

ZH Sound Word List

Make a SH sound, keep everything exactly where it is, and turn the voice on. Lips stay rounded, tongue stays pulled back.

SOUND

/zh/

TYPICAL AGE

By age 5

TYPE

Voiced Postalveolar fricative

PRACTICE TIP

ZH is the rarest sound in English and it almost never starts a word, so target it in the middle of words first (measure, treasure).

/zh/ almost never begins an English word - the few examples are loan words such as "genre." Practice medial and final positions first.

Medial Position (13 words)

The sound is in the middle of the word.

2 Syllables

3 words

measure	treasure	Asia
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3 Syllables

4 words

measurement	treasure chest	usual	treasure map
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4 Syllables

4 words

usually	television	unusual	measuring cup
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5 Syllables

2 words

television show	unusually
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High-frequency medial words

Everyday words rather than picture-card words - which is why most lists leave them out. A child already says these hundreds of times a day, so they carry more carryover value than any noun above. Target them in conversation, not in drill.

usually

Final Position (4 words)

The sound is at the end of the word.

1 Syllable

1 words

beige

2 Syllables

2 words

garage

collage

3 Syllables

1 words

camouflage

Generalization

Word lists get a sound into a child's mouth. Generalization is what gets it into their life. These are activities where the target words come up on their own, so nobody has to be talked into practicing.

Play-based ideas for young children

Treasure hunt

Hide "treasure" around the room and find it together. Measure how far away each piece is with a ruler or your feet.

Words that come up: treasure, measure, garage, beige, usual, pleasure, television, vision, casual, decision

Garage and cars

Park cars in a pretend garage. Measure which one is longest, then decide where each goes.

Words that come up: garage, measure, decision, usually, treasure, casual, television, collision, explosion, vision

Conversation and verbal games for older kids

Decision of the day

Talk through a decision you made and why. "Decision," "usually," "measure" and "pleasure" are the whole target set - ZH is rare, so a topic that naturally brings these words up is worth more than any word list.

Television review

Review a show. "Television," "vision," "usually" and "casual" all appear naturally.