

A Sampling of Phonics Rules (that usually work)

- Words and syllables with double *e* usually have the long-e sound (*seem, feel, needle*).
- The consonant digraph *ch* usually represents the sound in *chicken*, not /sh/.
- The letter *r* following a vowel creates a blended sound, and the vowel is neither long nor short (*fir, car, horn, burly, carry, hurdle, bargain*).
- When *c* is followed by *e* or *i*, it usually sounds like *s*. When followed by *o* or *u*, it most often sounds like *k*.
- If a syllable or word ends in a vowel, it usually has the long sound (*he, my, so, lo-co-mo-tive*).
- A single vowel in the middle of a one-syllable word most often represents the short-vowel sound (*dress, splash, fox*). Try the short sound first. If that doesn't result in a meaningful word, try the long sound (*mind, toll, gold*).
- In a word with two vowels, one of which is a final *e*, the *e* is usually silent and the first vowel is long (*like, tune, fate, nose*). Try the long sound first.

To divide a multi-syllabic word into syllables for decoding, use these suggestions and then sound out each syllable as if it were a word.

- Remove verb endings, prefixes and suffixes, and decode the root word.
- Divide two consonants, unless they form a digraph: (*hap-pen, fan-tas-tic, but gath-er and fash-ion*).
- Divide after the vowel if there's only one consonant. Since this creates a syllable ending in a vowel, try the long sound first (*ba-con, to-ken, pho-to, le-gal*). If this doesn't work, divide after the consonant and try the short sound (*pan-el, leg-end, pet-al, lib-er-ty*).