ZH Sound Word List

Make a SH sound, keep everything exactly where it is, and turn the voice on. Lips stay rounded, tongue stays pulled back.



SOUND	TYPICAL AGE	TYPE
/zh/	By age 5	Voiced Postalveolar fricative

PRACTICE TIP

ZH is the rarest sound in English and it almost never starts a word, so target it in the middle of words first (measure, treasure).

/zh/ almost never begins an English word - the few examples are loan words such as "genre." Practice medial and final positions first.

Medial Position (13 words)

The sound is in the middle of the word.


measure


treasure


treasure chest


treasure map


television


measuring cup

All in the ZH Sound picture cards.

2 Syllables

3 words

measure	treasure	Asia

3 Syllables

4 words

measurement	treasure chest	usual	treasure map

4 Syllables

4 words

usually	television	unusual	measuring cup

5 Syllables

2 words

television show	unusually

High-frequency medial words

Everyday words rather than picture-card words - which is why most lists leave them out. A child already says these hundreds of times a day, so they carry more carryover value than any noun above. Target them in conversation, not in drill.

usually

Final Position (4 words)

The sound is at the end of the word.

1 Syllable

1 word

beige

2 Syllables

2 words

garage collage

3 Syllables

1 word

camouflage

Generalization

Word lists get a sound into a child's mouth. Generalization is what gets it into their life. These are activities where the target words come up on their own, so nobody has to be talked into practicing.

Play-based ideas for young children

Treasure hunt

Hide "treasure" around the room and find it together. Measure how far away each piece is with a ruler or your feet.

Words that come up: treasure, measure, garage, beige, usual, pleasure, television, vision, casual, decision

Garage and cars

Park cars in a pretend garage. Measure which one is longest, then decide where each goes.

Words that come up: garage, measure, decision, usually, treasure, casual, television, collision, explosion, vision

Conversation and verbal games for older kids

Decision of the day

Talk through a decision you made and why. "Decision," "usually," "measure" and "pleasure" are the whole target set - ZH is rare, so a topic that naturally brings these words up is worth more than any word list.

Television review

Review a show. "Television," "vision," "usually" and "casual" all appear naturally.