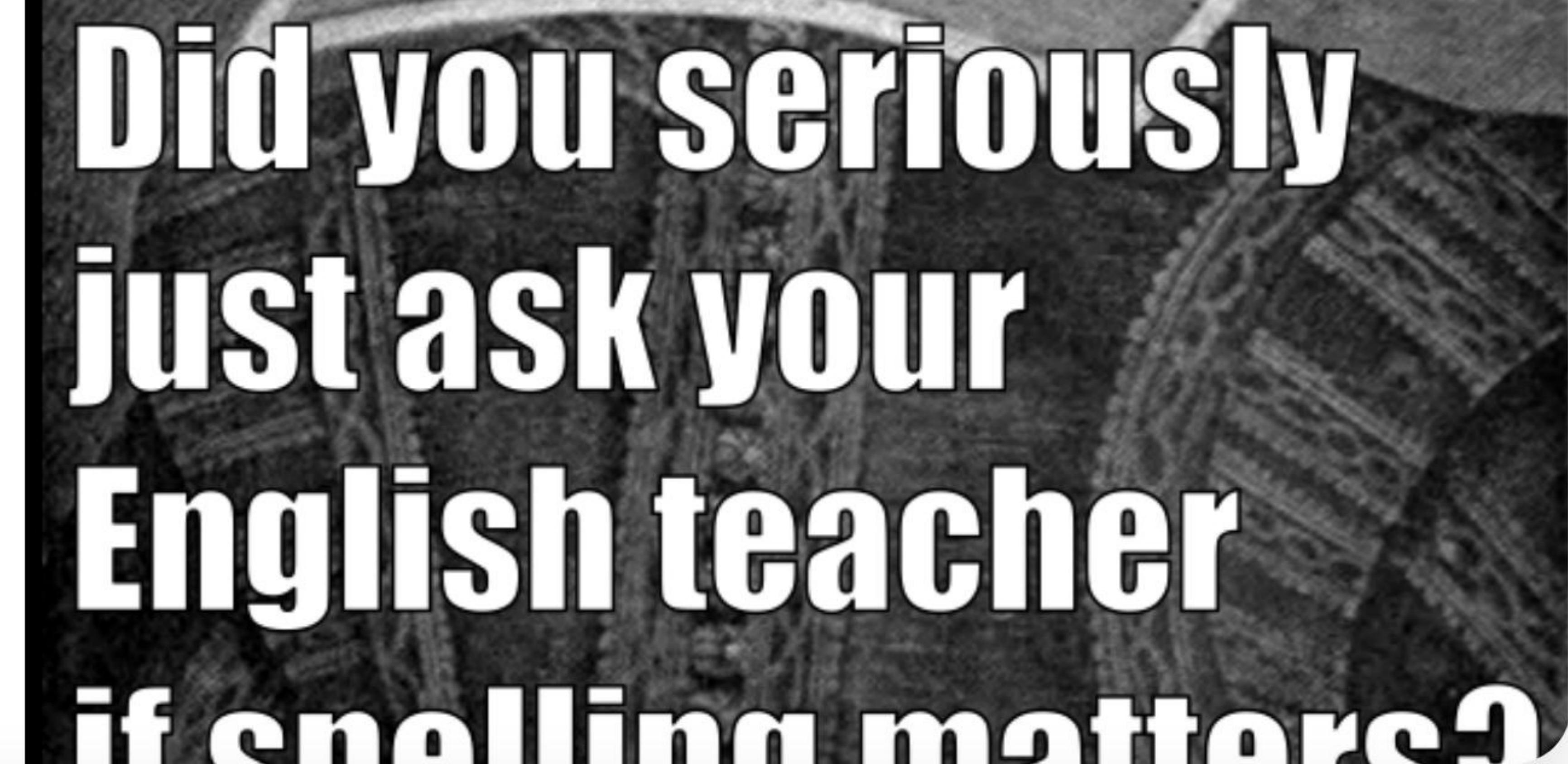
(Spoiler: They are all correct.)

Meme Placeholder

To the User: Please paste your "IPA Beer" meme here.

Concept:

- Customer: "I'd like an IPA."
- Bartender: "wɪtʃ bIə wʊd ju: laɪk?"
- Caption: Be careful what you ask for.



The Rules of Transcription

Don't write letters. Write sounds.

- [] **Square Brackets:** Phonetics (The physical sound).
- / / **Slanted Brackets:** Phonology (The mental category).
- < > **Angle Brackets:** Orthography (The spelling).

Fun Fact: "Bang" ends with [ŋ]. There is no [g] sound, despite the spelling. "Photo" and "Enough" share the same [f] sound.

[b æ η]

Intro Quiz: Air Traffic Control

Q: What is the difference between a "Stop" and a "Fricative"?



Option A

A Stop blocks air completely; a Fricative creates friction.



Option B

A Stop is a red light; a Fricative is a yellow light.



Option C

A Fricative is just a Stop with commitment issues.

Meme Placeholder

To the User: Please paste your "Suez Canal Ship" meme here.

Concept:

- Left (Fricative): Ship moving through narrow gap.
- Right (Stop): Ship stuck sideways blocking everything.



Manner of Articulation

Stops (Plosives)

Block airflow completely, then let it explode.

- **Voiceless:** [p], [t], [k]
- **Voiced:** [b], [d], [g]

Fricatives

Almost block airflow, squeezing it through a narrow gap.

- [f], [v], [s], [z], [h]
- "*My love for you is like a fricative... it never stops.*"

Affricates: The Remix. Start as a stop, release as a fricative (e.g., [tʃ] "cheap").

The Consonant Chart

This chart maps sounds by:

- **Place:** Where in the mouth? (Lips, Teeth, Palate)
- **Manner:** How is air blocked? (Stop, Fricative)
- **Voicing:** Are the vocal cords vibrating?

m	mat	mæt
f	fat	fæt
v	vat	væt
w	wit	wɪt
θ	Teeth	ti:θ
ð	that	ðæt
t	tot	töt
d	dot	döt
n	not	nöt
s	sit	sit
z	zit	zit
r	rat	ræt
l	lot	löt
tʃ	full	fʊtʃ
r̩	shot	ʃɒt̩

Intro Quiz: Tongue Gymnastics

Q: To make the sound [i] (as in "heat"), where is your tongue?



Option A

High and to the Front.



Option B

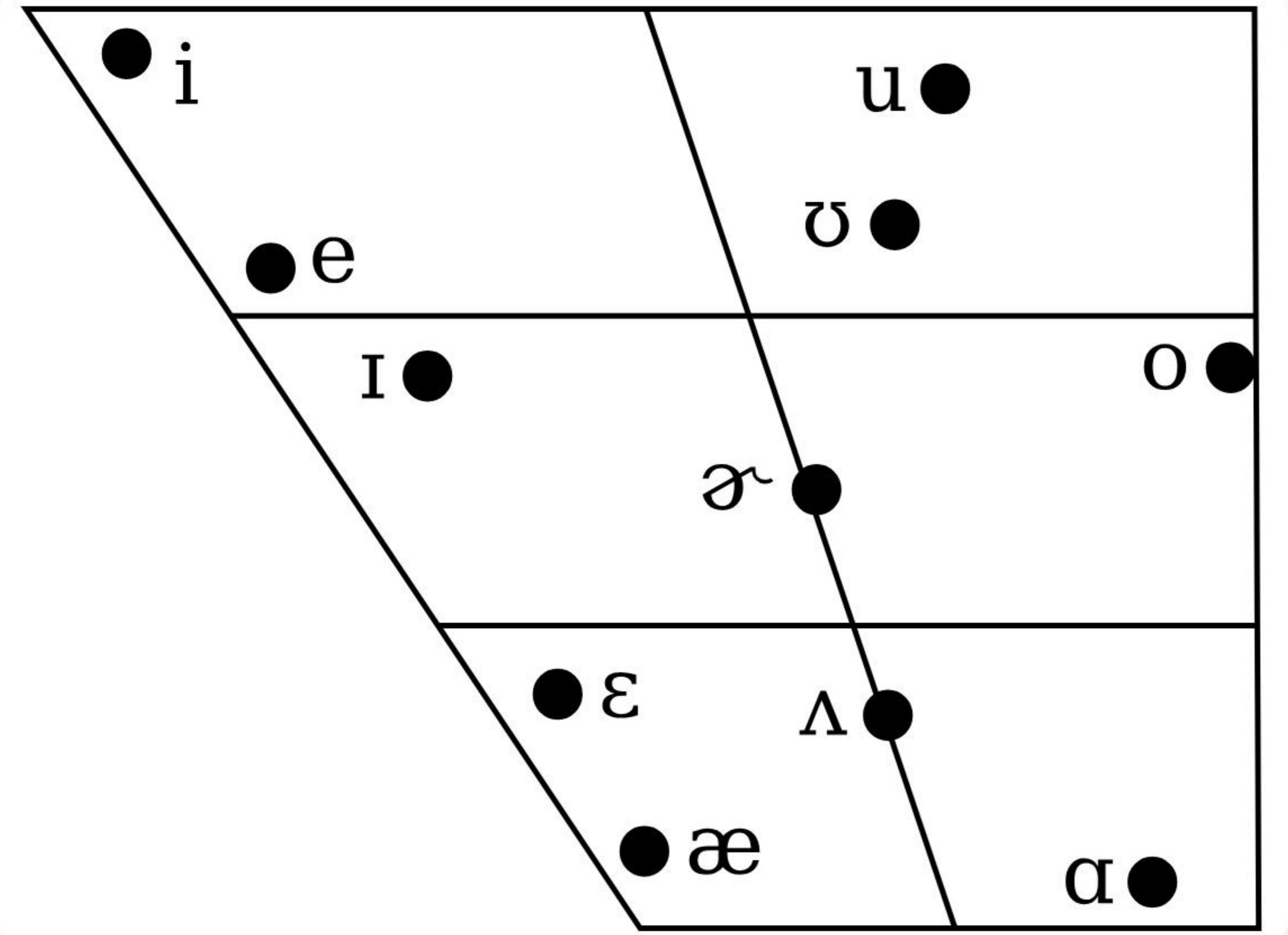
Relaxing on the sofa.



Option C

Trying to escape your mouth.

The Vowel Quadrilateral



Mapping the Mouth

- **High Front [i]:** "Bead" (Mouth closed, tongue forward).
- **Low Back [ɑ]:** "Bob" (Mouth open, tongue back).
- **The Schwa [ə]:** The sound of laziness. Central, unstressed, effortless. (e.g., "About").

Diphthongs: Vowels on the Move

[aɪ]

Buy, Eye, My

Gliding from Low to High

[aʊ]

Cow, Doubt

The "Ouch" sound

[ɔɪ]

Boy, Noise

The "Oy Vey" sound

Accent Note: Americans pronounce the final [r] in "Car". British English drops the [r] and often uses diphthongs instead.

Intro Quiz: Perception

Q: If a Phonologist looks at a dog, what do they see?



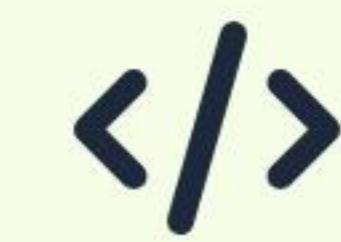
Option A

A contrastively meaningful sequence of segments.



Option B

A good boy.



Option C

[d ɔ g]

Phonemes vs. Allophones

Phoneme / /

The Mental Idea.

If you swap a phoneme, you change the meaning.

Example: Fat vs. Vat.

Allophone []

The Physical Reality.

Different versions of the same sound.

Example: The [t] in Tar (exploded) vs. Star (soft).

Meme Placeholder

To the User: Please paste your "Futurama Fry" meme here.

Concept: "Not sure if those are allophones or different phonemes."



Intro Quiz: Rhyme Time

Q: Which of these is a "Minimal Pair"?



Option A

Fan and Van.



Option B

Orange and Door-hinge.



Option C

Tomato and Tomato.

Minimal Pairs & Phonotactics

The Test

If changing **one** sound changes the meaning, those sounds are distinct phonemes.

- **Pair:** Fan vs. Van (/f/ vs /v/)
- **Set:** Big, Pig, Rig, Fig, Dig, Wig

Phonotactics

The "Rules of the Club". Some sounds just can't sit together.

- **✓ Legal:** /pl-/ (Play), /kl-/ (Clean)
- **✗ Illegal:** /vl-, /nl-, /fsig/

Intro Quiz: Fast Talk

Q: Why do we say "Hafta" instead of "Have to"?



Option A

Our brains anticipate the next sound (Assimilation).



Option B

Because enunciating is exhausting.



Option C

Both A and B.

Why We Sound Different Than We Spell

Assimilation

One sound copies a feature from its neighbor to make it easier to say.

Example: "I have to" → /v/ becomes voiceless /f/ to match the /t/. Result: "**H**afta".

Elision

Leaving sounds out completely (The "Ghost" sounds).

Example: "Friendship" → We usually drop the [d]. [**frenʃɪp**].

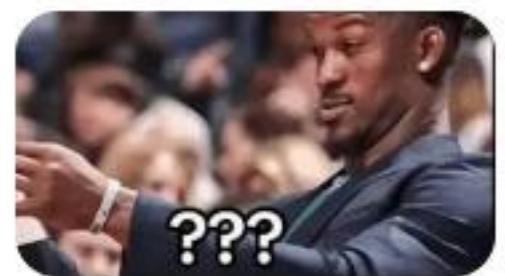
Example: "Camera" → We don't say Ca-me-ra. We say [**kæmrə**].

Image Sources



<https://www.rizzolieducation.it/content/uploads/2023/01/image4-1.png>

Source: www.rizzolieducation.it



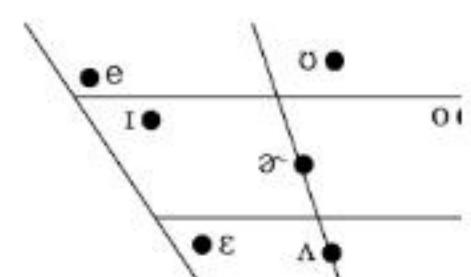
<https://media.tenor.com/LeexVki7avsAAAAe/alinathehack-guy-confused-looking-at-the-paper.png>

Source: tenor.com

IPA SYMBOL	Word	Transcription
p	pat	pæt
b	bat	bæt
m	mat	mæt
f	fat	fæt
v	vat	væt
w	wit	wɪt
θ	Teeth	θɪθ

<https://englishlikeanative.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/IPA-consonants.png>

Source: englishlikeanative.co.uk



https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/08/California_English_vowel_chart.svg

Source: en.wikipedia.org