Print pages 2-12 1 time. Print pages 13-16 2 times. Print page 17 1 time. Page 18 goes on the back of all cards.

Syntax

V2

Verb Second

The verb is the second constituent (not word) of each clause. Any subject, object, adverb, prepositional phrase, etc. can precede it.

E.g.:
Ed cooks rice.
Rice cooks Ed.
Absentmindedly cooks Ed rice.
On the stove cooks Ed rice.

Syntax

OSV

object-subject-verb

E.g.:
Milk cats drink.
Rice Ed cooks.
Languages linguists study.

Syntax

OVS

object-verb-subject

E.g.:
Milk drink cats.
Rice cooks Ed.
Languages Study Linguists

Syntax

VSO

verb-subject-object

E.g.:
Drink cats milk.
Cooks Ed rice.

Syntax

Topic-Comment

What is talked about comes first in a sentence; what is said about it comes next.

Syntax

Comment-Topic

What is talked about comes last in a sentence; what is said about it comes first.

Syntax

Postpositional

Postpositions follow their objects; postpositional phrases precede their heads.

E.g.:

shelf on books

Playable only if SVO, SOV, OVS, OSV, or V2 is in play

Phoneme

y

high front unrounded vowel

French “t<u>u</u>”
German “f<u>ü</u>”

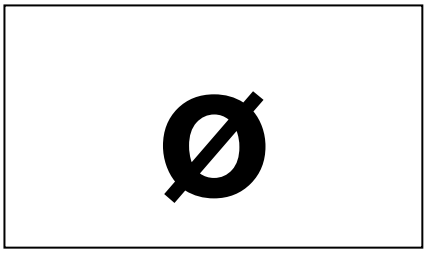
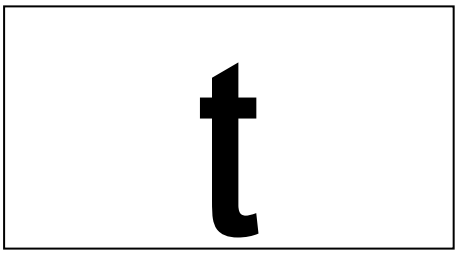
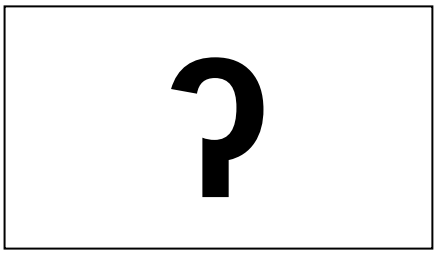
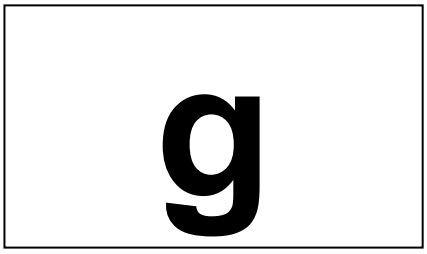
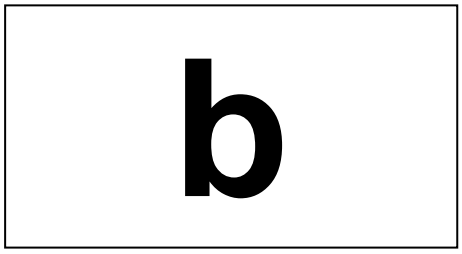
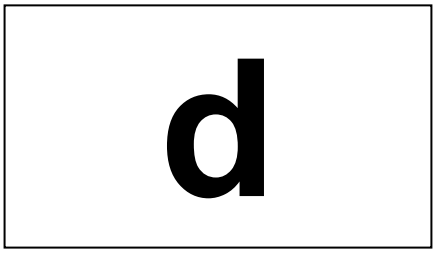
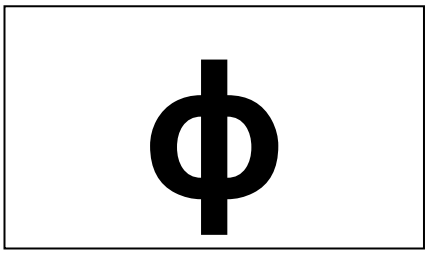
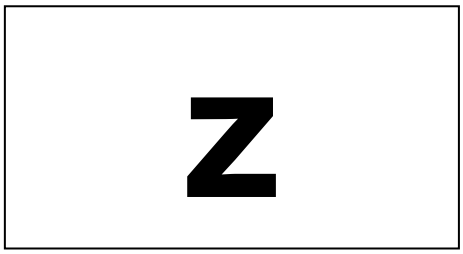
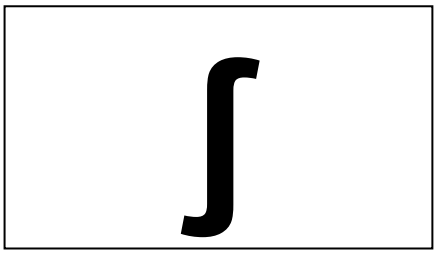
Phoneme

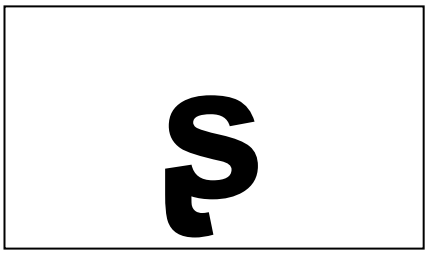
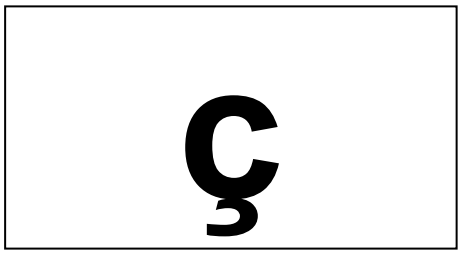
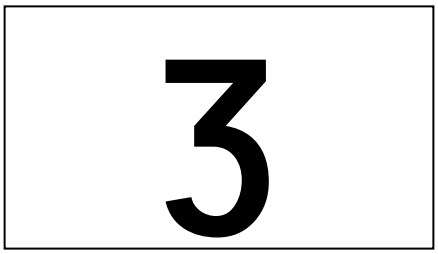
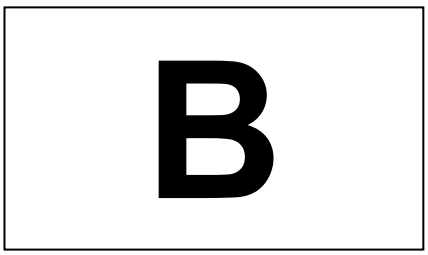
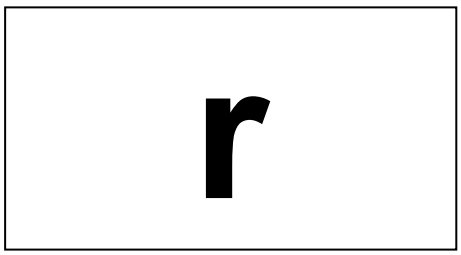
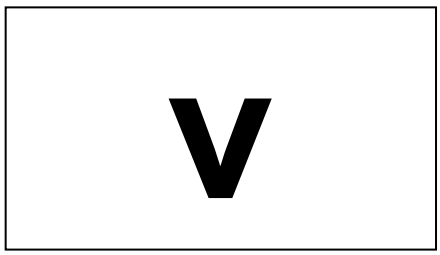
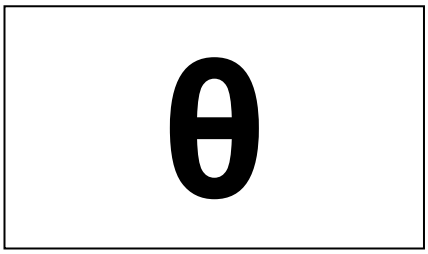
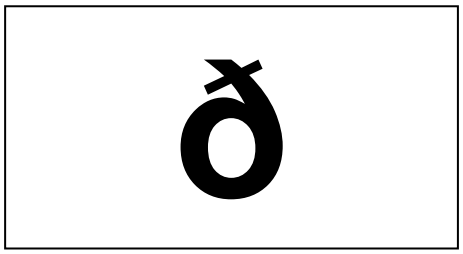
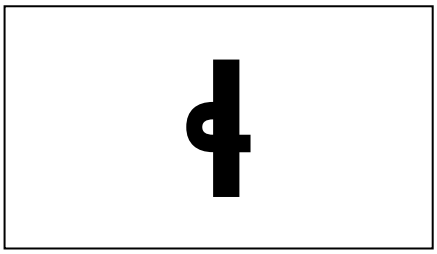
ɪ

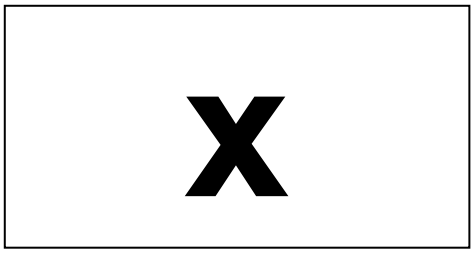
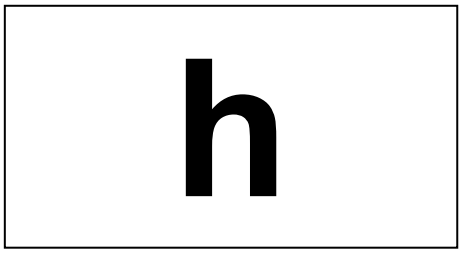
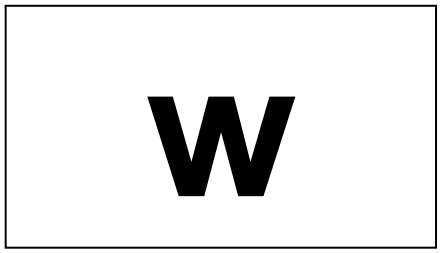
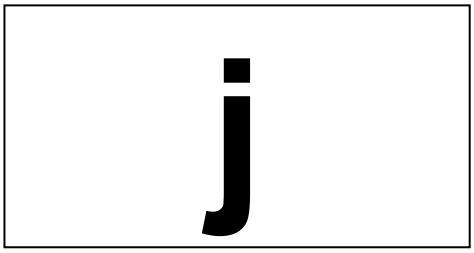
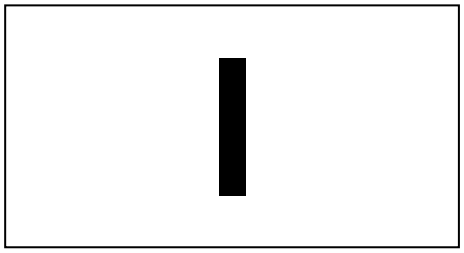
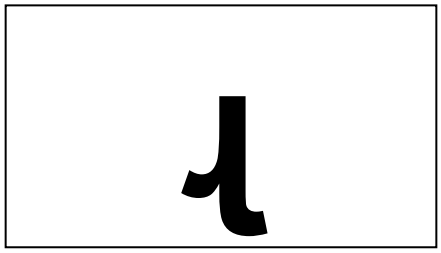
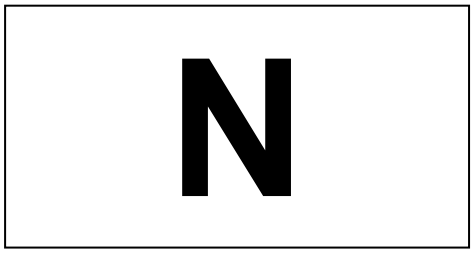
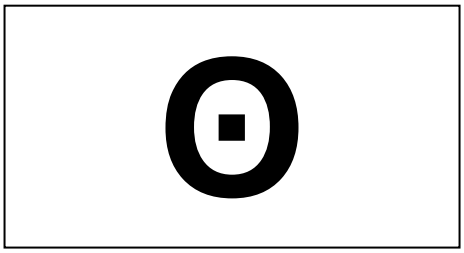
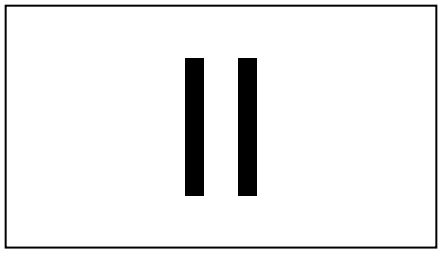
open high front unrounded vowel

English “p<u>i</u>ck”

Phoneme ɨ high central unrounded vowel Polish “mysz” Approx. English “tip”	Phoneme a low front unrounded vowel French “patte” German “Rat” Approx. English “cot”	Phoneme ɯ high back unrounded vowel Turkish “ılık” Hixkaryana “kàrà” Approx. English “shoebox”
Phoneme ɔ open-mid back rounded vowel English “ought”, “law”	Phoneme ʌ open-mid back unrounded vowel English “thus”, “cup”	Phoneme ə mid central unrounded vowel (schwa) English “ago”
Phoneme ɛ open-mid front unrounded vowel English “met”	Phoneme ʊ high back open rounded vowel English “look”	Phoneme æ open low unrounded vowel English “tack”

Phoneme  close-mid front unrounded vowel French “chanteuse” German “böse"	Phoneme  voiceless retroflex plosive Norwegian “kort” Approx. English “lot”	Phoneme  glottal plosive Hawaiian “ʻeleʻele” Indonesian “bakso”
Phoneme  voiced velar plosive English “agog”	Phoneme  voiced bilabial plosive English “bee”	Phoneme  voiced alveolar plosive English “do”
Phoneme  voiceless bilabial fricative Japanese “fuji”	Phoneme  voiced alveolar fricative English “zydeco”	Phoneme  voiceless postalveolar fricative English “she”

Phoneme  voiceless retroflex fricative Polish “szum” Approx. English “show”	Phoneme  voiceless palatal fricative German “ich” Approx. English “human”	Phoneme  voiced postalveolar fricative English “pleasure”
Phoneme  bilabial trill Kele [mbBuen]	Phoneme  alveolar trill Spanish “cerro”	Phoneme  voiced labiodental fricative English “valve”
Phoneme  voiceless dental fricative English “thin”, “bath”	Phoneme  voiced dental fricative English “the”, “bathe”	Phoneme  voiceless lateral fricative Nahuatl “chocolatl”

Phoneme  voiceless velar fricative German “nach”	Phoneme  glottal fricative English “he”	Phoneme  bilabial approximant English “wow”
Phoneme  palatal approximant English “yak”	Phoneme  palatal approximant English “lit”	Phoneme  retroflex approximant English “row”, “car”
Phoneme  uvular nasal Japanese “nihon”	Phoneme  bilabial click No example	Phoneme  alveolar lateral click No example

Phoneme

Wildcard

This represents any phoneme, specified at the time it's played.

Phoneme

Fill Gap

Specify a phoneme that clearly fills a gap in the current phoneme inventory.

Phonemic Contrast

Palatalization

Place above the consonant array. While in play, palatalized versions of all consonants are available.

Phonemic Contrast

Labialization

Place above the consonant array. While in play, labialized versions of all consonants are available.

Phonemic Contrast

Aspiration

Place above the consonant array. While in play, aspirated and non-aspirated versions of all consonants are available.

Phonemic Contrast

Ejective

Place above the plosives. While in play, ejective versions of all plosives are available.

Phonemic Contrast

Affricate

Place above the fricatives. While in play, affricate versions of all fricatives are available.

Phonemic Contrast

Tone

Place above the vowel array. While in play, tone is phonemic. The player who plays this card may specify how many and what tones are used. Anyone may complicate or simplify the tone system with the Phoneme Merge or Phoneme Split cards.

Phonemic Contrast

Nasalization

Place above the vowel array. While in play, nasal and oral versions of all vowels are available.

Phonemic Contrast

Length

Place above the vowel array. While in play, long and short versions of all vowels are available.

Phonemic Contrast

Rounding

Place above the vowel array. While in play, both rounded and unrounded versions of all vowels are available.

Syllable Onset

CA

Any consonant + approximant

E.g.:
/tw-/
/kj-/
/sl-/

Syllable Onset

FP

Fricative consonant + plosive consonant

E.g.:
/fp-/
/st-/

Syllable Onset

FPA

Fricative consonant + plosive consonant + approximant

E.g.:
/spl-/
/zgw-/

Syllable Onset

PF

Plosive consonant + fricative consonant

E.g.:
/bv-/
/ts-/

Syllable Onset

NF

Nasal consonant + fricative consonant

E.g.:
/mv-/
/nz-/

Syllable Onset

FN

Fricative consonant + nasal consonant

E.g.:
/zm-/
/fn-/

Syllable Onset

NN

Nasal consonant + nasal consonant

E.g.:
/mn-/

Syllable Onset

PN

Plosive consonant + nasal consonant

E.g.:
/bm-/
/kn-/

Syllable Onset

FF

Fricative consonant + fricative consonant

E.g.:
/sf-/
/vz-/

Syllable Rime

C

A syllabic consonant

E.g.:
/-mː/
/-lː/

Syllable Rime

VC

Vowel + any consonant

E.g.:
/-ef/
/-ut/
/-on/

Syllable Rime

VNF

Vowel + nasal consonant + fricative consonant

E.g.:
/-ens/
/-umv/

Syllable Rime

VFP

Vowel + fricative consonant + plosive consonant

E.g.:
/-ivb/
/-ust/

Syllable Rime

VPF

Vowel + plosive consonant + fricative consonant

E.g.:
/-igz/
/-ups/

Syllable Rime

VPP

Vowel + plosive consonant + plosive consonant

E.g.:
/-ikt/
/-upt/

Suprasegmental

Initial Stress

While in play, the first syllable of each word gets primary stress. The player playing this card specifies whether the language uses stress or pitch accent.

Suprasegmental

Final Stress

While in play, the last syllable of each word gets primary stress. The player playing this card specifies whether the language uses stress or pitch accent.

Suprasegmental

Penultimate Stress

While in play, the second-to-last syllable of each word gets primary stress. The player playing this card specifies whether the language uses stress or pitch accent.

Suprasegmental

Lexical Stress

Any syllable of a word can be stressed; stress can distinguish otherwise identical cards. The player playing this card specifies whether the language uses stress or pitch accent.

Suprasegmental

Wildcard

Specify any stress or tone system for the language, in effect as long as this card is in play. Other players may complicate or simplify the system with Phoneme Split or Phoneme Merge cards.

Sound Change

Eliminate Cluster

Discard a syllable onset or rime card currently in play which allows two or more consonants in a row. Specify how you want this to affect existing words with that kind of cluster. (E.g. insert a vowel; delete the first or second consonant; …)

Sound Change

Chain Shift

Play a phoneme card from your hand, and send a phoneme card in play to the discard pile. Specify a chain of sound shifts affecting any number of phonemes. **Draw another card at the end of your turn**

Sound Change

Delete Phoneme

Specify a phoneme and the context in which it will disappear. (The current syllable patterns must allow the resulting clusters or diphthongs.) If the phoneme no longer occurs in any words, send its card to the discard pile.

Sound Change

Metathesis

Specify a sequence of two phonemes, or two types of phoneme, and an optionally limiting context; these sounds swap positions in existing words.

Grammar Change

Drop Inflection

Pick an inflection (prefix, suffix, infix…) previously introduced and remove it from the language. Optionally, you may use your word-coining turn to show how the same meaning is expressed with stand-alone words.

Grammar Change

Back-Formation

Specify a morpheme that occurs within one or more previously coined words, in place of coining a new word.

Meaning Change

Restrict Meaning

Instead of coining a new word, take an existing word with a broad meaning or multiple meanings and give it a more restricted sense.

Action

Discard Anything

Send any card in play to the discard pile, specifying how this loss affects the language and existing words. (This can cancel a Constraint that's been placed on you (or another player).)

Action

Loanword

Instead of coining a new *a priori* word, borrow a word from any other language. (Adapt its sound to the phonology of the in-game language.)

Action

Swap Challenge

Trade your translation challenge card for another player's.

Action

Discard Challenge

Discard your challenge translation card and draw a new one.

Action

Rotate Challenges

Each player must pass their Subject card to the player on their right.

Action

Rotate Challenges

Each player must pass their Predicate card to the player on their left.

Action

Free Pass

On this turn, you may use English (or any other language) to define a word with no penalty.

Action

Lookahead

Look through the deck, find a card and immediately play it. Then reshuffle the deck.

Action

Replay

Look through the discard pile, find a card and immediately play it. Then reshuffle the discard pile into the deck.

Action

Draw 4

Draw four cards, then play one and discard three.

Action

Draw 3

Draw three cards, then play one and discard two.

Typology

Isolating

While in play, no new inflections may be coined. The player who plays this card may optionally eliminate any number of existing inflectional and derivational morphemes without replacing them.

Typology

Polysynthetic

While in play, if the previous player coined a root word, you must coin an affix or mutation.

Syntax

SVO

subject-verb-object

E.g.:
Birds eat worms.
Authors write books.

Syntax

SOV

subject-object-verb

E.g.:
Birds worms eat.
Authors books write.

Syntax

VSO

verb-subject-object

E.g.:
Seeks Bilbo treasure.
Eats Trey mangoes.

Syntax

Wildcard

Specify a syntactic rule in force as long as this card is in play.

Syntax

Head-Modifier

noun-adjective
verb-adverb

E.g.:
dragon scaly the
eats voraciously

Syntax

Modifier-Head

adjective-noun
adverb-verb

E.g.:
scaly dragon
voraciously eats

Syntax

Prepositional

Prepositions precede their objects; prepositional phrases precede their heads.

E.g.:

dragon in cave

Playable only if VSO, SVO, SOV, VOS, or V2 is in play.

Phoneme

i

high front unrounded vowel

English “machine”

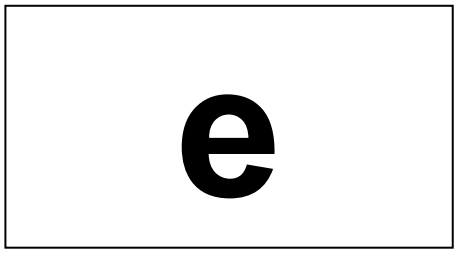
Phoneme

u

high back rounded vowel

French “ou”
Approx. English “shoe”

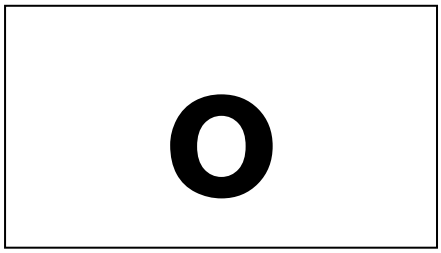
Phoneme



close-mid front unrounded vowel

French “paté”
Approx. English “may”

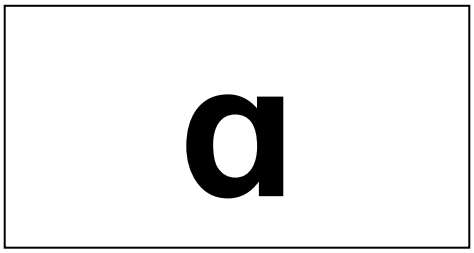
Phoneme



close-mid back unrounded vowel

Spanish “no”
French “côte”
Approx. English “so”

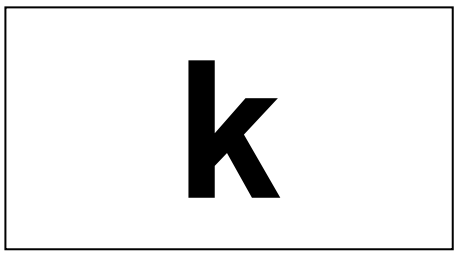
Phoneme



low back unrounded vowel

English “mop”

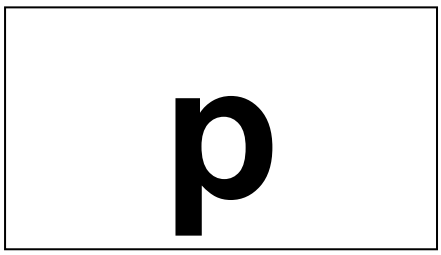
Phoneme



voiceless velar plosive

English “ski”

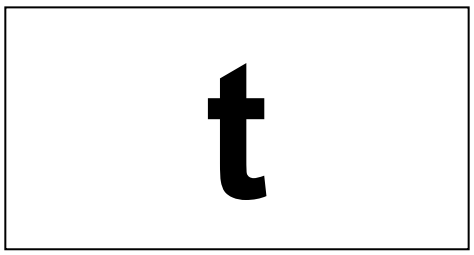
Phoneme



voiceless bilabial plosive

English “spin”

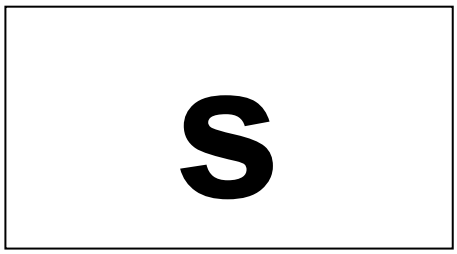
Phoneme



voiceless alveolar plosive

English “stay”

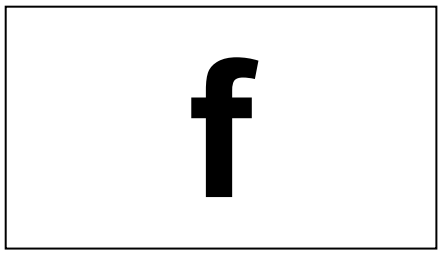
Phoneme



voiceless alveolar fricative

English “say”

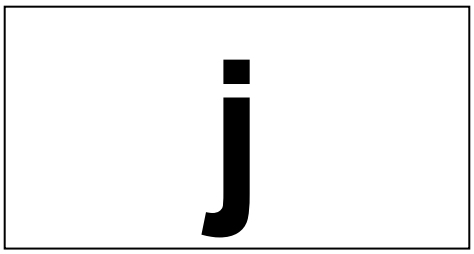
Phoneme



voiceless labiodental fricative

English “fee”

Phoneme



palatal approximant

English “yak”

Phoneme

l

palatal approximant

English “lit”

Phoneme

m

bilabial nasal

English “me”

Phoneme

n

alveolar nasal

English “nose”

Phonemic Contrast

Voicing

Place above the vowel *or* consonant array. While in play, voiced versions of all [vowels or consonants] are available.

Syllable Onset

(null)

A syllable need not begin with a consonant.

Syllable Rime

VN

Vowel + nasal consonant

E.g.:
/-an/
/-im/

Syllable Rime

VA

Vowel + approximant

E.g.:
/-aw/
/-ej/

Syllable Onset/Rime

Wildcard

Specify a syllable onset or rime structure available as long as this card is in play.

Sound Change

Phoneme Merge

Discard a phoneme currently in play, specifying another phoneme in play with which it merges. (The two must match on at least one feature.

Sound Change

Phoneme Split

Play a phoneme card that matches at least one feature with a phoneme already in play. Specify the context(s) where the old phoneme changes into the new one in existing words. **Draw another card at the end of your turn.**

Sound Change

Eliminate Contrast

Send a Phonemic Contrast card currently in play to the discard pile, eliminating this contrast also in existing words.

Grammar Change

Add Inflection

Instead of coining a new word, think of an inflection (prefix, suffix, mutation, infix…). Then show what it means and how it's used with two or more previously coined words.

Meaning Change

Extend Meaning

Instead of coining a new word, take an existing word and give it a new sense or broader meaning. (This may or may not be its original meaning.)

Action

Constraint

The player you designate must, on their next turn, coin a word of a specified part of speech or in a specified semantic domain – your choice. Place this card in front of the designated player, who will then discard it after their next turn.

Typology

Fusional

While in play, any player may coin a fusional affix or mutation on any turn instead of a new root word.

Typology

Agglutinative

While in play, any player may optionally coin an agglutinative affix on any turn instead of a new root word.

Sound Change

Sound Shift

Play a phoneme card that matches at least one feature with a phoneme already in play, discarding the old one and replacing the old phoneme with the new one in existing words. **Draw another card at the end of your turn.**

Grammar Change

Add Inflectional Category

Specify a category (e.g. case, number, tense, aspect, etc.) for which the language will inflect, and the types of words to which it applies. [Not playable if isolating.]

Grammar Change

Secondary Word Order

Play a syntax card from your hand *without* discarding a syntax card of the same type already in play. Specify the conditions where this alternate word order is used (e.g. questions, subordinate or relative clauses, superlatives, emphasis, etc.).

Sound Change

Sound Shift

Play a phoneme card that matches at least one feature with a phoneme already in play, discarding the old one and replacing the old phoneme with the new one in existing words. **Draw another card at the end of your turn.**

Grammar Change

Add Inflectional Category

Specify a category (e.g. case, number, tense, aspect, etc.) for which the language will inflect, and the types of words to which it applies. [Not playable if isolating.]

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Sound Change

Sound Shift

Play a phoneme card that matches at least one feature with a phoneme already in play, discarding the old one and replacing the old phoneme with the new one in existing words. **Draw another card at the end of your turn.**

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