



# How to teach your child a sound

*Teaching your child how to say sounds correctly is really important. It can help your child to make friends and decrease frustration as they are easier to understand. It also helps if your child can say the sound accurately when they are learning to read and write. Below are some steps to teach your child a sound.*

## Imitation

See whether your child can produce a single sound by asking them to imitate your cues. Select a different sound if the child cannot produce the sound with cues.

## Say the sound on its own (isolation)

You model the sound with a vowel (a, e, i, o, u) and the child copies. For example:

Beginning	"say fa"
Middle	"say afa"
End	"say af"

## Nonsense syllables (non-words)

You model and the child copies the sound. For example, "say ffff". Ask "what is the \_\_\_\_ sound?" and the child says the sound without your verbal model. For example, "what is the 'fly spray' sound?"

## Say the sound in words

First, you model and the child copies. For example, "say feet". The child says the word on his or her own. Secondly, the child says the word on their own. You can use pictures, toys, ask questions or give hints. For example, "you put shoes on your..."

## Say the sound in sentences

First, you model a sentence containing the sound and the child copies. For example, "this is a fire", or "you tell me 'this is a fire'".

Eventually, the child will produce a sentence containing the sound on his/her own.

## Say the sound in conversation

The child talks to you in a 5-minute activity, talking about their day or an excursion or describing what a picture looks like. They need to say the sound correctly.

Remember to praise your child when they say the sound automatically/spontaneously when they're talking. It might be time to teach a new sound!

*Adapted from: Brown, Jenny. & Western Sydney Area Health Service (N.S.W.). (1994). Pre-school communication workshop : an inservice programme for staff working in early childhood settings. Merrylands, N.S.W. : Western Sydney Area Health Service*



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