

BIGISMOB JIGIWAN DOG

Why does Kriol have its own writing system and spelling rules?

Looking at *Bigismob Jigiwan Dog*, you will notice that Kriol has its own alphabet and its own way of spelling and pronouncing words. Kriol is quite a new language and its writing system was only developed in the 1970s. When people wanted to get serious about writing down Kriol, they realised that writing Kriol using only English ways of spelling wasn't going to work very well. Here's why:

- There are some sounds in English that you don't get in Kriol and there are some sounds in Kriol you don't get in English. Writing Kriol using only the English way of spelling is like a sports team with half its players missing. It's just not very effective.
- The English writing system can be very irregular which means that if you try and read an English word you don't know, you can have all sorts of problems
- Look at words in English that have '-ough' in them: through, cough, dough, thought, although... there are many ways 'ough' is pronounced.
- Kriol has a more regular spelling system. Once you know what sound a letter or two-letter combination makes, you can read most words and say them quite well. So, if you can get used to what sounds all the Kriol letters and letter-combinations make, you will be able to read *Bigismob Jigiwan Dog* pretty well!

Reading Bigismob Jigiwan Dog

Here are some things to help you read *Bigismob Jigiwan Dog*:

Listen to the audio recording posted on the Meigim Kriol Strongbala website:

https://meigimkriolstrongbala.org.au/en_au/resource/bigismob-jigiwan-dog-too-many-cheeky-dogs/

Follow our handy pronunciation guide:

- Many Kriol letters and sounds are the same or almost the same as in English. These letters shouldn't give you too many problems:
 - **b, d, f, h, j, k, l, m, n, p, r, s, t, w, y, sh**
- But there are a few letters and sounds that take a bit of practice: **g** is always a 'hard g', as in 'girl', not like the 'soft g' in 'gym'. Kriol examples from the book: jigiwan (cheeky one), bigibigi (pig), dog (dog)
- Kriol has both **r** and **rr**. They are different sounds. Single **r** is the 'r' sound we use in English. Double **rr** is like a quick rolled r – a bit like the 'tt' when you say 'gotta' or 'butter' quickly. Examples from the book: garra (sounds like 'gotta' but means 'with' or 'will/going to')
- **tj** sounds like 'ch' as in 'church'. We use **tj** in Kriol because the Kriol alphabet doesn't use the letter 'c' in at all. Examples: Tjusdei (Tuesday), dogketja (dog catcher)
- The vowels are probably the part that looks trickiest at the start, but once you know what to do, it's easier than English!
 - **a** is ALWAYS like the sound in 'farm', not like the 'a' in 'fat'. Examples: daga (food – this word comes from tucker!), sabi (know, understand)
 - **e** is like the 'e' in 'bed'. Examples: beda (better), en (and)

- **i** can be like the `ee` in `meet` or like the `i` in `bit`. It's never like the `i` in `kite` or `might`. Examples: thribala (three), mi (me)
- **o** can be like the `o` in `hot` or sometimes like the `o` in `fork`. Examples: dog (dog), wok (walk), obul (oval)
- **u** is like `u` in `put` or sometimes like the `oo` in `boot`. Examples: yu (you), luk (see, look)

So far so good? Practice reading these Kriol words from the book. They actually sound like the English words they are based on – they are just spelled differently because of the Kriol spelling rules!

- Siso (see-saw)
- Kemp (camp)
- Fut (foot)
- Grinwan (green one)

Lastly, let's look at when Kriol puts two vowels together. These might look tricky but once you know what sound these two-letter combinations make, it's pretty easy!

- **ai** ALWAYS sounds like `eye` (and `I` too!), never like the `ai` in `paint`. Examples: main (mine), taim (time), trai (try)
- **ei** ALWAYS sounds like the `ay` in `day` or the `ai` in `pain`. Examples: Mandei (Monday), ranawei (runaway)
- **au** sounds like the `ou` in `sound` or the `ow` in `clown`. Example: braunwan (brown one)
- **ou** sounds like the `ow` in `flow` and the `oa` in `boat`. Example: roud (road)

Got it? Great! Well done! Don't forget – listen to any recordings of the book as a guide.

There are other resources to help with Kriol sounds and spelling, like these Kriol Elfabet (alphabet) posters: https://meigimkriolstrongbala.org.au/en_au/resource/kriol-elfabet-poster/

Tips for further learning and practice

To keep developing Kriol reading and speaking skills and to get better at reading *Bigismob Jigiwan Dog*, here are some more tips:

- If you know a Kriol speaker, ask if they can help you practice words with them and listen carefully to their pronunciation. Keep in mind though – not many Kriol speakers have had the opportunity to learn how to read Kriol because it is rarely taught in school, so it may be difficult for them to be confident when reading *Bigismob Jigiwan Dog* too. That's okay, you can practice together!
- Look and listen to the Kriol videos shared on the Meigim Kriol Strongbala website. They will give you a feel for how the language sounds: https://meigimkriolstrongbala.org.au/en_au/resource-type/videos-in-kriol/
- And don't forget to listen to the audio recording - https://meigimkriolstrongbala.org.au/en_au/resource/bigismob-jigiwan-dog-too-many-cheeky-dogs/ - and keep an eye out for more *Bigismob Jigiwan Dog* multimedia resources that are in the pipeline!