

TOUCH CUES

A helpful practice strategy is to combine each sound with the vowels (a, e, i, o, u), as in bay, bee, buy, bow, boo.

/b/ close lips together; gently pinch fingers together at lips (either your lips or child's), blow bubbles Target words: ball, baby, big, bye-bye, bow

/p/ close lips together, then pop them open; once again, use fingers to demonstrate lips squeezed together; also you can use powder on your hand, demonstrate lip popping (blow powder off your hand as you say, "Puh"). Target words: pay, pie, pea, pop, pig

/t,d/ show child tongue tip tapping behind teeth; use mirrors, have them look right in your mouth; also, tap your index finger on front/bottom of chin to elicit /t,d/ sound. /t/ is quiet sound, /d/ is made with your voice on. Target words: tie, die, toe, doe, day, tip, dip

/k,g/ talk to your child about the tongue scraping on the back of the throat; tap your hand on either your Adam's apple area (or theirs), to give them cue to pull their tongue back to scrape; you may also use tongue depressor to train feeling of the tongue being pulled back. Target words: kookoo, googoo, cookie, go, gas, kick

/f,v/ talk to your child about and demonstrate top teeth biting bottom lip and air flowing over bottom lip; remind them to bite their lip; push on bottom lip so it goes under top teeth (fee fie foe fum sound). Use the phrase "bite and blow" to remind your child what to do. Target words: far, fun, fast, van, vest

/th/ talk to child about putting tongue between teeth and blowing Target words: think, thank, that, this, Thanksgiving

/s,z/ talk to your child about closing teeth together and letting a little bit of air they have a hard time with this, have them bite down first, and then try to send air through their teeth. Remind them to keep their tongue in the cage, hide it. Once they get tongue placement, they may still have trouble with airflow. At this point, drag your index finger gently along the outside of their cheek towards their mouth to stimulate airflow. Target words: see, say, sigh, so, sue, zee, zay, zie, zoe, zoo

/sh/ talk to your child about making lips rounded, keeping teeth together, and letting more air out; put your finger in front of your lips ("Shhh", be quiet sound; gently pull child's cheeks forward to make their lips round and direct airflow. Target words: shay, she, shy, show, shoe

/h/ Have child take deep breath and then let lots of air out; put your hand in front of your mouth to feel the air hitting your hand; then have child feel the air hitting their hand; you can also use a mirror, which will fog up when you let the air hit it. Target words: hay, he, hi, hoe, who

/w/ tell child to make lips into a circle; move your index finger in a circle in front of your rounded lips as a reminder; gently pull cheeks forward to round lips Target words: way, we, why, woe, woo

/m/ have child close lips together, then feel vibration in their nose (or yours), as you or they make the /m/ sound Target words: may, me, my, moe, moo

/n/ show child tongue position behind top teeth, then have them feel vibration in nose (yours or theirs) Target words: neigh, knee, nigh, no, new

/ch,j/ have child round lips, keep teeth close together and push the air out; gently pull cheeks forward to obtain lip rounding; remind child to keep tongue against top of mouth Target words: cheep, chop, church, chat, jeep, job, jot, jog

/y/ start with "eee" sound, then slide into whatever vowel follows the /y/ (you = eee-you) Target words: yee, yeah, yie, yoe, you

/r/ This is one of the hardest sounds to teach. Correct production of /r/ requires appropriate tension and placement, all of which are mostly invisible to a child. We suggest that if your child is having trouble with /r/ that you take them to a speech-language pathologist who can shape the correct production and teach you how to best help your child.

/l/ teach child to move tongue tip to top of mouth; remind them to keep tongue inside of teeth; put peanut butter or candy at top of mouth right behind teeth, tell child that that is where you want their tongue to go to make the sound (lalala) Target words: lay, lee, lie, low, loo, light, lollipop, lip, lap