

# Buddy Letter Bonanza

Have you ever noticed how many words have a th, ch, sh or wh? Children need to know what happens to these letter sounds when they stand side by side. I've told my students that the letters are best friends. When they are together they love to dance and sing a new sound. It didn't take the children long to catch on to the idea that the beginning sound changes when an "h" is added. What gave them trouble was mixing up the sounds. They used ch for th or wh for sh.

To help them cement the sounds to the letters, I decided to sing about it, add an action and a visual chart.

## Buddy Letters

(Tune: I'm a Little Teapot)

I love buddy letters, yes I do.  
Letters stand together, there are two.  
Since they are best friends, they like to play.  
And make a different sound that we can say.

Th th th th th th th thumbs up.	(Put thumb up)
Ch ch ch ch ch ch ch chomp.	(Fingers together, touch thumb, then make chewing motion)
Sh sh sh sh sh sh sh shhhh.	(Pointer finger to mouth)
Wh wh wh wh wh wh wh wh what?	(Palms turned up, out to side-they love this one!)

For several days we practiced the song with the actions while we were looking at the chart. Now when I conference with students and find they are stuck on a "buddy letter" word, I point to the diagraph, say "buddy letters" and repeat the action. Often, the sound just pops out of their mouth.

Another time we practice singing this song is walking in the hallways. Think how much time you spend moving to and from lunch, library, special classes and more. Don't waste those precious minutes. We have a whole repertoire of songs we sing that reinforce concepts as we move from place to place. An added benefit...it keeps the children's mouths and hands busy!

Print off the chart and song, mount the chart on black and glue the song on the back. Now you can read the song while the chart is facing your students. Start singing tomorrow. You'll be delighted at the results!