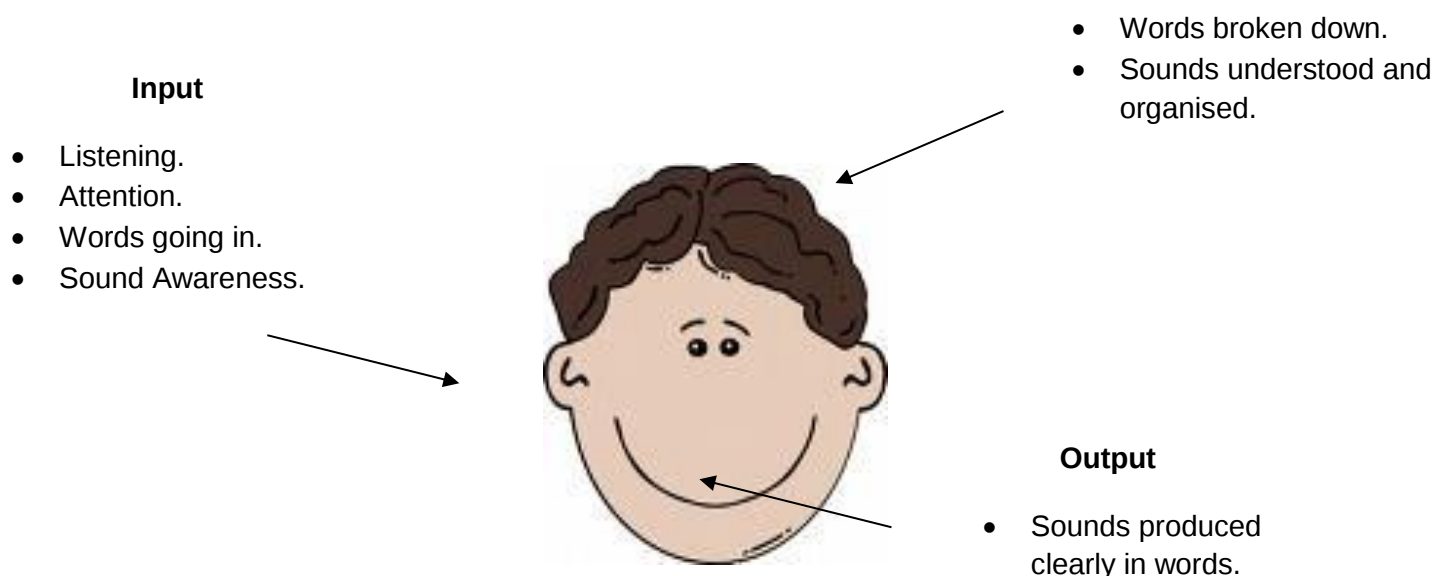


SOUNDS MAKE SENSE

Many children who have problems in pronouncing words clearly have poor attention and listening skills. Although they may hear clearly, they may not be listening accurately. When they hear words they may not be hearing them as separate units—each made up of a pattern of different sounds and syllables. What they may be hearing is just a jumble of sounds.



Their speech is unclear because they haven't learned when or where to use the sounds in words – not necessarily because they can't say them. Nobody really knows why some children have these difficulties – they just do.

For some children, working on listening and sound awareness tasks may be all that they need in order to start to use sounds clearly when talking.

Developing sound awareness is the first essential stage in both clear speech and learning about sounds and the sound/letter links needed for reading and spelling.

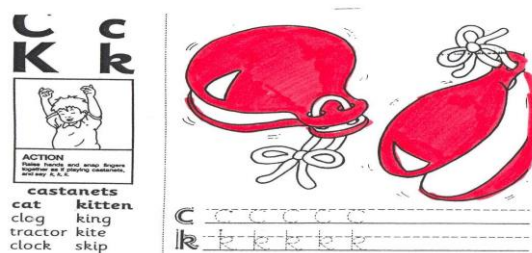
What it's all about

The first step is for your child to become a better listener.

He/she needs to become more aware of sounds around him and then to learn to listen much more carefully to words.

He/she needs to learn that words are made up of patterns of syllables and sounds. He/she needs to learn that some words rhyme, some words are long, some are short and some can sound very similar.

To teach children who find sound awareness difficult, we need as many 'clues' as we can to help them to understand how sounds work. These may be pictures and actions which help the child to see and hear sounds in words more clearly – before they learn about written letters in school e.g.



What can you do to help?

- Teach nursery and other rhymes, emphasising rhyming words. Encourage your child to make up other possible rhyming words. Read rhyme stories e.g. 'the Dragon in a Wagon'.
- Clapping out the syllables in family names and familiar objects. Beating out rhythms in simple tunes.
- Make a 'sound' scrapbook-talking about the different kinds of sounds we hear around us.
- Sound lotto (e.g. Early Learning Centre 'Sound Tracks') – ask "What made that sound?"
- Listening to taped stories.
- Putting hand up when they hear a specific name in a short story.
- Shopping games "Buy me aand a " (2-3 objects from a choice of 6).
- Stories about sounds e.g. 'Goodnight Owl' and 'Noisy Noises'.
- Make a scrapbook – find pictures for each page that begin with the same sound.
- Playing musical bumps/musical statues.
- Simplified I-spy
Set out 4 or 5 objects.

Choose one, say the first syllable e.g. "I spy with my little eye, something beginning with croc" (= crocodile).

Extend to any item in the room or set of pictures in magazine/catalogue.