

## Speech Activities

### Listening to Sounds // All Ages

If your child is having trouble producing specific speech sounds, first check the age at which that sound is typically acquired (on the Communication Carousel and speech sounds chart). Learning the speech sounds of English is a gradual process, and there can be variation between children in the order specific sounds are acquired.

If you have concerns about your child's production of a particular speech sound, you can try the following listening games. If difficulties persist, then please refer to the Speech and Language therapy service.

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First, teach your child to *listen*. Practice with environmental sounds (everyday sounds we hear around us), or with sounds made by musical instruments.

#### Sound Lotto

- There are commercially available sound lotto sets. Initially use very different sounds e.g. 'Soundtracks', which has sounds such as a running tap, a car starting, birds singing, etc.
- Next try more similar sounds e.g. 'The Photo Sound Lotto Pack' by LDA has all the sounds belonging to a group on one board e.g. musical instruments. Your child has to use finer discrimination skills to choose between the different instruments

#### Milk Bottles

- Matching sets of milk bottles filled with varying levels of water and tapped are ideal for fine discrimination. It is possible to start with just three bottles playing low, medium and high notes and gradually increase the number of bottles.
- An alternative is to make shakers using empty plastic bottles and filling them with various dry materials ranging from sand to heavy pebbles.

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#### Sound Matching

- Choose two sets of matching noisemakers. Start with 3-4 very different sounds e.g. a shaker, a drum, some bells and a whistle
- Let your child play with the noisemakers and talk about them
- Place a screen between you
- Take turns to make a noise while the other person finds the matching noisemaker
- If this is too easy, add more noisemakers or try a sequence of 2/3 sounds. Your child must play the matching noisemakers in the right order
- Gradually introduce noisemakers which are more and more similar e.g. three different shakers or three different drums

