

Can't Hear the Sounds

I recently had a lady say:

My children can't hear the sounds, not even one!

So I sent her this list of activities, so she could help her children learn to hear sounds in words.

Here are some activities that can help your children learn to hear the sounds. Just do the activities for a few minutes a day for a week or two and see if she starts to catch on. You might find that soon they only has a problem with 3 or 4 sounds. If these suggestions don't help, then follow my final suggestion – but don't rush to do that.

Many people have trouble hearing the sounds to start with. But remember, if your children speaks clearly, they used to be able to hear the sounds (when they were learning to speak). They've just got to "refresh" that skill. It takes a little time for the brain to catch on to what you're wanting. So don't panic.

When I'm speaking about a sound, I'll put the most common letter used to represent that sound between slash marks, e.g. /s/ means the sound sssss that begins the word *snake*.

**TEACH /F/ IN FLY SWAT, /L/ IN LADDER,
/M/ IN MOUNTAINS, AND /S/ IN SNAKE**

In order to tune your children in to hearing the individual sounds in words, teach them these 4 sounds – because they are the easiest one to hear. They're easier to hear because they are "continuous"; we can "stretch" each of them out into one continuous long sound e.g. ffffffffffff, llllllllllll, mmmmm and ssssssssss.

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Many other sounds are pronounced so quickly that they can be VERY hard to hear. It only becomes easier for students to hear these sounds after they've become a bit more tuned in to the easier sounds.

To tune students into hearing the sounds, use the following pictures with their memory words, their related hand signs, and their silly sentences.

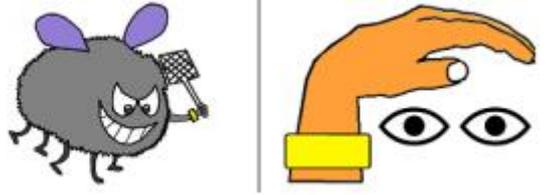
Teach one sound at a time, not going on to a new one until they know the current one well.

Here are the steps for each sound:

1. Teach the memory word or phrase
2. Teach the hand sign for that memory word
3. Say the silly sentence and get your students to repeat it after you
4. Say the sound and get students to repeat it
5. Get students to say the correct sound whenever you point to the picture
6. Get students to say the correct sound when you make the hand sign
7. Get students to make the correct hand sign when you point to the picture
8. Get students to make the correct hand sign when you say the sound

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/F/ IN FLY SWAT

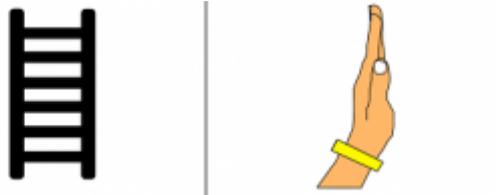


The memory word is: fly swat. The left hand* is used to swat flies at eye level.

*My left wrist is marked with a lemon wristband, you can must mark your wrist and your students' wrists with something that can be easily seen, so that they don't have to think about left and right when you want them to concentrate on hearing sounds.

The silly sentence is: The **fierce fly** has a **fly swat**. [Students don't need to remember the silly sentence; it's only there to supply you with a sentence that contains several words containing the necessary sound, so students can hear the sound, and then say it correctly.]

/L/ IN LADDER

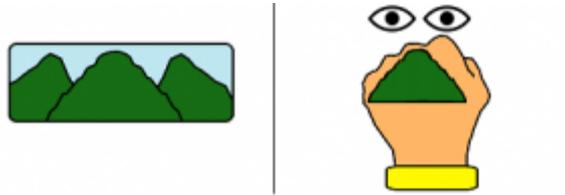


The memory word is: ladder. The left hand (marked with a lemon wristband) is held upright like a ladder.

The silly sentence is: **Little lambs love ladders**. [Students don't need to remember the silly sentence.]

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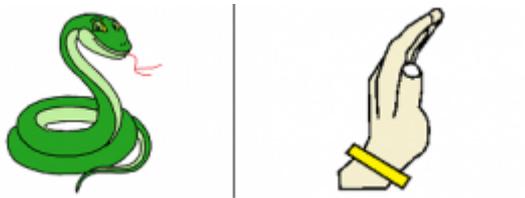
/M/ IN MOUNTAINS



The memory word is: mountains. The left hand (marked with a lemon wristband) is held up at eye level so you can see the knuckles that represent mountains.

The silly sentence is: **M**onkeys **m**ap **m**ighty **m**ountains. [Students don't need to remember the silly sentence.]

/S/ IN SNAKE



The memory word is: snake. The left hand (marked with a lemon wristband) is shaped like a snake's head being held up.

The silly sentence is: **S**ix **s**nakes **s**lide and **s**kid. [Students don't need to remember the silly sentence.]

Keep the activities low stress. It's like everything, it can take a few days of simple, brief instruction for a brain to make the connection between the new information and really "getting" it. So just plod along.

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IF YOU'D LIKE YOUR CHILD TO LEARN THE REST OF THE SOUNDS IN ENGLISH

If your child or student is now ready to learn the rest of the sounds, take him or her through the *Phonemic Awareness Video Course* Free Trial and then the Course, because it will teach your student to hear all the sounds in English.

IF IT LOOKS AS THOUGH THOSE ACTIVITIES ARE NOT HELPING, TRY THIS

FAST FORWARD

<http://www.fastforward.com.au>

This site is available in many countries. The program re-trains the brain to hear the individual sounds. It's an online course.