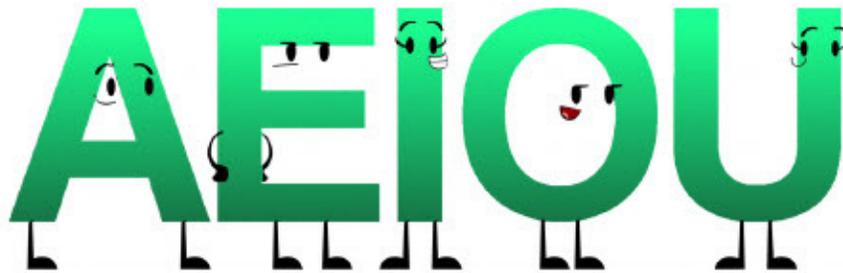


THE SECRET LIFE OF VOWELS

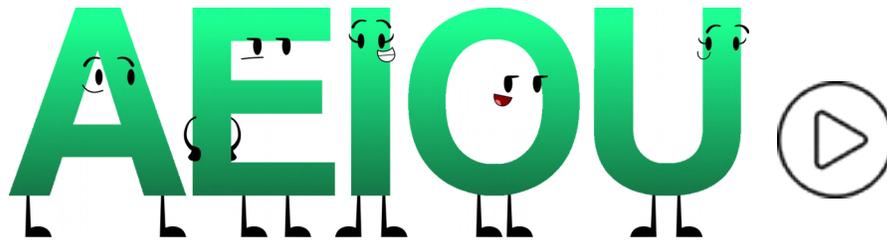


Students watch an innovative, fun video about the qualities of each of the vowels of English.

Full transcript. Listening Activity.
Short & Long Vowels Worksheets and
vowel sorting activity.



The Secret Life Of Vowels – by Mark Grist



Vowels. We use them everyday but how much do we really know about them.

In the English language we have five specific vowel letters each with its own unique personality. First off on this linguistic A list is well, it's A. It's about as popular and versatile a letter as you can get. A balance is representing an impressive seven different vowel sounds with the glitz and the glamour that comes from being the English language's very first letter. A is literally the Alpha of our entire alphabet. It's the highest grade a teacher can give you for your work. We have A list of celebrities and many of us grew up watching the A-team save the day on a regular basis. Some scientists believe that A has an entrenched motivating impact on us and can improve performance at work or creatively. A is quite playful. It features in a lot of words that are just well fun to say like llama, aardvark handbags, balaclava, Madagascar, jazz hands to name a few. And A isn't too interested in numbers either. If you spelled out every number from one upwards you wouldn't be using an A until you've got all the way up to 1,000

E in contrast is much more grounded. It's the only vowel in our most used word "the" and it's also the most used letter in our entire alphabet, appearing in eleven percent of all the words we use. It's the second most likely key to break on your keyboard from overuse. E is essential to storytelling. It allows us to write in the past tense. When E is left to its own devices, it takes a deep interest in the natural world. Endlessly green element - stems, trees, weeds, levees etc ...

I is very concerned with its appearance. It was the first letter to receive a dot when in its lowercase form and it's the only letter that is always capitalized when on its own. It's also the first word in the shortest complete sentence in the English language - I am. It's great for active verbs and when on its own it appears in a host of words related to excess and desire. Without it you couldn't have kissing or drinking or hitting or spilling or hardly any illicit thrills at all.

Out of all the symbols we use for vowels O is the one that appears the most in other languages, even ones that developed completely independently of each other. The shape of the letter O mirrors the shape of your mouth as you make the sound and it's thought that's why it appears in so many different languages. This constant circular shape with no beginning or end offers some of our most mysterious words - things like the moon, spooky house grottoes, horror, ghosts, groans, moans and bones too.

U is much more scientific and partly due to its lateness in the alphabet always has one eye on the future. It's an abbreviation for university, for uranium and is linked to submarines. It provides us with some pleasant words but also some of our most unpleasant words. U also works well with other letters. It can be completely silent when it wants to be and it can be rare to get three vowels together in a row but when it happens in most instances U is in there, holding it all together.

So there you have it, the English language is vowels essential to everyday life. Each one packed full of personality. You'd best learn to live with them because you can't speak without them.

THE SECRET LIFE OF VOWELS

Listen to a talk about vowels. Write down some special qualities for each vowel.

A	
E	
I	
O	
U	

LONG VOWELS

VOWEL SOUNDS THAT SAY THE NAME OF THE LETTER

Rule:

1. When two vowels go walking the first one does the talking (says its name), eg. 'boat'
2. A vowel at the end of the word is usually long, eg. 'go'



/a/

a - āpe



/e/

e - bēe



/i/

i - īce



/o/

o - bōat



/u/

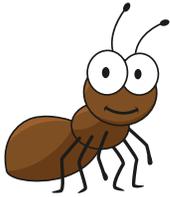
u - ūnicorn

SHORT VOWELS

VOWEL SOUNDS PRONOUNCED IN A SHORT, SHARP FORM

Rule:

When there is one vowel in a word, either at the beginning or between two consonants, it usually has the short vowel sound



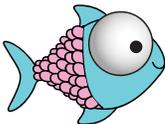
/a/

ă - ant



/e/

ĕ - bed



/i/

ĭ - fish



/o/

ŏ - frog



/u/

ŭ - bug

Name: _____

WORD SORTS

Read out loud each word below, and write into the correct column.

cup

pain

dog

dune

song

reef

pork

crab

ape

boat

bug

unicorn

Long vowel sound	Short vowel sound

THE SECRET LIFE OF VOWELS

Listen to a talk about vowels. Write down some special qualities for each vowel.

A

7 different vowel sounds. Highest grade you can get. Top celebrities. Can improve performance. Playful. In each number up to 1,000.

E

Most used vowel. 2nd most likely key to break on your keyboard. Essential to storytelling and the natural world.

I

Always capitalized on its own. Only letter with a dot. In the shortest complete sentence "I am." Essential for action, active words / verbs.

O

The most used letter in other languages. Represents the shape of your mouth. Circular. No beginning, no end.

U

Most scientific vowel. Used in many bad words. Can be silent. Sticky. Holds words together.

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