



# Phonics screening check

## 2022 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 letters which can be pronounced in different ways when read aloud according to the regional accent of a pupil, for example, vowel digraphs that end with 'r', such as 'ar'. In a small number of regional accents the 'r' in words with these vowel digraphs is voiced and pupils who speak with these accents will be known to their teachers. For these pupils, pseudo-words with a vowel digraph ending in 'r', such as 'nart', may be pronounced as /nart/ instead of /nɑ:t/. Valid alternative pronunciations related to regional accents are acceptable in the relevant pseudo-words and will be listed in the scoring guidance.

### 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 pronunciation	Phonemic representation
<b>bem</b>	This item uses the 'b' from 'bad' and rhymes with 'gem'.	/bɛm/
<b>dax</b>	This item uses the 'd' from 'den' and rhymes with 'Max'.	/dæks/
<b>kig</b>	This item uses the 'k' from 'key' and rhymes with 'dig'.	/kɪg/
<b>eld</b>	This item combines the 'e' from 'egg' with the 'ld' from 'old'.	/ɛld/
<b>besb</b>	This item uses the 'b' from 'ball' and rhymes with 'mesh'.	/bɛʃ/
<b>quab</b>	This item uses the 'qu' from 'quid' and rhymes with 'jab' or 'swab'.	/kwæb/ or /kwɒb/
<b>barp</b>	This item uses the 'b' from 'boil' and rhymes with 'harp'.	/bɑ:p/ or /bɑrp/
<b>chell</b>	This item uses the 'ch' from 'check' and rhymes with 'smell'.	/tʃɛl/
<b>grux</b>	This item uses the 'gr' from 'grin' and rhymes with 'flux'. All regional pronunciations of the 'u' are acceptable.	/grʌks/ or /grʊks/
<b>smung</b>	This item uses the 'sm' from 'smell' and rhymes with 'flung'. All regional pronunciations of the 'u' are acceptable.	/smʌŋ/ or /smʊŋ/
<b>nesk</b>	This item uses the 'n' from 'newt' and rhymes with 'desk'.	/nɛsk/
<b>foint</b>	This item uses the 'f' from 'ferry' and rhymes with 'point'.	/fɔɪnt/

## Section 2

Pseudo-word	Acceptable pronunciation	Phonemic representation
<b>vair</b>	This item uses the 'v' from 'vest' and rhymes with 'hair'. All regional pronunciations of the 'air' are acceptable.	/vɛə/ or /vɛər/
<b>cloat</b>	This item uses the 'cl' from 'clean' and rhymes with 'float'. All regional pronunciations of the 'oa' are acceptable.	/kləʊt/
<b>tirt</b>	This item uses the 't' from 'torn' and rhymes with 'dirt'. All regional pronunciations of the 'ir' are acceptable.	/tɜ:t/ or /tɜrt/
<b>whike</b>	This item uses the 'wh' from 'whale' and rhymes with 'spike'.	/waɪk/
<b>plunt</b>	This item uses the 'pl' from 'plank' and rhymes with 'stunt'. All regional pronunciations of the 'u' are acceptable.	/plʌnt/ or /plʊnt/
<b>flards</b>	This item uses the 'fl' from 'flank' and rhymes with 'cards'. All regional pronunciations of the 'ar' are acceptable.	/flɑ:dz/ or /flɑ:ds/ /flardz/ or /flards/
<b>spran</b>	This item uses the 'spr' from 'sprint' and rhymes with 'plan'.	/spræn/
<b>splew</b>	This item uses the 'spl' from 'splash' and rhymes with 'blue'.	/splu:/