

Speech and Language Therapy Activities

Speech Sounds

Minimal Pairs



What is auditory discrimination?

It is important that your child is able to hear the difference between sounds to be able to produce them accurately in their own speech. Discriminating between sounds is often practised using 'minimal pairs' (A pair of words where only one sound is different e.g. 'key' vs 'tea.')



Working on listening for sounds in this way will increase your child's awareness of the difference and allow them to store the sounds correctly ready to use them.

How can you help?

It is important to praise your child for their attempts at activities. If they find it difficult, model the sounds for them, saying, 'it did sound a bit like tea but I think it was a key,' emphasising the sound that your child is listening for. Try to mix up activities to make it fun!

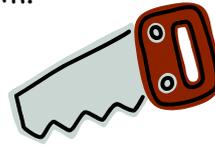


Activities to try:

Picture pairs

- Your Speech and Language Therapist can provide you with minimal pairs pictures
- Pick a pair of the pictures (minimal pairs), e.g. car/tar
- Place the pictures in front of your child and ask them to listen very carefully.
- Now, say one of the words e.g. car and ask your child to place an item, e.g. brick, toy or sweet/or post the picture that they hear.
- Try to do this 10 times in no specific order.

- Now, some children enjoy being the 'teacher:'
- Ask them to tell you which picture to take an item from, i.e 'car' or 'tar' until all of the pieces are removed. Don't worry if they say it wrong- it is more important that they hear you say it. You can check by pointing to the one that you hear and praising them.



Secret messages

- For a different activity, cut up the pictures of a pair, e.g. 'saw and door' and place them in a bag/ container. Take turns to pick a card from the bag and do not show each other. Keep the card hidden and say the word. The other person must choose which word they heard by pointing at the matching picture on the table. When they have picked, the card can be revealed to see if they were right!