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Personal View

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The Author

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The Simplified Spelling Society

The aim of the Simplified Spelling Society is to bring about a reform of the spelling of English in the interests of ease of learning and economy of writing. To this end, it

- Encourages the idea that reform is possible.
- Fosters debate on reform methods.
- Devises, publishes and promotes potential reform schemes.
- Persuades and campaigns.
- Aims to be of benefit to future generations by introducing a consistent spelling.
- Raises awareness of the problems caused by the irregularity of English spelling.
- Promotes remedies to improve literacy, including spelling reform.

REGSPEL

By
Stephen Linstead

Regspel is a revised English orthography that follows the phonemic principle. It uses no accents or special characters. Generally it allocates a unique grapheme to each phoneme of spoken English; nearly all such graphemes correspond to an equivalent in Traditional Spelling (TS).

A few simple rules are designed to ensure consistent transcription from TS. The schwa is represented in a manner that reflects the subtlety of unaccented vowel sounds in spoken English.

There is little non-phonemic retention from TS. But Regspel employs a few short cuts, mainly in relation to schwa-u; together these reduce the number of characters required by some 5% compared with TS.

Provision is made for the treatment of imported foreign words and for cases where there is a significant divergence between the Received Pronunciation of British English (RP) and the General American pronunciation of American English (GenAm).

Some questions for discussion are outlined.

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A. Preface – Why Regspel?

The author devised Regspel on his own over many years without consciously copying from other alternative spelling systems. The finished product bears some resemblance to New Spelling and Soundspel, but there are also significant differences. Regspel sets out to be as phonemic as possible within the constraints of no: (i) diacritics; (ii) unusual use of existing characters or (iii) unnecessary departures from TS. It is thus somewhat more phonemic than either New Spelling or Soundspel. Differences include:

*Greater distinction between phonemes*¹ – unlike the other two systems, Regspel differentiates between the voiced and unvoiced sounds of TS “th”, using th for **θ** [T] and dh for **ð** [D]. The sound **z** [z] at the end of words is represented by “z” rather than TS “s”. And unlike New Spelling, Regspel distinguishes the sounds **u:** [u:] and **ʊ** [U].

Very few non-phonemic retentions from TS². However, a few short cuts are adopted in the interests of reducing the number of characters required – principally it is permissible to infer u (used for schwa-u) in certain common forms of word ending.

Representation of unstressed vowels. Regspel tries to identify the underlying sound, based on slow and distinct rather than rapid speech. So generally the TS vowels are retained except where the spoken word is palpably different. The author believes that these rules, although essentially phonemic, are simpler than those of New Spelling or Soundspel.

Other differences in choice of graphemes. Compared with Soundspel, Regspel uses ew³ rather than ue for **ju:** [ju:], ea rather than ai for **eə** [e@], ar rather than aa for **a:** [A:], oy rather than oi for **ɔɪ** [Oɪ], and c instead of k for **k** [k]⁴.

B. Answers to Specific Questions

1. Is this a new original idea or is it adapted from one developed by the writer or someone else?

Essentially, it has been developed by the author independently.

2. Is it an initial scheme for learning literacy, as a step to TS, or is it for permanent adult use?

It is intended to replace TS entirely and is for permanent adult use.

3. Are there any supplementary rules? If so, please detail.

As well as allocating specific graphemes to phonemes, Regspel has a few supplementary spelling rules; these are set out at paragraph E below.

4. Does your system cater for schwa and stress?

The system caters for schwa in its various forms. Stressed syllables are not indicated, but this issue is left open for discussion.

5. If this is a phonemic system, which accent of English is it based on? Would you cater for other accents of English? How?

¹ In this article the IPA character is shown in bold followed by the SAMPA equivalent in square brackets and italics.

² Soundspel lists over a dozen such examples plus their compounds. Regspel has only three.

³ This has the advantage of reducing significantly cases where more than two vowels occur together.

⁴ Differences between Regspel and New Spelling include treatment of the phonemes: **i** [i], **i:** [i:], **ju:** [ju:], **ʊ** [U], **aʊ** [aU], **ɔɪ** [Oɪ], & **k** [k].

The author has generally used Longman's⁵ as the basis for the pronunciation followed – this shows RP and GenAm pronunciations, where different. The author believes that it should be possible for a single orthography to cater for most regional pronunciations of spoken English, and Regspel seeks to do so wherever possible. But provision is made for different spellings in a very few cases where RP diverges markedly from GenAm.

6. Is the scheme based on an assumed knowledge of English / TS or is it independent, that is could people who had learned the spelling rules pronounce a text correctly even though they had no knowledge of English?

Regspel does not presume prior knowledge of English or of TS. Non-English speakers could pronounce a Regspel text reasonably well, although at first less fluently than native English speakers, mainly due to having to learn irregular stress patterns.

7. How does the running text in the scheme compare in length with TS?

On average Regspel requires 5% fewer characters than TS. Some words require more characters than TS, principally for indicating long vowel sounds, but this is more than offset by the elimination of most of the doublings and redundant letters found in TS.

8. Would you suggest that all publications be produced in your system? What are your suggestions for dealing with material previously published?

Regspel is just one contribution to various efforts to develop a simpler and more phonemic English orthography, one that can be accepted by those familiar with TS and learnt easily by all. I hope that from the many systems invented (including Regspel) reformers can agree on a single (no doubt compromise) scheme, which if it gained general acceptance, would run in parallel with TS and eventually supersede it. Important material previously published would eventually be transcribed into Regspel or whatever other system was adopted.

9. Do you envisage your system and TS co-existing until agreement is reached on dropping TS (as with conversion to metric measures?)

Regspel and TS would co-exist side by side for a transitional period. If accepted, Regspel would appear initially in various publications. It would then spread to official communications. The final step would come when it was accepted as the principal method of teaching English spelling to children and students of English as a Second Language.

10. Do you regard homophones as a problem and does your system indicate them in any way?

The author does not regard homophones as a serious problem, essentially because they are no obstacle to oral communication. Regspel does not use special devices to distinguish them. The matter is discussed further in Paragraph H(a).

11. Could your system be used easily on most computers and word processors?

Regspel can be typed on a standard QWERTY keyboard and is ASCII compliant. The only slight difficulty is the frequency with which z has to be typed in contrast with TS. But the author does not find this a serious problem in typing and none at all in writing.

⁵ The Longman Pronunciation Dictionary (editor J C Wells, © Longman Group 2000). Where a pronunciation not listed by Longman's is used, this is noted in the text.

12. Is the system used in everyday life by yourself or anyone else?

At present it is used only by the author and some friends, but he has plans to put it on a dedicated web site for wider dissemination and further comment.

C. Table of Vowel Sounds

The following table sets out the character(s) used by Regspel for each phoneme of the English language. The first column shows the Regspel character(s); the second shows the appropriate symbol from the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA); the third shows the "SAMPA" equivalent (used particularly for ASCII communications) and the final two columns show a TS word using the phoneme in question together with its Regspel transcription. The relevant vowel is underlined.

Where alternative symbols are shown in the IPA or SAMPA columns, the former indicates RP and the latter GenAm pronunciation.

Regspel Character(s)	IPA Phonetic symbol(s)	SAMPA equivalent	Typical TS example	Regspel equivalent
u	ʌ	V	p <u>u</u> n	p <u>u</u> n
ar	a:	A:	h <u>a</u> rd	h <u>a</u> rd
a	æ	{	p <u>a</u> t	p <u>a</u> t
u	ə	@	camp <u>u</u> s	camp <u>u</u> s
e	e	e	p <u>e</u> t	p <u>e</u> t
er	ɜ: or ɝ	3: or 3`	h <u>e</u> rd	h <u>e</u> rd
i	ɪ	I	p <u>i</u> t	p <u>i</u> t
ee	i:	i:	f <u>ee</u> d	f <u>ee</u> d
y	i	i	s <u>i</u> mply	s <u>i</u> mply
o	ɒ or a:	Q or A:	p <u>o</u> t	p <u>o</u> t
or	ɔ:	O:	o <u>o</u> rd <u>e</u> r	o <u>o</u> rd <u>e</u> r
aw	ɔ:	O:	<u>a</u> wl	<u>a</u> wl
ou	ʊ	U	c <u>o</u> uld	c <u>o</u> uld
oo	u:	U:	f <u>oo</u> d	f <u>oo</u> d
ie	aɪ	aɪ	l <u>i</u> e	l <u>i</u> e
ow	Aʊ	aU	f <u>o</u> ul	f <u>o</u> ul
oe	əʊ or oʊ	@U or oU	f <u>l</u> ow	f <u>l</u> ow
ea	eə or e ^ə (r)	e@ or e [@] (r)	b <u>e</u> ar	b <u>e</u> ar
ae	eɪ	eɪ	m <u>a</u> de	m <u>a</u> ed
eer	ɪə or ɪ ^ə r	I@ or I [@] r	n <u>e</u> ar	n <u>e</u> er
oy	ɔɪ	Oɪ	b <u>o</u> y	b <u>o</u> y
ew	ju:	ju:	y <u>e</u> w	y <u>e</u> w

D. Table of Consonant Sounds

The following table is based on the same format as Table 1 in respect of consonants and consonant combinations.

Regspel Character(s)	Phonetic Symbol(s)	SAMPA equivalent	Typical TS example	Regspel equivalent
b	b	b	<u>b</u> at	<u>b</u> at
d	d	d	<u>d</u> og	<u>d</u> og
f	f	f	<u>f</u> rog	<u>f</u> rog
g	g	g	<u>g</u> oal	<u>g</u> oel
h	h	h	<u>h</u> ill	<u>h</u> il
y ⁶	j	j	<u>y</u> acht	<u>y</u> ot
c	k⁷	k	<u>c</u> at	<u>c</u> at
x	ks	ks	<u>e</u> xecute	<u>e</u> xecewt
qu	kw	kw	<u>q</u> ueen	<u>q</u> ueen
l	l	l	<u>l</u> amb	<u>l</u> am
m	m	m	<u>m</u> an	<u>m</u> an
n	n	n	<u>n</u> oun	<u>n</u> own
ng	ŋ	N	<u>r</u> ing	<u>r</u> ing
p	p	p	<u>p</u> un	<u>p</u> un
r	r	r	<u>r</u> un	<u>r</u> un
s	s	s	<u>s</u> un	<u>s</u> un
sh	ʃ	S	<u>s</u> heep	<u>s</u> heep
t	t	t	<u>t</u> own	<u>t</u> own
ch	tʃ	tS	<u>ch</u> art	<u>ch</u> art
th	θ	T	<u>th</u> in	<u>th</u> in
dh	ð	D	<u>th</u> at	<u>dh</u> at
v	v	v	<u>v</u> ast	<u>v</u> ast
w	w	w	<u>w</u> on	<u>w</u> un
ch	x	x	<u>loch</u>	<u>loch</u>
z	z	z	<u>z</u> ebra	<u>z</u> ebra
zh	ʒ	Z	<u>pleas</u> ure	<u>plez</u> her
j	dʒ	dZ	<u>jam</u>	<u>jam</u>

E. Regspel's Supplementary Rules

(a) "aw" and "or" - IPA:- ɔ: [O:]

Both formulae are generally pronounced as ɔ: [O:] in non-rhotic dialects⁸ such as RP. To accommodate rhotic dialects (eg GenAm), and also to discourage speakers from putting an **r** where there is none, Regspel uses "or" where there is an **r** in TS and "aw" in all other cases. Thus: law (law), snor (snore).

(b) Consonant Doubling

Generally, Regspel sees no need to resort to the TS formula of doubling consonants to change sounds represented. The only exception is when it is necessary to close the vowel

⁶ Also a Regspel vowel.

⁷ k is only used for foreign words in Regspel as c almost invariably represents IPA **k** [k].

⁸ Non-rhotic accents are said to exclude the [phoneme r](#) [r] from the [syllable coda](#), eg they do not pronounce the final "r" in "fur". Rhotic accents generally pronounce this phoneme.

sound before the letter r (ar IPA a: [A:], er IPA ɜ: [3:], or IPA ɔ: [O:]). Thus: far / farrier, merman / merrier, ford / florrid.

(c) th and dh - IPA:- θ [T] & ð [D]

“Dh” is one of the two Regspel letter combinations not found in TS and is used to represent IPA ð [D]. Thus: dhoez (those), dhear (there), dhat (that). “Th” is used for IPA θ [T]. Thus: thin (thin), thingz (things), thred (thread), thimbl (thimble).

(d) y as a word ending - IPA:- i [i]

In ordinary speech, pronunciation of the sound represented in TS by “-y” can vary from IPA i: [i:] through to IPA ɪ [ɪ]. Dictionaries tend to represent it by IPA i [i] – somewhere between the two. Regspel retains the y of TS for this sound at the end of words. Thus: feary (fairy), funy (funny). But y is always a consonant in Regspel when it occurs at the beginning of a word. Thus: yot (yacht), yeloe (yellow), yel (yell).

Regspel rarely uses y in the middle of a word. The main exception is for the ɔɪ [Oɪ] sound, eg: boyish. Where IPA j [j] occurs other than at the beginning or ending of a word, Regspel usually represents the sound with the letter i. Thus: bunion (bunion), bastion (bastion). However, where the subsequent syllable is stressed, a y is inserted, thus: biyond (beyond).

As with TS, Regspel substitutes “i” for “y” in the case of plurals and compounds. Thus: feariz (fairies), meriment (merriment).

(e) j - IPA:- dʒ [dʒ]

This is represented by the same IPA symbol regardless of whether in TS d precedes j. A d before j in TS *sometimes* indicates a slight difference in pronunciation, but as the difference is minimal, and in the interests of simplicity, Regspel uses a single j for all cases where IPA uses dʒ [dʒ]. Thus: kuj (judge), jam (jam), ej (edge), gaej (gauge).

(f) “zh” - IPA:- ʒ [ʒ]

This is the other Regspel combination not found in TS. Regspel uses it to represent the sound in plezher (pleasure), mezher (measure), trezher (treasure) etc.

(g) Unstressed vowels - “schwa” - IPA ə [ə]

English speakers reduce many unstressed vowels to an indistinct sound, especially in quick conversation. Pronunciation dictionaries tend to represent these sounds with IPA ə [ə] regardless of the original TS vowel. However, especially when pronounced slowly, the sounds show marked differences, and in the author’s view it would be misleading, and too much of a break with TS, to use a single symbol for all of them. In deciding which characters to represent schwa, Regspel adopts the following classification:

- (i) cases where the underlying vowel sound **clearly** resolves itself into an “uh” (frequently at the end of words), e.g. campus, graciou>s, beauteous, attention, quibble, upset;
- (ii) preserved o’s and a’s - the pronunciation of these sounds comes close to an “uh” in everyday speech, but the underlying vowel can still be detected at dictation speed (eg appeal, trapeze, somnambulist);
- (iii) unstressed e’s and i’s; here the underlying sound is definitely not an “uh” (e.g. mistake, frigid); and, as several pronunciation dictionaries assert, there are also

many cases where an unaccented e in TS is pronounced as if it were IPA ɪ, eg defence, reduce, refuse etc.

Regspel applies the following rules to the representation of these categories:

- (i) Where the underlying sound of an unstressed vowel spoken slowly is clearly “uh”⁹, Regspel represents it by its default schwa character which is “u”. Thus: suffies (suffice), suplie (supply), graeshus (gracious) - but see below under Short Cuts for words which in TS end in -tion, -ssion, -sion, -ble etc.
- (ii) Unstressed a’s, and o’s. Regspel generally retains the letter used in TS provided that this corresponds with the underlying sound. Thus: apeel (appeal), trapeez (trapeze), jeneraly (generally), robust (robust).
- (iii) Unaccented i’s. Regspel always represents the unaccented i with the same letter as in TS, thus: meedium (medium), desimal (decimal), statistic (statistic).
- (iv) Unaccented e’s. Regspel tries to follow the spoken sound. So where TS e falls in the first syllable after a consonant, this is usually represented by an i. Thus: difens (defence), rispons (response), diclear (declare). Where on the other hand ordinary speech appears to retain the e sound, Regspel does so as well. Thus: enlieten (enlighten), lisen (listen), peremptory (peremptory), tendenshus (tendentious).
- (v) Combinations of unaccented vowels: again the rule is to identify the underlying sound of the unstressed diphthong by pronouncing it slowly and to use the appropriate Regspel grapheme. Thus: maentaen, (maintain), particewlar (particular), nominaet (nominate).

(h) Spelling of Foreign Words etc

Where a word within a Regspel passage is spelled in a different orthography, (eg a foreign word retaining its original pronunciation), it is underlined¹⁰, thus:

Monsieur du Bois, chargé d'affaires for Panama, sat on a chaise longue lisening to sum Lieder bie Schubert.

Underlining is also used to distinguish the Scottish “ch” sound (IPA x). Thus: loch.

F. Retentions from Traditional Spelling and Short Cuts

In order to reduce the number of characters required, and to ease the transition from TS, Regspel employs a few conventions.

(a) Retentions from TS

(i) The preposition “to” may be written as in TS (pronounced “tou”); similarly, todae (today), tomorroe (tomorrow), toniet (tonight), towordz (towards) etc. But TS two and too are both spelled “too” in Regspel.

(ii) The hyphenated prefixes co- and re- are retained from TS (pronounced **kəʊ** [k@U] and **ri:** [ri:]); thus: co-opt (co-opt), re-elect (re-elect).

⁹ ie sounds which if stressed would be represented by **Λ** [V].

¹⁰ In ASCII the underlining can be replaced with a colon at each end, eg :chargé d'affaires:.

(b) Short Cuts

Regspel adopts a few short cuts, principally to reduce the number of characters required.

(i) Definite article. When writing the word in full, Regspel represents the definite article as “dhu” (or dhee” before vowels), but for convenience sake either may be contracted to “d”.

(ii) Second Person Singular and Plural – as in popular texting, it is permissible to use “U” to represent TS “you”.

(iii) Three categories of suffix - here the unaccented u (schwa) may be omitted where a strict application of Regspel’s rules would require it to be inserted, viz.:

- Words ending in –tion or -ssion. Thus: atensh(u)n (attention), mish(u)n (mission).
- Words ending in –sion Thus: prisizh(u)n (precision).
- Words ending in –le preceded by a consonant (–ble, -cle, -dle –fle etc). Thus rizib(u)l (risible), iesic(u)l (icicle), dand(u)l (dandle), fid(u)l (fiddle), trief(u)l (trifle).

The short cut is retained where z is added to make the plural or where the noun becomes an adjective. Thus: profeshnz, profeshnal.

G. Accommodating Regional Variations in Pronunciation

The author believes that generally, differences in pronunciation between RP, GenAm and other regional variants are too slight to warrant use of alternative graphemes. Regspel rather relies on conventions. In particular¹¹:

- It uses the letter “o” for words such as pot, lot, stop, in the knowledge that most RP speakers will pronounce these syllables as **ɒ** [Q], and GenAm speakers as **a**: [A:].
- It uses the grapheme “ea” to represent the vowel sound in words such as bear, lair, where etc, in the knowledge that most RP speakers will pronounce this sound as **eə** [e@] and most GenAm speakers as **e^ə(r)** [e^ər].
- Words such as cast, last and rasp are spelled with a single “a” in the knowledge that RP speakers will pronounce these words as **a**: [A:]¹², and GenAm speakers as **æ** [ɪ].

Exceptionally, however, Regspel provides for a strictly limited number of alternative spellings where RP and GenAm diverge markedly¹³. Examples are words such as shedewl, (RP), scedewl (GenAm), stewpid (RP) stoopid (GenA), tomartoe (BrE) tomaetoe (GenA), varz (BrE) vaez (GenA). (See also below under Items for Discussion.)

H. Items for Discussion

The author has identified some areas where readers’ input would be particularly welcome.

¹¹ See vowel tables (para, C) for other instances of divergent regional pronunciation where Regspel uses the same grapheme.

¹² One can fairly easily recognise words where RP gives “a” an **a**: [A:] pronunciation: most of them fall into the pattern of a stressed syllable where there is an -as, -an or -af plus consonant, (eg bask, last, lance, daft etc). Generally, where GenAm pronunciation is shared with several regional British accents, Regspel tends to follow the former. In this instance one will find the GenAm pronunciation mirrored in Yorkshire, Lancastrian, Liverpuddlian and some others regional British accents.

¹³ Candidates for this treatment are generally marked with an asterisk in Longman’s.

(a) Homophones with the same spelling are more frequent in Regspel than in TS because the former generally uses only one grapheme per phoneme. This probably doesn't matter, as the context nearly always makes the meaning clear: people talking English to each other on the phone or face to face can understand distinctions in meaning between homophones without the need for distinguishing features. But the problem of distinguishing homophones is regularly quoted by opponents of spelling reform and the author would welcome views on this. In order to appease traditionalists, it would be relatively simple to distinguish some common homophones by inserting a redundant h after the main vowel of the less frequently used word, eg nun (not one) and nuhn (member of a female religious order).

(b) Is Regspel right to differentiate between the various unaccented vowels and to restrict the character u (default schwa) to cases where the underlying "uh" sound is unmistakable?

(c) Are Regspel conventions for representing other unaccented vowels and vowel combinations logical and acceptable?

(d) Should Regspel use any devices to indicate stress? Some alternative spelling systems do so, but the author is reluctant to go down this route. It would be necessary to introduce diacritics (as in Spanish) or capitals in the middle of a word; either would be a major departure from TS and the former could require adaptation of keyboards etc. Relatively phonemic languages such as French and German do not see any need for special symbols to indicate variant stresses. Finally, although stress in English words is far from regular, there are certain rules that greatly help to identify exceptions¹⁴. However, the author does not have a closed mind on the subject.

(e) Are some of the phonemic devices too radical for those brought up on TS? Possible examples are the use of z to indicate plurals etc. If it were the price for general acceptance, the author would (with some reluctance) be prepared to let a final s represent IPA **z** [z], but an s occurring elsewhere to represent IPA **s** [s], while indicating IPA **ɣ** [s] at the end of a word with a double ss (as in hiss).

(f) Do Regspel's few TS retentions and short cuts represent a reasonable deviation from its basic phonemic principles? Examples include "d" for the definite article instead of "dhu" (the) and "U" for you.

(g) Apart from the short cuts "re-" and "co-", Regspel does not use hyphens or any other formula to separate syllables where more than two vowels come together. The pronunciation should usually be clear from the context and such examples in any case represent less than 2% of words rendered in Regspel, but the author welcomes views on this.

(h) Is Regspel is right to use common graphemes for virtually all the phonemes of spoken English and to rely on conventions to indicate divergent regional pronunciation, (e.g. for pronunciation of the letters "o" and "a")? He believes that his approach is generally consistent with phonemicity, but accepts that there is scope for debate on this subject.

¹⁴ Of the 1,000 most common English words, roughly 10% do not follow the default stress of the penultimate syllable. But of these, more than half are words of two syllables, and the great majority of such words have certain common prefixes (eg ac-, de-, re- etc), which usually shift the stress to the last syllable. So of these 1,000 words only about 5% are genuinely "irregular" as to stress pattern.

Appendix 1: Sample Texts

The star (H G Wells)

It was on the first day of the new year that the announcement was made, almost simultaneously from three observatories, that the motion of the planet Neptune, the outermost of all the planets that wheel about the sun, had become very erratic. A retardation in its velocity had been suspected in December. Then a faint, remote speck of light was discovered in the region of the perturbed planet. At first this did not cause any great excitement. Scientific people, however, found the intelligence remarkable enough even before it became known that the new body was rapidly growing larger and brighter, and that its motion was quite different from the orderly progress of the planets. (556)¹⁵

It woz on d ferst dae ov d new yeer that d anownsmnt woz maed, awlmoest simultaeniusly from three obzervatoriz, dhat d moeshn ov d planet Neptewn, d owtermoest ov awl d planetz dhat weel abowt d sun, had bicum verry eratic. A reetardaeshn in itz vilosity had been suspected in Disember. Dhen a faent, rimoet spec ov liet woz discoverd in d reejun ov d perterbd planet. At ferst dhis did not cawz eny graet exietment. Sieentific peepl, however, fownd d intelijens rimarcabl enuf eeven bifor it bicaem noen dhat d new body woz rapidly groeing larjer and brieter, and dhat itz moeshn woz quiet diferent from d orderly proegres ov d planetz. (512)

Britten when young (Frank Kermode)

We may nowadays be chary about using the word 'genius', but we still have a good idea what is meant by it. For example, there are great numbers of very gifted musicians who are admired but not called geniuses. But there are others, manifestly prodigious, performing often at extraordinary ages, a variety of feats so complex that the layman could hardly imagine, even with the most desperate labour, accomplishing any of them, while even musicians are astonished: and we then reach for the good, handy, vague, Enlightenment word and call them geniuses. The list includes Mozart and Mendlessohn; and despite all the limiting judgements, it includes Benjamin Britten. (538)

Wee mae nowadaez bee cheary abowt ewzing d werd 'jeenius', but wee stil hav a goud iedeea wot iz ment bie it. For egzampl, dhear ar graet numberz ov verry gifted mewzishnz hoo ar admierd but not cawld jeeniusez. But dhear ar udherz, manifestly prodijus, performing ofen at extrordinary erly aejez, a varieety ov feetz soe complex dhat d laeman coud hardly imajin, eeven with d moest desperaet laebor, acumplishing eny ov dhem, wiel eeven mewzishnz ar astonishd: and wee dhen reech for d goud, handy, vaeg Enlietenment werd and cawl dhem jeeniusez. D list incloodz Mozart and Mendlessohn; and dispriet awl d limiting jujment, it incloodz Benjamin Briten. (527)

Ode to a nightingale (John Keats)

Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
But being so happy in thine happiness,
That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.)

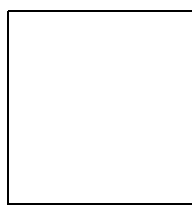
(182)

**Tiz not throo envy ov dhie hapy lot,
But beeing soe hapy in dhien hapines,
Dhat dhow, liet-winged Driedad ov d treez
In sum meloedius plot
Ov beechen green, and shadoez
numberles,
Singest ov sumer in foul-throeted eez.**

(172)

Fuzzy-opaque orthographical visions

¹⁵ Figures for characters do not include punctuation or spaces.



(C Upward)

There was a poor boy couldn't spell
Half the words in our language too well.
His teachers thought: "Brain-sick!"
Mum and Dad hoped: "Dyslexic?"
Yet the child rashly jeered:
"What the hell!" (143)

Dhear woz a pour boy coudn't spel
Harf d werdz in owr langwaej too wel.
Hiz teecherz thort: "Braen-sic!"
Mum and Dad hoepd: "Dizlexic?"
Yet d chield rashly jeerd:
"Wot d hel!" (129)

Personal Views published by the Spelling Society

<http://www.spellingsociety.org/news/pvs/pvs.php>

- 1. Bob Brown (1992) - *Literacy & the way we spell English*, 8 pp.
- 2. Paul Fletcher (1992) - *Yurospel*, 12 pp.
- 3. Sinclair Eustace - (3rd edition, 1992) **SIST3M 2**, 12 pp.
- 4. Anthony Burns (1997) - *An Alfabet for de Milenyem!*, 12 pp.
- 5. Ken Goodwin (1997) - *Yurabet*, 12 pp.
- 6. George Lahey (1998) - *Inqlish, the nou ABC's*, 12 pp.
- 7. Steve Bett (1998) - *Nu Folik Fo'netik: An Alfabet for English*, 12 pp.
See [The Star](#) example.
- 8. Edward Rondthaler (1999) - *SoundSpel*, 12 pp.
- 9. Katherine Greenland (1999) - *R.O.S.E. Reformed Orthography of Standard English Mark II.i*, 12 pp.
- 10. Valerie Yule (1999) - *Spelling for Beyond 2000*, 12 pp.
- 11. Ze do Rock (1999) - *Start with Cut Spelling. End with Zinglish*, 12 pp.
- 12. Russ Stygall (1999) - *Singlish*, 12 pp.
- 13. Masha Bell (2001) - *Types and magnitude of English spelling problems and their significance for reform*
- 14. Roy Blain (2002) - *Saaspel*, 16pp.
See the [updated PV](#) on his site and [The Star](#) example.
- 15. Stephen Linstead (2007) - *Regspel* 12pp

Most invented orthographies can be explained by showing how they represent the 14 pure vowels in spoken English (see p. 4). Disagreement is usually with respect to the obscure vowels, schwa, and r combinations and the choice of assignments. *Few around heer new that thae hav goud food on Tewzdaez.*

Surfer [ˈsɜːfə] could be spelled surfer, surfur, serfer, seufr, srfr, syrfyr, or ...
hoodlum [ˈhʊdɫəm] could be spelled houdlum, hoodlum, hwdlm, hoodlm, or ...

There is no shortage of consistent spellings that can be deciphered. The obscure vowel [U] is spelled 7 (OVERLAPPING) ways in TO: 00, OU, U, 00, OU, 0, W
For the full list, go to www.foolswisdom.com/~sbett/spelling-patterns.htm

The SSS house stile does not attempt to regularize any obscure vowel. It only regularizes 9 of the 14 pure vowels when the vowel comes before a consonant. In polysyllables, stressed short vowels are always followed by two consonants. Stressed vowels not followed by dbl consonants are pronounced long. Unstressed syllables are not respelled. Superfluous letters are removed unless the result is confusing. *who is not cut to ho or respelled as hu or hoo. [u:] is not regularized. Read the HS rules at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ssslstfiles/hs>

HOUSE STYLE: English **aut** to **contane** a single distinct mark or **character** as the representativ of **eech** simple sound **wich** is possible for the human voice to utter. No mark should represent 2 or 3 distinct sounds nor should **enny** simple sound be represented by 2 or 3 **difrent characters**.

REGSPEL: English awt to contaen a singl marc or caracter az d representativ ov eech simpl sownd wich iz posibl for d hewman voys to uter. Noe marc shoud represent 2 or 3 distinct sowndz nor shoud eny simpl sownd bee represented bie 2 or 3 diferent caracterz.

Appendix 2: SSS phoneme word list submitted with personal view spelling schemes

Each set of words represents one phoneme of English as derived from Longmans. Pronunciations not following Longmans are indicated. As indicated previously, Regspel uses more than one formula to represent schwa.

Traditional (irregular)	Regspel (regular)	Traditional (irregular)	Regspel (regular)
pen, copy, happen	pen, copy, hapen	lot, odd, wash	lot, od, wosh
back, bubble, job	bac, bubl, job	strut, bud, love	strut, bud, luv
tea, tight, button	tee, tiet, buton	foot, good, put	fout, goud, pout
city, better	sity, beter	fleece, day, streak	flees, dae, streec
day, ladder, odd	dae, lader, od	price, high, try	pries, hie, trie
key, cock, school	cee, coc, scool	choice, boy	choys, boy
get, giggle, ghost	get, gigl, goest	goose, two, blue	goos, too, bloo
church, match, nature	cherch, mach, naetewr ¹⁶	goat, show, no, cold	goet, shoe, noe, coeld
judge, age, soldier	juj, aej, soeldier ¹⁷	mouth, now	mowth, now
fat, coffee, rough, move	fat, cofee, ruf, moov	near, here, serious	neer, heer, seerius
thing, author, path	thing, awthor, path	square, fair, various	squear, fear, vearius
this, other, smooth	dhis, udher, smooth	start, father	start, fardher
soon, cease, sister	soon, sees, sister	thought, law	thawt, law
zero, zone, roses	zeeroe, zoen, roezez	north, war	north, wor
ship, sure, station	ship, shor, staeshn	cure, poor, jury	cewr, pour ¹⁸ , jury ²⁰
pleasure, vision	plezher, vizhn	nurse, stir	ners, ster
hot, whole, behind	hot, hoel, bihiend	courage	curaej ¹⁸
more, hammer, some	mor, hamer, sum	happy, radiation, glorious	hapy, raediaeshn, glorius
nice, know, funny, sun	nies, noe, funy, sun	about, comma, common	abowt, coma, comon
ring, long, thanks, sung	ring, long, thancz, sung	influence, situation, annual	infloens, sitewaeshn, anewal
light, valley, feel	liet, valy, feel	intend, basic	intend, baesic
yet, use, beauty	yet, ewz, bewty	stimulus, educate	stimulus, edewcaet
wet, one, when, queen	wet, wun, wen, queen	kit, bid, hymn	cit, bid, him
dress, bed	dres, bed	trap, bad	trap, bad
total characters ts :	635		
total characters Regspel:	603		

¹⁶ Indicates a pronunciation not shown in Longman's options. The departures reflect Regspel's emphasis on slow pronunciation to identify the underlying unstressed vowel sound.

¹⁷ The variant pronunciation shown in Longmans is used for this word.

¹⁸ These words are pronounced in various ways in both in the US and UK. Regspel's choices are slightly more resonant with GenAm usage.

