



Phoneme

The smallest unit of sound in a word. There are around 44 phonemes in English and they are represented by graphemes in writing. Phonemes are usually shown as symbols two forward slashes. For example, /b/ or /ch/.

Grapheme

A grapheme is simply a way of writing down a phoneme. A grapheme can be one letter (s), two letters (ir), three letters (igh) or four letters in length (ough).

Diagraph

A grapheme made up of two letters that makes one sound (sh in fish).

Trigraph

A grapheme made up of three letters that makes one sound (igh in high).

Split-Vowel Diagraph

A digraph that is split between a consonant (a-e in make). A split digraph usually changes the sound of the first vowel. For example, compare the pronunciation between hug and huge.

Blend

Blending involves merging the sounds in a word together in order to pronounce it. This is important for reading. For example, j-a-m blended together reads the word jam.

Segment

Segmenting involves breaking up a word that you hear into its sounds. This helps with spelling because if you know what graphemes represent the sounds in the word, you can write it! For example, the word jam is segmented into the sounds j-a-m.