

## Frequency of Digraphs and Trigraphs in a list of High Frequency Words

The data in the table below are compiled from of a list of the 300 most common words in children's literature published in the UK Government's Letters and Sounds Phonics guidance booklet\*. Words in bold are in the top 100 common words in order of frequency.

The symbols between forward slashes / / are used in the UK Government's Letters and Sounds phonics programme\*. The green symbols in round brackets are used in the International Phonetic Alphabet.

Digraph	Phonemes and Words containing the digraph in a list of the 300 most common words in children's literature.	Total Frequency of Digraph or Trigraph
th	/θ/ (ð) <b>the, they, that, there, this, then, them, their</b> , other, these, that's, another, mother, there's, than (15) /θ/ (θ) <b>with</b> , think, things, thought, through, something, three, thing (8)	23
er	/ə/ (ə) (or ə in some words with US accent) (Schwa sound - similar to 'uh') water, over, after, other, never, another, mother, under, better, ever, river (11) /r/ (r) (silent e) everyone, different (2) /ur/ (ɜ: Br. or ə US) <b>her</b> (1)	14
oo	/oo/ (ʊ) <b>looked, look</b> , good, took, book, looking, looks (7) /oo/ (u:) <b>too</b> , school, food, soon, room (5)	12
ee	/ee/ (i:) <b>see</b> , tree, been, need, three, keep, sleep, feet, queen, green, trees (11)	11
ng	/ng/ (ŋ) going, long, things, something, king, morning, looking, thing, coming, along (10)	10
ou	/ow/ (aʊ) <b>out, about, house</b> , round, shouted, mouse, found, around (8) /oo/ (u:) <b>you</b> (1)	9
ed	/t/ (t) <b>looked, asked</b> , jumped, stopped, laughed (5) /d/ (d) <b>called</b> , lived, pulled (3)	8
ll	/l/ (l) will, well, I'll, still, tell, fell, really, pulled (8)	8
ow	/ow/ (aʊ) <b>down, now</b> , how, town (4) /oa/ (əʊ or oʊ) know, window, snow, grow (4)	8
a-e	/ai/ (eɪ) <b>came, made, make</b> , take, gave, place (6) /a/ (æ) have (1)	7
ea	/ee/ (i:) eat, sea, each, tea, really, please (6) /e/ (e) head (1) /ai/ (eɪ) great (1)	7
wh	/w/ (w) <b>what, when</b> , where, why, which, white (6) /h/ (h) who (1)	7
ay	/ai/ (eɪ) <b>day</b> , away, play, way, may, say (6)	6
i-e	/igh/ (aɪ) <b>like, time</b> , I've, inside, white, liked (6)	6
or	/or/ (ɔ:) <b>for</b> , or, morning, horse (4) /ə/ (ə) (or ə US accent words) narrator (1) /ur/ (ɜ: Br. or ə US) work (1)	6



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<b>ere</b> (trigraph)	/air/ (eə) <b>there</b> , where, there's (3) /ear/ (ɪə) <b>here</b> , we're (2) /ur/ (ɜ: Br. or ɝ US) <b>were</b> (1)	6
ar	/ar/ (ɑ:) car, garden, dark, hard, park (5)	5
ch	/ch/ (tʃ) <b>children</b> , much, each, which (4) /k/ (k) school (1)	5
se	/s/ (s) <b>house</b> , mouse, horse (3) /z/ (z) because, please (2)	5
o-e	/oa/ (əʊ or oʊ) home, clothes (2) /u/ (ʌ) <b>some</b> , <b>come</b> (2) /o/ (ɒ) gone (1)	5
sh	/sh/ (ʃ) <b>she</b> , shouted, fish, wish (4)	4
al	/or/ (ɔ:) <b>all</b> , <b>called</b> , small (3)	3
ir	/ur/ (ɜ: Br. or ɝ US) first, girl, birds (3)	3
<b>oul</b> (trigraph)	/oo/ (ʊ) <b>could</b> , would, couldn't (3)	3
ai	/ai/ (eɪ) again (1) /e/ (e) <b>said</b> (1)	2
ck	/k/ (k) <b>back</b> , duck (2)	2
e-e	/ee/ (i:) these, even (2)	2
ey	/ee/ (i:) key (1) /ai/ (eɪ) <b>they</b> (1)	2
ff	/f/ (f) <b>off</b> , different (2)	2
ie	/igh/ (aɪ) <b>cried</b> (1) /e/ (e) friends (1)	2
le	/l/ (l) <b>little</b> , <b>people</b> (2)	2
pp	/p/ (p) floppy, stopped (2)	2
ss	/s/ (s) across, miss (2)	2
tt	/t/ (t) <b>little</b> , better (2)	2
<b>igh</b> (trigraph)	/igh/ (aɪ) right, night (2)	2
<b>ore</b> (trigraph)	/or/ (ɔ:) more, before (2)	2
<b>ough</b> (quadgraph)	/or/ (ɔ:) thought (1) /oo/ (u:) through (1)	2
au	/o/ (ɒ) because (1)	1
aw	/or/ (ɔ:) <b>saw</b> (1)	1
bb	/b/ (b) rabbit (1)	1
dd	/d/ (d) suddenly (1)	1
eo	/ee/ (i:) <b>people</b> (1)	1
ew*	/y/ (j) + /oo/ (u:) new (1) (*Just the /oo/ sound in some accents)	1
gg	/g/ (g) eggs (1)	1
kn	/n/ (n) know (1)	1
oa	/oa/ (əʊ or oʊ) boat (1)	1



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oh	/oa/ (əʊ or oʊ) oh (1)	1
oy	/oi/ (ɔɪ) boy (1)	1
qu*	/k/ (k) + /w/ (w) queen (1) (*Arguable whether this is a digraph in this word because it represents 2 sounds)	1
rr	/r/ (r) narrator (1)	1
u-e*	/y/ (j) + /oo/ (u:) use (1) (*Arguable whether this is a digraph in this word because it represents 2 sounds)	1
wo	/oo/ (u:) two (1)	1
are (trigraph)	/ar/ (ɑ:) are (1)	1
eir (trigraph)	/air/ (eə) their (1)	1
our (trigraph)	/or/ (ɔ:) your (1)	1
air (trigraph)	/air/ (eə) air (1)	1
ear (trigraph)	/air/ (eə) bear (1)	1
oor (trigraph)	/or/ (ɔ:) door (1)	1
eye (trigraph)	/igh/ (aɪ) eyes (1)	1

\*Letters and Sounds: Principles and Practice of High Quality Phonics: Notes of Guidance for Practitioners and Teachers, Primary National Strategy. Department for Education and Skills, 2007. Original source: Masterson, J., Stuart, M., Dixon, M. & Lovejoy, S. (2003) Children's Printed Word Database.

