

The Problem with Loughborough

Let's look at the odd spelling in English



ἵπποπόταμος
WoLLoW the HiPPo

The World of Languages
and Languages of the World

Objectives

- We can see that English spelling is difficult for us and for those learning English.
- We can think about why English has such tricky spellings.
- We can see that many other languages have more simple spelling rules.



Let's go!

If we pick words apart and investigate them thoroughly, we can work out meanings.

If you don't understand a word, just look very carefully: there are always clues hidden within.

Can you remember 4 that link to "*krypton*"?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4





Setting the scene...

Once upon a time I met someone who thought that Loughborough should be pronounced.

- Loo – g – bu – roo – g

And they had a point. It is a word in which the same set of letters are pronounced in two different ways.

We all know that 'ough' is a problem in English. How are these words pronounced? Say them aloud. How many sounds are there?

cough, tough, bough, brought, dough, through.

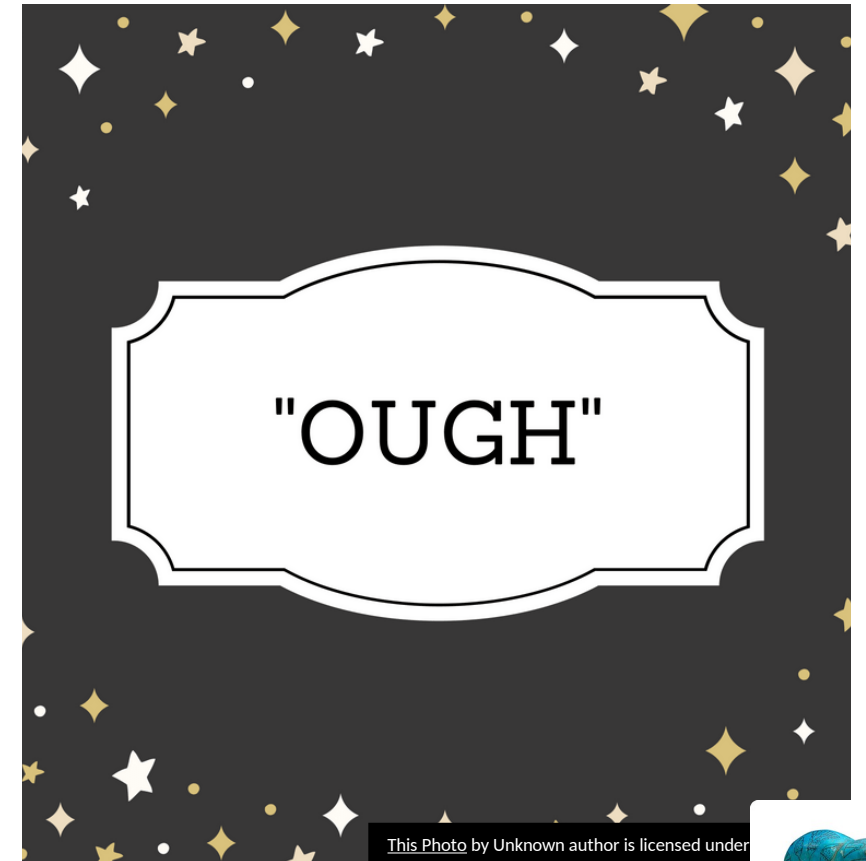
Ough

1. Write down in different letters how you could pronounce these words.

cough = coff

dough = doh

tough = tuff



To the loch!

2. Loch Ness is in Scotland and Lough Neagh is in Northern Ireland.

i) Why is the Loch and Lough pronounced the same and spelt differently?

ii) What does lough/loch mean?



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To the burgh!

3. **Edinburgh**, **Hamburg**, **Peterborough**, **St Petersburg**, **Pittsburgh** and **Gettysburg** all look or sound the same as or similar to **Loughborough**.

i) So, what do burgh/burg/borough mean?

ii) Can you find 5 other towns with the same word in them. What do you think that word means?

(You could use "wich", "by", "ham" or "ton" for example)





And back to Loughborough

4. So, what do you think **Lough****borough** means and why are the same letters pronounced in a different way in the same word?



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The Burghers of Calais

- 5. Have you heard of the Burghers of Calais?
- Who sculpted them?
- Where is this?
- What could Burgher mean?



Burger?

- 6. So, what's wrong with beefburger and cheeseburger?



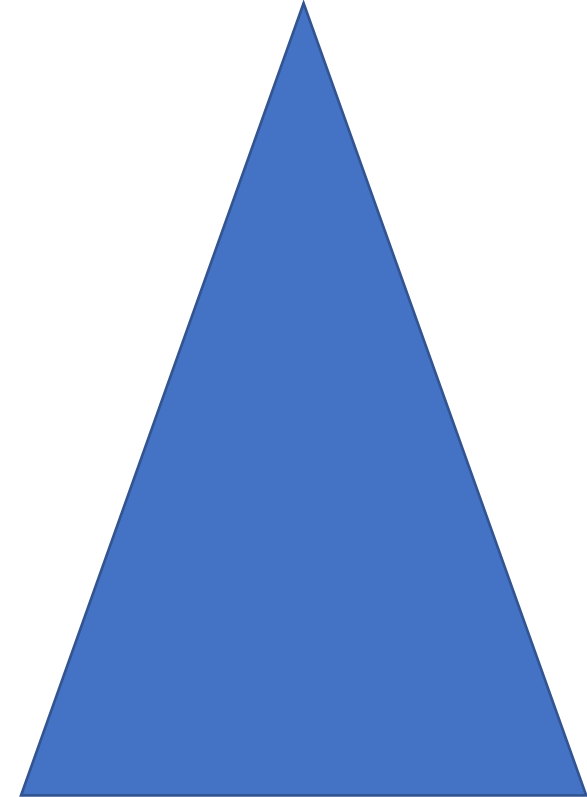
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What links these words in the columns below?

Thumb
Climb
Crumb
Lamb
Limb

Bridge
Edge
Handkerchief
Sandwich
Wednesday

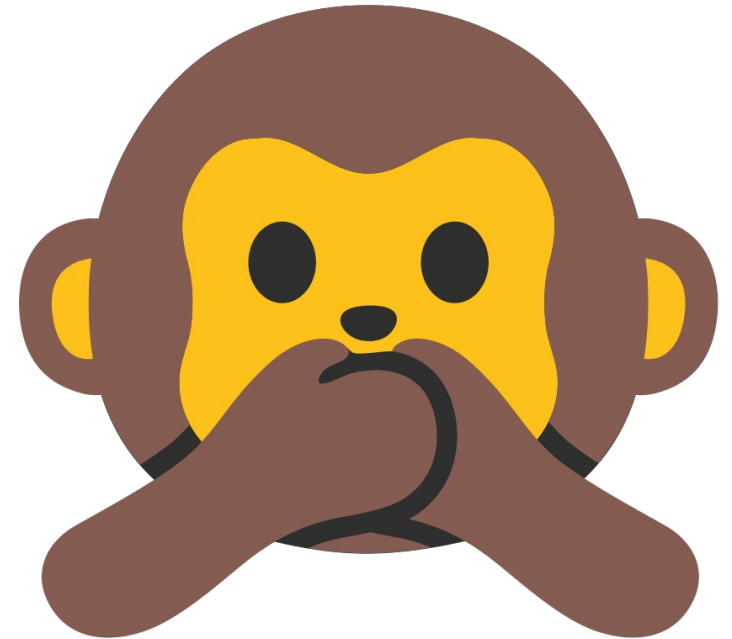
Gnat
Gnarl
Gnash
Gnaw
Gnome



They all have silent letters.

Why do you think we have silent letters in English?

Can you think of any more words with silent letters? Who can think of 5?



Do we just have 5 vowels?

- Well, yes: a, e, i, o and u.
- But we can make many more vowel sounds by adding vowels together, adding an "e" or adding another consonant.
- Have a go - say these aloud.

bait, bet, bit, bite, beat, bat, bot, boat, boot, but, book, bath....



The added "e". How quickly can you solve this puzzle?

1. Din
2. Mat
3. Tub
4. Can
5. Pin
6. Rip
7. Cub
8. Tap
9. Mad
10. Spin



From what you have learnt today...

If you speak another language, are the spelling rules straightforward?

Do you think Spanish, German, Italian or Danish have difficult spelling?

How would you teach someone to spell in English if they were learning the language?



WoLLoW would like to know...

- 3 things that make spelling in English tricky?
- 1
- 2
- 3



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