Two Letters, One Sound: sh, ch, th

Teacher		**Class**	Grade 1
Subject	ELA	**Topic**	Consonant digraphs
Date		**Room**	
Lesson length	60 minutes	**Country**	United States

Students learn that sh, ch, and th are two letters that make one sound. They sort and read sh words with a partner.

Curriculum links

- Know the spelling-sound correspondences for common consonant digraphs [2]
- Orally produce single-syllable words by blending sounds, including consonant blends [2]

Learning objectives

- Students will identify sh, ch, th and say the one sound each makes.
- Students will read ship, chip, thin and hear the starting digraph sound.
- Students will sort picture words into sh and not-sh piles correctly.

Success criteria

- I can say the one sound for sh, ch, and th.
- I can read ship, chip, and thin.
- I can sort words that start with sh.

What students already know

Show s and h apart. Ask: What sound does s make? What sound does h make? Listen as I push them together.

Key words

digraph	two letters that join to make one new sound [3]
ship	a big boat that moves on water
chip	a small crisp snack to eat
thin	not thick, with only a little width
shadow	a dark shape that follows you in light

Materials

- picture cards for shadow, short, shrimp, chick, chat, thin
- Slides 1-8, 10, 12
- device and speakers to play Video clip 1 and Video clip 2
- Worksheet page 1 copies - Label the pictures: Point and say the word for each picture!
- pencils

Before the lesson

- Print picture cards for shadow, short, shrimp, chick, chat, thin and Worksheet page 1 copies
- Test Slides 1-8, 10, 12 and Video clip 1 (0:00-2:17) on Slide 6 and Video clip 2 (0:00-2:20) on Slide 8
- Set out two sorting trays labeled sh and not-sh for modeling

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Lesson outline

0–5 min **Starter** 5 min · Whole class

Hook interest in the sh sound and recall that letters make sounds.

YOU DO

1. Do the hook: make the sh sound with teeth together and air coming out.
2. Show Slide 1: Two Letters, One Sound! Consonant digraphs: sh ch th.
3. Show Slide 5 vote: Which sound is fun to say? sh like ship, ch like chip, th like thin.
4. Count votes and say today we start with sh.

STUDENTS DO

1. Make the sh sound together and listen.
2. Look at Slide 1 and repeat sh, ch, th.
3. Vote for a favorite sound and say it aloud.

Say: Shhh! Listen - my teeth are together and air is coming out. What sound am I making? Today we learn how two letters can make one sound. Vote for the sound you think is fun to say.

Ask: What sound am I making with teeth together and air out? (sh) · On Slide 1, how many letters make sh? (Two letters, s and h)

Check understanding: All say sh together and show thumbs up if they can make it; model again if weak.

Support: Let the student copy the sound after the group says it first, watching teeth and lips. **Stretch:** Ask the student to say one more sh word they know, like ship.

Use: Slides 1, 5

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5–15 min **Teaching** 10 min · Whole class

Teach that sh, ch, and th are two letters for one sound.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 2: A fish. Hear sh at the end: fi-sh. Stretch fi-sh and point to sh [2].
2. Show Slide 3 Key words: ship, a big boat, chip, a small snack, thin, not thick. Read each slowly.
3. Show Slide 4 Big idea: Two letters can make one sound. A digraph is two letters combined to make one sound [3].
4. Model with letter cards s + h: first ssss-hhhh, then one sound sh in ship.

STUDENTS DO

1. Repeat fish, fi-sh, ship, chip, thin after the teacher.
2. Say letter sounds then the one digraph sound for sh, ch, th.
3. Point to sh, ch, th in the Key words.

Say: Two letters can make one sound. We do not say s plus h. We say one sound, sh. Children must recognize these as single sounds, not separate letters [5]. Sh, ch, and th are common consonant digraphs [4].

Worked example: ship: 1. Say word slow: sh-i-p. 2. Split sounds. 3. Find two letters: sh at the start. 4. Read one sound: sh is one sound, then ship [2][3].

Ask: In fish, is sh at the start or the end, and how many sounds is it? (At the end, and it is one sound) · What one sound do c and h make in chip? (ch, one sound) · What two letters make the first sound in thin? (t and h, th)

Check understanding: Point to sh, ch, th in random order; class calls the one sound. Reteach any missed one.

Support: Point to the digraph as you say the word slowly together, tracking left to right. **Stretch:** Ask the student to isolate the beginning sound in thin and the ending sound in fish [2].

Use: Slides 2-4

15–30 min **Sing and Read Together** 15 min · Whole class

Practice hearing and blending sh and ch in words.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 6 Sing sh! Watch lips for sh. Play Video clip 1 (0:00-2:17).
2. Show Slide 8 Sing ch! Watch mouth for ch. Play Video clip 2 (0:00-2:20).
3. Show Slide 7 Read it: Say word slow, Split sounds, Find two letters, Read one sound. Model with ship and chip.
4. Lead blending: orally produce single-syllable words by blending sounds, including consonant blends [2].

STUDENTS DO

1. Sing and make sh and ch sounds with actions.
2. Read ship and chip together using the four steps.
3. Isolate and say the beginning sound in each spoken word [2].

Say: Watch my lips and copy the sound. Say the word slow. Split the sounds. Find the two letters. Then read the one sound. We will do it together.

Worked example: chip: 1. Say word slow: ch-i-p. 2. Split sounds. 3. Find two letters: ch. 4. Read one sound: ch, then chip. ch is a consonant digraph [4].

Ask: When we see s and h together in ship, do we say two sounds or one? (One sound, sh) · What are the steps to read chip? (Say word slow, split sounds, find two letters, read one sound)

Check understanding: Use mini whiteboards: write sh or ch when you hear ship or chip. Re-model if many miss.

Support: Say the word with the student, stretching the first sound, then let them repeat the one sound.

Stretch: Let the student read thin and path and point to th in each word [2][5].

Use: Slides 6-8, Video clip 1 (0:00-2:17), Video clip 2 (0:00-2:20)

30–45 min **Main Activity** 15 min · Pairs

Hear and read sh at the start of words by sorting.

YOU DO

1. Tell the learning goal: you will hear and read sh at the start of words.
2. Model sorting picture cards for shadow, short, shrimp, chick, chat, thin: say each word out loud slowly so that we can listen for each sound [3].
3. Sort into sh and not-sh piles, blending sounds to read each single-syllable word [2]. Show Slide 10: shrimp has sh plus r. You hear sh, then r blends right after.
4. Give pairs mixed cards and listen in as they sort and read.

STUDENTS DO

1. Take turns picking a card, saying the word slowly, and listening for sh.
2. Sort cards into sh and not-sh piles and read each word aloud.
3. Hold up a card and say if it starts with sh or not.

Say: Say each word slowly and listen for the first sound. If you hear sh at the start like shadow, short, and shrimp [3], put it in the sh pile. If not, like chick, chat, thin, put it in the not-sh pile. Then read the word aloud.

Worked example: shadow: 1. Say slow: sh-a-dow. 2. Split first sound: sh. 3. sh is two letters for one sound [2]. 4. Pile: sh. shrimp contains the digraph sh blended with the consonant r [3].

Ask: Does short start with sh? How do you know? (Yes, I hear sh at the start, s and h make one sound) · Does chick start with sh? What sound does it start with? (No, it starts with ch)

Check understanding: Each pair holds up one sh card and reads it, pointing to sh. Re-sort together if errors.

Support: Give only two cards at a time, both with pictures, so the student hears the first sound clearly.
Stretch: Let the student add one more sh word from the pile to write with sh underlined.

Use: Slide 10

45–60 min **Plenary** 15 min · Whole class

Check that two letters make one sound and read sh words.

YOU DO

1. Hand out Worksheet page 1: Label the pictures: Point and say the word for each picture! Students point, say, and label.
2. Show Slide 12 True or false?: sh in fish is one sound. s and h work together. ch in chip is c plus h. ch is one sound. th in thin is a digraph. Two letters, one sound.
3. Read each line together; students show thumbs up or down and explain.
4. Close by repeating the big idea and previewing ch and th practice.

STUDENTS DO

1. Point and say each picture word on Worksheet page 1 and write the label.
2. Vote true or false for each line on Slide 12 and say why.
3. Repeat the one sounds for sh, ch, th together.

Say: Point to each picture and say the word. Listen for sh, ch, or th. Then we will decide what is true. Remember, two letters can make one sound.

Ask: Is it true that sh in fish is one sound because s and h work together? (True, two letters, one sound) · Is it true that ch in chip is c plus h as two sounds? (False, ch is one sound) · Is th in thin a digraph with two letters and one sound? (True)

Check understanding: Collect Worksheet page 1 and scan true/false votes; reteach any digraph with many errors tomorrow.

Support: Read the Slide 12 lines aloud with the student and let them echo before voting. **Stretch:** Ask the student to explain why ch is one sound, not c plus h, using chip as proof.

Use: Slide 12, Worksheet page 1

Common mistakes

Mistake	How to spot it	How to fix it
Saying s-h as two sounds ssss-hhhh instead of one sh sound	Student stretches ship as s-h-ip when reading aloud	Cover sh with a finger and model one sound; children must recognize these as single sounds, not separate letters [5]
Mixing up sh, ch, and th at the start of words	Student puts chick or thin in the sh pile during sorting	Say each word out loud slowly to listen for each sound [3]; compare mouth shapes for sh, ch, th, which are common consonant digraphs [4]
Thinking shrimp is only sh and missing the r blend	Student reads shrimp as ship	Point out shrimp has sh plus r and you hear sh, then r blends right after; shrimp contains the digraph sh blended with r [3]

Support

- Use picture cards, track print left to right, and read together before asking the student to read alone.
- Limit choices to two cards at a time and repeat the first sound clearly.

Stretch

- Sort th words by where th is heard and underline the digraph when writing sh words.
- Read thin and path and explain that th is two letters for one sound.

For the LSE or teaching assistant

Stay with the sorting pairs in the main activity; help them say each word slowly, point to sh, ch, th, and keep piles to two cards at a time if needed.

Check for understanding

Question	Answer
What sound do s and h make together in ship?	One sound, sh
Is ch in chip one sound or two sounds?	One sound
Which pile does shadow go in, sh or not-sh? Why?	sh pile, because it starts with sh

Homework

Say ship, short, and shadow at home and point to sh in each word.

Sources

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