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- Regional Accent Modification
- Vocal Dynamics and Diction
- Professional Voice Care

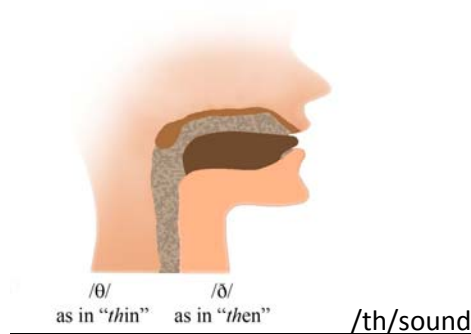
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Be Distinct: The Voiced and Voiceless /th/

This lesson is about the /th/ sounds that are frequently made in error by non-native English speakers. They are important sounds to master because they are frequently used in English.



/ð/: The IPA symbol used to express the voiced /th/ sound as in the, that, there, those, etc.

/θ/: The IPA symbol used to express the unvoiced /th/ sound as in think, thank, theft, thick, etc.

The only difference between these two sounds is the voicing. To make this sound, the tongue protrudes slightly between your teeth. The tongue touches the bottom teeth and air is blown over the tongue and through the mouth creating a frication sound due to some obstruction in the mouth opening. Airflow is continuous. Frequently, the sound that follows the /th/ colors the way in which it sounds.

Here are some common mistakes:

Voiceless th: /s/, /t/, /f/, /b/ substitutions or eliminated completely

Voiced th: /z/, /d/, /f/ substitutions or eliminated completely

Sometimes the voicing is not present although the /th/ sound is correctly made.

Pay attention to the way in which you say it. Watch yourself in the mirror. Are you sticking your tongue out slightly between your teeth or is your tongue behind your teeth. Is the airflow continuous or are you stopping the airflow?

Let's learn the sound. Work through this workbook taking a task a day at a time. Do not move forward on the lesson until you have mastered the level. Spend 5-10 minutes drilling the sound. Once you are



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through this workbook, keep drilling until you notice the sounds being made automatically in your

speech. If you see this symbol,  there is an audio to listen to.



The Speech Ladder

Target Sound:

Voiced /th/or /ð/ Voiceless /th/ or /θ/

Complex Conversation _____

Routine Conversation _____

Reading _____ (Day 8)

Sentences _____ (Day 7)

Final sound in words _____ (Day 6)

Medial sound in words _____ (Day 5)

Initial sound in words _____ (Day 4)

Contrast _____ (Day 3)

Sound in isolation _____ (Day 2)

Discrimination _____ (Day 1)



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Day 1: Listen to the word pairs on the recording. Can you hear the difference between the words? Write Same or Different below. Check your answers at the end of the booklet. If you

got any wrong, please stay here and listen again before moving on.



- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Do these words use a voiced or voiceless /th/?



- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
- 14.
- 15.
- 16.
- 17.
- 18.
- 19.
- 20.

Day 2: Make the sound in isolation. Move back and forth from voiced to voiceless /th/. Place your hand on your neck to feel the vibration of the voiced /th/. If you can't feel it, you probably aren't saying it correctly. Watch yourself in the mirror to make sure that your tongue is sticking out between your teeth a little bit.



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Day 3: Compare and contrast these word pairs. Say the following word lists to contrast the /th/

with commonly substituted words/sounds. (You can also listen to the recording.)



Think sink
Miss myth
Sought thought
Face faith
Truce truth
Theme team

Thing ting
Think fink
Zen then
Zee thee
Sin thin
Tanks thanks

Bat that
Tie thigh
Taught thought
That dat
Then den
the da

Remember that it might not be just at the beginning of the word but the middle of words and endings too have /th/ sounds and may be mispronounced as well.

Contrast the voicing in these /th/ words:

That= say, /θat/ vs /ðat/
These
There
The
Though
Through
Think

Day 4: Say the list of words, voiced and voiceless (initial position only). Listen to the audios of

both sounds. (See below.)



Day 5: Say this list of words (medial position). Listen to the audio of both sounds.



Day 6: Say this list of words (final consonant). Listen to the audio of both sounds.
Word List /θ/



Initial _____ Medial _____ Final _____



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Theme	athlete	bath
Third	author	booth
Thirst	bathtub	breath
Thorns	ethical	length
Thirty	empathy	death
Thought	everything	mouth
Thumb	faithful	math
Thing	marathon	south
Think	hypothesis	tooth
Thigh	ruthless	warmth
Thanks	Timothy	wreath
Thunder	youthful	youth
Thursday	Nathaniel	beneath
Thirty one	mathematics	birdbath
Thirty two	pathologist	blacksmith
Thirty three	South Dakota	Kenneth
Thirty-four	sympathetic	locksmith
Thirty-five	amphitheater	Macbeth
Thirty-six	authenticity	mammoth
Thirty-seven	Catholicism	zenith
Thirty-eight	Ethiopia	eightieth
Thirty-nine	hydrotherapy	ninetieth
Thoroughly	South America	underneath
Thermometer	South Carolina	wisdom tooth

/dθ/

hundredth
breadth

/nθ/

Anthem
Anthony
Enthuse, enthusiast
Menthol
Monthly, month
Unthinking
Unthankful
Samantha
Parenthesis
Tenth
Eighteenth

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Millionth

/ngθ/

Lengthen

Strengthen

Half-length

/θr/

Threaded

Threefold

Thresher

Thrifty

Thriller

Throaty

Throbbing

Throughout

Thrower

Threatening

Anthrax

Bathrobe

Bathroom

Drive through

Spendthrift

Arthritic

Arthritis

Overthrow

Philanthropist

Arthur

Bertha

Birthday

Earthly

Earthquake

North Pole

Northward

Worthless

Worthwhile

Orthodontics

Orthopedic

North America

Childbirth

Rebirth

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Accent Modification_CS Sound Stories_th sound



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/lθ/

Filth

Stealth

Health

Word list /ð/

Initial

Than

That

The

Thee

Their

Them

Then

These

This

Those

Thus

Thy

Therefore

Thereafter

Mother

Neither

Other

Rather

Rhythm

Seething

Smoother

Smother

Teething

Weather

Withdraw

Another

Otherwise

Together

Final

Bathe

Breathe

Clothe

Lathe

Loathe

Scathe

Seethe

Smooth

Soothe

Swathe

Teethe

Tithe

Wreathe

Wrath

Medial

Although

Bather

Bathing

Bother

Breather

Breathing

Brethren

Brother

Clothing

Either

Father

Feather

Gather

Heathen

Leather

Loathing



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/ðd/

- Bathed
- Breathed
- Clothed
- Loathed
- Scathed
- Seethed
- Sheathed
- Smoothed
- Swathed
- Teethed
- Tithed

/rð/

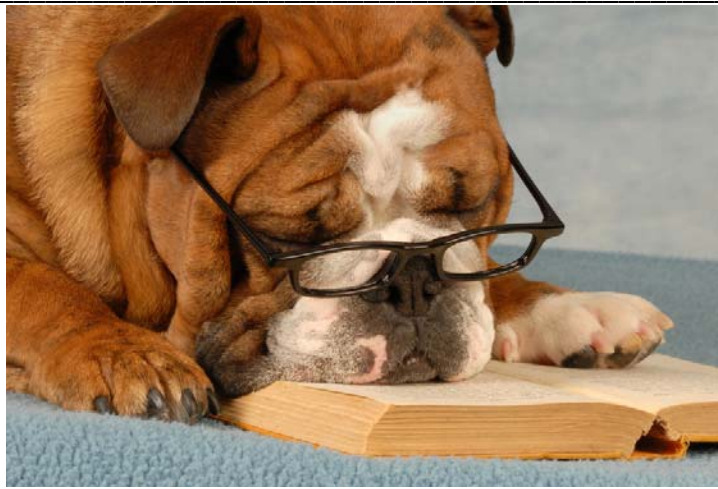
- Farther
- Farthest
- Further
- Northern
- Worthy
- Furthermore
- Noteworthy
- Worthy, unworthy
- Nevertheless

/ðz/

- Bathes
- Breathes
- Loathes
- Seethes
- Smoothes
- Soothes
- Teethes
- Tithes
- Wreathes
- writhes

Day 7: Make up sentences using words from the above word lists. Be creative! Write them down! (Don't worry if they don't make perfect sense!)

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____





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Day 8: Read the following two paragraphs. Repeat them as often as possible.

/θ/ Reading:



A Lutheran named Theodore and a Methodist named Kathy were planning their wedding in Bethesda, Maryland. Although their views on theology didn't always agree, they were expecting to work through their differences and faithfully live through a fiftieth wedding anniversary. They planned to get married in a Catholic church with a breath-taking cathedral. The cathedral was mammoth even though Kathy and Theodore only invited one hundred and thirty guests.

On the day of their wedding, both Kathy and Theodore were very enthusiastic. Unfortunately, there were distant thunderstorms lurking and it looked like it was threatening to rain. But nothing could keep the seventy three guests from coming. The day ended up perfectly despite the threat of rain and a slight wind from the southeast. The touch of baby's-breath in all the decorations, the fantastic food that fulfilled any sweet tooth, and the youthful enthusiasm made the day wonderful and worthwhile! Every guest left very thankful that they had come. Kathy and Theodore happily left on their honeymoon to the Klamath Falls excited to begin their new life together.

**Not every /th/ sound in this passage is a voiceless /th/. Try to find all the voiced /th/ sounds in this passage.*

Answer the following questions with full sentences using words from the question in your response:

1. What were the dominations of Kathy and Theodore?
2. Where did they decide to get married?
3. How many guests were invited?
4. What event threatened their day?
5. Do you think people from different religious denominations or religions can be happily married?



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/ð/ Reading:



My family enjoyed celebrating Mother's and Father's Day in very special ways each year. My brother often made it his goal to be altogether on these two days to help make my mother and father feel appreciated. It is noteworthy that my parents were very worthy of this pouring of affection. Often times, my brother and I would gather in the kitchen to make a breakfast while they were breathing deeply in the other room. We made soothing tea or coffee and light, feathery pancakes. We served them when they woke. Neither my mother nor father ever appeared to know that they were going to be served in this manner even though we did the same thing for them year after year. After my mother's breakfast, she bathed in a warm bubble bath that soothed her muscles. My father, on Father's Day would rather go to a concert somewhere to listen to the rhythms of his favorite band. If the weather cooperated, we might go on a picnic or a hike later on in the day. By the end of the day, both my mother and father were thankful for the special day that had been given to them.

**Note that not all /th/ words in this passage are voiced. Can you find the voiceless /th/ sounds?*

Answer the following questions with full sentences using words in the question to respond.

1. What are some of the things that were done for mother to make her feel special on Mother's Day?
2. What are some of the things that were done for father the make him feel special on Father's Day?
3. What are some special traditions you do with your mother or father?
4. If you are a father or mother, what are some special things that your child or children have done for you?
5. Does your family every get together to do things on a regular basis? Are family traditions important?



Day 9: Answer the questions about the paragraphs using complete sentences and words from the paragraph.



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Day 10: Incorporate these words into your speech. Make up sentences you would use in conversation. Here are some common words you may use with the /th/ sound:

These, those, them, there, the, father, mother

Think, thank, thought, through

The th words that I use frequently:

To incorporate words into conversation, make up sentences using these words.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Are you noticing that you are using these words in conversational speech? Has anyone else commented on you? Great work! Keep on practicing until you no longer have to think about it!





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10 Additional Ways to Practice:

1. Ask a friend to help/mentor you and advise you.
2. Read books to your kids. (Try, **Thidwick the Big-Hearted Moose** by Dr. Seuss)
3. Read billboards on the way to work.
4. Print off a memo from a colleague and read it out loud.
5. Read the newspaper, a magazine, or a book out loud. Tape record your speech and listen to it.
6. Tape record your end of a phone conversation and then listen to it.
7. Read a recipe or something that has lots of ordinal numbers (seventh, eighth, etc.) to a friend and let them write out the instructions. Did he/she understand it correctly?
8. Always practice your speech when you talk to one person. Choose one person that you will try to your new speech skills on.
9. Always practice your speech at a regular time each day.
10. Write out key phrases that you want to use in a presentation and master them by repeating over and over. Be sure these phrases contain the sound you want to master.

Answer key: Same or different?

1. think—sink
2. thought—thought (SAME)
3. moss—moth
4. bet—Beth
5. thread—tread
6. oath—oath (SAME)
7. close—clothe
8. rather—razzer
9. seed—seethe
10. day--they

Do these words use a voiced or voiceless /th/?

11. Though (voiced)
12. Teething (voiced)
13. Worthy (voiced)
14. Third (voiceless)
15. Threw (voiceless)
16. Mother (voiced)
17. Thanks (voiceless)
18. Both (voiceless)
19. Then (voiced)
20. Nothing (voiceless)



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*Good luck! Congratulations! You have done a great job.
Let me know how you are doing!*

