

Conducting a sound test

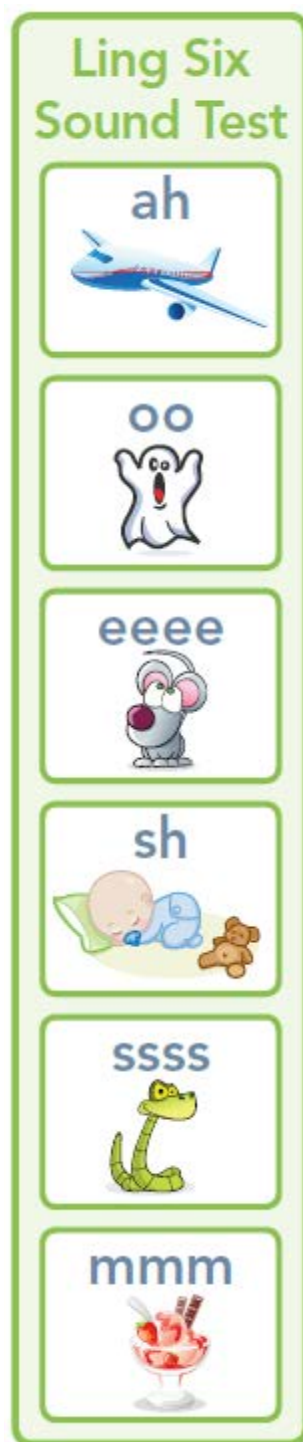
Background

The single, most important tip for teaching a child with a cochlear implant is to ensure that the cochlear implant works! Conduct a sound test with the child every morning. A sound test is easy and takes no more than a minute or two to complete. The school audiologist or another professional on the child's educational team who works in a field related to hearing loss can help you develop a routine and provide pointers on the sound check process.

Strategies

Before the school day begins, or any time you notice a change in the behavior of the child with a cochlear implant, use the simple Ling Six Sound Test to confirm that the child's cochlear implant works. The Ling Six Sound Test checks to see if the child is aware of sounds representative of the full spectrum of the sounds important for understanding speech (low-, mid-, and high-pitched sounds) and includes nine steps.

1. Stand approximately 4 feet from the child.
2. Read each of the six sounds in the Ling Six Sound Test diagram to the right in a different order each day and ask the child to repeat the sound after he or she hears it. You may need to repeat a sound if the child misses it.
3. If the child is unaccustomed to participating in a sound check, demonstrate what you want him or her to do.
4. Speak in a quieter than normal volume, but do not whisper.
5. To avoid lip-reading place thin piece of paper, or a listening hoop (ask your audiologist for one), in front of your mouth, but not so close that it distorts the sound.
6. Insert silent pauses of different durations between each sound.
7. Change the order of the Ling sounds each day so that the child cannot "guess" what comes next.
8. Report any problems to the child's parents.
9. Document your findings daily.



The child must indicate that he or she has heard the sound, preferably by repeating the sound, or by pointing to the appropriate picture of the sound heard. If the child cannot hear each sound, troubleshoot the cochlear implant or call the appropriate contact to troubleshoot for you. Are the batteries working? Is there another technical problem? Repeat the sound check. Remember too that the cochlear implant's batteries can wear out or the equipment may stop working correctly at anytime. For tips on troubleshooting a cochlear implant, see the *Troubleshooting a nonfunctional cochlear implant* information sheet.