

Crunchy Cockroach: Phonics Poems for Hong Kong Kids

Answers and Notes

Who has the Ball?

This poem focuses on first consonants. Say the following pairs of consonants. They have been put into these pairs because the sounds are quite similar. Sometimes people confuse one sound with the other:

p/b t/d k/g f/v s/z m/n r/l v/w and don't forget y (as in Yolly).

Note that when 'y' is at the beginning of a word, it is a consonant (as in yellow) but when it is at the end of a word it sounds like a vowel (like a 'long' i (my, sky) or like a 'long' e (Poppy, funny). The name 'Yolly' has both cases!

So ... who has the ball? The answer is ... nobody! But it is behind the tree, next to Yolly.

Animals in the Kitchen

This poem focuses on the 'short' vowels a i and u. Write the words that sound like:

'a' as in cat: a / has / jam / bananas / and / ham

'i' as in pig: dim / drinks / his / milk / spins / in / skillet / sit / still / spill / it

'u' as in cub: rub / tum / sum

Hop on the Bed

This poem focuses on the 'short' vowels o and e. Write the words that sound like:

Here are the 'short' o words: hop / on / top / stop / not / off

Here are the 'short' e words: bed / red / better

Review!

'short' a words: Dad / happy / and

'short' i words: it / is / hit / it's

'short' u words: fluffy / jump / up / Mum / run / fun

The word 'the' is a special case. The sound of the letter e is not 'long' and not 'short'. It's just one of the words you have got to know.

Early Birds Get the Worm

This poem focuses on r-controlled vowels: ear er ir or ur ar

ear: heard

er: Sherman / caterpillar
ir: thirteen / birds / dirt /
or: worm / words / worms / doctor / worry
ur: hurt / hurry / furry
ar: caterpillar

Look at this! ur sounds like er, in the word ‘sugar’, but ar in the word ‘far’.

I Saw Yau Ming in Wing On

This poem focuses on ending blends ng and nk. Write all the words you see, under the headings:

ing: Ming / Wing / playing / ping / dancing / singing / sing / thing
ang: Tsang / Lang Lang
ong: pong / song
ung: hung / Tung Chung
ink: sink / drink / think
ank: sank
onk: honked
unk: junk

Look at this! The name Tsang is a Chinese name, so the sound of ‘ang’ in this word is not a typical ‘ang’ sound.

Ode to the Toad

This poem focuses on the ‘long’ o sound, spelled like this: o_e oe oa oh o ow ou

o_e: ode
oe: toed
oa: toad / croaked / croaks
oh: oh
o: go / so / bold / over / no / don’t
ow: slowly / low / slow / show’s
ou: your

Look at this! The vowel diphthong ow is pronounced differently than the vowel blend. Say this sentence: **Now** take a **bow**. It’s time for the **sow**.

Say these sentences:

Take a deep **bow**. Tie a pretty **bow**.

A **sow** is a female pig. The farmer will **sow** his seeds soon.

Crunchy Cockroach:

This poem focuses on consonants blends: cr ch and ck

cr: crunchy / crunch

ch: crunchy / cockroach / crunch / munch / bunch / sandwich / lunch

ck: cockroach

The Comics:

This poem focuses on vowel diphthongs: oi and oy

oi: boil / oil / choice / broil

oy: boy / joy / soy / toy

The Tale of the Daisy-Jane

This poem focuses on the 'long' a sound, spelled like this: ai ay a_e ei ey ea

Circle these words with the 'long' a sound:

ai: rainy / Daisy / sailed / sail / mail / wailed / sailors / bailed / failed / wait / tail / snails

ay: day / May / swayed / Dwayne / splayed / play / say

a_e: tale / Jane / cake / came / gale / mate / wave / waves / craz(e)y / shak(e)ing / saved / whale / made / saf(e)ty / grave /

ei: veil

ey: grey / hey / they

ea: steak / Mclean / breaking

Look at this! In the word 'captain', the ai does not sound like a 'long' a. You can say the word like this: *cap-t'n* or *cap-ten*.

Look at this! The whale says: "Steak! Bread! What a treat!" In each case, the letters 'ea' have a different sound. (steak: 'long' a bread: 'short' e treat: 'long' e)

Twice as Nice (or Double trouble)

This poem focuses on the 'soft' c and g sounds

'soft' c: twice / nice / rice / spice / mice / race / place / faces / disgraces

'soft' g: George / Gemma

Look at this! The word **chase** sound like race, but it has an 's', not a 'soft' c.

Can you think of other words with the 'soft' c or g sound?

How about: cent / celery / cell phone / certificate and germs / gym / gel / gentle

A School of Fish

This poem focuses on the consonant blend: sh
and the 'vowel blends': augh and ough

sh: fish / splash / dash / wish
augh: caught / taught
ough: bought / brought / thought / ought

Look at this! The letters 'sch' sound like 'sk' in the word school. But in some people's names (like my own name) it sounds like 'sh'.

Witch's Brew

This poem focuses on vowel blends: u ew o ou oo ui u_e ue oe

Circle the words in this poem with the same vowel sound as 'soup' and 'stew':

u: Ruth
ew: knew / brew / stew / threw / chew / flew / eeeew
o: two
ou: soup / ghoul / you
oo: gooey / too / roof / pool / coop / broom / spoon / roots / shoots / boot / scoops / food / noodles / spoonful / scoop / toothpaste / snoofed / room
ui: juice / suitcase /
u_e: prune / huge / rude / tube / dude
ue: clue / glue / bluey
oe: shoes

Look at this! Some words, like spew and, for some people, stew, have a 'yoo' sound, not an 'oo' sound.

Look at this! Some 'oo' words sound like book, took and soot – not boot / broom and spoon.

The Bout

This poem focuses on vowel diphthongs: ou and ow

Circle all the ou / ow words and say them again:

ou: bout / hound / lout / proud / loud / around / snout / shout / rout / count / out / ouch / youch / astounded / pounded / shouted
ow: cow / growled / sow / growled / scowled / prowled / power / plowed / pow / wow / crowd / down / owl / bow

What do these words mean?

Bout – a fight Snout – a nose Rout – an easily won fight
Lout – a bad guy

Phonics Shmonics

Spell these words correctly:

no	know
gho	go
soh	so
dum	dumb
elefant	elephant
ice kreem	ice cream
Joon	June
toob	tube
sownd	sound
werds	words
owt	out
fonix	phonics

Opposite Attractions

This poem focuses on opposite pairs.

How many pairs of opposites can you think of?

There are so many! Why don't you have a contest in your classroom? The student that comes up with the longest list of opposite pairs is the winner!

Contraction Action

This poem focuses on contractions.

Write some more contractions here:

could not	couldn't
would not	wouldn't
should not	shouldn't
have not	haven't
had not	hadn't
did not	didn't
are not	aren't
is not	isn't
was not	wasn't
were not	weren't
it is	it's
But look at this!	its

It's Monday today.

The dog hurt **its** paw.

Bad Worse Worst

This poem focuses on comparatives and superlatives.

What's missing?

good	better	best
bad	worse	worst
tall	taller	tallest
clean	cleaner	cleanest
hard	harder	hardest
some	more	most

Pirate Cheung Po Tsai

Look at this! Cheung Po Tsai says: You **thought** I **got** **caught** on my **yacht**. There are four words with the 'short' o sound:

thought
got
caught
yacht

But they are all spelled differently!