

Glossary of Phonics Terms

Syllable Types

Closed Syllables: syllables with only one vowel, followed by one or more consonants

- **Key info:** The vowel sound in a Closed Syllable is usually short.
- **Examples:**

- *Single-syllable:*

c u p

o x

u p

w i sh

- *Multisyllabic:*

mag net

fan tas tic



Open Syllables: syllables that end with only one vowel letter

- **Key info:** The vowel sound in an Open Syllable is usually long or schwa.
- **Examples:**

- *Single-syllable:*

h i

sh e

g o

- *Multisyllabic:*

mu sic

pi lot

a ma zing



Vowel-Consonant-e Syllables: syllables that end with a vowel letter, a consonant, and a final e

- **Key info:**
 - The VCE pattern is one of the most common ways to spell a long vowel sound.
 - VCE Syllables often happen at the end of words.

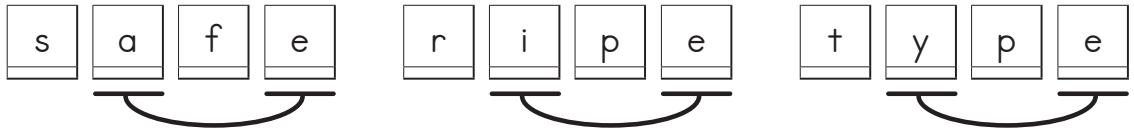


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◦ Any vowel letter can be in a VCE Syllable: a_e, e_e, i_e, o_e, u_e, y_e.

- Examples:

- *Single-syllable:*



- *Multisyllabic:*

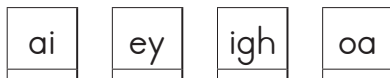


Vowel Team Syllables: syllables with two, three, or four letters that work together to spell one vowel sound

- Key info:

- The vowel sound in a Vowel Team Syllable is usually long or other.
 - The letters in a vowel team stay together in one syllable.

- Examples of vowel teams spelling long vowel sounds:



- Examples of vowel teams spelling other vowel sounds:



- Examples:



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R-Controlled Syllables: syllables with a vowel letter or vowel team followed by the letter **r**, where the letters combine to spell an r-controlled vowel sound

- **Key info:**

- R-controlled vowel spellings have two or three letters.
- /ar/, /or/, and /er/ are r-controlled vowel sounds.

- **Examples of r-controlled vowel spellings:**

ar	or	oor	er	ur	ir
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- **Examples:**

tar	nish	for	giv	en	board	room
earth	ly	noc	tur	nal	chirp	ing

Consonant-le Syllables: 3-letter syllables formed by a single consonant letter right before the letters **le**

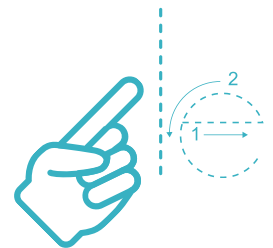
- **Key info:**

- Consonant-le Syllables occur only at the end of multisyllabic words.
- -le spells the sounds /uhl/ (schwa plus /l/).
- -le acts like a magnet to pull the consonant before it into the final syllable.
- Once you decode the Consonant-le Syllable, it is easy to see what type of syllable comes just before it.

- **Examples of consonant-le spellings:** -ble, -cle, -dle, -fle, -gle, -kle, -ple, -tle, -zle

- **Examples:**

puz	zle	star	tle	cu	bi	cle
pud	dle	bu	gle	re	sem	ble



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Schwa:



- is a “lazy” or “reduced” vowel sound because it has less energy than a typical vowel sound;
 - is the most common phoneme in English;
 - often occurs in multisyllabic words.
- **Key info:**
 - The most common sound for schwa is /uh/, like in **zebra** and **avoid**.
 - The other sound for schwa is /ih/, like in **basket**, **lemon**, and **salad**.
 - Sometimes we need to “flex” a vowel sound to the schwa to pronounce the word correctly.
 - **Common schwa spellings:**

◦ -on	rib <u>o</u> nn	comm <u>o</u> nn
◦ -et	helmet <u>ə</u>	basket <u>ə</u>
◦ -al	dent <u>a</u> l	ov <u>a</u> l
◦ con-	conf <u>e</u> ss	cont <u>a</u> in
◦ a-, -a	<u>A</u> lask <u>a</u>	<u>A</u> mer <u>i</u> c <u>a</u>
◦ -en	seve <u>n</u>	consist <u>e</u> nt
◦ -le	pebb <u>l</u> e	appl <u>e</u>
◦ -a-	hex <u>a</u> gon	cata <u>s</u> trophic
◦ -i-	optim <u>i</u> sm	presid <u>e</u> nt

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Reading Multisyllabic Words



When reading longer words:

- Look for the vowel letters.
- Expand your vision to look for the vowel spellings.



First ask yourself:

- How many vowels do I see?
- Are they together or apart?



Then ask:

- Do I see a Latin chunk, prefix, suffix, or any other familiar endings or chunks?
- Do I see a vowel-consonant-e?
- Do I see a vowel team?
- Do I see an r-controlled vowel?
- Do I see a consonant-le?



Finally, ask:

- How many vowel spellings are there?
- How many syllables will there be?



Remember!

- Digraphs always stay together, but blends can be split down the middle. (es-tab-lish, quic-k-ly, com-plex)
- Doubled consonants are split down the middle. (puz-zle, ap-proach)
- When a vowel is by itself, not next to another vowel, it is usually the only vowel in the syllable. (fan-tas-tic, Wis-con-sin, e-lec-tri-cal)
- Vowel teams almost always stay together. (sea-son, main-tain, a-stound-ing)
- Vowels followed by an r almost always combine to spell an r-controlled vowel sound. (bur-den, floor-board, for-bid-den)

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- Prefixes and suffixes are often syllables. They stay on one SyllaBoard™. The vowel suffixes **-able** and **-ible** each have two vowel spellings and are each split between two SyllaBoards™. (dis-a-gree-ment, re-read, un-e-vent-ful, val-u-a-ble, in-flex-i-ble)
- If you see **-le** at the end of a word, it usually grabs the previous consonant and becomes a Consonant-le Syllable. (jun-**gle**, pur-**ple**, fiz-**zle**)
- The letters in Latin chunks (**tion**, **sion**, **ture**) work together to spell consistent sounds. They stay on one SyllaBoard™. (fic-**tion**, ad-mis-**sion**, fix-**ture**)

Common Vowel Spellings:

Long a

Most common: a (Open Syllable), a_e, ay, ai



Long e

Most common: e (Open Syllable), e_e, ee, ea, y

Less common: ie, ey



Long i

Most common: i (Open Syllable), i_e, y, igh

Less common: y_e



Long o

Most common: o (Open Syllable), o_e, oa, ow



Long u

Most common: u (Open Syllable), u_e



/or/ as in fork

Most common: or

Less common: our, ore, oor, oar



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/ar/ as in barn

Most common: ar



/er/ as in bird

Most common: er, ir, ur

Less common: ear, ar, or



/oo/ as in ooze

Most common: oo, u_e, ew, u



/ou/ as in ouch

Most common: ou, ow



/oi/ as in oink

Most common: oi, oy



/oo/ as in book

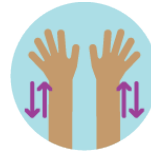
Most common: oo

Less common: u



/aw/ as in awesome

Most common: au, aw



Common Chunks and Endings

- Identifying prefixes, suffixes, Latin chunks, and other chunks in a word can help you decode the word more quickly.
- When you see one of these groups of letters in a word:
 - Read them as one chunk that almost always spells the same sounds.
 - Keep them together in the same syllable.
 - Once you have decoded the chunk, it is usually easier to figure out the syllable type of the syllable that comes before the chunk.

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Common chunks:	all	ing				
Vowel-ng chunks:	ang	ing	ong	ung		
Vowel-nk chunks:	ank	ink	onk	unk		
Latin chunks:	tion	sion	ture			
Consonant Suffixes:	-s	-less	-ness	-ment	-ful	-ly
Vowel Suffixes:	-ed	-es	-ing	-er	-est	-ous
	-y	-able	-ible			
Prefixes:	dis-	con-	un-	im-	in-	re-
	pre-	pro-				

Latin Chunks

- Key info:

- Latin chunks are groups of letters that work together as whole units, or “chunks,” to spell consistent sounds.
- These chunks only occur in multisyllabic words.
- When you see a Latin chunk in a word, first separate the chunk from the rest of the word. It is then easier to decode the remaining syllables in the word.
- Latin chunk **tion** spells /shun/. (**na-tion**, **va-ca-tion**)
- Latin chunk **sion** spells /shun/ (**ses-sion**, **com-pre-hen-sion**) or /zhun/ (**vi-sion**, **ex-plo-sion**).
- Latin chunk **ture** spells /cher/. (**na-ture**, **fea-ture**)

- Examples:

mis	<u>sion</u>	fur	ni	<u>ture</u>
por	<u>tion</u>	di	vi	<u>sion</u>
fu	<u>ture</u>	con	nec	<u>tion</u>

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Hard and Soft c and g

- Key info:

- The letters **c** and **g** can each spell two sounds, a hard sound and a soft sound.
- Hard **c** is /k/ as in **can**, and soft **c** is /s/ as in **city**.
- Hard **g** is /g/ as in **gulp**, and soft **g** is /j/ as in **gel**.
- When followed by **e**, **i**, or **y**, **c** and **g** usually spell their soft sounds.
- When followed by any other vowel letter, **c** and **g** usually spell their hard sounds.
- When followed by a consonant, **c** and **g** usually spell their hard sounds.

- Examples:

- Hard c and g:

g	r	a	b	c	r	a	sh
<u>gal</u> lon				<u>can</u> dy			

- Soft c and g:

b	u	l	g	e	c	y	s	t
<u>gym</u> nast					<u>ex</u> er <u>cise</u>			

Closed Syllable Exceptions

- Key info:

- Closed Syllable exceptions look like Closed Syllables, but the vowel letters do not spell the short vowel sounds we expect.

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- The vowel sound in a Closed Syllable exception is long.
- The five Closed Syllable exceptions are **old**, **ild**, **ind**, **olt**, and **ost**.
- Examples:

b	o	l	d	ch	i	l	d	k	i	n	d
v	o	l	t	m	o	s	t				

Split Vowels

- Key info:
 - Split vowels are two vowels next to each other that spell two separate vowel sounds.
 - Sometimes split vowels look like a common vowel team (**ai**, **oa**, **oi**), and sometimes they do not (**eo**, **ua**, **io**).
 - When you see two vowels next to each other in a word, they often work together as a vowel team to spell one vowel phoneme, but sometimes they are split into two different syllables because each one spells its own vowel phoneme.
 - The letter **i** in a split vowel sometimes spells the *long e* sound (**ra-di-o**, **glor-i-ous**). If it does not work to read the letter **i** as *long i* or *schwa*, try *long e* next.

- Examples:

d <u>i</u>	<u>a</u> l	p <u>i</u>	<u>a</u> n	o
n <u>e</u>	<u>o</u> n	mo	s <u>a</u>	<u>i</u> c
r <u>e</u>	<u>a</u> ct	mu	s <u>e</u>	<u>u</u> m