



How to help a child to say "th"

Ear Tuning

You will need to do plenty of listening and ear tuning first. The first step is to practice listening for the difference between f and th when you say them on their own.

Write "f" and "th" on two cards and put them in front of the child.

Say fff and then th several times each and ask the child to put a counter on the one that you say.

NB. Remember to say the sound without a vowel after it, in other words, "ffff" not "fuh".

Now put two minimal pair word cards in front of the child e.g. thin and fin. You will find these in "Listen and Fink", also included in this pack.

Say one of the words clearly, exaggerating the "fff" or "th" sound as you do so.

Ask the child to point to, or put a counter on the picture of the one you say.

Gradually decrease the amount of exaggeration of your "f" and "th" sound until the child can get it right even with normal speech.

Say a list of words that begin with either "f" or "th" and ask the child to point to the letter of that the word starts with.

Now help him to say "th"

- Keeping the lips slightly open will help because this makes production of "f" more difficult
- Use a mirror if necessary
- Practise licking the top lip then the bottom lip, so that the tongue gets used to a more forward position.
- Ask the child to put his tongue out. Now ask him to bite his tongue gently, then open the lips slightly and blow. A mirror is helpful at this stage
- It may help to say a long "aaah" then bit the tongue, so that the lips don't come together for "ffff"
- Try a long "tthh" and then try lots of little ones "th th th"
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Blending "th" with a vowel

It is easier to make nonsense syllables not words.

E.g. th eeee, th ooooo, th air, th ur etc.

Putting the sounds into words

Practice saying words that start with the sound "th" There are two sorts of "th", the whispered one in "thin" and the voiced one in "that" . He may find the whispered one easier at first.

Putting the words into sentences

Now make up a sentence with each of the words in it. Practice these sentences.