

Consonant Sound /f/ spelled “ugh”

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1-syllable

cough
laugh
rough
tough
trough

2-syllable

laugh ter
tough en

e nough

Other /f/ Spellings

-lf-

calf*

half*

-ffe-

chau **ffeur***

gir **affe***

-pph-

sa **pphire***

*Indicates an
uncommon spelling

Note: The *ugh* spelling is taught in the OnTrack Reading curriculum for the following reasons

1. If *gh* is taught as the /f/ sound instead, then the *au* in *laugh* must represent the /a/ sound, which would be an unusual spelling of /a/.
2. Similarly, if *gh* is the /f/ in *cough*, then the *ou* must represent the /o/ sound, which would introduce yet another sound for the digraph *ou*.
3. With *rough*, *tough* and *enough*, if *gh* is the /f/ sound, then the *ou* could stand for the /u/ sound, which would be a common sound for the digraph *ou*, but it also works to simply teach children to hear the /o/ sound for the letter **o** in these words when the *ugh* is taught as the /f/ sound.
4. Teaching *ugh* as /f/ at the *end* of a word (or chunk) avoids the confusion of teaching the digraph *gh* as /g/ in some words such as *ghost* or *ghoul*, and as /f/ in others.