🧠 The Sounds of the Consonants: Tricky Combos and Exceptions

Some consonants don’t follow their expected sounds—especially when paired with other letters. This lesson teaches how to recognize and pronounce tricky combinations, from 'ph = f' to 'ch = k'.

# 🔹 N, Ñ, and NG

ñ (Spanish) → sounds like 'ny' (cañon = canyon)
ng → nasal sound (sing, long)
n before g/k → also sounds like ng (angle, ankle, single)

# 🔹 PH = F

ph sounds like 'f' (prophet, pharmacy, telephone)

# 🔹 TH – Two Versions

Hard th (voiced) → the, than, breathe, scythe
Soft th (voiceless) → thin, bath, Smith, kith
Examples: breathe vs. breath, lathe vs. lath

# 🔹 S – Two Versions

Soft s → sin, kiss, lace
Z sound → is, rise, men’s, baths
Examples: rice vs. rise

# 🔹 X – More Than One Sound

ks → box, six
gs → exact, exaggerate
z (at the start) → Xerxes

# 🔹 CH – Triple Personality

ch = 'ch' → child
ch = 'sh' → machine
ch = 'k' → character

# 💡 The SH and ZH Sounds

SH sound comes from:

sh → share, shift

ti → condition, mention

si → tension, suspension

ci → suspicion, crucifixion

ZH sound examples:

z → azure

s → pleasure

# 🔠 What About Y?

Y at the beginning (before a vowel) = consonant → yet, year, yell
Y before a consonant = vowel → Ypsilanti
Y at the end = vowel → quickly, happily

# ✅ Practice: What Sound Do You Hear?

1. prophet → \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. machine → \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3. suspicion → \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

4. the → \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

5. thin → \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

6. rise → \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

7. exaggerate → \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

8. Ypsilanti → Y is a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

9. treasure → \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

10. child → \_\_\_\_\_\_\_