

# Common Spellings for Vowel Phonemes

Older elementary students benefit from learning phonemes and their common spellings together. Here are all of the vowel phonemes and their common spelling. Notice that many spellings include more than one letter for the given vowel sound.

Word examples are also provided for each vowel phoneme and common spelling. Students may recognize many of the examples from the [Vowel Valley chart](#) that is often used in early elementary grades.

Phoneme	Common Spellings	Word Examples
/ē/	ee, e_e, -e, ea, ey, -y, ie, ei	see, these, me, eat, key, happy, chief, either
/ī/	i, y	sit, gym
/ā/	a_e, ai, ay, ea, -y, eigh, ei, ey	make, rain, play, great, baby, eight, vein, they
/ĕ/	e, ea	bed, breath
/ă/	a	cat
/ī/	i_e, ie, y, igh, _i	time, pie, cry, right, rifle
/ō/	o, wa, al	fox, swap, palm
/ŭ/	u, o, oo, ou	cup, cover, flood, tough
/aw/	aw, au, all, wa, ough	saw, pause, call, water, bought
/ō/	o_e, oa, oe, ow, o-	vote, boat, toe, snow, open
/oo/	oo, u, ou	took, put, could
/oo/	oo, u_e, ue, ew, ui, ou	moo, tube, blue, chew, suit, soup
/ū/	u, ew, u_e	use, few, cute
/oi/	oi, oy	boil, boy
/ow/	ou, ow	out, cow
/er/	er, ur, ir	her, fur, sir
/ar/	ar	cart
/or/	or	sport
schwa	a, o, e, i, u	about, lesson, elect, definition, circus

**Note:** This list of common spellings includes many, but not all, possible spellings of each vowel phoneme.