

The Structure of the English Syllable

(C)(C)(C)V(C)(C)(C)(C)

- **Zero onset.** The syllable begins with a vowel
– /i:t, it, et, a:t, ɒn, ɔ:t, ʌs, ɜ:θ, u:z, a:/
- **Single consonant onset.** Any consonant except /ŋ/.
– /fɔ:, tu:, mæn, fit/
- **A consonant cluster as the onset.** Cluster of two or three consonants

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- 2. **Beginning with consonants other than /s/. /p, t, k, b, d, g, f .../ + /l, r, w, or j/**
play, pray, twin, tune, blade, dry ...
The first consonant = initial, the second = post-initial.

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Cluster of Two Consonants

- 1. **Beginning with /s/. /s/ + /p, t, k, f, m, or n/**
spell, stay, sky, sphynx /sfɪŋks/, smash, snack
/s/ = pre-initial
Other consonants in the cluster = initial

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Cluster of Three Consonants

- The first consonant is always /s/. Then two consonants follow: /p, t, or k/ (voiceless stops) + /l, r, w, or j/ (approximants).
– /s/ = pre-initial
– /p, t, or k/ = initial
– /l, r, w, or j/ = post-initial
• splash, student, skew, squash

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