

Table 4.1. Guide to pronunciation of English sounds

Sound	Key word	Most frequent spelling	% of the time	Other spellings
/ɪ/	it	i	66%	y
/t/	tip	t	97%	tt, ed
/p/	pig	p	96%	pp
/n/	nose	n	97%	nn, kn, gn
/s/	see	s	73%	c, ss
/ă/	at	a	96%	ae
/l/	lip	l	91%	ll
/d/	did	d	98%	dd, ed
/f/	fly	f	78%	ff, ph, lf
/h/	him	h	98%	wh
/g/	get	g	88%	gg, gh
/ō/	on	o	79%	aw, augh, ough
/k/	kit	c	73%	cc, k, ck, lk, q
/m/	man	m	94%	mm
/r/	rat	r	97%	rr, wr
/b/	bin	b	97%	bb
/ĕ/	elm	e	91%	ea, e_e
/y/	yet	y	44%	l
/j/	jar	g	88%	j, dg
/u/	us	u	92%	o, ou
/w/	wet	w	92%	u
/v/	vet	v	99.5%	f (of)
/z/	zoom	z	23%	zz, s
/th/	that	th	100%	--
/ch/	chill	ch	55%	t
/sh/	shop	sh	26%	ti, ssi, s, si, sci
/zh/	sure	si	49%	s, ss, z
/hw/	wheel	wh	100%	--
/ng/	song	n	41%	ng
/oi/	boil	oi	62%	oy
/ou/	house	ou	56%	ow
/oo/	soon	oo	38%	u, o, ou, u_e, ew, ue
/oo/	book	oo	31%	u, ou, o, ould
/ă/	aim	a	45%	a_e, ai, ay, ea
/ĕ/	ear	e	70%	y, ea, ee, ie, e_e, ey, i, ei
/ī/	ice	i_e	69%	i, igh, u, ie, y_e
/ō/	oat	o	100%	o_e, ow, oa, oe
/yoo/	use	u	69%	u_e, ew, ue
/th/	the	th	100%	--
/ō/	ball	o		a, au, aw, ough, augh
/û/	bird	er	40%	ir, ur
/ă/	car	a	89%	aw, aa, ah
/a/	alarm	a	24%	e, i, o, u
/â/	chair	a	29%	are, air

Source: *Research-Based Methods of Reading Instruction Grades K—3* (p. 36-37), by Sharon Vaughn & Sylvia Linan-Thompson. Alexandria, VA: ASCD. © 2004 by ASCD. Adapted with permission. Learn more about ASCD at www.ascd.org