/s/ Sound and /s/ Blend Lesson Plan

Children learn new sounds by forming a concept of the sound after repeatedly hearing it in many contexts and discriminating it as unique from other sounds. Some children will require more exposure to a sound, with added cues and prompts, to develop an awareness of that sound. They must be made aware of the significance of the sound in terms of how it impacts meaning (e.g. “spot” becomes “pot” when you leave of the /s/). In cases where children are leaving off or substituting for a sound that they are able to produce, they must be given repeated models and the opportunity to produce and be corrected on their own productions. They must learn to understand the importance of producing the sound correctly.

Sound Stimulation and instructional Ideas for teaching /s/:

- **Give the sound a name:**
  - Snake sound – “ssssssssss”
  - Hissing tire sound
  - Steamy sound

- **Provide a visual cue to represent the sound**
  - Place your pointer finger (index finger) up horizontal with your mouth and draw the /s/ symbol in the air as your finger moves away from your mouth
  - Use your index finger and slither (forming an /s/) down your arm from elbow to wrist to

- **Provide verbal instructions and reminders for how to produce /l/**
  - “Close your teeth at the back of your mouth; now let some air sneak through your front teeth”
  - “Your tongue should be hiding behind your teeth, try not to let it poke out”
  - “Hide your tongue tip behind your teeth”

**Materials:**

- Snowballs by Lois Ehlert
- Snowman Chant – 5 Little Snowmen and materials
- Mini-marshmallows
- S-Friends Picture Cards and Minimal Contrasts
- S-Friends Clubhouse
- Pencils (students)
- Dice

**Activities:**

- Introduction and warm-up
  - Tell the students:
    - “We will practise a special sound today.” (Show the students the Visual Phonics hand sign). I am going to be talking to you about a long sound. Some of the sounds that we use when we talk are long. Listen to these long sounds: ssssss, efffffff, shhhhhh. (Perhaps use a stop watch and time how long they can make the sound for, a volunteer??). Some sounds are short, you same them and they end quickly. Listen to
these short sounds (p, t, k, d...). They are so short that we can’t even really time them. Now I want you to try to make the long sound I have chosen to talk about today class s........ Wow, it sounds like we are in a snake den. Very good!

- Let’s think about how we made that sound. When I make that sound, I can feel my tongue tip goes up and and stays behind my top teeth. It does sound like a snake hissing doesn’t it. The hissing sound looks like this (draw the letter “s” on the board. Does anybody in this room have the hissing sound in their name? Who can think of a word that starts with the hissing sound? Who can think of a word that ends with one? Can anyone think of a word with an /s/ sound in the middle?”

- Now sometimes the long /s/ sound has a friend so we call them “sound friends.” They like to stay right beside each other. “Snuh” is a sound friend because the “s” and the “n” are right beside each other. So, if you listen, when we were singing about Stuart the Snake, we heard two pairs of sound friends. In the name “Stuart” the “S” and “t” are friends. If you listen even more carefully, you will notice that in “snake” the “s” has another friend “n.” Sometimes “s’s” friends are long like him (e.g. m, nnnn, l) but they are never buzzy or hissy like he is. Sometimes his friends are “short” (e.g. p,t,k). I am not sure why, but the “s” has no friends that are buzzy or hissy.

- Let’s listen to some words where “s” is with his friends (e.g. snake, spot, stop).

- **Time to Sing/Chant – Snowmen Finger Play**
  - Encourage participation in the song
  - Emphasize /s/ sounds as you encounter them. Use visual hand sign as you say the /s/ in words and encourage the children to use it too (if you have an additional adult or student volunteer available).

- **Book Sharing – Snowballs** by Lois Ehlert
  - Encourage participation in the book
  - Emphasize the /s/ blends as you encounter them
  - Probe for recognition of the “sound friends.” Read a sentence and ask them to tell you the word with the “s” friend. See if they can identify the friend. What would it look like if you were spelling the word.

**Class Activity:**

- **S Friend Clubhouse**
  The S-Friends decided that they would like to have a club and they built a perfect tree house to meet in. Today we are going to look at some pictures and decide if they are members of the S-Friend club. Hold a picture up; decide whether or not it is an “s-friend” picture. Say the word and where applicable emphasize the “s.” Depending on the class, you could ask the student to identify the “friend.” For students who are having difficulty, prompt with the visual cue/gesture.
Extension Activities/Small Group Activities:

- Math counting, adding, subtracting sheets: roll the dice to determine how many snowballs each snowman has (for subtracting) the first snowman has six and you roll to determine how many snowballs the sun melted two snowballs so now there are four snowballs left.
- Play “I Spy” using the “I Spy” game, “I Spy” books or the classroom itself
- Play a stacking game: see who can stack the most objects (JENGA is a great game for this).
- Highlight or brainstorm s-blend words at various times throughout the day such as during Morning Message and transition times.
- Play a game using a “spinner”
- Other commonly used classroom words: stick, stop, start, spot, stuck, small, stack which you can naturally emphasize as they occur

Environment:

- Make an /s-blend/ sound center during center time including /l/ games and worksheets (SLP can provide), objects, pictures and mirrors
- Use visuals such as Visual Phonics hand signs or other hand signs when teaching phonics and sight words
- Ask children to listen for and raise their hand when they hear the a “special” s-friend word during book reads.
- Have a Show and Tell where students must bring a picture or object from home containing the s-friends
- Word Wall: as words are added, highlight those containing  s-friends
- Have a listening centre – students can listen to s-friend stories and songs. Your Speech-Language Pathologist would be a good resource for this.
- Challenge students to repeat tongue twisters containing the s-friends.

Websites:


Be creative! There are many ways to highlight sounds, words and language for students using materials that you have already created, it just takes some awareness and imagination. Challenge your SLP to help you incorporate activities into specific lessons and see what they come up with!