



# Phonics screening check

## 2016 scoring guidance

### Pronunciation of real words and pseudo-words

Some of the graphemes used in the check represent a number of different phonemes. When decoding a real word in the check, the pupil has to select the correct phoneme for the word, for example the 'ow' in 'blow' should not be pronounced as the 'ow' in 'cow'. However, when decoding a pseudo-word, all plausible alternative pronunciations are acceptable.

The tables on the next page provide guidance to teachers scoring the check on acceptable pronunciations of the pseudo-words in the check.

### Regional pronunciations

Some of the pseudo-words in the screening check contain vowel digraphs that end with 'r', such as 'ur'. In a small number of regional dialects, the 'r' in words with these vowel digraphs is voiced and pupils who speak with these dialects will be known to their teachers. For these pupils, pseudo-words with a vowel digraph ending in 'r', such as 'charb' may be pronounced as /tʃɑ:rb/ instead of /tʃɑ:b/. These pronunciations are acceptable alternatives in the relevant pseudo-words.

### Contact details

For more information about the phonics screening check, please contact the national curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013 or email [assessments@education.gov.uk](mailto:assessments@education.gov.uk).

## Section 1

Pseudo-word	Acceptable pronunciations	Phonemic representation
<b>lig</b>	This item uses the 'l' from 'leg' and rhymes with 'jig'.	/lɪg/
<b>mep</b>	This item uses the 'm' from 'mat' and rhymes with 'step'.	/mɛp/
<b>gax</b>	This item uses the 'g' from 'get' and rhymes with 'fax'.	/gæks/
<b>emp</b>	This item combines the 'e' from 'end' and the 'mp' from 'amp'.	/ɛmp/
<b>beff</b>	This item uses the 'b' from 'bill' and rhymes with 'chef'.	/bɛf/
<b>shup</b>	This item uses the 'sh' from 'shop' and rhymes with 'cup'. All regional pronunciations of the 'u' are acceptable.	/ʃʌp/ or /ʃʊp/
<b>doil</b>	This item uses the 'd' from 'deal' and rhymes with 'boil'.	/dɔɪl/
<b>charb</b>	This item uses the 'ch' from 'chain' and rhymes with 'garb'.	/tʃɑ:b/
<b>frex</b>	This item combines the 'fr' from 'frog' and the 'ex' from 'rex'.	/frɛks/
<b>criff</b>	This item uses the 'cr' from 'cramp' and rhymes with 'tiff'.	/krɪf/
<b>haps</b>	This item uses the 'h' from 'hits' and rhymes with 'maps'.	/hæps/
<b>barst</b>	This item combines the 'bar' from 'barn' and the 'st' from 'first'.	/bɑ:st/

## Section 2

Pseudo-word	Acceptable pronunciations	Phonemic representation
<b>jigh</b>	This item uses the 'j' from 'jump' and rhymes with 'high'.	/dʒaɪ/
<b>woats</b>	This item uses the 'w' from 'warns' and rhymes with 'coats'.	/wəʊts/
<b>rird</b>	This item uses the 'r' from 'rail' and rhymes with 'bird'.	/rɜ:d/
<b>phope</b>	This item uses the 'ph' from 'photo' and rhymes with 'scope'.	/fəʊp/
<b>glips</b>	This item uses the 'gl' from 'glows' and rhymes with 'ships'.	/glɪps/
<b>floost</b>	This item uses the 'fl' from 'flakes' and rhymes with 'boost'.	/flu:st/ or /flʊst/
<b>splam</b>	This item uses the 'spl' from 'split' and rhymes with 'scram'.	/splæm/
<b>stribe</b>	This item uses the 'str' from 'stroke' and rhymes with 'scribe'.	/straɪb/