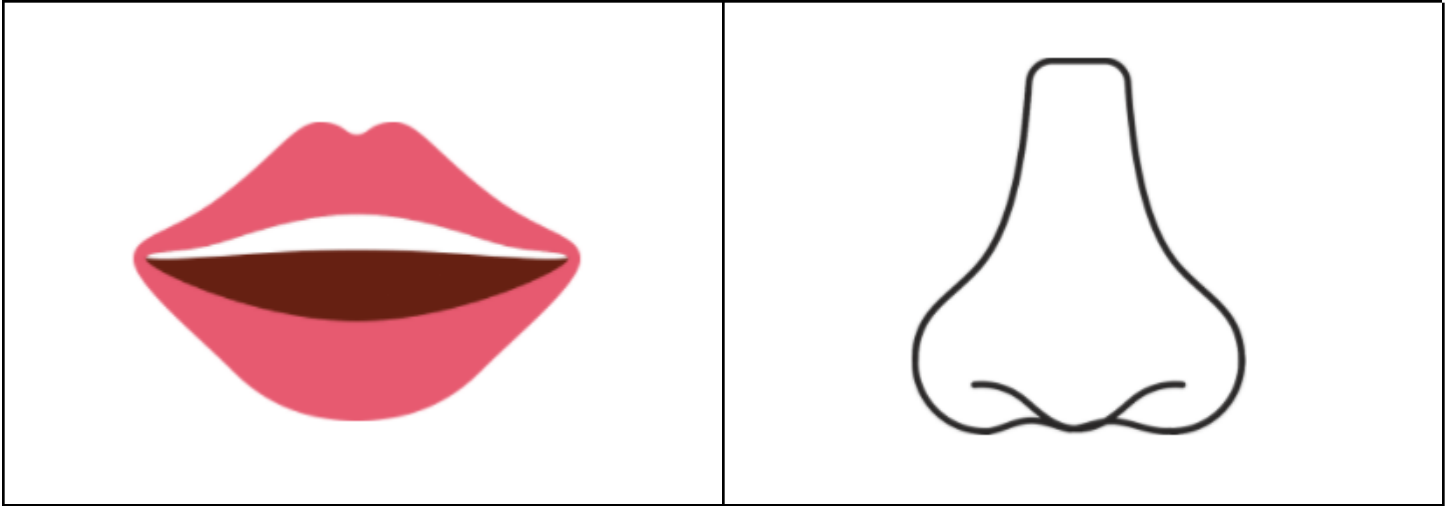
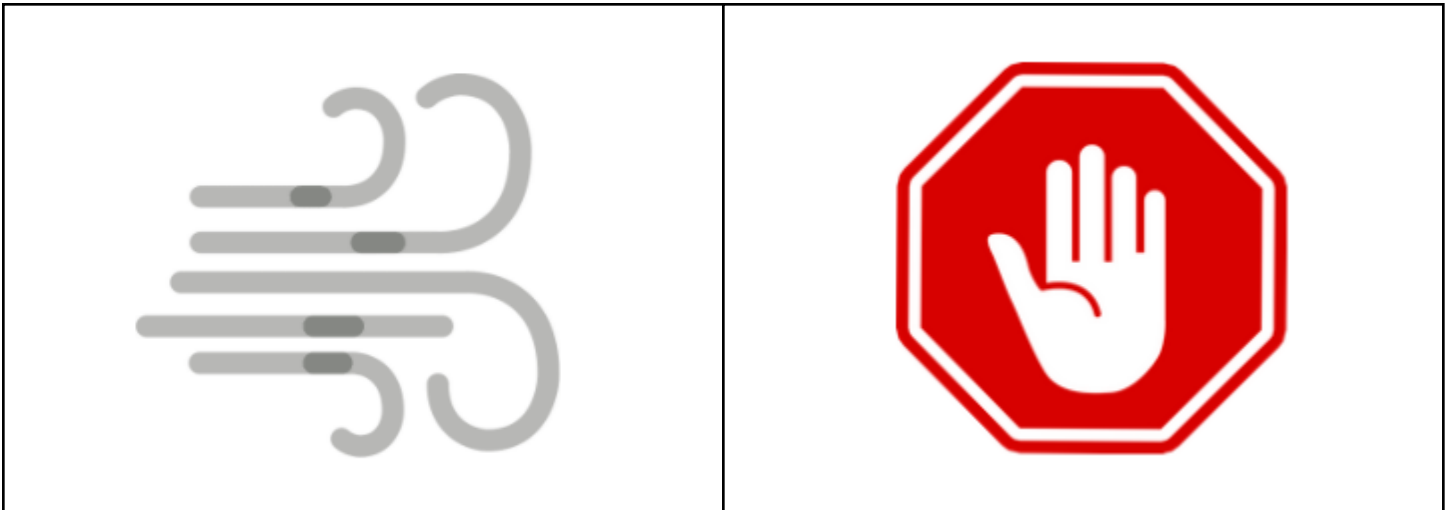


Characteristics of English Consonant Phonemes

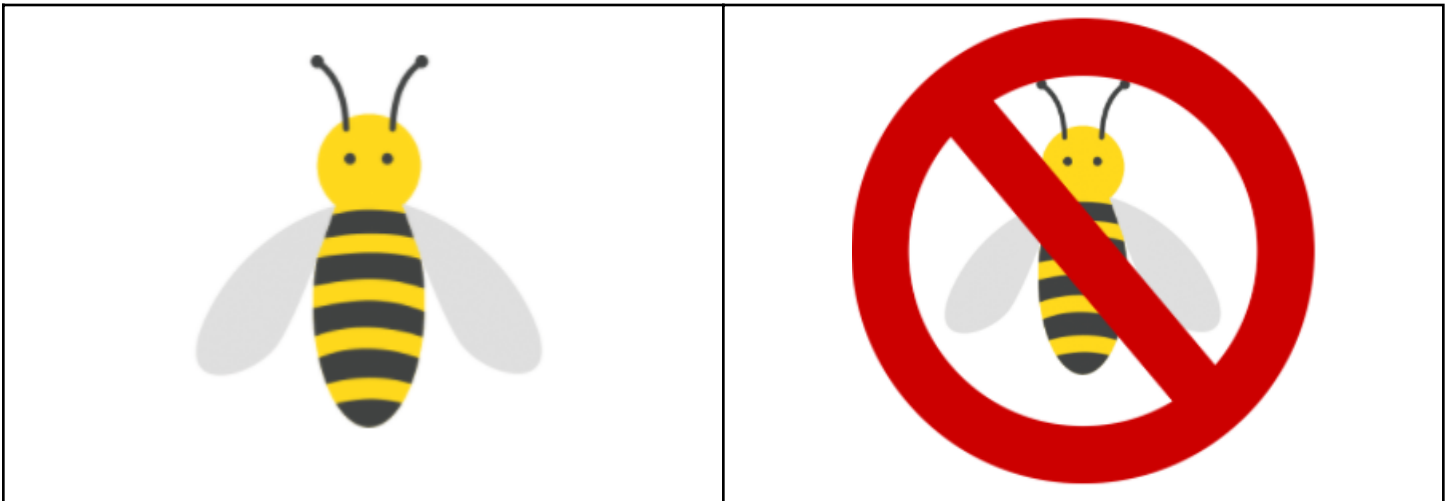
Does the air travel through your mouth or your nose?









Is the sound continuous, or does it stop?



Is the sound voiced or unvoiced? Is there “buzzing” or “no buzzing”?



Consonant phoneme	Where does the air come from?		Continuous or stop?		Voiced or unvoiced?	
						
/p/ pig	X			X		X
/b/ bat	X			X	X	
/t/ turtle	X			X		X
/d/ dog	X			X	X	
/k/ cat	X			X		X
/g/ gorilla	X			X	X	
/m/ mouse		X	X*		X	
/n/ nest		X	X*		X	
/ng/ ring		X	X*		X	
/f/ fish	X		X			X
/v/ volcano	X		X		X	
/th/ thumb	X		X			X
/th/ there	X		X		X	
/s/ snake	X		X			X
/z/ zebra	X		X		X	
/sh/ sheep	X		X			X
/zh/ measure	X		X		X	
/ch/ chair	X			X		X
/j/ jump	X			X	X	
/y/ yoyo	X		X*		X	
/w/ wagon	X		X*		X	
/hw/ whale	X			X		X
/h/ hat	X		X			X
/l/ leaf	X		X		X	
/r/ rabbit	X		X		X	

* While the nasals /m/, /n/, and /ng/ are technically classified as stop sounds, for the purposes of instruction they can be considered continuants. Similarly, the glide phonemes /w/ and /y/ can feel like a “stop” when produced in isolation. These are semivowels, and producing them in a word (wet, yes) reveals them as continuants.

Characteristics of English Vowel Phonemes




All English vowel phonemes are:

- **Continuous**
- **Open (no obstruction of the vocal tract)**
- **Voiced (vocal cords are engaged)**

Helping students identify, at a basic level, what their mouth is doing when isolating a particular vowel sound can support more accurate articulation. Keep this instruction brief when introducing the phoneme and corresponding grapheme, and review as needed for individual students.

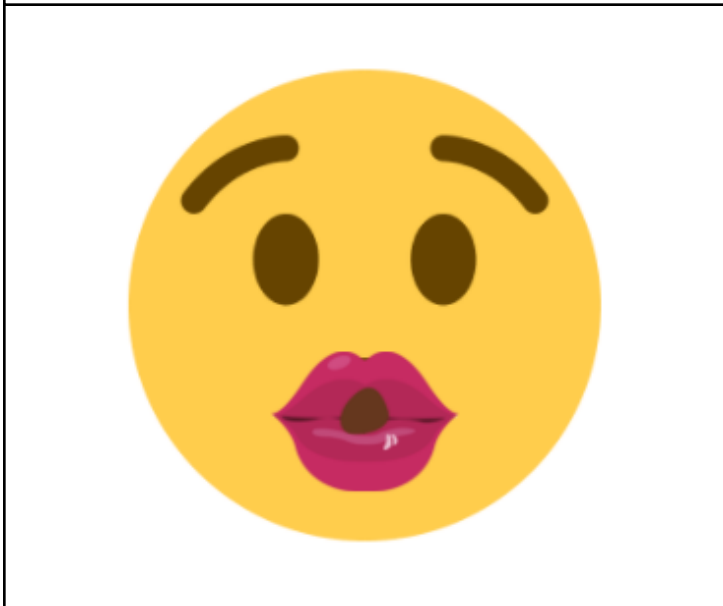
For most vowel sounds, ask:

How does our mouth feel when we make this sound? Is it more:

	<p>Smiley? Lips pulled back in a smile. Tongue at front of mouth.</p>
	<p>Open? Mouth wide open Chin dropped low. Tongue low in mouth.</p>
	<p>Rounded? Lips rounded forward. Tongue back.</p>

*Diphthongs (/oi/ as in ‘oil’ and /ou/ as in ‘ouch’) glide between two positions in the mouth. The picture cards could be used to represent the two mouth placements for these sounds.

*R-controlled vowels (/ar/ as in ‘arm’; /or/ as in ‘orange’; /er/ as in ‘bird’) contain a vowel sound plus the consonant /r/ sound.



References

Birsch, Judith & Carreker, Suzanne. (2018). Multisensory Teaching of Basic Literacy Skills, 4th Edition. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Moats, Louisa. (2010). Speech to Print: Language Essentials for Teachers, 2nd Edition. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

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