

## Consonant Sound /g/ spelled “gue”

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This list was taken from a 7,000 word database built from a children’s dictionary

### 1-Syllable

rogue  
vogue  
league  
plague  
vague

### 2-Syllable

in trigue  
fa tigue

### 3-Syllable

di a logue

\*\*contains a rare  
spelling of a sound

Note: Words like *rogue* and *vague* tempt curriculum designers to treat the “o-e” and “a-e” concepts as “o- -e” and “a- -e” concepts as well. That is, to allow *two* letters between the vowel and the trailing letter **e**. Words like *waste* and *paste* also encourage this thinking.

Here, it is even more tempting because it would be possible to justify on the basis of there being just one *sound*, the /g/ sound represented by the digraph **gu**, as standing between the vowel and the ending **e**.

One then, however, discovers a word like *league* where it then becomes nearly impossible to explain the ending letter **e** (unless a rule is introduced about no English words ending in the letter **u**, but then we have *flu* and *gnu* to complicate the matter.) Similarly, we then have to complicate the digraph **i-e** by introducing a second /ee/ sound for it in *intrigue* and *fatigue*. Finally, we encounter the word *dialogue* where the **o-e** concept leads to assigning it the /o/ sound and the matter becomes hopelessly confused.

The simplest, most straightforward and most conceptually accurate approach is to just let the spelling **gue** represent the /g/ sound at times, usually at the ends of words. Children rapidly learn to accept the fact that English words often have a superfluous letter **e** at the end. They just need to be told how to conceptually handle it in a consistent manner and shown a few examples of the pattern involved. Very young children form categories almost effortlessly, and this approach relies on their ability to do so.