



ChaChaCha and TraLaLa

Language Arts

Overview

This lesson helps young students differentiate between the consonant blends CH and TR. Even though most texts do not discuss the confusion some children have with these blends, emergent readers may misspell words such as tree (chree) or train (chrain). As students learn more about distinguishing the affricate CH from the blend TR, they also will learn about safety rules on and around trains in the city or the country.

Time Allotment

Two 30-minute class periods

Learning Objectives

On completion of this lesson students will be able to:

- Classify pictures based on the words they represent.
- Distinguish between words that begin with the CH and TR consonant blend sounds.
- Create a list of words that start with CH and TR sounds.
- Understand one safety rule about train tracks.

Media Components

- Document presenter to show text on large screen (alternate: overhead projector)
- Interactive whiteboard with Notebook software (alternate: chalkboard or whiteboard)
- Teacher presenter station with computer, projector and screen
- Optional: Sound effects of trains from iTunes
- Websites:
 - www.do2learn.com This site has a short movie about "CH" appropriate for classroom viewing. (Sounds and Games: Sounds Sing along: Affricates: CH)
 - www.pbskids.org/lions/videos/chachacha.html *Between the Lions* has a video relative to the CH sound for use in the Culminating Activities.

Materials and Student Handouts

- Teacher copy of story for use during Introductory Activity (attached)
- Card stock paper with the consonant blend “CH” written on one side and the words “Choo-Choo” and “ChaChaCha” written on the other
- Card stock paper with the consonant blend “TR” written on one side and the words “Train” and “TraLaLa” on the other
- *Optional*: Wooden train whistle
- *Optional*: Handheld mirror for each pair of students

Teacher Preparations

- Prepare in advance for all media and technology to be used in lesson. If no technology is available, make alternate arrangements (see Adaptations section of lesson).
- Preview websites.
- Prepare card stock signs (for holding up in class).
- Print story for reading to class.
- Prepare a two-column Notebook page on the interactive whiteboard, one with CH and one with TR at the top. See Adaptations section of lesson if not using the interactive whiteboard.
- Download clip art images representing all the words listed in the Learning Activities portion of the lesson and load for access on whiteboard. These pictures will later be clicked and dragged into the Notebook page.

- If desired, obtain a train whistle from the school music teacher or another source to represent the “choo-choo” sound of a train. (Alternatively, visit iTunes store and search “sound effects trains” for several downloadable sounds, each about 99¢.)
- Obtain approval for the “ChaCha TraLa” train’s passage through the school hallways. (Culminating Activities)

Introductory Activity

1. Focus: Blow the train whistle to get students’ attention. Have them sit in the story area of the classroom. Divide the class into two groups. Tell them that you’re going to read a story about two trains. While you are reading, you want them to think about TWO things.

- Everyone should think about safety rules we learn from the story. Students should be able to tell at least one safety rule when the story is finished.
- Everyone should put on their good listening ears and think about the letters that make the sound at the beginning of certain words.

1) Group one should pay close attention to any words you say that start with the “CH” sound, like “CHOO-CHOO.” Show the card stock paper to the students, with “CH” on one side and the word “Choo-choo” on the other. When they hear a word that starts with “ch” they should call out “ChaChaCha!”

2) Group two should pay close attention to any words in the story that start with the “TR” sound, like “TRain.” Show the card stock paper to the students, with “TR” on one side and the word “train” on the other. When they hear a word that starts with “tr” they should call out “TraLaLa!”

Activity: Read the story of the cross-country freight train that longed to be a passenger train in the big city. Pause if students do not call out at the appropriate times, hinting that they have missed a cue. Sometimes, you may hear students calling out “ChaChaCha!” at the same time as others call out “TraLaLa!” This is to be expected, because young readers will not easily distinguish between the two blend sounds.

Follow-up: After students have listened to the story once interactively, talk about the safety rules they learned from the trains in the story. Ask: What are three rules about safety that we learned from the

story? (Prompt them, as needed): What did the train do to let people know it was coming? Where did people stand when the train was passing? When was it safe for people to come up to the train?

After discussing the safety messages, re-read the story with students while showing them the text of the story on the document presenter (or overhead projector). This time, students do not need to call out; instead as you read, underline all the words that start with CH or TR so they can hear and see them, and [have a student] write each one on the whiteboard under the CH or TR column. Have students use their mouths to form the CH sound (pucker). Have students use their mouths to form the TR sound (flatter lips than the CH). Say all the CH words together. Say all the TR words together.

Learning Activities

Focus: Now ask students to look at pictures you have stored in the Notebook software. One at a time, have student volunteers come up to click and drag each image into the proper column. A list of words is provided below, most of which can be illustrated easily with clip art obtained by the instructor.

Activity: Find pictures that represent the following words (or generate your own list of words and pictures with the CH and TR sounds). If surrounding towns, the school, or any student in the class have names starting with CH or TR, use those proper names as well, represented by pictures.

CH: cherries, chicken, church, child(ren), chimpanzee, chimney, chipmunk, chocolate

TR: truck, tracks, train, tree, treehouse, traffic light, trumpet, tractor, trolley

Follow-up: Once students have completed the categorization of the pictures together, write the word represented by each picture on the whiteboard. Have students correct any misplaced pictures.

2. Focus: Ask students why they might have placed pictures in the wrong column. Go into more depth about how CH and TR sometimes sound the same, but that they are different.

Activity: There is one main way to remember the difference, represented when they say “ah-choo!” Tell them to watch how the woman in the video says “CH.” Show them the video and song at

www.do2learn.com: Sounds and Games: Sounds
Sing along: Affricates: CH.

Follow-up: Pair students and have them use hand-held mirrors to see the different mouth positions they use when saying both blends. The song in the video is simple and can easily be mimicked during the follow-up.

Culminating Activities

Focus: To get students into the mood for dancing, show the video from *Between the Lions* on the PBS website: www.pbskids.org/lions/videos/chachacha.html. Say: Now we've learned about the differences between CH and TR, let's learn the ChaCha TraLa dance and dance through the halls together!

Activity: ChaCha TraLa is a movement activity. For every ChaCha, students pucker their mouths to accentuate the CH sound and lift their arms in the air (saying “ChaChaCha”). For every TraLa, they slap their hands on their thighs to accentuate the TR sound (saying “TraLaLa”). If they can coordinate the movement of their legs and heads simultaneously, they can step to the right and left and move their heads to the left and right (opposite legs).

Follow-up: Form a ChaCha TraLa train with students to dance through the halls (if approved by the administration) or use a large space outside to wrap up the lesson.

Assessment

- Students correctly categorize the CH and TR words/pictures.
- Students participate in the “ChaCha TraLa” activity.
- Students articulate one rule about rail safety.

Community Connections

Have students fill in the blanks on the note to parents (see lesson end), which says that they have been exploring the consonant sounds CH and TR and requests families' help in locating CH and TR words at home.

Cross-Curricular Extensions

- **Language Arts, Reading:** Help students understand the differences between freight and passenger trains using books found in the school library.
- **Language Arts, Writing** (2nd graders): Students write a story with TR and CH sounds.
- **Music:** The “ChaCha, TraLa” movement activity opens the door to more dance and music in the classroom. Use a song about trains, such as “Down By the Station” to encourage movement and song.
- **Math:** Students estimate how many words in a newspaper article will have the consonant blend CH or TR in them. Students count them and compare their estimates with the actual numbers.

Adaptations

- If a document presenter is not available, copy the story that accompanies this lesson plan onto clear plastic overhead projector sheets and use an overhead projector/screen set-up to show the story to students on the second reading. (Be sure to have an overhead marker available for underlining words.)
- If an interactive whiteboard is not available with clip art images, use MSWord with a computer/projector on a regular screen. (An extensive clip art collection is available free for download from Microsoft.com.) Alternately, download non-copyrighted images from the Web; enlarge, print and laminate them prior to the lesson to be manipulated by students on the regular chalkboard. Masking tape or painter's tape can help secure the images on to the board in the proper column.

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National Standards

Language Arts (Level I — Grades K-2)

Standard 3. Uses grammatical and mechanical conventions in written compositions.

7. Uses conventions of spelling in written compositions

Standard 5. Uses the general skills and strategies of the reading process

3. Uses basic elements of phonetic analysis (e.g., common letter/sound relationships, beginning and ending consonants, vowel sounds, blends, word patterns) to decode unknown words)

Source: mcrel.org

Sample Note to Parents:

Students fill in the date, the CH and TR, their name (twice) and the number of additional words you wish them to find at home. Teacher signs the note.

Date: _____

Dear Parents:

Today, we have been studying the consonant blends _____ and _____ at the beginnings of words. We have explored several words that start with these letters, but we would like to make our list even longer. Please work with _____ to find _____ more words that start with either consonant blend. They can be words representing items or actions in your home, people in your family, towns where you (or family members) have lived, words or pictures in newspaper articles, etc.

_____ should write the words on the bottom of this note. Please return them by tomorrow.

These are the words we have explored:
CH: cherries, chicken, church, child(ren), chimpanzee, chimney, chipmunk, chocolate
TR: truck, tracks, train, tree, treehouse, traffic light, trumpet, tractor, trolley

Thank You!

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Trina and Charles Take a Trip

Once upon a time there was a choo-choo named Charles. He was a well-used train with many years of experience and many miles of track behind him. Everyone on the freight train line knew him as a trusty old guy. He had carried tree trunks to the paper factory for years. He had delivered milk, butter and cheese to markets across tri-state lines. He had even trudged through snow and ice to deliver widgets to Wisconsin. But no matter where he traveled, Charles was sad. His young cousin Trina was a passenger train, and she was living a life of fun and frolic in the big city.

Trina lived in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and every day, she had the honor of carrying important people to and from their jobs at the local cheesecake factory, the church, and the newspaper, known as The Trading Times. Every time Trina went by, people stood safely far away from the train tracks and waved at her, only coming up to the tracks when the train had stopped traveling and the conductor told them it was safe to do.

Charles longed for a life of glamour and glitz. Whenever he heard about Trina through the family chatter, he heard only of her unique travels around town where she was the center of traffic and attention, and where people treated her with respect - watching and listening for her and minding all lights, signals and instructions. Meanwhile, he chugged through lonely countrysides and quiet hills without anyone paying him much notice at all. Children knew that they should stay away from the tracks and not to play anywhere near them, and they certainly shouldn't get close to him when he was traveling through.

The only thing that gave Charles any cause to chuckle was his loud choo-choo sound; just trumpeting it made him cheerier. He made the choo-choo sound to warn people that he was coming, and to remind them to stay far, far away from the train tracks so they could be safe. Little did Charles know that every time Trina heard Charles' choo-choo sound off in the distance, she longed to break free of her city-limited track and try a life of freedom out in the open country.

One quiet Sunday, Trina had the day off. She sat in the train yard waiting and thinking. When what did she hear? Her cousin Charles was choo-chooing not far away. She wasn't expected anywhere today; no one was checking on her. It was the perfect time for a trip to the country! She started up her engine, slowly moving forward. She wasn't sure exactly how she'd do it, but she had to take the chance! And off she went to chase her true passion.

Meanwhile, Charles had a special delivery to make. He triumphed over the fact that he was getting to take a trip into the big city! He chortled with excitement as he approached the entrance to the city, knowing that he'd see the downtown track at any moment, and knowing that his cousin Trina would be there. But when he arrived, she was nowhere to be seen.

After dropping off his freight, he chose to spend the day in town, looking for her. Finally, at midnight, when he had to move out and prepare for another day on the open track, she rolled in with wind-burned cheeks and a cheesy grin on her face, glad to be home from her country travels.

Charles was also glad to go home, leaving the hubbub of the traffic in the city. They had enjoyed the change of pace for one day, but Charles knew he belonged on the cross country train track, and Trina knew her place was in the checkered center of downtown Chattanooga.