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## Tactile activity for practicing vowel sounds

Having introduced the **vowel sounds and their letters**, and having established our **hand motions for those vowels**, move on to actually using these newly-acquired tools! We played games together to practice listening for the vowel sound in words.

### Step 1: Listen for the vowel:

Say one word at a time. Students will do the hand motion for the vowel they hear. This activity will attach a movement essential for kinesthetic learners and will also allow you to do a quick visual check to see if every child correctly identified the vowel.

### Sample word list:

Sand, tent, with, bus, off, Tom, bat, best, fresh, sun, punt, shop, west, nod, fun, fin, pen, pun, pan, pin, hop.

If you need a formal assessment for your students' knowledge of vowel sounds, just have them number a paper, listen to each word, and write the vowel they heard inside each word.

### Step 2: Play Quick Draw

To practice listening for sounds in words, and especially for distinguishing between vowel sounds, I found playing Quick Draw was very helpful. Each child has a white board, or if you are as lucky as I was, you will have enough room on your big white board to accommodate all the kids in your group. Each child stands with his or her back to the white board, marker ready, and then listens while I say the word. OR give each child a personal white board.

- "The word is CLASS."
- "Sound it with me." The kids sound with me as I break apart the word for them, "C-L-A-SS." I use the motion for A as we sound in order to give them a visual cue for the vowel. I am also using fingermapping, which gives them an instant visual map for the structure of the word.
- "Sound and Write!" This is the cue for the children to quickly turn and write their word as they say each sound. This part is critical. They need to say the sounds out loud and

hear themselves saying the sounds, at the same time they are seeing their hand write the sounds.

- I do a quick visual check for accuracy and then move on to another word. If there is an error, I do not say the name of the missed letter, rather we SOUND OUT the word as the child is looking at the word they wrote so they can identify the missing sound and make the correction.

## Helpful Hints

- If the child is reading for you and mispronounces a word, just cue him with the hand motion for the vowel sound.
- If you suspect your child is a kinesthetic learner, have him or her make the hand motion for the vowel sound as often as possible.
- Play Word Morph: start with one word, and then change a sound with each new word: EX: BAT, BIT, BUT, BOT (bought), BUT. Mix the words up so they are not in a predictable order and have the child give you the hand signal for the vowel again.

You may also use word pairs for quick vowel sound practice: CUT/KIT, GNAT/NET, BET/BIT, COT/CUFF, NIT/NET.

**Hint:** E and I are frequently taken for each other, as are O and U.

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