Just like a word is made of letters, longer words are made of syllables.

If you put your hand under your chin, you can count how many syllables are in a word – your chin will drop every time you say a syllable. So, say the following words after me, and let’s count how many syllables are in each word. (Teacher/parent note: Make sure you exaggerate each word so that the motion is big enough to feel.)

- spaghetti
- pizza
- pie
- popcorn
- lollipop
- candy
- chocolate
- cat
- giraffe
- hippopotamus
- snake
- alligator
- elephant
- rhinoceros

A syllable always has a vowel in it – it’s the vowel that makes your chin drop.

You already know how to read some two-syllable words –

Today is my birthday.

A sister and a brother.

A tiger can’t read a letter.

And in this book we’re going to learn some more two-syllable words. Ready?
First, we are now going to learn more about the letter “y”.

Usually, at the beginning of a word, the letter “y” says “yuh”, like in “yes”, “yellow” and “you.” But at the end of a word, the letter “y” doesn’t have his own sound, so he calls out the name of another vowel, usually the letter “e” or the letter “i.”

At the end of a very short, one-syllable word, the letter “y” calls out the name of the letter “i” –

My sister says that I must try to eat my peas – but why, oh, why? My peas are special – see them fly, so someone tell me why, oh, why I must eat peas that fly, fly, fly?
But if a word has TWO syllables (two vowel sounds), the letter “y” calls out the name of the letter “e” –

When a **lady** bug
bit a **baby** bee,
the **lady** bug said,
“Hee, hee, hee.”

But when the **baby** bee bit her back,
the **lady** bug said, “Eeeee!”

See **sleepy** sheep sleep **slowly** on the hill.
**Sleepy** sheep sleep **slowly**
so they don’t get ill.
But do **silly, sleepy** sheep see the **sunny** shine?

No. Slow sheep **slowly**
sleep all the **sleepy** time.
My head is heavy;
it is ready for bed.
My head is heavy,
and my brain feels dead.
I am ready for sleep;
I am ready for bed –
so can someone please pick up
my heavy, heavy head?

I was happy with my candy,
my candy was good,
but my twenty bits of candy
were all that I could
eat before my tummy
felt rather funny –
now I’m sorry that my candy
was so yummy, yummy good.
Remember...

**Cheese** can be **cheesy**
and a **sneeze** can be **sneezy**.

It is **easy** to be **sneezy** –
put pepper on your nose.
And to make your “**sneezy**” **cheesy**,
put pizza on your toes.
But please, please, “**pleasy**”
keep the “**cheesy**” off your clothes.

I know a lot of jokes –
I think some are **funny**.
I know a lot of jokes,
and I tell them to **my bunny**.
But **my bunny** doesn’t laugh –
he thinks none of them are **funny**.
Do I need **funny** jokes,
or do I need a **funny bunny**?
Sometimes the “y” is silent and doesn’t say anything, like when the “y” is right next to the letter “a,” like in say, day and play.

I always say, “thank you.”
I always say, “please.”
I always say, “excuse me,”
every time I sneeze.
But my dog, Sparky,
says nothing at all
except, “feed my tummy,”
and, “let’s play ball.”

Maybe a baby just pretends to be small.
Maybe a baby is not a baby at all.
Maybe a baby is a giant in disguise,
with big, hairy feet
and yellow, scary eyes.
Remember the naughty silent “e”? Well, the letter “y” at the end of a word does the SAME thing –

But if there are TWO consonants between the first vowel and the “y” at the end, then the naughty “y” can’t reach over and pinch the vowel.

This is how you can tell if the first vowel is short or long – making its sound (-a-) or calling out its name (AAAAA!)

(Bony means having lots of bones, or having bones that you can easily see. Bonny means nice to look at, good looking.)
Mary wants to marry Larry, and Larry wants to marry Mary.
But Mary is a dog, and Larry is a duck...
So will Mary marry Larry?
They will need a lot of luck.

Tony rode a pony all around the house.
Timmy was too tiny, so he had to ride a mouse.
But Tommy wasn’t tiny; Tommy was big.
So Tommy rode an elephant – that is what he did.
Katy Cat hates to be happy.
Katy Cat is always snappy.
The one thing Katy Cat likes to do is frown, frown, frown at me and you.

I do not care to carry my baby brother, Harry.
I do not care to carry Baby Harry at all.
Because Harry is so heavy – Baby Harry is not small – would you care to carry a ten ton bowling ball?
So while it’s a pretty good rule, lots of words break it. We are going to learn some important words that break this rule, starting with “body” – instead of saying “boady”, we say “boddy” –

Another word that breaks the rule is “copy” – instead of saying “coapy,” we say, “coppy” –

If **Bobby** has a **body**, can **Bobby** be a ghost? 
No, **nobody** with a **body**, not even little **Bobby**, can be a good ghost or eat ghost toast.

My brother is a **copy** cat.
Whatever I do, he has to **copy** that.
I wish he would **copy** somebody else –
I am the only one who can **copy** myself..
The word “very” doesn’t follow the rule either. Instead of saying, “veery”, we say “very” which sounds like “scary” and “Mary” –

Bugs are not very scary at all.
And the very best bugs
don’t fly – they crawl.
A big, black bug that is very, very hairy – like my spider here;
I call her Mary –
is so very quick at crawling on the wall
that I can never let out to crawl at all.

Mary the fairy
is very, very hairy.
Mary is so hairy
it is very, very scary.
If Mary the fairy
ever went bald,
Mary would not be
very scary at all.
Every book I ever read is stuck in here inside my head.
And every night when I go to sleep, the books come out to tickle my feet.
I wish I never read so very many books; every one of them is bad – just take a look!

I never, ever go to sleep with shoes and socks upon my feet.
I take my shoes off every night, and then I turn off every light.
Then I jump into my very big bed and pull my blanket over my head.
But every day, just after dawn, when I wake up, my shoes are on.

The word “every” is also a bit strange. Instead of sounding like “very” (ee-very), it sounds like “ever” and “never.”
Every time I eat a lot of dirt,
I feel very sick – my tummy
starts to hurt.
I feel very hot, and my insides burn –
it happens every time
I pretend to be a worm.

Many men were standing
in a long, long line.
And many of the men
were there a long time.
But were any of the many men
in the long line
called Benny or Denny
or Frankenstein?

The words, “any” and “many” also break
the rule. They SHOULD sound like “ainy”
and “mainy” but they don’t – they sound
like “enny” and “menny” –
If I could have **anything** –
**anything** to eat –
would I eat **any** rice?
Would I eat **any** meat?
No, I want **candy** –
**candy** is so nice.
Do we have **any candy**
I can put on my rice?

If I could have **any** pet –
**any** pet at all –
would **any** pet be right for me?
**Any** pet at all?
But I don’t worry,
I’m not in **any** hurry,
I will find the right pet
when the pet finds me.
The work “only” also doesn’t follow the rules – instead of saying “on-ly,” we say “own-ly” –

I only feel lonely when I’m alone by myself,
I only feel lonely when there’s nobody else.
But I am only lonely for a very short time, because my doll jumps off the shelf, and then everything is fine.

Cindy Sue is only two, so Cindy Sue got only two lollipops to suck.
And though Cindy Sue is only two, Cindy Sue thought only two was nowhere near enough.
I was all alone and lonely – the only one awake. I was all alone and lonely, so I made a chocolate cake. I thought I would have only one bite... only one sliver... only one slice... and when I was finished I was glad that I had made only one only lonely little cake.

Katy Cat was a pretty, pretty kitty; a pretty, pretty kitty was she. But no pretty cat can frown like that and still be pretty to see.

And remember, even though the word, “one,” looks like “lone” and “bone,” is sounds like “fun” and “sun” –

The word, “pretty,” is another rule breaker. It should sound like “Betty” and “spaghetti”, but instead it sounds like “kitty” and “city” –
“Pretty” means “nice to look at” but can also mean “quite a bit” like, he’s pretty good, or it’s pretty big.

I am pretty good at running –
I can run pretty fast –
so how come every race
I am last, last, last?
I am pretty, pretty sure,
and it’s pretty plain to see,
that the people I am racing
are all bigger than me.

Sometimes the “y” at the end of a word is spelled with “ie” –

There is only one cookie
left in the bag.
Only one cookie –
and the cookie looks sad.
All alone, only one in the bag...
I think I will eat it,
and then it won’t be sad.
Every time my dog does a trick,
I have to call him, “cutie.”
But now he wants much more than that –
like candy or a cookie.
What will I do when my doggy wants
to get an apple pie?
Do I lie and give him cookies,
or bake my dog a pie?

And in the middle of a word, “i” and
“e” together also sound like the “e” in
cookie – niece, piece...

My aunt told me
that I was a nice niece –
a very nice niece indeed.
Such a nice niece,
not a bother nor a beast,
that she gave me a piece
of a cookie for a treat.

See how “cookie” and “cutie” look like
“pie” and “lie” but sound different.
I **believe** in vampires,
and I **believe** in ghosts.
I **believe** in monsters
dancing on my toast.
My dog does not **believe**
in a vampire or a ghost –
but I **believe** that he can see
the monsters on my toast.

The tooth fairy is
a **thief, thief, thief**
who comes at night
to steal my **teeth**.
I do not want that
**thief, thief, thief**
to take any more of my
**teeth, teeth, teeth**
so I put a padlock on my mouth
to keep the tooth **thief** out, out, out.
The word “friend” breaks the rule, instead of saying, “freend,” we say, “frend” like in “send” and “bend” –

I will send my friend a piece of pie.
And my friend will say, “For me? Oh, my!”
Then my friend will send it back to me,
so I can send it again to my friend – whoopee!

We learned this in an earlier book, but let’s look at it again. When we add an “s” to a word that ends in “y,” look what happens –

- baby
- babies
- fly
- flies
- bunny
- bunnies
One baby, two babies, 
three babies sat 
out in the sun with only one hat. 
The babies had to share their 
silly, frilly hat with bunnies and 
puppies and a big, pink cat.

But if the “y” is silent (which usually happens when another vowel is standing right next to the “y”) we don’t have to change the “y” to anything – we just add an “s”.

day                 days
key                 keys
Most of the time when two vowels are walking together, only ONE vowel gets to talk. But sometimes, BOTH vowels get to say something –

My cat says that she has a lot of keys, but when she try, try, tries to find them, the keys never are in the house or in the car – even the dog says he can’t find them.
My dog is very **quiet**
when he cheats on his **diet**, 
and he always tells a **lie**
when he eats a **piece of pie**.
He has gained a lot of **weight**
eating ice cream and cake –
would he stick to his **diet**
if he wasn’t **quite** so **quiet**?

I wish I was an **alien** –
I would be **quite quiet**.
I would sneak up on a space ship, 
and then I’d learn to fly it.
Oh, I wish I was an **alien**...
I would really like to try it.
We all know words like BIG, BIGGER and BIGGEST. Well, look what happens with a word that ends in a “y” –

My cats like to wear fancy, fancy pants fancy, fancy wigs and even fancier hats. Then they put on the fanciest shoes... but which cat is fancier? How can I choose?
Two **hairy, scary** spiders sit on a wall. The **scarier** spider starts to crawl, but the **hairier** spider, the **tinier** of the two, **tries** to crawl but falls – boo, hoo. He falls onto a **piece of pie**, takes a **tiny** bite and says, "Oh, my! This is **tastier** than a **tasty** fly. Now all I want is **pie, pie, pie!**"

I had a good **idea** – my **idea** was **great**. So I tried to write it down, before it was too late. But by the time I got some paper, a pencil and eraser, my **idea** didn’t seem so very, very **great**.

There are other words where two vowels both make a sound – words like “idea,” “giant” and “video.”
Leo the lion is a liar, liar, liar.

He said he saw a bird on a telephone wire.

He said the bird flew up, higher and higher, then Leo the liar said the bird caught on fire.

When I play the piano, my cat sits on a chair, and as my giant cat sings her wails fill up the air. It sounds so bad, like a needle in the brain, so I never play piano again.
I wrote half a poem about my pet fish, Owen. The poem was so short that it only had one line – a poem should be longer, but I didn’t have time.

Sometimes the letter “y” makes such a small sound at the end of a word that you can hardly hear it, like in the words, “boy” and “toy.”

Listen and then say after me —

- toy
- toys
- boy
- boys
When I was a tiny tot,
I only had one toy –
a fuzzy-wuzzy teddy bear
with a big, blue "b" for boy.
Now that I am bigger,
I have a lot of toys,
but my favorite toy for sleeping
is my teddy-beddie boy.

I do not like flies;
flies annoy me.
And I think that flies
enjoy to annoy me.
I know that I
would enjoy my pizza better
if these flies would go annoy
some other pizza-getter.
If the “oy” sound is in the middle of a word, the “oi” is spelled with an “i”.

For example, “boy” and “boil” sound the same, but are spelled differently – here’s how:

If a hungry monster wants to boil a boy, first he must catch a boy and put him in a pot. Then he must add water, salt, and olive oil; then the hungry monster must wait for the boy to boil.
Everybody wants to spoil the brand new baby boy.
It’s baby this and baby that, baby powder, baby oil.
But I know it’s not a baby, it’s really just a toy –
I’m the only one who noticed when they brought home Baby Boy.

I have a coin in my pocket;
I use the coin for tricks –
I can make the coin spin around;
I can make the coin do flips.
Would you like to join me, and make a coin do flips?
Join me now, we can have some fun –
I will show you all my tricks.
I like noise –
lots and lots of noise.
A drum and two sticks
are the very best of toys.
But, oh, how it annoys me
when I’m told that I’m too noisy...
so I make louder noise
on my toys for noisy boys.

For dessert I have a choice
of ice cream or pie.
It’s a very hard choice,
and hard choices make me cry.
But in my head I hear a voice
telling me to make no choice.
Yes, the voice tells me that I
must have ice cream WITH my pie.
The letter “y” is also used in a few more words that we should learn, like the word “eye”. In the word “eye,” you can hardly hear the “y” – listen: “eye.”

I go to sleep with one eye open –
I don’t like the dark, and my light is broken.
But I can’t see a thing with
the eye that is open.
Is it because it is dark,
or is my eye broken?

In the words, “bye” and “goodbye” you can also hardly hear the letter “y” –

I waved goodbye
with a tear in my eye.
I waved goodbye,
and I said “Bye, bye.”
But my nasty, old cold
didn’t go away – I think my cold
is here to stay.
You can also hardly hear the “y” in the words, “buy” and “guy.”

What can I buy with one little penny?
I can’t buy much... I can’t buy any ice cream, cake or soda pop...
So what good is a penny?
It can’t buy a lot.

I went to the store to buy a cake but the guy at the store said the cake was late. But I know the guy was telling a lie, I could see the cake with my very own eye. So I asked the guy why, why, why he would not let me buy, buy, buy? But the guy didn’t answer – the guy ran away and I couldn’t buy a cake until the next day.
The end

Don’t forget!
If you have a moment (and if you are willing), email us with your comments. Thanks!

Feedback@ProgressivePhonics.com

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