

Voiceless TH practice: think, bath, and dialect

The TH in think is different from the TH in this. A practice list for voiceless /θ/ should keep that distinction clear. Whether TH needs practice depends on the child's speech variety and individual goals; a spelling difference alone is not evidence of a disorder.

Key facts

- Educational guide for caregiver discussion, not a diagnostic checklist.
- Intended target and level: the child's individual SLP plan.
- A word's spelling does not reliably identify its sound.
- The examples below use common U.S. English pronunciations; adapt for dialect and language.

Word list by position

Initial: think, thumb, thin, thank

Medial: bathtub, birthday, toothpaste, healthy

Final: bath, tooth, mouth, both

Plan a pretend birthday

Collect a birthday card, a toothpaste picture, and a tooth drawing. Pick a word position with the SLP and use only those examples in a short pretend event. The caregiver says the word as part of a meaningful message, then lets the child participate. Do not require faster repetition or exaggerated mouth movement.

Use only words your child understands. Allow pointing, play, or another communication method; participation does not require a spoken response on every turn. Ask your SLP what to model, which cue to use, and whether to practice listening, single words, or phrases. If the child is tired or frustrated, finish the activity and discuss the plan with the clinician. Do not make a practice score a reward or a condition for ending play.

Sound development in context

The U.S. English review places /θ/ in the 6-year acquisition band at its 90% criterion. This population summary does not diagnose an individual child. Assessment considers communication needs, hearing, languages, dialect, and the whole sound system. If you are concerned, ask a licensed SLP for an evaluation rather than waiting for an app milestone.

Details that matter for this target

TH substitutions can be ordinary features of a dialect. Do not label an accent or dialect as incorrect. Tooth and teeth also illustrate that spelling and word meaning change; ask the SLP whether an example fits the selected sound and vocabulary level.

Using SpeechLP alongside the plan

Choose voiceless TH explicitly; do not combine it with voiced TH merely because both are spelled TH. SpeechLP offers articulation games and target settings. Confirm that the selected game words fit the clinician's plan before beginning. Automatic feedback can disagree with a listener and is not a diagnostic result or proof of clinical improvement. Use the practice report to discuss what happened, including difficult words, with your SLP.

Printable activity sheet

[Download this printable guide](#), or print the word list and activity on separate pages. Leave out the child's name and any medical details. Circle the clinician-selected words and note the chosen position and activity level privately.

Related reading

- [SpeechLP for families](#)
- [AI articulation practice and its limits](#)
- [Find an SLP](#)
- [SpeechLP product facts](#)

Sources

- [Crowe and McLeod \(2020\), Children's English Consonant Acquisition in the United States](#). Acquisition bands describe a pooled 90% criterion, not mandatory individual treatment ages.
- [ASHA Practice Portal: Speech Sound Disorders](#). Individual assessment and linguistic variation.