

Digraph Disco

DIGRAPHS AT THE BEGINNING OF A WORD



VIDEO CONNECTION:

Grab your dancing shoes! In this video, Kayla and Scarlett are transported to a disco, where they dance their digraphs by each embodying a letter, then coming together to make one sound: **ch**, **sh**, **ph**, and **th**. They groove down a Soul Train line*, dancing words that begin with each digraph!

**A Soul Train line is formed by two rows of dancers facing each other, with individuals taking turns dancing down the middle, made famous by the TV show Soul Train.*

COMPONENT:

Phonics



SUBCOMPONENT FOCUS:

- Beginning sound consonant digraphs (i.e., two letters that make one phoneme or sound)

DEL DANCE FRAMEWORK COMPONENTS:

- Action Words
- Guided Exploration using all components of the DEL Dance Framework: Body, Effort, Space, Relationship

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:



Students will...

- Identify common digraphs (i.e., **ch**, **sh**, **ph**, and **th**), when two consonants come together to make one sound.
- Identify the digraph letters (e.g., **ch**) and the corresponding digraph sound (e.g., /ch/) at the beginning of words.

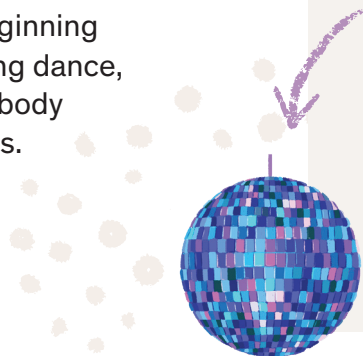


ACTIVITY STATEMENT:

Students will engage in a **Guided Exploration** of digraphs at the beginning of words - **ch**, **sh**, **ph**, and **th** - using dance, sound, and imaginative play to embody each digraph and associated words.

PHONICS CARDS:

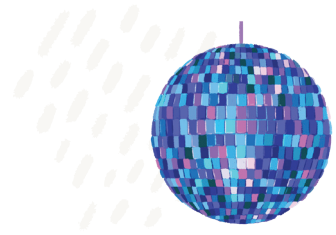
Digraph Disco Cards:
Digraphs



NOTE TO TEACHERS:

For this activity, invite your students to bring the disco into your classroom — or create any environment where they can embody digraphs and the words that begin with them!

ACTIVITY STEPS:



1. Review rules for safe movement in your classroom.
2. Introduce or review the concept of digraphs: two letters that make one sound.
How can our two hands make one sound? Clapping! Clap three times.
3. Show the

ch

 digraph card. *Let's put the **c** in one hand and the **h** in the other hand. Together they make /ch/. Bring your two hands together and say /ch/ as you clap! Say **ch** while you clap 3 times: /ch/ /ch/ /ch/.*
4. Ask students what words start with /ch/. **Chug** and **choo choo**!
5. Facilitate a **Guided Exploration** of **chug** and **choo choo**:
 - a. Encourage students to explore infinite movement possibilities! Use the **DEL Sentence Frames for Guided Exploration** document as well as the **DEL Dance Framework** for ideas.
 - b. Try to include elements from all four categories (Body, Effort, Space, and Relationship) of the **DEL Dance Framework** in your exploration. For example:

Chug:

Note: A “chug” is a simple dance step that involves sliding forward on the balls of the feet and landing on the whole foot. It looks like a small jump that stays close to the floor.

*Can you **chug** forward? Can you **chug** backward? Can you **chug** to the side? Make a symmetrical shape (the same on both sides). Hold your symmetrical shape as you **chug**. How quickly can you **chug**? How slowly can you **chug**? **Chug** towards a friend. **Chug** away from a friend. Can we all make a line and **chug** together in the line? How else can you **chug**?*

Choo Choo:

*Let's imagine we are conductors on a train! Pull your train whistle, **choo choo**! Can your train travel quickly? Pull your train whistle fast: **Choo choo**! Can your train travel slowly? Pull your train whistle slowly: **Choo choo**! Can your train travel on a diagonal pathway? **Choo choo**! Can your train travel on a curvy pathway? **Choo choo**! Can you find another friend's train and have your two trains travel together through space? **Choo choo**! How else can your train travel?*

- c. Narrate students' movement choices. For example, *I see Mara **chug** backward. I see Luca **chug** on a circular pathway. I see Diego's train travel slowly - his “**choo choo**” is even in slow motion!*
- d. Highlight certain movement choices and have the whole class try them. For example, *watch Luca **chug** on a circular pathway. Let's try following him and **chug** in a circular pathway.*



6. Repeat steps 3-5 with the following digraphs: **sh**, **ph**, and **th**.

sh:



- a. Show the digraph card. Let's put the **s** in one hand and the **h** in the other hand. Together they make **/sh/**. Say **/sh/** three times as you clap. **/Sh/** like **shimmy** and **shake**.
- b. Facilitate a **Guided Exploration** of **shimmy** and **shake**:
 - i. **Shimmy:**

A **shimmy** is a small, quick, wiggly dance. Try shaking your shoulders back and forth really fast—that's a **shimmy**! Can you **shimmy** and turn? Can you **shimmy** on a low level? Can you face a partner and **shimmy** together? How else can you **shimmy**?
 - ii. **Shake:**

Now let's try some other shaking dances! Can you **shake** up high? Can you **shake** down low? Can you **shake** your head? Can you **shake** your arms? Can you **shake** your legs? Can you **shake** one hand towards a friend? Can you **shake** your hand away from a friend? Can you **shake** your hands over your head? Can you **shake** your hands under your legs? Can you **shake** your whole body in a very loose way? How else can you **shake**?

ph:



- a. Show the digraph card. Let's put the **p** in one hand and the **h** in the other hand. Together they make **/f/**. Say **/f/** three times as you clap. **/F/** like **photo** and **phone**.
- b. Facilitate a **Guided Exploration** of **photo** and **phone**:
 - i. **Photo:**

A **photo** is a picture you take. Can you hold an imaginary camera and snap a **photo**? Take a **photo** of something up high. Take a **photo** of something down low. Take **photos** all around the room. Now, pretend that someone is taking a **photo** of you! Pose for your **photo**! Can you pose in an asymmetrical (different on both sides) shape for your **photo**? Change poses very quickly to make new shapes. Make a new shape, a new shape, a new shape. Can your shape change levels? Change sizes? Make a shape with a friend. Show me your favorite shape and pose for a **photo**.
 - ii. **Phone:**

Now let's explore **phone**. Can you show me how you hold a phone? Let's be silly! Can you make an upside down shape while holding an imaginary **phone**? Can you balance on one foot while holding the imaginary **phone** far away from your ear? Can you make a twisted shape and hold your **phone** to a different body part other than your ear? Show me a new shape with your **phone**!

th:

th__

- a. Show the digraph card. Let's put the **t** in one hand and the **h** in the other hand. Together they make **/th/**. Say **/th/** three times as you clap. **/Th/** like **thread** and **thumb**.

- b. Facilitate a **Guided Exploration** of the words **thread** and **thumb**:

i. **Thread:**

To **thread** means to move through or between spaces, like a string weaving in and out of fabric. Let's start with our arms. Can you **thread** your arms in and out from each other, crisscrossing them in a curvy, twisty way in front of your body? Can you **thread** slowly and smoothly? Can you **thread** quickly and energetically? Can you make a shape with one arm and **thread** the other arm through it? Can you make a shape with your legs and **thread** your arm through it? Now, let's **thread** using our whole body. Travel on a curvy pathway, and **thread** in and out without touching anyone. Can you **thread** low to the ground, slithering on your belly like a snake? Can you **thread** with different body parts, like your head, shoulder, or elbow? How else can you **thread**? Now, let's try working with a partner. Follow a partner as they **thread** through space. Then, your partner will follow you. Now, one partner will make a shape with lots of holes in it. The other partner will find ways to **thread** through that shape without touching. Let's try to **thread** as a whole class. Half of the class will hold hands in a circle. The other half will hold hands and **thread** through and around the circle. Then, switch groups.

ii. **Thumb:**

Now, let's dance with our **thumbs**. Wiggle one **thumb**. Wiggle the other **thumb**. Wiggle your **thumbs** up high. Wiggle your **thumbs** down low. Do a wiggly **thumb** dance. Can you do a sharp **thumb** dance through your personal space? Can you do a smooth **thumb** dance through personal space? Give a **thumbs** up to a friend. Give a **thumbs** up to another friend and change your level. Can your **thumb** travel through the room? Can your whole body travel while your **thumb** is leading? Connect with a partner, **thumb-to-thumb**. Keep your **thumbs** together as you dance. Let's try a **thumb** dance from a long time ago. This dance is called the hitchhike. Give a **thumbs**-up as you move your hand up and out to the side as you bounce. Repeat on the other side. Keep alternating sides. Let's try it to the beat of the music. Now, show me your own **thumb** dance. Can you copy a friend's **thumb** dance?



ADDITIONAL LITERACY APPLICATIONS:

- Provide additional practice opportunities with words from your current ELA unit, module, or cross-content words (e.g., science, history, or math) that contain the digraphs **ch**, **sh**, **ph**, and **th**.
- Practice with additional digraphs not shown in the video. For example: **wh-** (e.g., whale, wheel) and **wr-** (e.g., write, wrinkle).
- Extend practice to vowel digraphs, or two vowels that make one sound: **ai** (rain), **ay** (day), **ea** (sea), **ee** (bee), **oa** (boat), **oe** (toe).

ACTIVITY EXTENSIONS:

1. Digraph Soul Train:

- a. Create a Digraph Soul Train Line by having students form two lines facing each other, with one line representing the first letter of the digraph (e.g., s) and the other representing the second letter (e.g., h). A Soul Train is a line of dancers who form two rows facing each other while individuals dance down the middle, made famous by the TV show *Soul Train*.
- b. The first pair steps forward and dances toward each other while each student says their letter. When they meet in the middle, they give a high-five and say the digraph sound together: **/sh/**.
- c. The pair then moves down the center of the line performing a matching movement that reflects the sound, such as a **shimmy** and **shake**, while saying **shimmy, shake**. When they reach the end, they join the end of their respective lines, and the next pair repeats the process as the lines shift up until all students have had a turn.
- d. Repeat with other digraphs.

2. Digraph Freeze Dance:

- a. Play music. When the music stops, display a digraph card and invite students to quickly find a partner.
- b. Invite pairs to make a connected shape together and say the digraph aloud. The shared shape reinforces that two letters make one sound.
- c. You can later expand the activity by having partners say whole words that begin with that digraph.