

Onestop Phonics: Hard and soft *th*

by Rachel Finnie

Level: Starter; Starters (Cambridge Young Learner tests)

Target age: 4+

Time needed: 30 minutes

Materials: Phonics podcast (downloaded from www.onestopenglish.com); flashcard; copies of worksheet 1, 2 and 3 for each child

Hard and soft *th*

Vocabulary

hard *th* /ð/ (*together, this, that, leather, feather, they, mother, weather*)

soft *th* /tʃ/ (*Theodore, Arthur, nothing, month, think, thunder, thanks*)

Note: We have included the phonemic symbols here for your information. You can also refer to the interactive phonemic chart on onestopenglish: www.onestopenglish.com/skills/pronunciation/phonemic-chart-and-app/

The vocabulary words all appear in the fun rhyme that is used to present the sounds initially.

Some of these words will be new to your learners and may require pre-teaching. You may like to use onestopenglish flashcards to pre-teach the words. Another option would be to use pictures from books, magazines or posters, draw pictures on the board or, where appropriate, use realia.

Alternatively, you might choose to start by inviting the children to guess the meaning of the words from the context of the rhyme.

The thing to remember is this: the more difficult words in the rhymes are only receptive. They are there to help the rhymes scan properly, and the children WILL remember the words easily as part of the rhyme, even if they don't always know the exact meanings of the words.

Procedure

- Start by telling the children: *We are going to learn about the two different sounds the letters 't' and 'h' make together today. Explain what this means: When 't' and 'h' are together in a word, they are either pronounced 'th' as in 'this' or 'th' as in 'thanks'.*
- Ask the children if they can think of any words with 'th' in them.

- If they can, each time they say a word, ask them whether the 'th' sound in the word is hard or soft.

- Draw two columns on the board, one for the hard 'th' sound and one for the soft 'th' sound. Write the children's words on the board in the correct column (or invite the children to write the words on the board themselves if they can).

- If they can't think of many words, add some of your own (for example *north, south, tooth, Earth, thin* for soft 'th'; *there, then, other, with, father* for hard 'th'). Each time, say the word, write the letters 'th' on the board and ask the children if they can call out the other letters that spell the word. As they call the letters out, write them in the correct place to make the word.

- When all the words are on the board, point to them at random and ask the children to read the word, think about how it is pronounced and then to say the 'th' sound for that word.
- For further reinforcement, say either the hard or soft 'th' sound, choose a child and ask them to say one of the words from the board that has that sound.
- Say to the children: *We are now going to listen to the new sounds in a rhyme. Then play the podcast for this lesson. Ask the children to listen carefully. Play the podcast a second time if you think it is necessary.*

Hand out Worksheet 1 and 2

- Play the podcast again. This time, say to the children: *Look at the Worksheet and follow the words in the rhyme with your finger as you listen.*
- Then read the rhyme one line at a time. Each time, ask the children to repeat it.
- For each line of the rhyme, ask the children: *Which 'th' sounds did you hear?* and choose children to call out the sounds (some of the lines contain only one of the sounds, while others contain both sounds).
- Then choose children to call out the words from the rhyme that include either the hard or soft 'th' sound. Write the words on the board if you wish.
- Read the rhyme as a class.
- Suggest that the children take their pictures home to colour them in however they want.
- Ask the children to bring their coloured pictures to the next lesson. You can then ask for volunteers to bring their coloured pictures to the front and to read

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the rhyme to the class, to help to consolidate/revise the previous sounds.

Transcript:

*Theodore and Arthur sat together one morning
and talked about this and that.
Theodore had his leather boots on
and Arthur had a feather in his hat.*

*They talked of nothing important ...
Arthur's plans for the month of May,
the cake Theo made for his mother ...
and the weather on that beautiful day.*

*'Uh-oh, I think I hear thunder!'
'Uh-oh, a drop of rain on my hat!'
'Time to go home!' and off they went,
saying, 'Thanks for the lovely chat!'*

Hand out Worksheet 3

Ask the children to look at the pictures and see if they can guess what the word is for each one. They don't call out the words at this stage.

Explain that the children are going to complete the words by writing *th* in each gap.

Walk round as they are working, to check what they are doing.

When they have all finished writing the letters, hold up the worksheet and point to the words one at a time. Each time, the children call out the word.

Ask the children to look at the table at the top of the worksheet. Point to the words *think* and *that* and ask the children to say the words. Make sure they know which word has a hard *th* and which word has a soft *th*. Ask them to write the other words in the correct column.

End the lesson by asking the children to say the rhyme again as a class. You can invite them to clap the rhythm as they listen. They might also like to act out to the rhyme.

Fun activity

Play *Bingo*. Ask the children to write a list of six '*th*' words on a piece of paper. Call out '*th*' words at random. The children cross the words off their lists as you say them. The first child to cross off all their words is the winner.

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Theodore and Arthur sat together one morning and talked about **this** and **that**.
Theodore had his **leather** boots on and **Arthur** had a **feather** in his hat.

They talked of **nothing** important ...
Arthur's plans for **the month** of May,
the cake **Theo** made for his **mother** ...
and **the weather** on **that** beautiful day.

'Uh-oh, I **think** I hear **thunder**!'
'Uh-oh, a drop of rain on my hat!'
'Time to go home!' and off **they** went,
saying, '**Thanks** for **the** lovely chat!'

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YOUNG LEARNERS WORKSHEET 3

<i>that</i>	<i>think</i>
<u>feather</u>	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



feather



brothers



mouth



bath



them



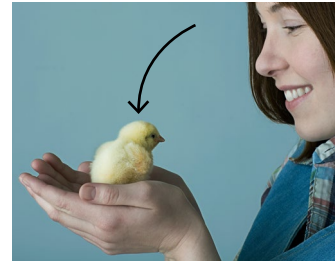
tooth



thirteen



father



chick