

Exploring How Sounds Are Made

Students make important discoveries about sounds when they are aware of how sounds are made. Lead your students through developing a kinesthetic awareness of sounds with this activity.

Materials Needed	
Mirror	
Legend	
Teacher	Student

Exploring the sound /b/

Teacher	Student
I will say a sound. Repeat the sound and look in the mirror. /b/. What are your lips doing as you say the sound /b/?	<i>/b/ My lips are pressing together, and then they pop open.</i>
Place your hand in front of your mouth and say /b/. What do you feel?	<i>/b/ I feel air puffing out.</i>
Place your hand on your throat and say /b/. What do you feel?	<i>/b/ I feel my throat vibrating.</i>

Exploring the sound /p/

Teacher	Student
Now say /p/. Repeat /p/ as you look in the mirror. What are your lips doing?	<i>/p/ My lips are pressing together, and then they pop open.</i>
Place your hands in front of your mouth and say /p/. What do you feel?	<i>/p/ I feel air puffing out.</i>
Place your hand on your throat and say /p/. What do you feel?	<i>/p/ Nothing. My throat is not vibrating.</i>

Comparing the sounds /b/ and /p/

Teacher	Student
How are the sounds /b/ and /p/ the same?	<i>They are both made by pressing my lips together, and then they pop open. Air puffs out.</i>
How are the sounds /b/ and /p/ different?	<i>My voice box is on for /b/ and off for /p/.</i>

When two sounds are formed the same way but one has the voice box turned on and the other doesn't, they are called a voiced and unvoiced pair. /b/ and /p/ are a voiced and unvoiced pair.

Exploring the sound /s/

Teacher	Student
I will say another sound. Repeat the sound and look in the mirror. What is your mouth doing as you say the sound /s/?	<i>/s/ My lips are open. My teeth are together. Air is coming out over my tongue.</i>
Place your hand in front of your mouth and say /s/. What do you feel?	<i>/s/ I feel air streaming out.</i>
Place your hand on your throat and say /s/. What do you feel?	<i>/s/ Nothing. My throat is not vibrating.</i>

Exploring the sound /z/

Teacher	Student
Now say /z/. Repeat /z/ as you look in the mirror. What is your mouth doing?	<i>/z/ My lips are open. My teeth are together. Air is coming out over my tongue.</i>



Place your hand in front of your mouth and say /z/. What do you feel?	/z/ I feel air streaming out.
Place your hand on your throat and say /z/. What do you feel?	/z/ I feel my throat vibrating.

Comparing the sounds /s/ and /z/

Teacher	Student
How are the sounds /s/ and /z/ the same?	My lips are open. My teeth are together. Air is coming out over my tongue.
How are the sounds /s/ and /z/ different?	My voice box is off for /s/ and on for /z/.
Are /s/ and /z/ a voiced and unvoiced pair?	Yes.

