

The Speech Pathway

"S" Sound Worksheets



Disclaimer:

*These tools have been designed to support and enhance
speech sound development and programming.*

*This tool should not be considered a substitute for the expertise of a
registered Speech Language Pathologist.*

*A full assessment with a registered Speech Language Pathologist
is always recommended prior to beginning any
articulation work.*

Introduction:

You hold in your hands my personal recipe for success when working on developing the acquisition of speech sounds. The following pages provide you a roadmap or “pathway” for you to follow in your pursuit of achieving your target sound. This is a motor based approach with a primary focus of developing automaticity through repetition. This approach is similar to how a pianist practices musical scales to develop automaticity in their fingers ability to smoothly and fluidly hit the notes.

At the bottom of each page you will see the golden rule, “Accuracy First-Develop speed while maintaining accuracy.” Accuracy is essential but accuracy without speed is of limited value. Conversational speech requires many extremely rapid transitions which occur without us consciously attending to them. They are automatic processes. This program develops the automaticity of articulator movements for your specific target sound. The provided drills will systematically progress through various levels of increasing complexity.

Getting the sound correct is not enough. We need to perceive how the sound is being said. Is it effortful, taking much concentration-or is it fluid, effortless and automatic. In striving for automatic speech we spend the great majority of our time practicing sounds and sound combinations that appear easy to do. The focus on repeating drills that we can already do leads to our productions being more fluid, effortless and automatic.

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How to Use This Program

To get the most out of this program you need to develop the habit of practicing 5-10 minutes a day. Establish a consistent routine of practicing at the same time each day if at all possible. This ultimately should develop into a habit like brushing your teeth daily before going to bed.

When practicing the drills, always start at the beginning sound level and rapidly review all levels up until the point your child starts to break down. Do not skip ahead and only practice the level where the break down is occurring. To do so would be a massive missed opportunity for improvement. Remember this program focuses on developing what skills your child can already do and facilitates them doing it “smoother” and “without effort”

For example, if your child was working on sentence level drills with multiple targets, which is a high level skill, the warm up would look like this:

1. Say /s/ 20 sets of 5
2. Say each syllable 2 sets of 5.
3. Say each double syllable 2 sets of 5.
4. Say words 5x each target word.
 - o 5 word initial targets
 - o 5 word medial targets
 - o 5 word final targets

Once experienced, this warm up will take 3-5 minutes.

Spend the remainder of the session working on the level of where the breakdown is occurring. Go slow at first to foster accurate productions. Develop speed while maintaining accuracy. Do not spend too much time working on where the breakdown is occurring. This can overwhelm your child. NO one likes being asked to do something they cannot do. Rather reduce the level of difficulty until your child can produce the target sound accurately and resume increasing the speed while trying to maintain accuracy.

Be positive, focused and persistent and your speech sound target will be achieved.

Sound Discrimination:

Sound Discrimination is a fundamental skill that needs to be in place for a child to successfully improve their articulation. A child needs to clearly hear and distinguish the correct production of their target sound from the incorrect productions. If they are able to perceive the sound is being produced incorrectly than they have the opportunity to adjust how they are saying it.

Goal:

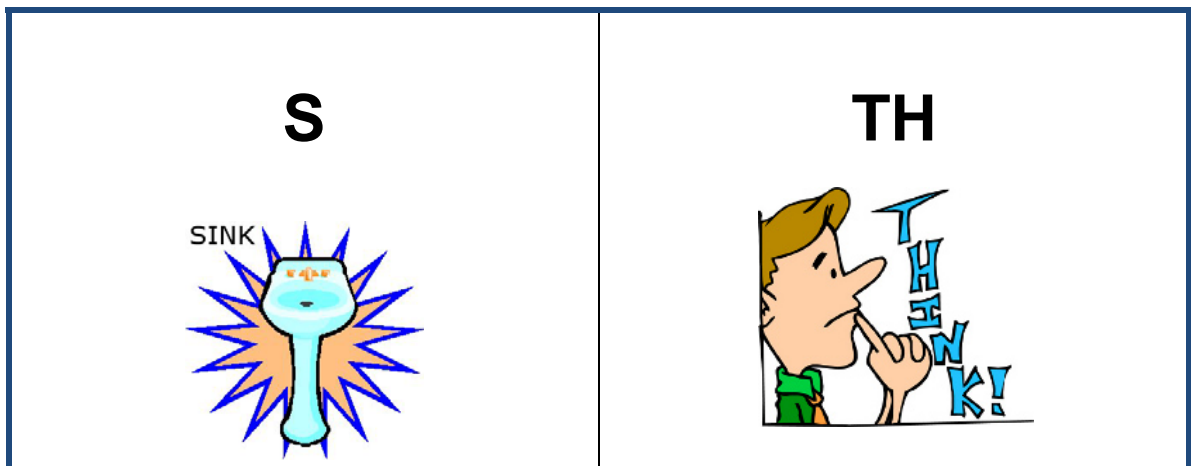
To develop ability to accurately distinguish their target sound from other sounds (specifically any sound they substitute for target sounds).

Example: The child might say **thumb** for **some**. Fronting is causing the /s/ sound to distort into a /th/ sound.

Focus on discriminating S and TH sounds.

Method:

1. Using the table below, say either sound and have your child point to that sound. Say “Show me /s/”, and have child select by pointing. Be very random in targets you choose. You may find your child is an expert pattern seeker! Try saying random /s/ and /th/ sounds 20 times and keep score. Progress to the next level when 90% accuracy is reached (18/20 accurate attempts).



Golden Rule: Accuracy first! Develop speed while maintaining accuracy.

2. Once child is accurate with sound level discrimination, we will work on discriminating the 1st sound at the start of words. We use minimal pairs for this task. A minimal pair is a set of words that differs only by one sound. These can be tricky at first but will improve with patience and consistency of practice.

Sick/thick

Sin/thin

Some/thumb

Sing/thing

Sink/think

Song/thong

Sore/thor

NOTE: *Instruct the child to listen to the first sound in each word and point to the sound on the sheet. Be very random once again as children will look for patterns and guess.*

3. Stick with this until you have a strong sense that your child is clearly hearing the difference between the two sounds. Should at least have 90% accuracy (18/20 trials). If child is having difficulty with this, make a point of practicing this at the start of every homework session.



Golden Rule: Accuracy first! Develop speed while maintaining accuracy.

Sound Level Productions:

Prerequisite:

Child must be stimulable for the sound, meaning they are able to produce sound when given a model or prompted. If child is not stimulable they will have to work with SLP to develop proper articulator placement. Oral motor drills may be given to help develop their articulator strength, coordination and overall awareness of the speech mechanism.

The sound level is the first step in mastering the /s/ sound in conversation. Mastery is necessary before proceeding to the next level.

Goal:

To develop the ability to accurately *and* consistently reproduce the target sound rapidly. Always start off slowly and gradually increase speed while maintaining accuracy. Try to make it a habit of saying your target in sets of 5.

Method:

1. Model sound for child each time.
2. Direct child's attention to your mouth to watch the model.

Start with one target at a time:

/s/...../s/...../s/...../s/

Then try two at a time:

/s/.s/...../s/.s/...../s/.s/....

Then try three at a time:

/s/.s/.s/...../s/.s/.s/...../s/.s/.s/....

Building finally to 5 at a time:

/s/.s/.s/.s/.s/...../s/.s/.s/.s/.s/...../s/.s/.s/.s/.s/....

Once child can repeatedly do 5 times in a row slowly it is absolutely essential you focus on increasing the speed. There is a high likelihood you will cause errors when pushing the speed. Pay attention to the errors. If your child is making an error and then corrects themselves on subsequent productions they are on track. If your child makes an error repeatedly 2-3 time in a row you need to slow things down to regain accuracy.



Golden Rule: Accuracy first! Develop speed while maintaining accuracy.

Speed Drills

See how long it takes to do the 5 sets of 5 (25 total). It takes a lot less than you think.

At this stage you should not need to model or only need to model 1st set.

- 20 or more seconds is a start.
- 12 seconds is medium speed.
- 8 seconds is fast.



Golden Rule: Accuracy first! Develop speed while maintaining accuracy.

Syllable Level Productions:

Prerequisite:

Child must be able to rapidly reproduce sound 5 times in a row accurately and repeat 5 times.

Goal:

To develop the ability to add a target sound to a vowel, and develop transition speed.

Method:

1. Model sound for child each time.
2. Direct child’s attention to your mouth to watch Model sound.
3. Go slow and stretch out productions at first. Split apart if absolutely necessary.

Example: s.....ay, s...ay, s.ay, say

4. Say each of the following 5 times. We are simply adding the vowels A,E,I,O,U to the target sound.

Initial Productions

say

see

sigh

so

sue

Final Productions

ace

eeese

ice

ose

oose

5. Model one target at a time slowly:

/say/...../say/...../say/...../say/

6. Then model two at a time slowly:

/say/./say//say/./say/...../say/./say/....

7. Then model three at a time slowly:

/say/./say/./say/...../say/./say/./say/...../say/./say/./say/.....



Golden Rule: Accuracy first! Develop speed while maintaining accuracy.

8. Lastly try five at a time slowly:

/say/.say/.say/.say/.say/...../say/.say/.say/.say/.say/.....

Once child can repeatedly do 5 times in a row slowly it is absolutely essential you focus on increasing the speed. There is a high likelihood you will cause errors when pushing the speed. Pay attention to the errors. If your child is making an error and then corrects themselves on subsequent productions they are on track. If your child makes an error repeatedly 2-3 time in a row you need to slow things down to regain accuracy.

Speed Drills

See how long it takes to do the 5 sets of 5. (25 total) It takes a lot less than you think.

At this stage you should not need to model or only need to model 1st set.

- 20 or more seconds is a start.
- 12 seconds is medium speed.
- 8 seconds is fast.

You could also see how many accurate productions your child can do in 10 seconds. Keep track of your score and strive to beat your previous scores. Make sure the child is clear that only accurate productions count.

Note: *If your child can do target 5 times in a row, for three sets, at a medium speed than they are ready for next level.*



Golden Rule: Accuracy first! Develop speed while maintaining accuracy.

Double Syllable Level Productions:

Double syllable drills are the most important drills in the entire pathway progression. These drills target the ability to rapidly transition between target sounds and vowels. This is a key skill necessary to produce these sounds in conversation.

Prerequisite:

Child must be able to rapidly reproduce syllable 5 times in a row accurately.

Goal:

To further develop the ability to add target sound to a vowel and develop transition speed.

Method:

1. Model sound for child each time.
2. Direct the child’s attention to your mouth to watch the model sound.
3. Go slow and stretch out productions at first. Split apart if absolutely necessary.

Example: s.....ay, s...ay, s.ay, say

4. Say each of the following 15 times by chunking into three sets of 5. We are simply adding the vowels A,E,I,O,U to the target.

Initial Productions

say-see

see-sie

sie-so

so-sue

sue-say

Final Productions

ace-eeese

eeese-ice

ice-ose

ose-oose

oose-ace

5. Model one target at a time slowly:

/say-see/...../say-see/...../say-see/...../say-see/

6. Then model two at a time slowly:

/say-see/./say-see//say-see/./say-see/...../say-see/./say-see/....

7. Then model three at a time slowly:

/say-see/./say-see/./say-see/...../say-see/./say-see/./say-see/.....



Golden Rule: Accuracy first! Develop speed while maintaining accuracy.

8. Lastly try five at a time slowly:

/say-see/./say-see/./say-see/./say-see/./say-see/....

Once child can repeatedly do this 5 times in a row slowly it is absolutely essential you focus on increasing the speed. There is a high likelihood you will cause errors when pushing the speed. Pay attention to the errors. If your child is making an error and then corrects themselves on subsequent productions they are on track. If your child makes an error repeatedly 2-3 time in a row you need to slow things down to regain accuracy.

Speed Drills

See how long it takes to do the 3 sets of 5. (15 total) It takes a lot less than you think.

At this stage you should not need to model or only need to model 1st set.

- 25 or more seconds is a good start.
- 15 seconds is medium speed.
- 10 seconds is fast.

Game:

See how many accurate productions your child can do in 10 seconds. Keep track of your score and strive to beat your previous scores. Make sure the child is clear that only accurate productions count.

Note: *If your child can do the target 5 times in a row for three sets at a medium speed than they are ready for next level.*



Golden Rule: Accuracy first! Develop speed while maintaining accuracy.

Word Level Productions:

If your child has a strong foundation in syllable level drills then word level drills should be quite easy.

Prerequisite:

Child must be fluent in double syllable drills. With strong double syllable skill set, word level productions should be very easy.

Goal:

To develop ability to accurately *and* consistently reproduce target words rapidly. Always start of slowly and gradually increase speed while maintaining accuracy. Feel free to add your own words.

Method:


Initial	Medial	Final
Same	Missing	Face
Seat	Lesson	Peace
Sign	Nicely	Mice
Soak	Closer	Close
Suit	Amusing	Loose
Sad	Massive	Pass
Sip	Kissing	Kiss
Sat	Castle	Toss
Song	Bossy	moss

Say each word from the table 5 times in a row. Start slow, and get progressively faster.

Game:

See how many accurate productions your child can do in 10 seconds. Keep track of your score and strive to beat your previous scores. Make sure the child is clear that only accurate productions count.

Take turns thinking up new target words and add them to list.



Golden Rule: Accuracy first! Develop speed while maintaining accuracy.

Sentence Level Productions:

Prerequisite:

Child must be able to say words 5 times in a row rapidly.

Goal:

To develop ability to accurately *and* consistently reproduce sentences in a rapid fashion. No pauses before target sounds or emphasis on target sounds should be noted.

Method:

Initial	Medial	Final
Same	Missing	Face
Seat	Lesson	Peace
Sign	Nicely	Mice
Soak	Closer	Close
Suit	Amusing	Loose
Sad	Massive	Pass
Sip	Kissing	Kiss
Sat	Castle	Toss
Song	Bossy	moss

Take /s/ words from your list and make sentences. Say each sentence 5 times. Say first sentence slowly and gradually increase the speed on subsequent sentences in that set. Start with small sentences and gradually increase length and complexity. Have fun making up your own silly sentences.

Initial: I like to **sing**.

Medial: I am **missing** you.

Final: I made a **pass**.


Multi-initial: We bought the **same sign**.

Multi-Medial: I am **missing** my **lesson**.

Multi-Final: The piece **is loose**.

Mixed-Multi: **Silly Sally is very bossy** when making **soup and salad**.

KEY: *There should be no pauses before target words as well as no emphasis on target words. Once a child is consistently accurate with their sentence drills above they are ready for conversation level drills.*



Golden Rule: Accuracy first! Develop speed while maintaining accuracy.

Conversation Drills:

At this point we know your child has a solid foundation with their /s/ sound and is close to acquiring the sound in conversation. We simply need to monitor and correct the sound daily. When brought to your child's attention they should be easily able to repeat themselves accurately.

Try repeating what your child said incorrectly exactly as they said it and pretend you don't know what they mean. Your child should be able to pick up on this and correct themselves. Soon your child should be correcting themselves before you point it out to them. When self correcting is present they are very close to achieving their goal.

If they have hit a plateau or failed to achieve their sound consistently in conversation, start reviewing double syllable drills on a daily basis in addition to conversational drill work.



Golden Rule: Accuracy first! Develop speed while maintaining accuracy.