

How many speech sounds are there in the words below? For example, for the word “pot”, there would be three sounds, and for the word “spot” there would be four. Note that for these two examples the number of speech sounds is that same as the number of letters. This will not always be the case. For example, the word “note” has four letters but just 3 speech sounds; the word “know” has four letters but just two speech sounds. Answers are attached.

1. cat \_\_\_\_\_
2. sissy \_\_\_\_\_
3. pits \_\_\_\_\_
4. bill \_\_\_\_\_
5. phone \_\_\_\_\_
6. plant \_\_\_\_\_
7. this \_\_\_\_\_
8. breath \_\_\_\_\_
9. steak \_\_\_\_\_
10. cough \_\_\_\_\_
11. filly \_\_\_\_\_
12. Philly \_\_\_\_\_
13. league \_\_\_\_\_
14. throw \_\_\_\_\_
15. thought \_\_\_\_\_
16. limb \_\_\_\_\_
17. Kansas \_\_\_\_\_
18. cash \_\_\_\_\_
19. steal \_\_\_\_\_
20. beau \_\_\_\_\_
21. bath \_\_\_\_\_
22. bathe \_\_\_\_\_
23. lass \_\_\_\_\_
24. edit \_\_\_\_\_
25. bus \_\_\_\_\_
26. buzz \_\_\_\_\_
27. flew \_\_\_\_\_
28. plaid \_\_\_\_\_
29. ring \_\_\_\_\_
30. boxes \_\_\_\_\_
31. stroke \_\_\_\_\_
32. pants \_\_\_\_\_
33. show \_\_\_\_\_
34. pew \_\_\_\_\_
35. exist \_\_\_\_\_
36. tomb \_\_\_\_\_
37. chill \_\_\_\_\_
38. print \_\_\_\_\_
39. pillow \_\_\_\_\_
40. chew \_\_\_\_\_

## Answers

- |     |         |   |   |
|-----|---------|---|---|
| 1.  | cat     | 3 |   |
| 2.  | sissy   | 4 | (the 'ss' in the middle represents a single /s/)  |
| 3.  | pits    | 4 |   |
| 4.  | bill    | 3 | (the final 'll' is a single /l/)  |
| 5.  | phone   | 3 | (ph = /f/)  |
| 6.  | plant   | 5 |   |
| 7.  | this    | 3 | (the 'th' at the beginning is a single sound, not 2)  |
| 8.  | breath  | 4 | (same deal, though this sound is not the same as the 'th' above)  |
| 9.  | steak   | 4 |   |
| 10. | cough   | 3 |   |
| 11. | filly   | 4 |   |
| 12. | Philly  | 4 |   |
| 13. | league  | 3 | (a lot of letters for just 3 sounds, but that's it)   |
| 14. | throw   | 3 |   |
| 15. | thought | 3 | ('th'=1 sound; 'ough' all represents 1 vowel; then the 't')   |
| 16. | limb    | 3 |   |
| 17. | Kansas  | 6 |   |
| 18. | cash    | 3 | (the 'sh' represents a single sound)  |
| 19. | steal   | 4 |   |
| 20. | beau    | 2 | ('eau' = 1 vowel)   |
| 21. | bath    | 3 |   |
| 22. | bathe   | 3 | (note the difference between this 'th' and the one above)   |
| 23. | lass    | 3 |   |
| 24. | edit    | 4 |   |
| 25. | bus     | 3 |   |
| 26. | buzz    | 3 |   |
| 27. | flew    | 3 | (the 'ew' here represents just 1 vowel)   |
| 28. | plaid   | 4 |   |
| 29. | ring    | 3 | (tricky: final sound here is not 'n' followed by 'g'; it's 1 consonant)   |
| 30. | boxes   | 6 | (this is spoken like 'bahksiz'; IPA transcription = /baksɪz/)   |
| 31. | stroke  | 5 |   |
| 32. | pants   | 5 |   |
| 33. | show    | 2 | (1 consonant represented by 'sh' and 1 vowel)   |
| 34. | pew     | 3 | (tricky: there is a 'y' sound after the /p/)  |
| 35. | exist   | 6 | (spoken like "eggzist"; IPA transcription = /ɛgzɪst/)   |
| 36. | tomb    | 3 |   |
| 37. | chill   | 3 | ('ch' = just 1 sound, IPA transcription = /tʃɪl/, where tʃ=1 sound)   |
| 38. | print   | 5 |   |
| 39. | pillow  | 4 |   |
| 40. | chew    | 2 | (IPA = /tʃu/; again, the phonetic symbol /tʃ/ uses 2 characters but is used to represent a <i>single</i> sound) |