

The long **i** sound spelled with “**i**+ silent **g** + **n**” as in “**sign**”



The Semivowel Theory: Semivowels can act like vowels and can make the preceding “**i**” sound long.

l, m, n, r, s

Semivowels: The **l**, **m**, **n**, **r**, and **s** are semivowels and they can sometimes act like vowels. Other consonants have no sounds of their own, unless they are said with a vowel. The semivowels, however, do have some sounds of their own, even when not said with vowels. For instance, saying the sound of “s” without a vowel still makes the sound of “s.”

ind: When next to a vowel, the semivowels tend to have various types of controls over the way that preceding vowel should sound. For instance, the “**l**” in “**sol**d” makes the “**o**” sound long; the “**m**” in “**clim**b” makes the “**i**” sound long; the “**n**” in “**kind**” makes the “**i**” sound long; the “**r**” in “**for**” makes the “**o**” sound long; the “**s**” in “**paste**” makes the “**a**” sound long.

sign: Because the “g” is silent in “**sign**,” the semivowels “**n**” is able to make the “**i**” long. In addition, this spelling pattern of long “**i**” is mainly in words that contain the word “**sign**” and the spelling of the word “**sign**” must be memorized.

Moreover, this spelling pattern of long **i** may have been originally accepted into English to tell apart words like “**sign**” and “**sine**,” and once the pattern was used, more words ended up being spelled with it.

ign = in

The “n” is a semivowel.

Compare: Compare “**sin**” with “**sign**.” The “**i**” in “**sin**” does not sound like the name of the letter **I**. Without the silent “**g**,” we would have the word “**sin**” not “**sign**.” The “**i**” in “**sin**” has the unique short **i** sound.



Compare short **i** with long **i** and then compare homonyms of long **i**:

sin, **sign**

sinned, **signed**

sin·ning, **sign**·ing

sign, **sine**

co·**sign**, co·**sine**




The “**ign**” phonic is in approximately **34** words; read them aloud slowly:

sign	signed	sign ·ing
co· sign	co· signed	co· sign ·ing
as· sign	as· signs	as· signed
as· sign ·ing	as· sign ·ment	as· sign ·ee
con· sign	con· sign ·ment	de· sign
de· signed	de· sign ·ing	de· sign ·er
re· sign	re· signed	re· sign ·ing



assignments

sign design
SCHOOL

a· lign	a· ligned	a· lign ·ing
a· lign ·ment	re·a· lign	re·a· ligned
re·a· lign ·ing	be· nign	be· nig ·nant
ma· lign	ma· ligned	ma· lign ·ing
[par·a· dig <u>m</u>]	 Not long i in en· sig	