

Minimal Pairs

Listening for sounds in words helps children with speech sound difficulties. Children need to hear and know the sounds in words before they can work on saying them.

Minimal pairs are 2 words that sound similar. They have 1 sound that is different. This different sound means that the word changes. An example could be 'key and tea'. They sound the same apart from the first sound. Minimal pairs help children to listen and practise sounds they find tricky.

Minimal Pairs game

- Choose minimal pairs with the sound your child has trouble saying. You should use a word that contains the sound they say instead (e.g. key and tea).
- There are pictures in this pack. Your speech and language therapist may also have given you pictures. You can also find lots of minimal pair pictures on the [Caroline Bowen](#) website.
- Put the 2 words in front of your child and say the words.
- Ask your child to close their eyes. Hide a picture or sticker under the word.
- Ask your child to open their eyes. Tell them where the picture is hiding. Try not to point or look at the picture. See if your child can find the one you say.
- If your child finds this tricky, use cued articulation to help your child listen for the sound.

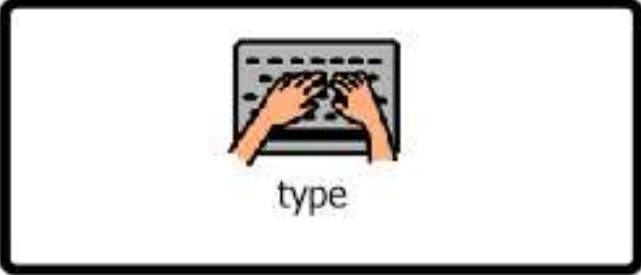
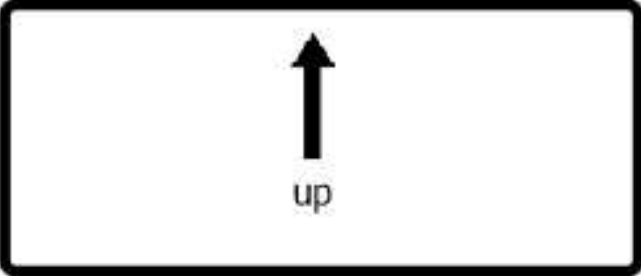
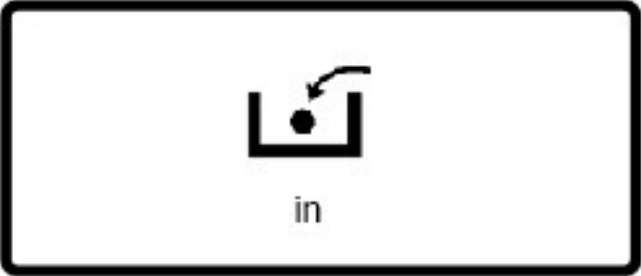
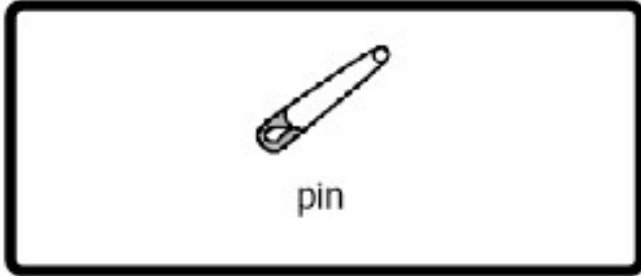
If your child is beginning to say the sound correctly, ask them to hide the sticker for you to find. They can then practise saying their target sound in a word.

For more ideas you can watch our [How to use minimal pairs](#) and our [game ideas video](#) on our YouTube channel.

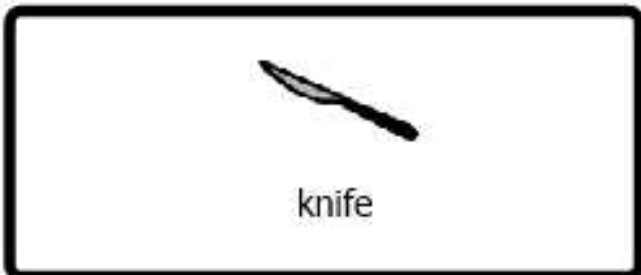
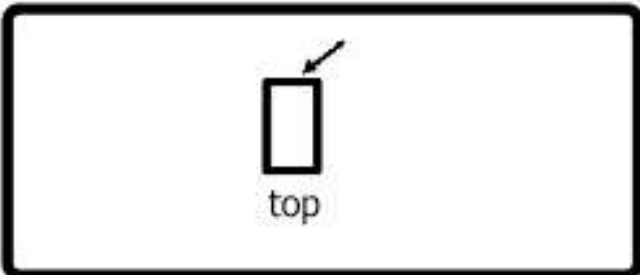
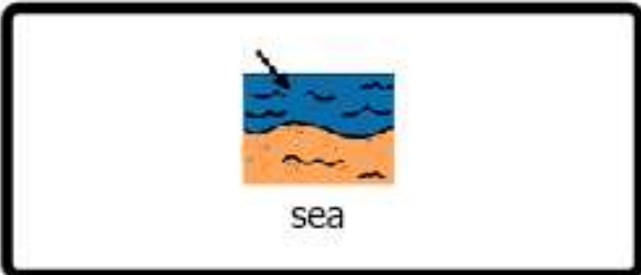
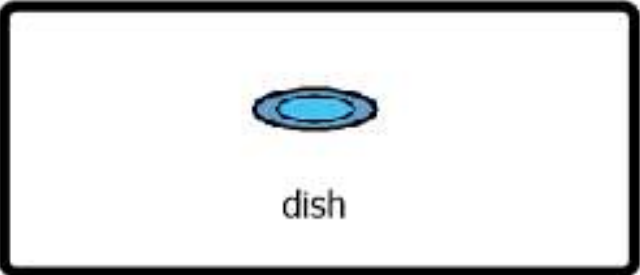
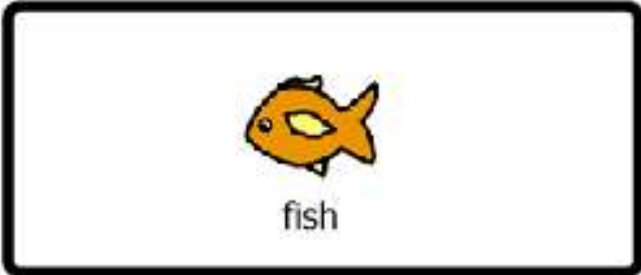
Remember

When you practise sounds - model the sound and not the letter. When we say a 't' sound we say (t)... and not the letter (teh). Remember to do this with all the sounds to help your child's listening.

Example 1



Example 2



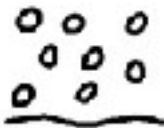
Example 3



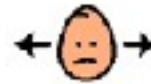
spin



pin



snow



no



stick



tick



school



cool