

The Basic Alphabet Code

The alphabet represents distinct sounds in our language called phonemes. Each phoneme is mapped to a letter or group of letters. Children are born with the ability to pick out these sounds. To teach them to read and write, we need to show them how to represent these sounds with letters. Always teach from a known point in someone's understanding to the new unknown point. So in the case of someone learning the language go from the sound to the letter or letter combination. Say the sound, show the letter. The chart shows the sounds, gives examples, and then gives the spelling.

Sound	As In	Spelling
	Consonants	
/b/	bug	b
/d/	dig	d
/f/	fit	f
/g/	get	g
/h/	ham	h
/j/	jug	j
/k/	kite	k
/l/	lit	l
/m/	mat	m
/n/	net	n
/p/	pit	p
/r/	rat	r
/s/	sit	s
/t/	tip	t
/v/	vat	v
/w/	wet	w
/z/	zip	z
/ch/	chat	ch
/ng/	ring	ng
/sh/	ship	sh
/th/	think	th
/th/	then	th
/ks/	lax	x
/kw/	quiz	qu
	Vowels	
/a/	hat	a
/e/	bet	e
/i/	sit	i
/o/	log	o
/aw/	saw	aw
/u/	cut	u
/ae/	fade	a-e
/ee/	bee	ee

/ie/	bite	i-e
/oe/	note	o-e
/ue/	cube	u-e
/ōō/	book	oo
/ōō/	moon	oo
/ou/	ouch	ou
/oi/	oil	oi
Vowels +r		
/ar/	car	ar
/er/	her	er
/or/	nor	or
/e-/er/	dare	are

Note: Vowels +r have a primary vowel sound followed by an /er/ sound. All these combinations are counted as one sound. There are a total of nine vowel +r sounds. Most vowel sounds have multiple spelling options and those are not listed in the Basic Alphabet Code.

Celia Webb is an author, illustrator, and company executive. She and her husband, Mack H. Webb, Jr., founded Pilinut Press, Inc., publishing advanced readers for children and ESL students. Their website www.pilinutpress.com offers more free articles on developing reading-related skills, word games and puzzles, and activity sheets for their entertaining and educational books.

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