



# Best Fit Rule Resources

# Phonics Shed

## Consonants

# Best Fit Rules

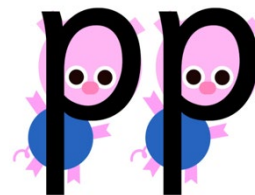
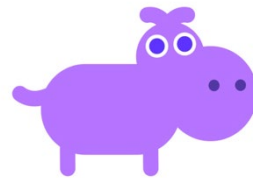
## /p/ sound

First Guess: 

(anywhere in words)

pen    cape    cap

Double letter:  
(after a short vowel in longer words)



hippo    applaud    puppy

# Best Fit Rules

## /h/ sound

### Best fit:

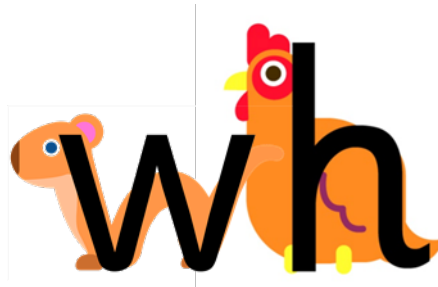
(Most often heard at the start of a word)



hot happy high house

### Uncommon:

(Occasionally, /h/ is represented by the grapheme 'wh'; almost always at the beginning of a word)



who whole

# Best Fit Rules

## /y/ sound

### Best fit:

(Is only ever used at the beginning of words or syllables, most often used at beginning of words)



yes yellow year

### Uncommon:

(Occasionally it is made by an 'i' in the middle of words, usually in the final syllable, never at the beginning of words)



view Daniel opinion

# Best Fit Rules

## /b/ sound

Best fit:

(anywhere in words)



bed elbow crab

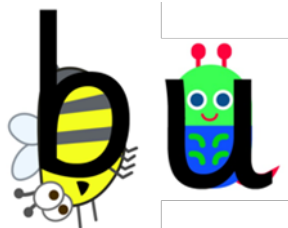
Double letter:

(will only be found in the middle of a word,  
usually after a short vowel in longer words)



rabbit gibbon

Very rare:



(only at  
the start  
of words)

build buy



(only in  
middle of  
words)

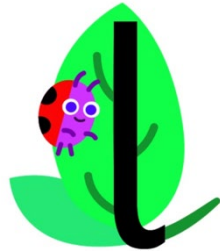
cupboard raspberry

# Best Fit Rules

## /l/ sound

Best fit:

(anywhere in words)



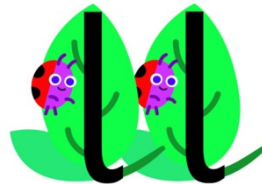
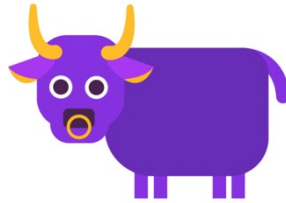
leg

plan

hole

Double letter:

(usually after a short vowel at the end of a word or syllable)



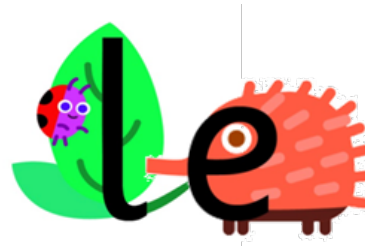
well

still

yellow

Word endings:

('le' comes at the end of a two-syllable word, usually after 't' or 'd' but sometimes other consonants)



little

middle

marble

# Best Fit Rules

## /v/ sound

Best fit:

(found anywhere in words)



van rival verb drive

End of words:

(a /v/ at the end of words will be a 'v' between a split digraph or a 've')



have give glove above

Rare:

(occasionally, 'vv' will appear in the middle of a word)



revving savvy

Common Exception Word:

of



# Best Fit Rules

## /d/ sound

Best fit:

(anywhere in a word)



dog

model

bed

made

Past tense:

(added to make a base word into the past tense)



added  
hugged  
opened

Double letter:

(‘dd’ tends to appear in the middle of words or before the suffixes ‘-er’, ‘-est’ and ‘-ing’.)



teddy    ladder  
waddling    saddest

Uncommon: (only at the end of words,  
not to be confused with split digraphs, like ‘made’)



aide

blonde

# Best Fit Rules

## /r/ sound

### Best fit:

(at the start or middle of a word, an 'r' at the end of a word will be part of a digraph or trigraph)



rat crab drive prefer

### Double letter:

('rr' appears in the middle of words, never the start)



parrot arrive error

### Less Common:

(at the start of words or base words)



write  
wrong



rhythm  
rhino

### Common Exception Word:

we're

# Best Fit Rules

## /f/ sound

### Best fit:

(most likely to be used at the beginning and in the middle words but can also be at the end)



fly shift life leaf

### Double letter:

(Usually after a short vowel)



off stuff muffin coffee

### Less common (from Greek):

(can come anywhere in words)



dolphin graph  
alphabet paragraph

### Rare:

(at the end of words, after 'ou' or 'au')



rough tough enough

# Best Fit Rules

## /g/ sound

### Best fit:

(anywhere in words, not often before 'e', 'i' or 'y')



got dog August prefer

### Double letter:

(usually after short vowel)



egg nugget leggings

### Less common:

(often found at the beginning of words)



guess  
disguise



ghost  
yoghurt

### Word ending:

(uncommon, from French words)



league vague

# Best Fit Rules

## /m/ sound

Best fit:

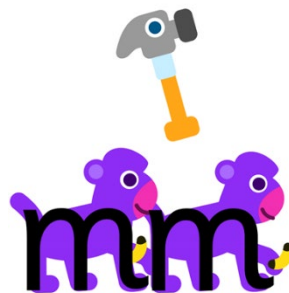
(anywhere in words)



mum thump moth mannerism

Double letter:

(usually after a short vowel in longer words)



common mummy  
summer swimming

Less common:

(only at the end of base words)



climb lamb  
thumb crumb



come some  
welcome



autumn hymn  
column

# Best Fit Rules

## /n/ sound

### Best fit:

(anywhere in a word)



ten land net fine

### Double letter:

(‘nn’ usually appears after a short vowel)



funny tunnel granny

### Less Common:



know knock knight

(found at the start of words)



design gnome  
align

(rare, at the beginning or end of words)



gone none

(rare, at the end of word)

# Best Fit Rules

## /t/ sound

Best fit:  **t**

tent just top twist

(anywhere in a word)

Double letter:



putt better attack

('tt' usually appears after a short vowel)

Past Tense:

(found at the end of words after an unvoiced sound)



backed chopped trapped

Less

common:



(at the end of words, from French)

Charlotte pipette



(at the end of words)

waste route



(Mostly at the start, sometimes in the middle. Often place names or names of people)

Thomas thyme

# Best Fit Rules

## /j/ sound

Most common at the start of words:

(sometimes in the middle, never at the end)



jam jacket  
jump object

Most common in the middle of words:

(usually before e, i, or y, also used at the start of words, never at the end)



age angel  
digit gerbil

Less common:



(at the end of words,  
after short vowel  
sounds, mostly in  
one-syllable words)

edge badge bridge



(only after short vowels  
in the middle of words)

badger gadget dodgy



(at the end of words,  
usually after consonant  
or long vowel sound)

change pigeon



(less common, found in  
the middle of words)

hygiene region



# Best Fit Rules

## /z/ sound

Most common:

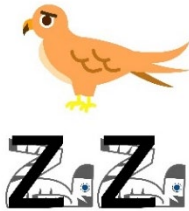
(best guess at the start of words, often also in the middle, rarely at the end)



zip zebra wizard size

Double Letter:

(after short vowels)




buzz frizzy puzzle frazzled

Plurals:

(to make something plural after a vowel, another 's', or a voiced consonant, also often between split digraphs)



dogs bags hugs rose

Uncommon: 

(at the end of words, often after a digraph)

because  
pause



breeze  
sneeze

(at the end of words, often after a long vowel sound)



dessert  
dissolve

(only ever in the middle of words)



xylophone

(unusual, at the start or ends of words)

# Best Fit Rules

## /z/ sound

### Most common:

(best guess at the start of words, often also in the middle, rarely at the end)



zip zebra wizard size

### Double Letter:

(after short vowels)




buzz frizzy puzzle frazzled

### Plurals:

(to make something plural after a vowel, another 's', or a voiced consonant, also often between split digraphs)



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(only ever in the middle of words)



xylophone

(unusual, at the start or ends of words)

# Best Fit Rules

## /k/ sound

Often before 'a', 'o' or 'u':



cat cut comic  
cloth magic

(anywhere in words but most common at the start,

Also used before consonants and at the end of words, but not often used before 'e', 'i' or 'y' to avoid making a /s/ sound)

Often before 'e', 'i' or 'y':



sketch kind cheeky  
milk cake

(anywhere in words but most common in the middle or at the end,

Also used before consonants and at the end of words

but is less common before 'a', 'o' or 'u')

At the end of words:



back duck check

(and in the middle of compound words, never at the start

Usually after a short vowel sound)

Less

Common:



(uncommon,  
in the middle  
of words  
after a short  
vowel)

broccoli  
account



(anywhere  
in words,  
from  
Greek)

school  
echidna



(uncommon,  
at the end of  
words with  
the exception  
of 'queue')

unique queue



(uncommon,  
in the middle  
or at the start  
of words,  
from French)

quoit mannequin

# Best Fit Rules

## /w/ sound

First Guess:  W  
(anywhere in words, usually at start or after 't' or 's')

was twin switch cobweb

Question words:



why when what where

Or at the start of words:

(less common than w)

wheel whale wheat

Uncommon:  O  
one once

  
**Phonics Shed**

# Consonant Digraphs

# Best Fit Rules

## /ng/ sound

### Digraph:

(usually the last sound in a word,  
but it does sometimes appear in the  
middle of words  
Often after a short vowel)



wing sung bang long  
jungle

### As part of a suffix with 'i':

looking sitting running

### Two sounds:

(usually the last sound in a word  
unless it is before a suffix.  
Often after a short vowel)



wink sunk bank thank

# Best Fit Rules

## /zh/ sound

Never at the start of words, most often in the middle, sometimes at the end.

Most common:

(usually followed by 'on' or sometimes 'a')



decision television version Asia

At the end of words:

(from French)



collage sabotage camouflage

Less Common:

(followed by 'ure' or 'al')



treasure usual closure

Rare:



(From French, mostly partially decodable)

genre  
aubergine



(Very rare)

déjà vu  
force majeure

Exceptions:



(only 2 words)

azure  
seizure



(only word)

equation

# Best Fit Rules

## /ch/ sound

Most common:

(rarely after a short vowel)



chicken church touch lunch

After short vowels:

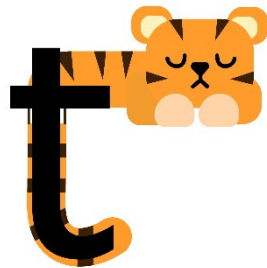
(may sound like /t/ /ch/)



watch catch witch itchy

Before 'u':

(most often before 'ure',  
may sound like /t/)



picture mixture century statue



# Best Fit Rules

## /sh/ sound

Most Common:

(anywhere in words)



brush shop mushroom shallow publish

As part of  
word endings:



(usually  
towards the  
end of words  
before 'on' or  
'ous')

action mention  
description



(usually in  
the middle  
of words  
before 'a')

special musician  
precious



(usually  
after 'l', 'n'  
and 'r' and  
before 'on')

extension  
comprehension

Less Common:



(anywhere in  
words, most  
often at the  
start)

parachute brochure



(usually  
towards the  
end of words  
before 'on')

mission discussion



(rare, appears  
anywhere in  
words usually  
before 'u')

sure sugar

**Phonics**  **Shed**

# Short Vowels

# Best Fit Rules

## /a/ sound

(always after a consonant)

Best Guess:

(anywhere in words)



cat and plans back thankyou

Rare:

(best guess will always be 'a'/a/  
as these are very uncommon)



plait plaid



meringue timbre



laugh aunt

# Best Fit Rules

## /a/ sound

(always after a consonant)

### Best Guess:

(anywhere in words)



cat and plans back thankyou

### Rare:

(best guess will always be 'a'/a/  
as these are very uncommon)



plait plaid



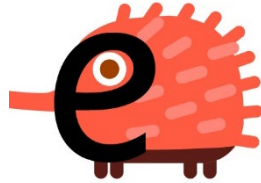
meringue timbre

# Best Fit Rules

## /e/ sound

### Best Guess:

(in the middle and at the start of words)



bed end tent Ellis elf

### Less Common:

(in the middle of words)



bread sweat weather feather

### Uncommon:



any  
many



said  
again

### Rare:



leisure



friend

# Best Fit Rules

## /i/ sound

### Best Guess:

(in the middle and at the start of words)



imp printer sinking interesting

### Less Common:

(in the middle of words)



lynx crystal mystery pyramid

### /i/ /j/ Word Ending:



('age' ending: the split digraph 'a\_e' around 'g'/j/ is more likely to be pronounced /i/ than /ai/, although there are exceptions, e.g. 'age', 'page' and 'stage')

village cottage sausage

### Uncommon:



pretty England privilege

### Rare:



busy

# Best Fit Rules

## /o/ sound

### Best Guess:

(in the middle and at the start of words, not normally before 'w' or 'qu')



on dog odd box coffee bother

### After /w/ sounds:

(including 'qu'. Apart from 'salt', 'malt', 'scald' and 'halt')



wasp what squad swap waffle

### Uncommon:



fault sausage

### Very Rare:

(before 'gh'/f/)



cough

# Best Fit Rules

## hard /u/ sound

Best Guess:

(in the middle of words)



wood foot understood woolly

Less Common:

(in the middle of words)



put bull push sugar

Rare:



(more commonly makes the softer /u/ sound)

couscous  
hummous



(very rare, always before 'd', only in word these three base words)

could  
would  
should



# Best Fit Rules

## /u/ sound

### Best Guess:

(at the start or in the middle of words)



bug put duck mummy

### Less Common:

(mostly in the middle of words,  
occasionally at the start)



love son money other

### Uncommon:

(in the middle of words)



touch rough trouble

# Best Fit Rules

## /u/ sound

### Best Guess:

(at the start or in the middle of words)



bug

put

duck

mummy

### Less Common:



(in the middle of words)

wood foot  
understood  
woolly



(mostly in the middle of words,  
occasionally at the start)

love son  
money  
other

### Uncommon:

(in the middle of words)



touch  
rough  
trouble

### Rare:

(always before 'd',  
only in word these  
three base words)



could  
would  
should

# Phonics Shed

## Long Vowels

# Best Fit Rules

## /ai/ sound

### Best Guess:

(as part of a word ending around a consonant ending)



cake shape gate safe

### Middle of Words:

(occasionally at the start)



snail wait rainbow email

### Word Ending:



day stay away

(occasionally in the middle of words)



(much less common)

they grey

### Less Common:



able danger making safest

(often used instead of split digraph when a suffix is added.  
Also appears at the start and in the middle of words.)

### Rare:



(often before 'n')

reindeer beige



(anywhere in words)

eight weigh

# Best Fit Rules

## /ee/ sound

Equally common:

(both can be found at any point in words)



eat sea  
each tea



see three  
green feet

Less Common:



chief field  
hobbies married

(In the middle of words, mostly part of a suffix replacing a 'y': 'ies' or 'ied')



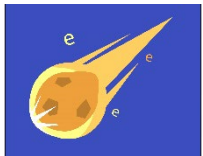
key turkey  
gooey chimney

(only found at the end of words)



jelly funny  
baby actually

(At the end of words)



we be me  
meteor

(Middle or end of words)



taxi happier  
alien funniest

(anywhere in words, often replacing 'y' when a suffix is added)



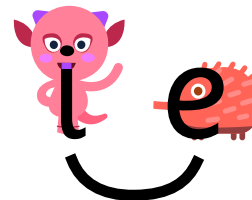
these theme  
compete

(As part of a words ending around a consonant)



ceiling  
receipt

(At the end of words)



police  
routine

(As part of a words ending around a consonant)

# Best Fit Rules

## /igh/ sound

### Most Common:

(as part of a word ending with a consonant between them)



kite

bike

bedtime

advice

### Common:



lion  
liked

item  
sliding

(At the beginning or in the middle of words.  
Can replace the split digraph when 'e' is removed to add a suffix)



night  
moonlight

(In the middle or at the end of words. Often found before 't')

### Word Endings:



spy  
cycle

occupy  
lying

(Often found at the end of words.  
Can also be found in the middle of words.  
Sometimes replacing 'ie' when 'ing' is added)



magpie  
occupied

pie  
cries

(At the end of words or part of a suffix, often replacing a 'y': 'ies' or 'ied')

### Less Common:

(split digraph, as part of a word ending with a consonant between them)



type

thyme

tyre

# Best Fit Rules

## /oa/ sound

### Most Common:

(as part of a word ending with a consonant between them)



cone home bones code

### Common:



ghost potato  
old coding

(Anywhere in words. Can replace the split digraph when 'e' is removed to add a suffix)



boat toad  
oats toaster

(mostly in the middle of words, occasionally at the start)

### Word Endings:



toe Joe  
potatoes

(At the end of words. Sometimes replacing 'o' when 's' is added)



snow rainbow  
own bowl

(Usually at the end of base words or followed by 'n' or 'l')

### Uncommon:



soul boulder

(Normally the 'ou' in the middle of words makes the an /ow/ sound as in 'house')



dough though

(At the end of a few words)

# Best Fit Rules

## /ue/ sound

Most Common:

(as part of a word ending with  
a consonant between them)



use cube attitude perfume

Common:



(Anywhere in words)

unicorn music  
tuna argument

Less  
Common:



(At the start or in the middle of words)

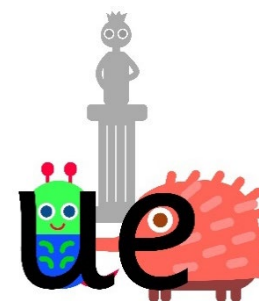
neutral feud

Word Endings:



(Most likely when /ue/ is found at the end of words.  
Can also be found in the middle of words)

new few  
nephew newt



(Most found at the end of words.  
Can also be found in the middle of words)

due statue  
argue Tuesday

These graphemes after a 'ch', 'j', 'l', 'r' or 's' and sometimes 't' or 'd' will make an /oo/ sound.



**Phonics Shed**

Vowel

Digraphs and Trigraphs

# Best Fit Rules

## /oo/ sound

Most Common:

(anywhere in words)



goose    boo    oops    baboon

Common:

(In the middle and at the end of words)



June    salute  
flute    rule

(As part of a word ending around a consonant)



screw    flew  
jewel    chewing

Less Common:



(in the middle and at the end of words)

toucan    you  
routine    group



(in the middle and at the end of words)

flu    truth  
judo    ruby



(in the middle and at the end of words)

do    to  
who    remove



(at the end of base words)

blue    clue  
glue    true



(rare, in the middle of words)

fruit    suit  
bruise

# Best Fit Rules

## /oi/ sound

In the middle and  
at the start of words:



coin oil toilet ointment

At the end of words:

(can appear anywhere words)



boy annoy voyage royal

## Best Fit Rules

# /ow/ sound

In the middle and  
at the start of words:



mouse outside loud house

Most often at  
the end of words:

(or followed by /n/ or /l/.  
There are several exceptions)



owl now brown flower

Uncommon:

(in the middle or at the end)



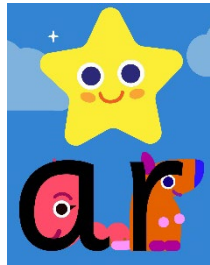
plough drought

# Best Fit Rules

## /ar/ sound

Most common:

(anywhere in words)



star art farm carpark

Middle of words:

(can also come at the end of short words)



llama rather father drama

Uncommon:

(in the middle of words,  
before 'f', 'm' or 've')



half palm  
calves

Very Rare:

(in the middle of  
very few words)



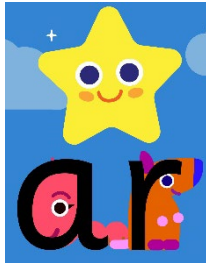
heart  
hearth

# Best Fit Rules

## /ar/ sound

Most common:

(anywhere in words)



star art farm carpark

Middle of words:

(can also come at the end of short words)



llama dance after mask

Uncommon:

(in the middle of words,  
before 'f', 'm' or 've')



half palm calves

Very Rare:



heart hearth

(in the middle of  
very few words)



laugh aunt

(at start or in the middle of  
very few words)

# Best Fit Rules

## /or/ sound

Most common:

(anywhere in words, most common in the middle of words)



horse fork  
ordinary for

Common:

(only slightly less common, anywhere in words)



dawn saw  
awful hawk

Less Common:



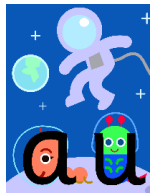
(at the end of words)

more score  
ignore core



(mostly before 'l', apart from 'water')

all always  
small water



(at the beginning or in the middle of words)

astronaut  
pause sauce



(always before /w/)

warm award  
quarter



(always before 'k')

walk talk  
chalk



(always before 't')

thought  
fought bought



(always before 't')

caught naughty  
daughter



(anywhere in words)

roar oar  
board



(at the end of words)

door floor  
poor



(in the middle or at the end of words)

four course  
tournament



(in names of dinosaurs and mythical creatures)

stegosaurus  
centaur

# Best Fit Rules

## /ur/ sound

### Equally common:

(most often in the middle of words,  
rarely at the beginning of words)



surf  
curl  
turn  
blur



different  
perfect  
herb  
prefer



first  
girl  
birds  
stir

### Less Common:



('or'/ur/  
always  
comes  
after 'w')

word worm  
world



(at the beginning or  
the middle of a word.  
If 'ear' is at the end of  
a word, it will make a  
different sound.)

Earl earth  
learn



(in the  
middle of a  
few words)

journey courtesy

### Word ending:

When a word ends with /ur/ and we add  
'ed', we double the 'r' in the /ur/ grapheme.

stirred  
preferred  
blurred



# Best Fit Rules

## /air/ sound

Most Common:

(at the end of words)



dare  
care  
spare  
square

Common:

(most often at the end of words, part of many compound words)



fairy  
hair  
chair  
stairs

Less Common:

(in the middle of words)



parent  
hilarious  
area

(and when the 'e' is removed from 'are' words when adding 'ing')

daring  
caring  
sparing

Rare:



(at the end of base words)

pear  
bear  
wear

(at the end of base words)



there  
where  
premiere

(at the start of words to do with being in the air)



aeroplane  
aerial  
aerobics



millionaire    billionaire

(at the end of words)

## Best Fit Rules

### /ear/ sound

#### Most Common:

(mostly at the end of base words and  
at the start of compound words)



hear dear beard earwig

#### Common Endings:

(mostly at the end of base words,  
occasionally in the middle of words)



steer cheer  
reindeer  
meerkats



here sincere  
interfere  
sphere



tier cashier  
chandelier  
fierce

#### Middle of Words:



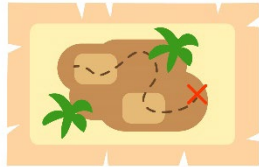
zero bacteria serious query

# Best Fit Rules

## 'ure'

### Common:

(various pronunciations, will appear at the end of a word unless a suffix is added)



cure

mixture

featured

### Schwa Ending:

(often after 's'/zh/ or 't')



treasure

vulture