

2. The ideal of an alphabet is that every sound should have its own unvarying sign, and every sign its own unvarying sound.

3. An alphabet intended for use by a vast community need not attempt an exhaustive analysis of the elements of utterance, and a representation of the nicest varieties of articulation; it may well leave room for the unavoidable play of individual and local pronunciation.

4. An ideal alphabet would seek to adopt for its characters forms which should suggest the sound signified, and of which the resemblances should in some measure represent the similarities of the sounds. But for general practical use there is no advantage in a system which aims to depict in detail the physical processes of utterance.

5. No language has ever had, or is likely to have, a perfect alphabet; and in changing and amending the mode of writing of a language already long written, regard must necessarily be had to what is practically possible quite as much as to what is inherently desirable.

6. To prepare the way for such a change, the first step is to break down, by the combined influence of enlightened scholars and of practical educators, the immense and stubborn prejudice which regards the established modes of spelling almost as constituting the language, as having a sacred character, as in themselves preferable to others. All agitation and all definite proposals of reform are to be welcomed so far as they work in this direction.

7. An altered orthography will be unavoidably offensive to those who are first called upon to use it; but any sensible and consistent new system will rapidly win the hearty preference of the mass of writers.

8. The Roman alphabet is so widely and firmly established in use among the leading civilized nations that it cannot be displaced; in adapting it to improved use for English, the efforts of scholars should be directed towards its use with uniformity and in conformity with other nations.

This statement of principles was unanimously adopted by the Association, and the Committee was reappointed for the purpose of framing a detailed scheme. In 1877 it recommended the adoption of a certain scale of phonetic values for vowels and the addition of a number of new letters to make the alphabet more perfect. These recommendations were adopted, and in 1878 the following eleven words were approved of by the Association for immediate use: *Ar, catalog, definit, gard, giv, hav, infinit, liv, tho, thru, wisht*. The next step was to recommend the observance of five rules, the general application of which would at once rid our spelling of a large number of anomalies and by accustoming readers to new forms pave the way for more extensive changes. These rules are:

1. Omit *a* from the digraph, *ea* when pronounced as *e* short, as in *head, health*, etc.
2. Omit silent final *e* after a short vowel in the same syllable, as in *have, give, infinite, definite*, etc.

3. Write *f* for *ph* in such words as *alphabet, phantom*, etc.

4. When a word ends with a double letter, omit the last letter, as in *shall, cliff, egg*, etc.

5. Change *ed* final to *t* where it has the sound of *t*, as in *lashea, impressed*, etc.

In 1881, the American Philological Association, encouraged by the radical action of the Philological Society of England above referred to, formally approved of the general principles laid down by the latter, and drew up in accordance with them and with its own previously affirmed principles, the following 24 new rules for guidance in the improvement of English spelling without making any change in the English alphabet: