

Phonemes Help Sheet

What are Phonemes?

Phonemes are the smallest sounds in spoken language. Every word you say is made up of different phonemes. Understanding these sounds helps you read, write, and spell words correctly!

Phoneme Types to Know:

1. Short Vowel Sounds: Vowels that sound quick and short.
 - Examples: cat (/a/), bed (/e/), sit (/i/), dog (/o/), cup (/u/).
2. Long Vowel Sounds: Vowels that say their name (the letter name).
 - Examples: cake (/a/), me (/e/), bike (/i/), go (/o/), cute (/u/).
3. Schwa Sound (/ə/): The “lazy” vowel sound, like a quick, soft “uh.”
 - Examples: sofa, banana.
4. Digraphs: Two letters that make one sound.
 - Examples: sh in ship, ch in chip, th in this, ph in phone.
5. Blends: Two or more consonants where each sound is heard.
 - Examples: bl in blue, st in stop, tr in tree.
6. Vowel-Consonant-E (Silent E): The silent "e" at the end of a word makes the vowel sound long.
 - Examples: cake (/a/), tote (/o/), lime (/i/).
7. Vowel Teams: Two vowels together that make one sound.
 - Examples: ee in seat (long /e/), ai in train (long /a/), ou in out (diphthong).
8. R-Controlled Vowels: A vowel followed by "r" changes the vowel sound.
 - Examples: star (/ar/), bird (/ir/), car (/ar/).
9. Consonant-le Syllable: The "le" syllable after a consonant creates a soft "uh" sound (schwa).
 - Examples: candle, table, puddle.

Phoneme Practice:

Segmenting Phonemes: Break words into their sounds.

- Example: cat → /k/ /a/ /t/

Blending Phonemes: Put the sounds together to make a word.

- Example: /b/ /i/ /g/ → big

Why Phonemes Matter:

- Phonemes help you understand how words sound and how they are written.
- When you understand the sounds, you can read and spell better.
- The more you practice, the easier it gets to decode and encode words.

Remember:

- Phonemes = Sounds, not letters!
- Words are made by blending individual sounds together.
- Practice helps you get faster and more confident with reading and spelling!