

Lytspel: A Simple Phonetic Respelling for the English Language

The syllable that carries the primary **stress** is preceded by an apostrophe («dis'cuss, in'telijent, co'miti» <discuss, intelligent, committee>), unless it's the first or only one.

Vowels

«aa» as in «paam» <palm>

«ai/ay» as in «aim, play, layer»¹

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

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

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

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

«oo» as in «book»

«ou/ow» as in «mouth, now, power»¹

«uu/u» as in «gruup, clu, sichu'aition»
<group, clue, situation>¹

«iu» as in «valiu» <value>

«ue» is used if «iu» or «uu» may be spoken,
e.g. «due, tuen» <...tune>

«y/ai» as in «styl, quaiet, nuecliai» <style, quiet, nuclei>³

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

The other vowels are written as expected («cat, pen, big, dog, club»).

¹ Second spelling used at the end of words and before other vowels.

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

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

Consonants

«dh» as in «dhem» <them>

«g» as in «big»

«j» as in «joy»

«ng» as in «long»

«th» as in «thin»

«zh» as in «mi'raazh» <mirage>

/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» («deecent, ix'plicit» <decent, explicit>)
- «ss» between other vowels («as'sault, epissoad» <assault, episode>) and at the end of words except after /f, k, p, t, T/ («less, evidenss» <...evidence>)

- «s» otherwise («sun, desk, chips»)

/z/ is written

- «s» between vowels («visit, dusen, di'syr» <...dozen, desire>) and at the end of words except after /f, k, p, t, T/ («his, meens, paus» <...means, pause>)
- «z» otherwise («zeero, ig'zact, ob'zurv» <zero, exact, observe>)

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

R-colored Consonants

«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» <error>

«oar» as in «foarss, board» <force...>

«or» as in «north, order» (many people pronounce «oar» and «or» the same)

«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, piur, nuerel, our» <mirror, poor, pure, neural, our/hour>).

Sound Combinations

«qu» /kw/ as in «quit»

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

Final «all» /O:l/ as in «ball»

Final «tion» /S@n/ as in «section, recog'nition, per'mition, miu'sition» <... recognition, permission, musician>

Final «sion» /Z@n/ as in «vision, con'fiusion, i'quaision» <...confusion, equation>

Sample

Foarscoar and seven yeers a'go our faadhers braut foarth, on dhiss continent, a nue naition, con'seerd in liberti and dedicaited tu dhe propo'sition dhat all men ar cri'aited eequel. Now wi ar en'gaijd in a grait sivel wor, testing wedher dhat naition, or eni naition so con'seerd, and so dedicaited, can long en'duer.

Links

Online converter: <https://www.lytspel.org/>

Detailed ruleset:

<https://www.lytspel.org/rules>