

Sounds and Lipshapes: the consonants

Phonemes and Visemes

There are 24 consonant sounds or phonemes in Standard English.

When you make one of these sounds your neck, lips, tongue, teeth, cheeks, etc all move – so each sound has a matching lipshape known as a viseme.

Some of these visemes look very similar so it is generally accepted that there are only 12 consonant visemes.

We can divide the consonant visemes into the:

- visibles
- less visibles
- nearly invisibles

Visibles

1. p/b/m – for example: pat, bat, mat
2. f/v – for example: few, view
3. w/qu – for example: whale, quail
4. sh/ch/j – for example: sheep, cheap, jeeep
5. th – for example: this
6. l – for example: lovely

Less visibles

7. r – for example: rare
8. t/d/n – for example: tame, dame, name
9. s/z – for example: sip, zip

Nearly invisibles

10. k/g/ng – for example: pik, pig, ping
11. h – for example: hardy
12. y – for example: yellow