

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

CLASS: _____

SCORE: _____

LESSON 31 • SHORT U (ŭ), LONG U (ū) & SILENT LETTERS

Systemic Phonics • Closed Syllables vs. V-C-e • Silent Letters (Silent -e, Silent -b)

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🕒 PHONICS & SPELLING RULES TO REMEMBER

RULE 1 • Ū VS. Ŭ CONTRAST

Short ŭ (/ʌ/) sits in closed syllables: *dŭsk, snŭg, jŭmp, cŭt*. Long ū (/ju:/ or /u:/) uses silent -e: *ŭse, cŭbe, tŭbe, mŭle*.

RULE 2 • FLOSS RULE (-ZZ)

In a one-syllable word directly after a short vowel, final /z/ is spelled with double -zz: *bŭzz*.

RULE 3 • SILENT LETTERS (-E & -B)

Final -e is silent in *use, cube, tube, mule*. The letter **b** is silent after **m** at the end of words: *dŭm[b]*.

1 Copy these words carefully • Spell orally: Write each word neatly on the handwriting guideline:

COLUMN 1

use _____

muse _____

dusk _____

musk _____

COLUMN 2

snug _____

swung _____

clung _____

jump _____

COLUMN 3

cube _____

tube _____

mule _____

buzz _____

COLUMN 4

cut _____

but _____

rush _____

dumb _____

2 Diacritical & Silent Letter Marking: Check the proper sound for u (ŭ or ū) and identify any silent letter:

COLUMN 1

use ☐ ŭ ☐ ū
Silent: ☐ none ☐ -e ☐ -b

muse ☐ ŭ ☐ ū
Silent: ☐ none ☐ -e ☐ -b

dusk ☐ ŭ ☐ ū
Silent: ☐ none ☐ -e ☐ -b

musk ☐ ŭ ☐ ū
Silent: ☐ none ☐ -e ☐ -b

COLUMN 2

snug ☐ ŭ ☐ ū
Silent: ☐ none ☐ -e ☐ -b

swung ☐ ŭ ☐ ū
Silent: ☐ none ☐ -e ☐ -b

clung ☐ ŭ ☐ ū
Silent: ☐ none ☐ -e ☐ -b

jump ☐ ŭ ☐ ū
Silent: ☐ none ☐ -e ☐ -b

COLUMN 3

cube ☐ ŭ ☐ ū
Silent: ☐ none ☐ -e ☐ -b

tube ☐ ŭ ☐ ū
Silent: ☐ none ☐ -e ☐ -b

mule ☐ ŭ ☐ ū
Silent: ☐ none ☐ -e ☐ -b

buzz ☐ ŭ ☐ ū
Silent: ☐ none ☐ -e ☐ -b

COLUMN 4

cut ☐ ŭ ☐ ū
Silent: ☐ none ☐ -e ☐ -b

but ☐ ŭ ☐ ū
Silent: ☐ none ☐ -e ☐ -b

rush ☐ ŭ ☐ ū
Silent: ☐ none ☐ -e ☐ -b

dumb ☐ ŭ ☐ ū
Silent: ☐ none ☐ -e ☐ -b

3 Memory & Dictation Sentence: Read aloud, copy neatly, and analyze the keyword *pure*:

“Unto the pure all things are pure.” — BIBLE.

Keyword: *pure*

Vowel Mark: ☐ ŭ (short) ☐ ū (long)

Silent Letter: ☐ none ☐ silent -e ☐ silent -b

LESSON 31 • TEACHER ANSWER KEY & LINGUISTIC GUIDE

Diacritical Markings (ü & ū) • Silent Letters (-e & -b) • Biblical Dictation Script

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KEY

Word	Webster Mark	IPA	Vowel Sound	Silent Letter	Orthographic / Etymological Rationale
use	ūse	/juːz/	Long (ū)	Silent -e	V-C-e pattern; voiced coda /z/; final -e is silent
muse	mūse	/mjuːz/	Long (ū)	Silent -e	V-C-e pattern; voiced coda /z/; final -e is silent
dusk	dŭsk	/dʌsk/	Short (ŭ)	None	Closed syllable ending in consonant cluster -sk
musk	mŭsk	/mʌsk/	Short (ŭ)	None	Closed syllable ending in consonant cluster -sk
snug	snŭg	/snʌg/	Short (ŭ)	None	Closed syllable CVC with voiced velar stop /g/
swung	swŭng	/swʌŋ/	Short (ŭ)	None	Closed syllable with velar nasal /ŋ/; past form of swing
clung	clŭng	/klʌŋ/	Short (ŭ)	None	Closed syllable with velar nasal /ŋ/; past form of cling
jump	jŭmp	/dʒʌmp/	Short (ŭ)	None	Closed syllable with voiced affricate j- and nasal blend -mp
cube	cūbe	/kjuːb/	Long (ū)	Silent -e	V-C-e pattern; initial c- before u; final -e is silent
tube	tūbe	/tjuːb/ or /tuːb/	Long (ū)	Silent -e	V-C-e pattern; final -e is silent
mule	mūle	/mjuːl/	Long (ū)	Silent -e	V-C-e pattern; lateral coda /l/; final -e is silent
buzz	bŭzz	/bʌz/	Short (ŭ)	None	FLOSS rule: -zz is doubled after a single short vowel
cut	cŭt	/kʌt/	Short (ŭ)	None	Closed syllable CVC; c- before u (/k/ sound)
but	bŭt	/bʌt/	Short (ŭ)	None	Closed syllable CVC; basic high-frequency short vowel word
rush	rŭsh	/rʌʃ/	Short (ŭ)	None	Closed syllable ending in palato-alveolar fricative digraph -sh
dumb	dŭmb	/dʌm/	Short (ŭ)	Silent -b	Silent letter: final -b is silent after -m; short ŭ sound
pure	pūre	/pjʊər/ or /pjɔːr/	Long (ū)	Silent -e	Proverb keyword: V-r-e pattern; long ū; final -e is silent

MORPHO-PHONOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL ORTHOGRAPHY NOTES:

1. The Silent -b in dumb: *dumb* descends from Old English *dumb* (silent /b/ after /m/). The final /b/ was pronounced in Proto-Germanic but underwent coda cluster reduction in Middle English. The spelling retains the historic etymological **-b**.

2. The Split Digraph V-C-e: In *use*, *muse*, *cube*, *tube*, *mule*, *pure*, the final silent **-e** signals the vowel to represent its alphabetic "long" value (/juː/ or /uː/), rather than the lax short vowel /ʌ/.

3. FLOSS Rule in buzz: Single-syllable base words ending in /z/ immediately preceded by a short vowel double the final letter (**-zz**).

CLASSROOM DICTATION SCRIPT (10 SENTENCES)

use: Please make good use of your time at school.
cube: An ice cube melted quickly in the warm sunlight.
snug: The kitten felt cozy and snug in the wool blanket. **dusk:** Street lamps turn on automatically at dusk.
tube: Squeeze the blue paint gently from the metal tube.
clung: Wet yellow leaves clung firmly to the stone wall.
buzz: Honey bees buzz happily among garden flowers. **rush:** Take your time and do not rush your work.
dumb: Ancient storybooks spoke of gentle, dumb animals.
pure: "Unto the pure all things are pure," states the proverb.

DIAGNOSTIC SCORING RUBRIC (50 POINTS)

Target Skill	Criteria for Mastery	Pts
Careful Copying	Accurate letter formation & baseline penmanship for 16 words.	/16
Vowel Marking	Correct identification of short ŭ vs. long ū on all words.	/16
Silent Letters	Accurate identification of silent -e (5 words) and silent -b (dumb).	/8
Memory Sentence	Accurate transcription of Bible proverb & analysis of keyword pure.	/10
TOTAL SCORE:		/50
COMMON STUDENT ERRORS:		
• Omitting silent -b: Spelling *dum instead of dumb.		
• Omitting silent -e: Writing *cub for cube or *tub for tube.		
• FLOSS rule failure: Writing *buz instead of buzz.		