

# Lytspel: A Simple Phonetic Respelling for the English Language

## Vowels

«aa» as in «paam» <palm>

«ai/ay» as in «aim, play, layer»<sup>1</sup>

«au/aw» as in «paus, law, drawing»  
<pause...><sup>1</sup>

«ee/i» as in «tree, fansi, raidio» <...fancy, radio><sup>2</sup>

«oa/o» as in «boat, yelo, poetic» <...yellow, poetic><sup>1</sup>

«oi/oy» as in «oil, boy, royel» <...royal><sup>1</sup>

«oo» as in «book»

«ou/ow» as in «mouth, now, power»<sup>1</sup>

«uu/u» as in «gruup, clu, sichuaition»  
<group, clue, situation><sup>1</sup>

«ue» as in «váue» <value> – also used in words such as «due, tuen» <...tune> where some people speak «uu»

«y/iy» as in «styl, quiyet, nuecliyy» <style, quiet, nuclei><sup>3</sup>

The schwa is usually written as «e» («camel, comen» <...common>) or «u» («álbum, nurvuss» <...nervous>), but as «a» at the end of words («extra»).

The other vowels are written as expected («cat, pen, big, dog, club»). These five vowels and «oo» are considered short, all others are long.

<sup>1</sup> Second spelling used at the end of words and before other vowels.

<sup>2</sup> Second spelling used for unstressed vowels at the end of words and before other vowels.

<sup>3</sup> Second spelling used before other vowels and at the end of words after a vowel.

## Consonants

«g» as in «big»

«j» as in «joy»

«ng» as in «long»

«zh» as in «miraazh» <mirage>

«w» as in «west»

«wh» as in «when» – many people speak this like «w», but not everybody does

/k/ is written

- «c» before other letters except «e, i, y, h» («cat, cost, crisp») and in final unstressed /ak/ or /Ik/ («mainiac, public» <maniac...>)
- «k» otherwise («keep, king, book, drink»)

/s/ is written

- «c» between any vowel and «e, i, y» («decent, ixplicit» <decent, explicit>)
- «ss» between other vowels («assault, épissoad» <assault, episode>) and at the end of words except after /f, k, p, t, T/ («less, évidenss» <...evidence>)
- «s» otherwise («sun, desk, chips»)

/z/ is written

- «s» between vowels («visit, dusen, disyr» <...dozen, desire>) and at the end of words except after /f, k, p, t, T/ («his, meens, paus» <...means, pause>)
- «z» otherwise («zeero, igzact, obzurv» <zero, exact, observe>)

/T/ and /D/:

- Voiceless /T/ is always «th», e.g. «thin».
- Voiced /D/ is usually «dh», e.g. «smuudh, wurdhi» <smooth, worthy>.
- But it remains «th» in the frequent words «aulthó, tho, than, the, then, thay, them, thair, thiss, that, thuss» <although, though, than, the, then, they, them, their or there, this, that, thus> as well as in all words ending in /D@`/, such as «anuther, bother, muther, whether» <another, bother, mother, whether>. This spelling is also used in derivatives of all these words.
- The small number of words ending in /T@`/ is written with «thur»: «Arthur,

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author, panthur» <Arthur, author, panther>.

The other consonants are written as expected («**bed**, **much**, **fat**, **hot**, **leg**, **now**, **pop**, **run**, **ship**, **ever**, **yet**»).

## R-colored Vowels

«air» as in «pair»

«ar» as in «dark»

«arr» as in «carri» <carry>

«eer» as in «cheer»

«er» as in «number»

«err» as in «merri» <merry>

«or» as in «north, order, port»

«orr» as in «sorri» <sorry>

«ur» as in «turn»

«urr» as in «current»

«yr» as in «fyr, vyruss» <fire, virus>

Other vowels keep their usual spelling

(«mirer, **poor**, **puer**, **our**» <mirror, poor, pure, our/hour>).

## Sound Combinations

«qu» /kw/ as in «quit»

«x» /ks/ as in «mix, next, áxident» <... accident>

Final «all» /O:l/ as in «ball»

Final «tion» /S@n/ as in «section, recognition, permission, miusition» <... permission, musician>

Final «sion» /Z@n/ as in «vision, confiusion, iquaision» <...confusion, equation>

## Stress

Stress is marked using an acute accent in cases where it deviates from the stress pattern predicted by the following rules:

- If a word has just one syllable, no accent is used or needed.
- If a word ends in «ee», this final vowel is stressed, e.g. «agree».

- If a word ends in «a» or «i» and has just two syllables, the first vowel is stressed, e.g. «extra, hapi» <...happy>.
- If a word ends in any of «grefi, leji, ic, icl, ics, iti, sion, tion», the vowel preceding this ending is stressed, e.g. «turminoleji, statistic, publicaition» <terminology, statistic, publication>.
- Otherwise the first long vowel in the word is considered stressed, e.g. «compleet, prisuem, sufyss» <complete, presume, suffice>. But, except for «y», long vowel written with just one letter (e.g. the «o» in «windo» <>window>) don't count for the purposes of this rule, and neither does the final vowel in word ends in «ait, y, ys, yt».
- Otherwise, if a word starts with a short vowel or with «di» or «ri», the second vowel is considered stressed, e.g. «adopt, difenss, rquest» <adopt, defense, request>. If not, the first vowel is considered stressed, e.g. «current». But in either case, if the chosen vowel would be «er», the next vowel that is not «er» is chosen instead, e.g. «interject, perhaps».

The use of accents is optional, but recommended.

## Sample

Four scor and seven yeers ago our faathers braut forth upon thiss continent, a nue naition, conseevd in Liberti, and dedicaited tu the proposition that all men ar criáited eequel. Now wi ar engaijd in a grait sivil wor, testing whether that naition, or eni naition so conseevd and so dedicaited, can long enduer.

## Links

Online converter: <https://www.lytspel.org>  
Detailed ruleset: <https://www.lytspel.org/rules>