

Handy Handouts®

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Get to Know Your Speech Sounds: /th/

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How is the Sound Produced?

/th/ is a linguadental (made with the tongue and teeth) fricative sound, meaning there is a continuous flow of air. It can be a voiced sound, where the vocal folds are vibrating, or a voiceless sound, where the vocal folds are not vibrating.



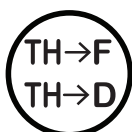
1. Place the tip of the tongue slightly between the teeth.
2. Blow air between the teeth to produce /th/.
3. For voiceless /th/ words, (e.g. teeth), the voice is off. To produce voiced /th/ words (e.g. brother), turn the voice on (or hum) as you blow air.

When Does the Sound Develop?*



- 50% of children produce voiced and voiceless /th/ by age 4. This is when the sound is emerging.
- 90% of children produce voiceless /th/ by age 7 and voiced /th/ by age 6. This is when the sound should be acquired. If the child is not producing the sound by this point, speak with a speech-language pathologist.

Common Errors



- Voiceless /th/ is commonly replaced with /f/ (e.g. "baf" for "bath").
- Voiced /th/ is commonly replaced with /d/ (e.g. "dis" for "this") or /v/ (e.g. "brover" for "brother").

Tips for Cueing**

1. Verbal



- "Put your tongue between your teeth."
- "Blow air."



2. Visual



- Show the student the picture above. Ask the child to describe how the teeth and lips look.
- Use a mirror to have the child see the difference between /th/ and the error sound. For example, if the child is producing /f/ for /th/, point out how the lower lip touches the teeth and the tongue is not between the teeth.

3. Tactile



- Have the child place his or her hand in front of the mouth to feel the air as it blows out.

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Practice***

Note: Even though a word may end with another letter, if the /th/ sound is pronounced last, it is considered a /th/ final word (e.g., bathe).

-Phonemic Awareness

- Name each picture. Point to the pictures with the /th/ sound.†



-Syllable



- tho-tho-tho-tho-tho
- thay-thay-thay-thay-thay
- ooth-ooth-ooth-ooth-ooth
- ith-ith-ith-ith-ith
- thee-tho-thay-thee-tho-thay

-Word

Initial	Final	Medial
<u>th</u> umb	bat <u>th</u> tub	mat <u>h</u>
<u>th</u> irsty	pat <u>h</u> way	toot <u>h</u>
<u>th</u> is	mo <u>th</u> er	breat <u>h</u> e
<u>th</u> ere	weat <u>h</u> er	smoot <u>h</u>



-Isolation

- Practice /th/ while tracing each letter. Practice first with your voice off and then practice with your voice on.

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-Phrase



- picking them up
- in third place
- a chocolate smoothie
- a new tooththbrush
- a smoothth road
- a bath on Saturday

-Sentence



- I like this cake.
- Thank you for the present.
- I bathe every night.
- I put a wreathth on my door.
- My grandmotherth is visiting.
- Her birtthday is on Monday.

-Structured Language



- Describe how you get ready for school. Use the words "toothbrush, bathroom, clothes."
- Talk about a trip to the dentist using the words "mouth, toothpaste, teeth, toothbrush, toothache."
- Pick out a page in a book and mark the words with the /th/ sound with sticky notes. Read the page with your best /th/ sound.

-Unstructured Language



- Tell how to play your favorite game using your best /th/ sound.
- Talk about your favorite summer activity using your best /th/ sound.
- Describe your family using your best /th/ sound.



*These milestones are based on monolingual, native English speakers. If a child speaks more than one language, acquisition of English sounds can be influenced by the other language(s). These differences do not necessarily indicate a speech sound disorder. Please consult with a speech-language pathologist.

**Not all cues are appropriate in all cases. Please consult with a speech-language pathologist before cueing.

***Ask your child's speech-language pathologist which targets are appropriate to practice.

† "thumb", "feather," and "Earth" contain the /th/ sound.

Resources:

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (n.d.) Age of Customary Consonant Production. (Practice Portal). Retrieved June 21, 2023 from www.asha.org/Practice-Portal/Clinical-Topics/Articulation-and-Phonology/

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (n.d.) Selected Phonological Processes. (Practice Portal). Retrieved June 21, 2023, from www.asha.org/Practice-Portal/Clinical-Topics/Articulation-and-Phonology/

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