



## Detailed Notes About the Readable English Markup

Readable English makes written English phonetic, without changing the spelling of words, by adding syllable breaks to words, graying out silent letters, and adding phonetic cues to letters.

In Readable English, each letter has a most common or 'standard' sound. These letters remain unmarked.

cat nest crisp

When a letter makes a sound *other* than its standard sound, it is marked with a glyph.

up pŭt ù·nit flüte qúit bŭ·şý bú·rý

To maintain the integrity of words as much as possible, sounds that are written with two letters (digraphs) also have a standard sound and are kept unmarked. For example, the standard sound for the digraph 'ou' is as in 'cloud'. When 'ou' makes a sound other than this sound (e.g. as in 'soup' or 'could'), it is marked with a glyph. There are 12 digraphs in total (ar, or, ur, oi, oy, ou, ow, ch, ng, ph, sh, th).

cloud söup coũld thôugh coun·trý

The aim of the Readable English mark up is for a reader to be able to sound out a word well enough to recognize the word when reading. The glyphs provide an accurate approximation of the exact speech sound so that readers are able to arrive at the correct pronunciation of the word.

To reduce the total number of glyphs, the schwa sound that occurs in unstressed syllables (e.g. the second syllable in 'sofa') is represented by the Upper Cup glyph. The /uh/ sound is a close approximation of the schwa sound.

Similarly, the /o/ sound in 'off' is the same as or close to the sound in 'hall', 'awful' and 'caution' in many dialects of American English. This sound is represented by the Aussie Oswald glyph (in the US version of Readable English).

sŏn sŏ.fă  
off hăll clăw hăunt

**A note on the letter 'r'.** The letter 'r' often modifies the vowel sound in front of it. As such, Readable English teaches 'ar', 'or' and 'ur' as standard digraphs. The /or/ and /ur/ sounds can also be represented by other letters (e.g. in words such as 'warm' and 'bird'). Readers learn that in Readable English if the Upper Cup glyph (which makes the sound /uh/) is followed immediately by the letter 'r', the letters together will make the digraph sound /ur/. Similarly, if the Aussie Oswald glyph is followed immediately by the letter 'r', the letters together will make the digraph sound /or/.

far for fur  
wărm hĕr bĭrd wŏrk back.wărd