

The English Alphabetic Code

sounds	simple code	complex code graphemes, or spelling alternatives, which are code for the sounds						
/s/	s snake 	-ss glass 	-ce palace 	-se house 	c (e i y) city 	sc scissors 	-st castle 	ps pseudonym 
/a/	a apple 							
/t/	t tent 	-tt letter 	-ed skipped 					
/i/	i insect 	-y cymbals 						
/p/	p pan 	-pp puppet 						
/n/	n net 	-nn bonnet 	kn knot 	gn gnome 	-ne engine 			
/k/	k kit 	c cat 	-ck duck 	ch chameleon 	qu bouquet 	que plaque 		
/e/	e egg 	-ea head 	-ai said 					
/h/	h hat 	wh who? 						
/r/	r rat 	-rr arrow 	wr write 	rh rhinoceros 				
/m/	m map 	-mm hammer 	-me welcome 	-mb thumb 	-mn columns 			
/d/	d dig 	-dd puddle 	-ed rained 					
/g/	g girl 	-gg juggle 	gu guitar 	gh ghost 	-gue catalogue 			
/o/	o octopus 	wa watch 	qua qualify 	alt salt 				
/u/	u umbrella 	o son 	-ou touch 	-ough thoroughfare 				
/l/	l ladder 	-ll shell 						
/ul/	-le kettle 	-il pencil 	-al hospital 	-el camel 				
/f/	f feathers 	-ff cliff 	ph photograph 	-gh laugh 				
/b/	b bat 	-bb rabbit 	bu building 					
/j/	j jug 	-ge cabbage 	g (e i y) giraffe 	-dge fridge 				
/y/	y yawn 							
/ai/	ai first aid 	-ay tray 	a table 	-ae sundae 	a-e cakes 			
	-ey prey 	-ea break 	eigh eight 	-aigh straight 				
/w/	w web 	wh wheel 	-u penguin 					

sounds	simple code	complex code						
/oa/	oa oak 	ow bow 	o yo-yo 	-oe oboe 	o-e rope 	-ough dough 	eau plateau 	
/igh/	-igh night 	-ie tie 	i behind 	-y fly 	i-e bike 	ei eider duck 	eye eye 	
/ee/	ee eel 	ea eat 	e emu 	e-e concrete 	-ey key 	-ie chief 	-ine sardines 	
/i-ee/	-y sunny 	-ey monkey 	-ie movie 					
/or/	or fork 	oar oars 	-oor door 	ore snore 	-our four 	war wardrobe 	quar quarter 	wa water 
	aw dawn 	au sauce 	-al chalk 	-augh caught 	ough thought 			
/z/	z zebra 	-zz jazz 	-s fries 	-se cheese 	-ze breeze 			
/ng/	-ng gong 	-n jungle 		/ngk/	-nk ink 	-nc uncle 		
/v/	v violin 	-ve dove 						
short /oo/	-oo book 	-oul should 	-u push 					
long /ool/	oo moon 	-ue blue 	u-e flute 	-ew crew 	-ui fruit 	-ou soup 	-o move 	-ough through 
/ks/	-x fox 	-ks books 	-cks ducks 	-kes cakes 		/gz/	-x exam 	-gs pegs 
/ch/	ch chairs 	-tch patch 		/chu/	-ture picture 			
/sh/	sh sheep 	ch chef 	-ti station 	-ci magician 	-ssi admission 			
unvoiced /th/	th thistle 		voiced /th/	th there 				
/kw/	qu queen 							
/ou/	ou ouch 	ow owl 	-ough plough 					
/oi/	oi ointment 	oy toy 						This chart is not definitive. You may discover further code.
/yoo/	-ue statue 	u unicorn 	u-e tube 	ew new 	eu pneumatic 			
/er/	er mermaid 	ir birthday 	ur nurse 	ear earth 	wor world 			Grey dashes indicate that the particular letter/s-sound correspondence is unlikely to begin a word.
schwa /er/ 'uh'	-er mixer 	-our humour 	-re theatre 	-ar collar 	-or sailor 			
/ar/	ar artist 	a father 	alm palm 	-alf half 	-alves calves 			Hollow letters alert the reader to various possible pronunciations.
/air/	air hair 	-are hare 	-ear bear 	-ere where 				
/eer/	eer deer 	ear ears 	-ere adhere 	-ier cashier 				by Debbie Hepplewhite
/zh/	-si television 	-s treasure 	-z azure 	g courgette 	-ge collage 			

The complexities of the English Alphabetic Code:

- one sound (phoneme) can be represented by one, two, three or four letters: e.g. /a/ a, /f/ ph, /igh/ igh, /oa/ ough
- one sound can be represented by multiple spelling alternatives (graphemes): e.g. /oa/: o, oa, ow, oe, o-e, eau, ough
- one grapheme can represent multiple sounds: e.g. 'ough': /oa/ though, /or/ thought, /ool/ through, /ou/ plough, /u/ thorough