

## Teacher's Notes

<b>Level</b>	Upper Intermediate
<b>Lesson Aims</b>	Learners will develop listening skills and practice pronunciation of alliterative sounds in the context of tongue twisters.
<b>Approximate Timing</b>	45 mins
<b>Notes to the teacher</b>	This lesson centers around NPR coverage of the National Tongue Twister Contest (this year's is 8/22/15) and an interview with two of the 2013 winners. There is pronunciation practice with the winning tongue twisters, plus some others. Feel free to add your favorites! The productive task asks students to try writing their own English tongue twisters and seeing whose is the toughest.
<b>Audio and Transcript Link</b>	<a href="http://www.npr.org/2013/03/03/173350726/a-contest-that-would-make-dr-seuss-and-his-cat-tip-their-hats">http://www.npr.org/2013/03/03/173350726/a-contest-that-would-make-dr-seuss-and-his-cat-tip-their-hats</a>



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\* Write a simple tongue twister on the board (for example, "She sells seashells by the sea shore.") Check meaning of "seashells" and "seashore". Elicit the common letter ('s') and sound (/ʃ/) and ask for volunteers to try saying the whole sentence. Elicit the name and write "Tongue Twister" above it. After you model and drill it a couple times, have students practice saying it in pairs for a minute. Then ask if they can share some tongue twisters from their L1—this is fun.

\*Tell students they are going to listen to an interview with two of the winners of the International Tongue Twister contest (yes, it is a competitive sport!). The question they need to answer while they listen is "What is the relationship between the two winners?" (father and son). The audio is 2:28 minutes long and is here:  
<http://www.npr.org/2013/03/03/173350726/a-contest-that-would-make-dr-seuss-and-his-cat-tip-their-hats>

\*Provide transcript and have students listen again, this time underlining the two winning tongue twisters as they are said in the interview.

\*Write the two tongue twisters on the board and isolate the similar sounds, sorting them into phonemes. Model and drill and mark stress on board. Have students practice in pairs.

→ "Please pass the peas" the sounds are /p/ and /iz/

→ "Black bug's blood" the sounds are /b/, /bl/ and /ʌ/

\*Pass out the list of other tongue twisters and have the students mark which sounds are similar. Model and drill to check. Have students practice saying these. Which is the most difficult?

\*Finish this stage with an individual or team competition!

\*Now have students try to write their own English tongue twisters in pairs. Elicit what you need for a good tongue twister (first and possibly medial or final syllables the same or slightly different). If necessary, start one yourself (write on board) and have them finish it, to give them the idea (for example, "Four furious friends....(fought for the phone))

\*Have pairs swap their creations with another pair and see how well they can say them. In whole class, choose the best one.

## Transcript

RACHEL MARTIN, HOST:

Now, on to a puzzle of a different kind. We're going to delve into the world of the tongue twister. We actually use these a lot in the production of our show, but you never hear them on the air. It's the way we check our guests' sound levels before we start the interview. Take a listen.

ROBYN HITCHCOCK: Peter, here we are. Peter began to pick things - the pepper.

MARTIN: That's musician Robyn Hitchcock and we're going to hear more from him in a moment.

But first to a contest that would make Dr. Seuss and his cat tip their hats and knock the socks off that fox. It is the 13th Annual International Tongue Twister Contest. Judith Schulz is the director of the Logic Puzzle Museum in Burlington, Wisconsin, and that's where we reached her just after the contest finished.

Hi, Judith.

JUDITH SCHULZ: Hi.

MARTIN: So tell us how this contest works.

SCHULZ: Well, we give you 10 seconds, it's timed. And in that 10 seconds, you need to say as many as you can as fast as you can successfully.

MARTIN: OK, and besides the glorious title of International Tongue Twister Champion, are there any other prizes?

SCHULZ: Oh, of course. The Tongue Twister Prize for the adults is a portion of a peck of pickled peppers.

(LAUGHTER)

MARTIN: All right, and you have this year's champion with you. Can you pass the phone to the winner?

SCHULZ: And that would be the adult winner and here he is.

MARTIN: Great.

TOM BECK: Hi, my name is Tom Beck.

MARTIN: Congratulations.

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BECK: Well, thank you very much. I am so proud.

(LAUGHTER)

MARTIN: So what was the final alarmingly awkward alliteration that tried to trip your tongue?

BECK: Well, I had to say: Please pass the peas. And I have an aversion to green vegetables.

MARTIN: Oh, no.

BECK: So this was quite a feat.

MARTIN: So you know we're going to ask you to do this, right?

BECK: Please pass the peas. Please pass the peas. Please pass the peas. Please pass the peas.  
Please pass the peas. Please pass the peas. Please pass the peas.

(LAUGHTER)

BECK: I'm done.

MARTIN: That was great.

BECK: Thank you.

SCHULZ: Judith here. We have one more winner, the kids' division.

MARTIN: OK.

(APPLAUSE)

SAMUEL BECK: Hello.

MARTIN: Hello. Who am I talking to?

BECK: My name is Samuel Beck.

MARTIN: Samuel Beck, are you related to Tom Beck?

BECK: Yes.

MARTIN: Wait, so your dad won the adult division and you won the kids' division?

BECK: Mm-hmm.

MARTIN: You guys clearly do a lot of tongue twisters at the dinner table?

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BECK: Not really.

(LAUGHTER)

MARTIN: So, Samuel, what was your tongue twister that you won with?

BECK: It was Black bugs' blood.

MARTIN: Well done, my friend. Well done, a champion, indeed. That was Samuel Beck, his dad Thomas Beck, and Judith Schulz who's the director of the Logic Puzzle Museum in Burlington, Wisconsin.

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## Student Worksheet 1

*What sounds are the same or close to the same in these tongue twisters? Mark them.*

1. Purple paper people
2. Stupid superstition!
3. A tiny tiger thinks tough thoughts.
4. Many mini mice make nice merry music.
5. If Stu chews shoes, should Stu choose the shoes he chews?

*Now work with a partner and write your own tongue twister. Don't make it too long; you have to be able to repeat it several times!*

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## Answers

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