



Cambridgeshire
County Council



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN
CAMBRIDGESHIRE

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

KEY WORDS FOR
PRIMARY RE

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PRONUNCIATION GUIDE: KEY WORDS FOR PRIMARY RE

What is this guide for?

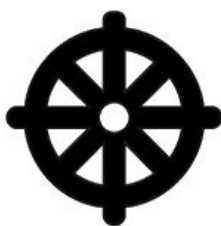
The purpose of this guide is to help teachers who may be unfamiliar with the religious terminology of the faiths included in “Religious Education in Cambridgeshire: the Agreed Syllabus”. The meanings of the words are included in most published resources but the pronunciations are not. What follows is a very simplified guide to pronunciation. Teachers can get a clearer guide by listening for these words on the soundtracks of video material produced for RE in schools, or by consulting older pupils, parents or other contacts such as bilingual school assistants.

Why do pupils need to know these words?

The accurate use of religious terms and concepts is one way in which pupils can demonstrate their growing knowledge and understanding of religions. Teachers will be able to exercise professional judgement over how much specialist vocabulary is appropriate at a given stage. However, all the terms included in this guide occur in either the Agreed Syllabus or the non-statutory scheme of work for Key Stages One and Two.

There is also a large body of religious vocabulary in the Programmes of Study on Christianity which has not been included in this pronunciation guide. It is assumed that all schools will have easy access to people familiar with Christian traditions who can give guidance on pronunciation where necessary.

The appropriate use of religious terminology is of clear benefit in RE. It also has a part to play in encouraging pupils’ general linguistic understanding by making them aware of the existence of other languages, sounds and intonation patterns, laying positive foundations for later foreign language learning.



Buddhism

Buddhist terms and words encountered in this country will usually be from the Indian languages of Pali and Sanskrit. There are slight variations e.g. 'dharma' (Sanskrit) may also be written 'dhamma' (Pali). References may also be found to Tibetan and Japanese Buddhist names and terms; however this is unlikely to happen in primary level RE work.

Some general points

Unless otherwise indicated:

'a' as in 'cat'
'e' as in 'leg'
'i' as in 'sit'
'o' as in 'low'
'u' as 'ou' in 'should'
'th' as in 'thin'

Some key words

bodhi	.....	BOW-dee
Buddha	.....	BUDD-a
dharma	.....	DAR-ma
dukkha	.....	DUK-ka
Jataka	.....	JA-ta-ka
Mahayana	.....	MA-ha-ya-na
Pali	.....	PAA-lee
sangha	.....	san-ga
Sanskrit	.....	Sans-krit
Siddhartha Guatama	.....	Sid-ARTH-a Go-TAA-ma
Theravada	.....	Te-ra VAA-da
Wesak	.....	We-sak



Hinduism

For religious purposes the ancient language of Sanskrit is used. Pupils may speak one or more of a range of Indian languages at home e.g. Hindi, Punjabi, Gujarati, Tamil, Malayalam, as well as English in school.

Some general points

1. Syllables are of equal weight unless a syllable is in capitals, in which case that one should be stressed.
2. Unless other indicated:

'a' as in 'cat'
'i' as in '-ly' in 'lovely'
'o' as in 'orange'
'u' as 'Urdu'
'bh' as 'v' in 'very'

3. You may see names of some deities written sometimes with a final 'a' sometimes without. When spoken, no final 'a' is pronounced, i.e. Rama = Rama, Shiva = Shiv.

Some key words

arti	_____	AAR-ti
AUM/OM	_____	AUM (rhymes with 'home')
Bhagavad Gita	_____	Vaag-vaad Gee-ta
Brahma	_____	Brah-ma
Diwali	_____	Dee-VAA-lee
Ganesh	_____	Ga-NEYSH
Hanuman	_____	Ha-nuu-maan
Holi	_____	Ho-lee
Janamashtami	_____	Jan-MASH-ta-mee
Krishna	_____	KRISH-na

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Lakshmi	_____	LAKSH-mee
mandir	_____	MAN-dir
murti	_____	MUR-tee
prashad	_____	pra-SHAAD
puja	_____	PU-ja
pujari	_____	pu-JAR-ee
Raksha Bandham	_____	Rak-sha Band-hun
rakhi	_____	RAA-kee
Rama	_____	RAAM
Ramayana	_____	Ra-ma-ya-n
rangoli	_____	ran-GO-lee
Shiva	_____	Shi-va
Sita	_____	SEE-ta
Vishnu	_____	Vish-nu



Islam

The language used for religious purposes is Arabic. It is written from right to left. Arabic is particularly important for Muslims and there is great emphasis on the point that the Qur'an, the holy book, is in Arabic and is unchanged from the original revelation to the Prophet Muhammad.

Sometimes pupils will use a term from their vernacular language rather than the Arabic term e.g. Pakistani pupils may use the word 'namaz' instead of 'salah' for 'prayer', or 'roza' instead of 'sawm' for 'fasting'.

Some general points

1. Syllables are of equal weight unless a syllable is in capitals, in which case that one should be stressed.
2. Unless other indicated:
 - 'a' as 'a' in 'around'
 - 'i' as in 'i' in 'big'
 - 'u' as 'u' in 'push'
 - 'aa' as 'a' in 'arm'
 - 'ee' as 'ee' in 'deep'
 - 'oo' as 'oo' in 'food'
3. Some sounds in Arabic don't exist as letters in English. An example of this is the glottal stop, written as an apostrophe in words like Qur'an. It is pronounced like the gap between the two syllables when you pronounce 'bottle' as 'bo'le', i.e. missing out the t's.
4. There is no exact equivalent in English to the Arabic short 'a' sound. The closest might be the 'a' as in 'around'.
5. 'q' is pronounced like 'k' not 'qw'.

Some key words

Allah	_____	Al-Ilah
hadith	_____	ha-DEETH
hajj	_____	hajj
halal	_____	ha-LAAL
Ibrahim	_____	Ib-raa-HEEM

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Islam

Id ul Adha	_____	Eed ul Ad-haa
Id ul Fitr	_____	Eed ul Fit-ter
imam	_____	i-MAAM
ihram	_____	IH-raam
Ka'aba	_____	Ka-a-ba
Makkah	_____	MAK-ka
mihrab	_____	MIH-raab
minbar	_____	MIN-bar
muezzin	_____	mu-AZ-zin
Muhammad	_____	Mu-HAM-mad
qiblah	_____	QIB-la
Qur'an	_____	QUR'-aan
Ramadan	_____	RAM-a-daan
as-salaamu aleikum	_____	as-sa-LAAMu a-LAY-kum
salah	_____	sa-LAAH
Shahadah	_____	Sha-HAA-da
surah	_____	SOO-ra
tawhid	_____	taw-HEED ('taw' rhymes with 'now')
zakah	_____	za-KAAH

Some general points about spelling and grammar

- a) You may find variant spellings of certain sounds in books about Islam, as in the examples below. Most of these are not wrong. They are sometimes slight variations in the way the word is pronounced e.g. by people from different parts of the Muslim world. In other cases they are different ways of trying to represent sounds which exist in Arabic but not in English.
- the sound 'z' or hard 'th' may be seen as 'z', 'dh' or 'd' e.g. 'Ramadan', 'Ramadhan' or 'Ramazan'.
 - the sound 'q' may sometimes be written as 'k' eg in 'Qur'an' 'Koran'.
 - 'Makkah' is now the officially preferred spelling of the name of the holy city (i.e. not Mecca')
 - the sound 'ee' is sometimes written 'i' and sometimes 'ei' e.g. Id ul Fitr, Eid ul Fitr.
- b) 'al' means 'the' i.e. it is the definite article. When it is followed by certain letters, the 'l' is changed to the first letter of the following word e.g. 'al-salaam' (peace) is pronounced 'as-salaam'. You may see it written in either form in English.



Judaism

The language used for religious purposes is Hebrew. This is the basis of modern Hebrew (Ivrit) as spoken in Israel, but is not identical to it. The language is written from right to left. Most Jewish people in Britain speak English as their first language, but small groups (mostly of older people) speak Yiddish. Some words of this language are still commonly used by a lot of people e.g. 'shul' for 'synagogue'.

Some general points

1. All syllables are of equal weight and stress unless a syllable is in capitals letters showing it should be stressed.

The pattern of stresses shown here is the one most likely to be used by Jewish people in Britain. You may also hear some words pronounced with the stress on the last syllable, as would be the way in Israel.

2. Unless otherwise indicated:

'a', 'ah' as in flat, cat

'e' : halfway between 'e' of 'pedal' and 'ay' of 'pay'

'i' as in 'sit'

'u' as 'oo' in 'look', 'book'

3. 'ch' as in the Scottish 'loch' i.e. soft and guttural, not hard 'ch' as in 'church'. This is the sound in words like 'Chanukah', 'chuppah', 'challah' and 'Pesach'. It is sometimes spelt 'Hanukah', 'huppah', 'hallah' or 'Pesah'.

Some key words

Bar Mitzvah/Bat Mitzvah	————	bar (rhymes with car) mitz-va
Bimah	————	BEE-ma
challah	————	CHAL-la
Chanukah	————	CHA-nu-ka
chazzan	————	chaz-ZAN
chuppah	————	CHUP-pa
hagadah	————	ha-ga-da
havdalah	————	hav-da-la
kashrut	————	kash-rut
kippah	————	KIP-pa
kosher	————	KO-sher (rhymes with chauffeur)
matzah	————	MAT-za
menorah	————	me-NOR-ah ('nor' as in 'ignore')
mezuzah	————	me-ZU-za ('zu' as in 'Su' of 'Susanna')
Pesach	————	PE-sach

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Purim _____	Pur-im ('Pur' rhymes with 'sure')
rabbi _____	rab-bye (as in 'goodbye')
Rosh Hashanah _____	Rosh (rhymes with 'Josh') Ha-sha-na
seder _____	SE-da
Sefer Torah _____	SE-fa Tor-a ('Tor' rhymes with 'door')
Shabbat _____	shab-BAT
Shema _____	she-MA
Simchat Torah _____	sim-chat Tor-a
Sukkot _____	suk-kot
synagogue _____	si-na-gog
tallit _____	tal-lit
tefillin _____	te-fil-lin
Torah _____	tor-ah ('Tor' rhymes with 'door')
Tu B 'Shevat _____	toob she-vat
yad _____	yad
Yom Kippur _____	Yom Kip-pur ('Pur' rhymes with 'sure')

Spelling and grammar – a few general points

- a) You may find variant spellings of certain sounds in books about Judaism, as follows. None of these are wrong; they sometimes just reflect slight variations in the way the word is written or pronounced. For example the letter 'k' sometimes appears as a 'c' in the middle of words e.g. 'Sukkot', 'Succot'. The letter 't' sometimes appears as 'th' or 's' e.g. 'tallit', 'tallith'. 'tallis'. In other cases they may represent a letter which exists in Hebrew but not in English e.g. the 'ch' sound described in point (3) above.
- b) The ending '-ah' as a singular changes to '-ot' as a plural. So 'challah' (one loaf) becomes 'challot' (more than one loaf); 'sukkah' (booth, shelter, tabernacle) becomes 'Sukkot' (festival of shelters).
- c) The syllable 'ha-' usually means 'the' i.e. it's the definite article.



Sikhism

The religious language of Sikhs is Punjabi. Punjabi exists as a spoken language which can be written or transcribed in a number of different scripts. The one used for the Sikh scriptures is Gurmukhi – the script of the Gurus.

(Punjabi is also spoken by other people in the Punjab region of North-west India/South east Pakistan, irrespective of their religion. For instance it is used by many Muslim Punjabis when it may be written in Persian script, or by Hindu Punjabis who may write it in the Devanagiri script which is used for other languages such as Gujarati).

Some general points

1. All syllables stressed equally unless printed in capitals letters, in which case that one is emphasised.
2. Unless other indicated:

'a', as in 'cat'
'aa' as in 'a' in 'car'
'e' as in 'leg'
'i' as in 'big'
'o' as in 'orange'
'u' as in 'Urdu'
'th' as in 'thin'
'ch' as in 'cherry'

Some key words

amrit	_____	am-rit
Amritsar	_____	am-RIT-saar
ardas	_____	aar-daas
Baisakhi	_____	By-saa-kee
chauri	_____	chow-ree ('chow' rhymes with 'now')
Ek Onkar	_____	Ek On-kaar

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granthi _____	gran-thee
gurdwara _____	gurd-waa-raa
gurmukhi _____	gur-moo-kee
Guru Gobind Singh _____	Goo-roo Go-bind Sing
Guru Granth Sahib _____	Goo-roo Granth Sa-hib
Guru Nanak _____	Goo-roo Naa-nak
kacchera _____	ka-CHAIR-a
kanga _____	kan-ga
kara _____	ka-ra
kesh _____	kesh
kirpan _____	kir-PAAN
khanda _____	kan-da
kara parshad _____	ka-ra par-shad
Khalsa _____	Kal-sa
Kaur _____	core
langar _____	lan-gaar
Mool Mantar _____	Mool Man-taar
Panj Piare _____	Panj Pee-aa-ray
rumala _____	roo-maa-la
Sikh _____	Seek
Singh _____	Sing

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