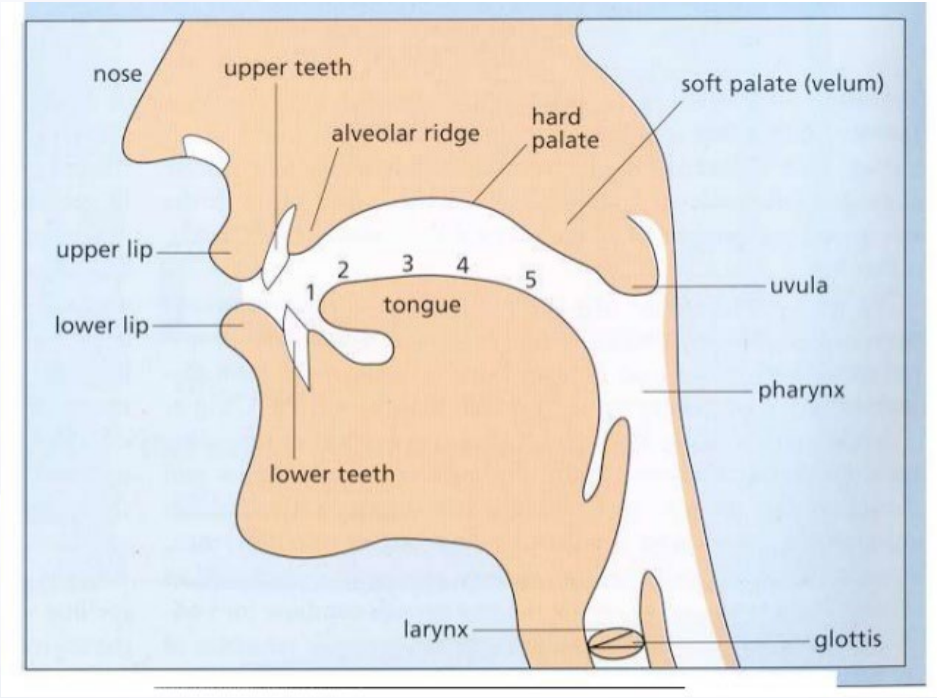
Phonology

Part I. Organs of Speech Production



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Visualization

Linguistics is easy.
Linguistics is fun.
Linguistics is logical.

Essential Question:

What should every teacher know about **Organs of Speech** to effectively serve English learners (ELs)?

Have you ever wondered how actor **Meryl Streep** is able to master so many different accents?

She convincingly played a Polish concentration camp survivor in *Sophie's Choice,* a Danish plantation owner in *Out of Africa*, an Italian farm wife in *Bridges of Madison County*, and, more recently, a famous cookbook writer with a very distinctive voice, Julia Child.

Her success is the result of her ***knowledge of linguistics***, particularly the **organs of speech production, place and manner of articulation.**

If she wanted to say ***хорошо*** (good) in **Russian**, she would learn from her coach that the "**kh**" sound is produced by raising the back of the tongue to the soft palate (or "velum") and allowing air to flow through the space without allowing her vocal folds to vibrate. This sound in Russian is a voiceless, velar fricative.

Photo: http://thesource.com/tag/meryl-streep/

If she were to play a **Hindi** woman and wanted to say "teacher" in English but with a Hindi accent, she would be advised to place the tip of her tongue halfway between the alveolar ridge (the bony area just behind the top front teeth) and the hard palate (the dome-shaped bone at the top of the oral cavity).

The result would be more like "**deacher**" than "**teacher,**" but she would sound like a Hindi speaker of English.

And how about you?

Are you convinced that you can't roll your R's?

Actually, you do it every day!

Say the word "**butter**" as an American would, then say it again as a British person would.

What's the difference?

In the first pronunciation, the tip of your tongue actually flapped briefly in the middle of the word; in the second pronunciation, it rested behind your top teeth and you "spat" out a little puff of air before ending the word.

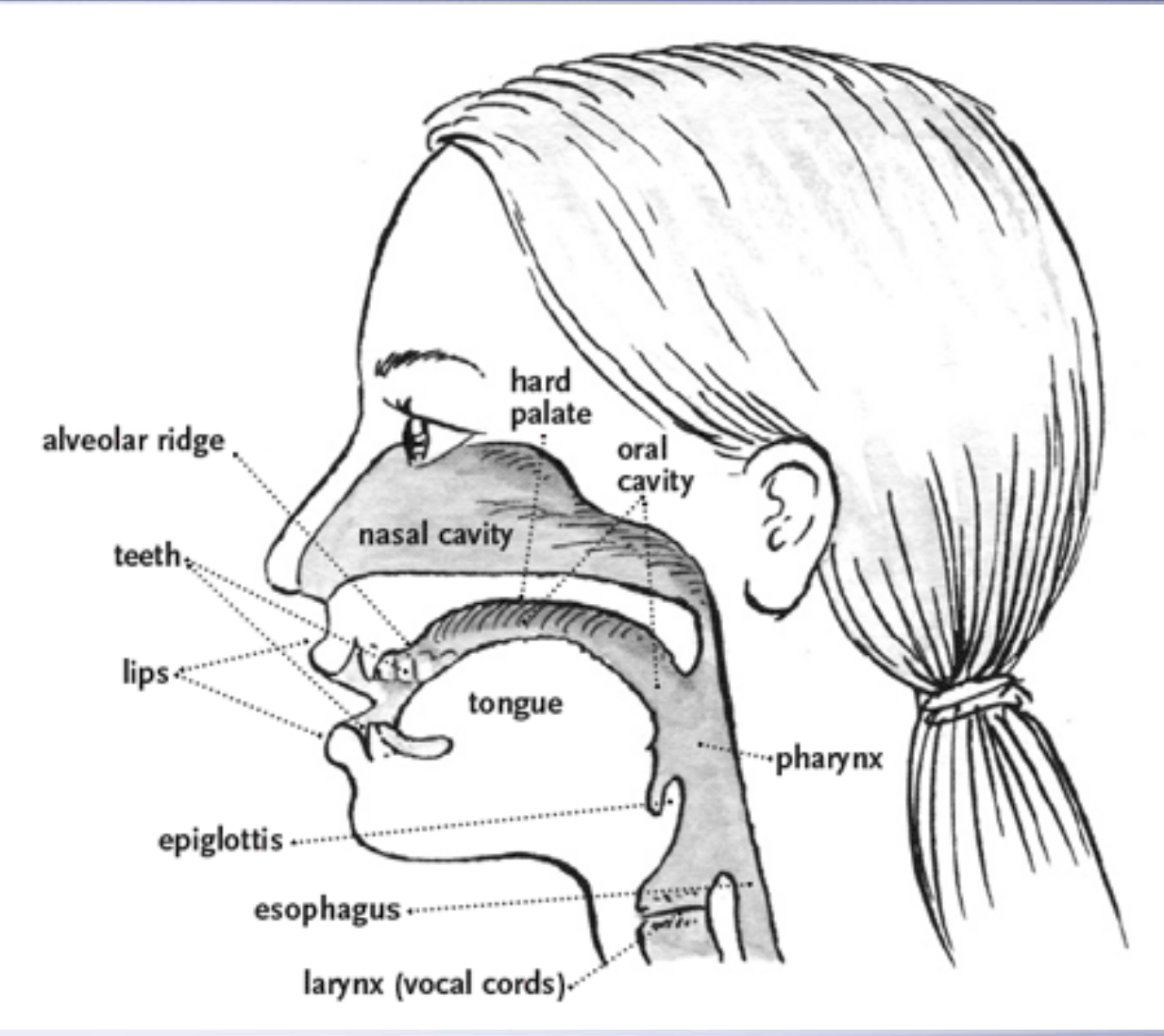
but-ter **butter** **budder**

The “**alveolar flap**” you produced when saying the word “butter” as a North American speaker of English is the same sound that is used to trill the ‘r’ in the Spanish word “caro” (cheap).

For a more extended trill, say the word “butter” rapidly 3 or 4 times. **Hear the trill?**

Now, practice with the following Spanish words: *gracias*, *claro* (sure), *nombre* (name).

Teachers who are aware of the **speech organs** will be able to **assist ELs** their with **pronunciation of English.**

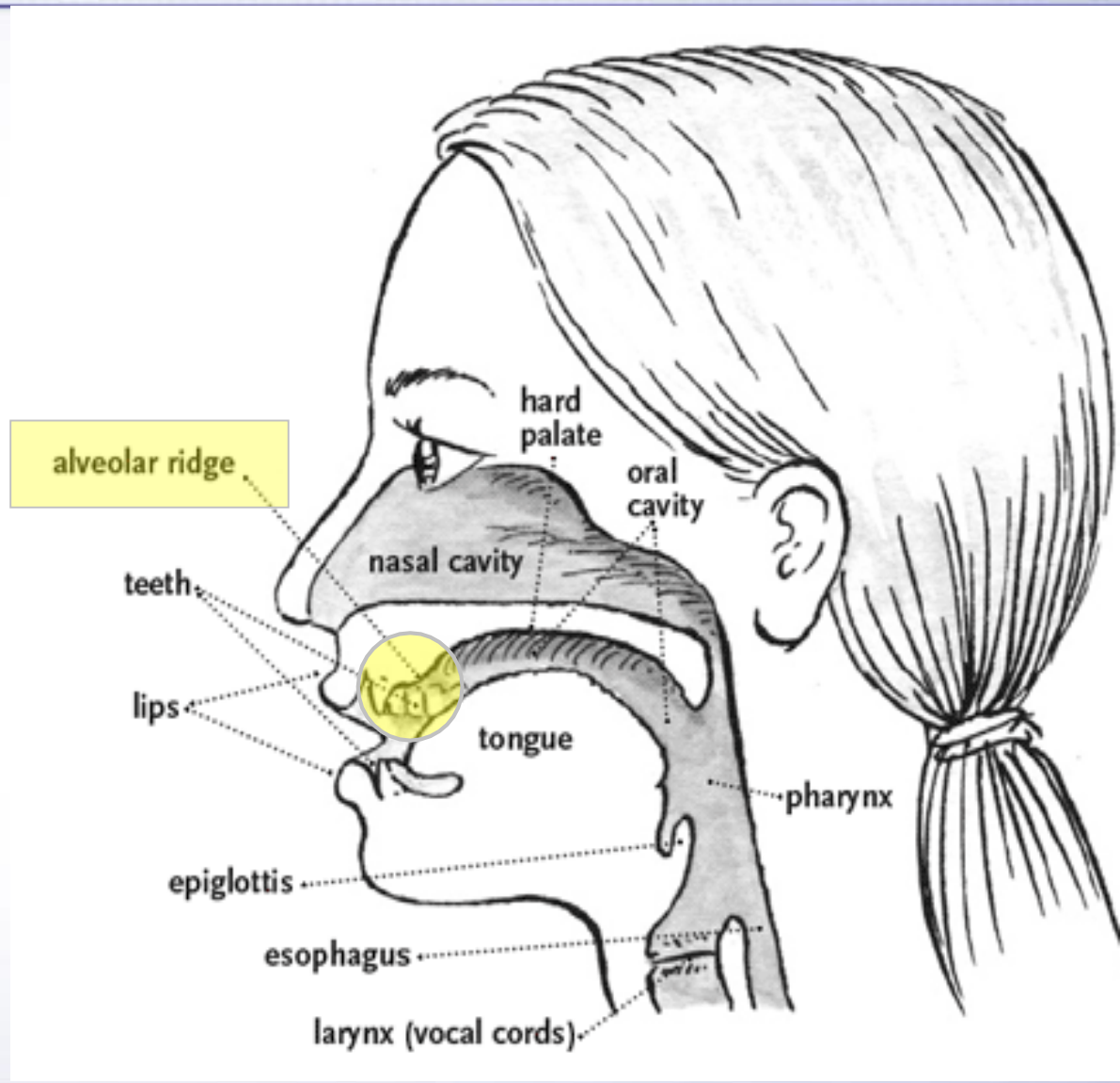


Chew a piece of gum.

Move it with the tip of your tongue to the *alveolar ridge*.

What sounds are made at this place of articulation?

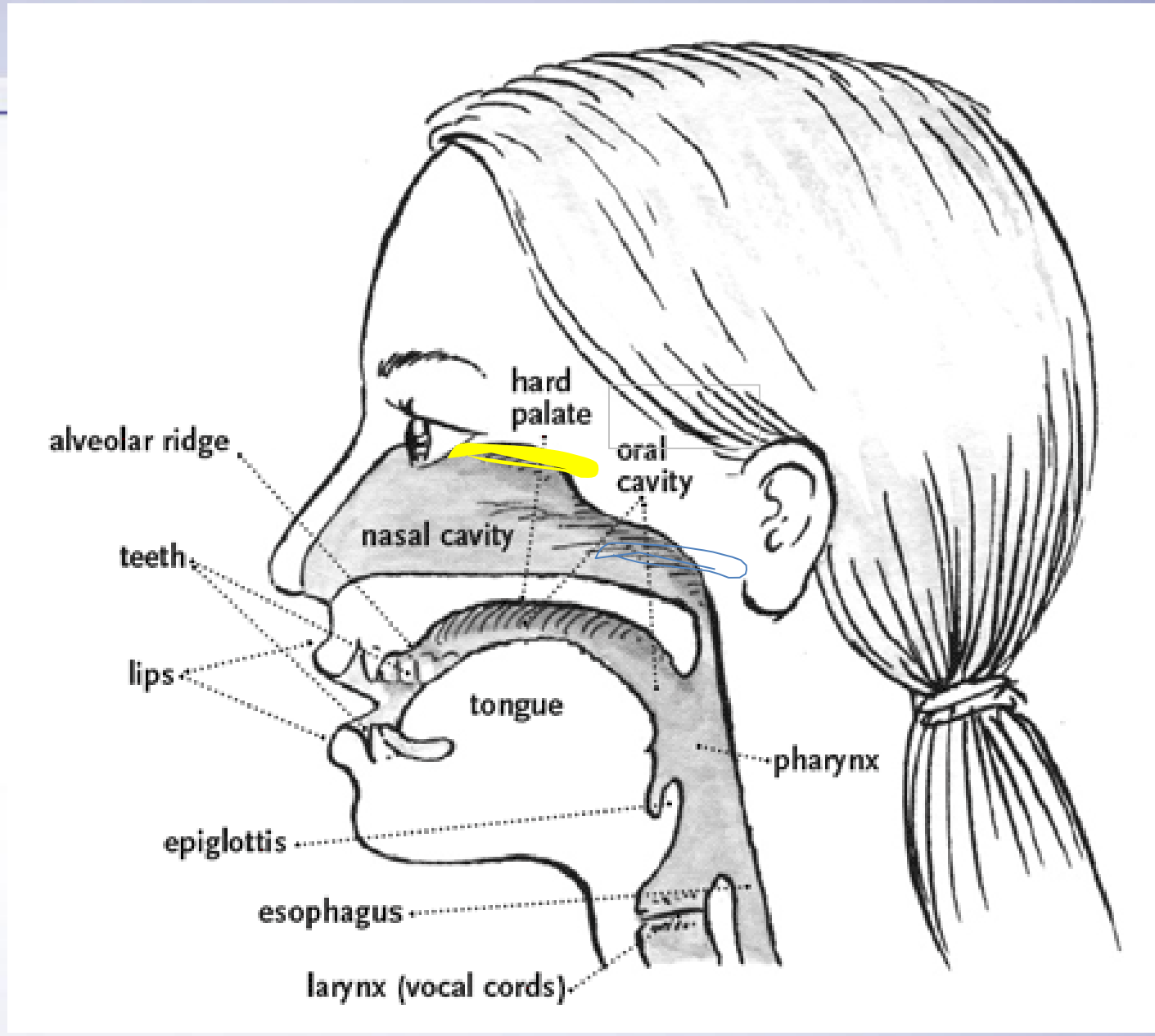
d t n s z l r ch j



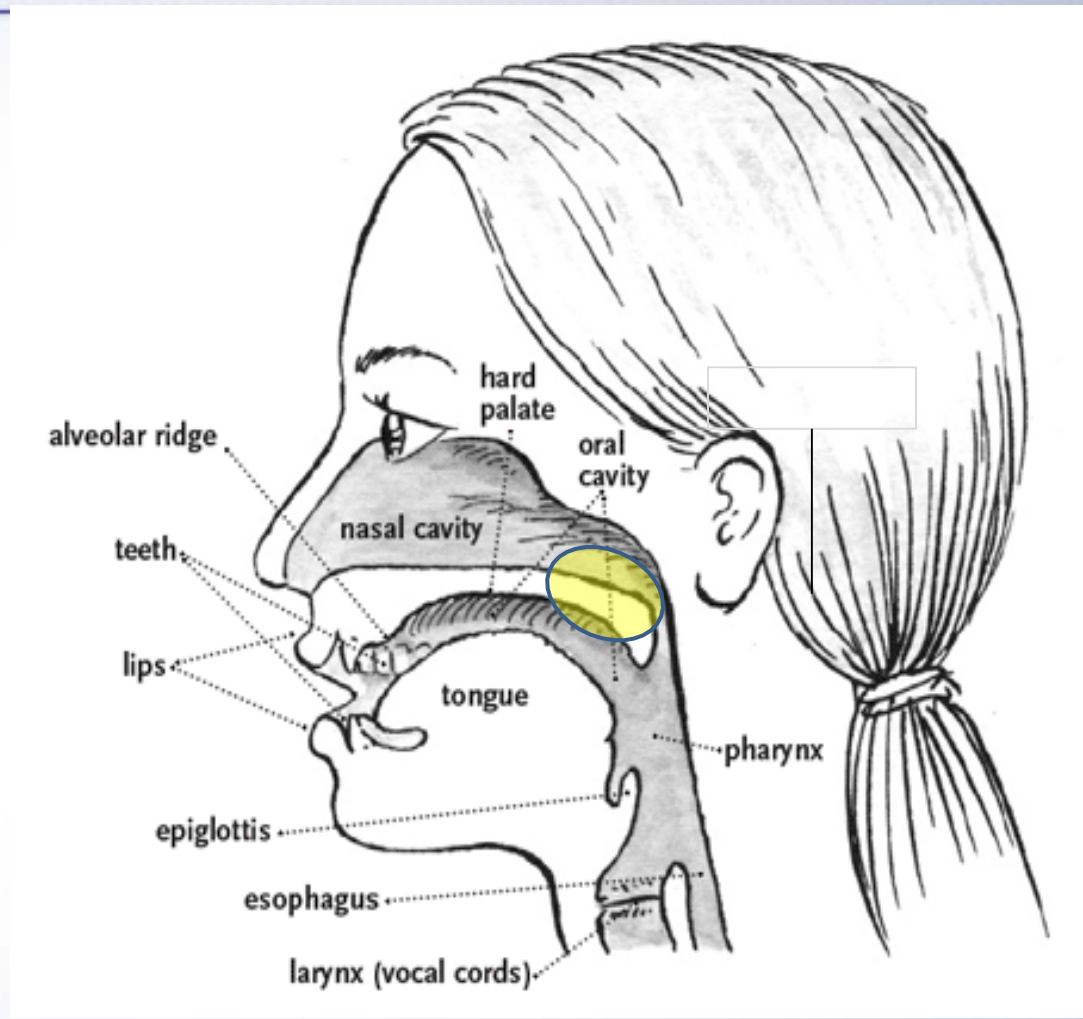
Now, move the gum to the *hard palate*.

What sounds are made at this point of articulation?

sh zh y



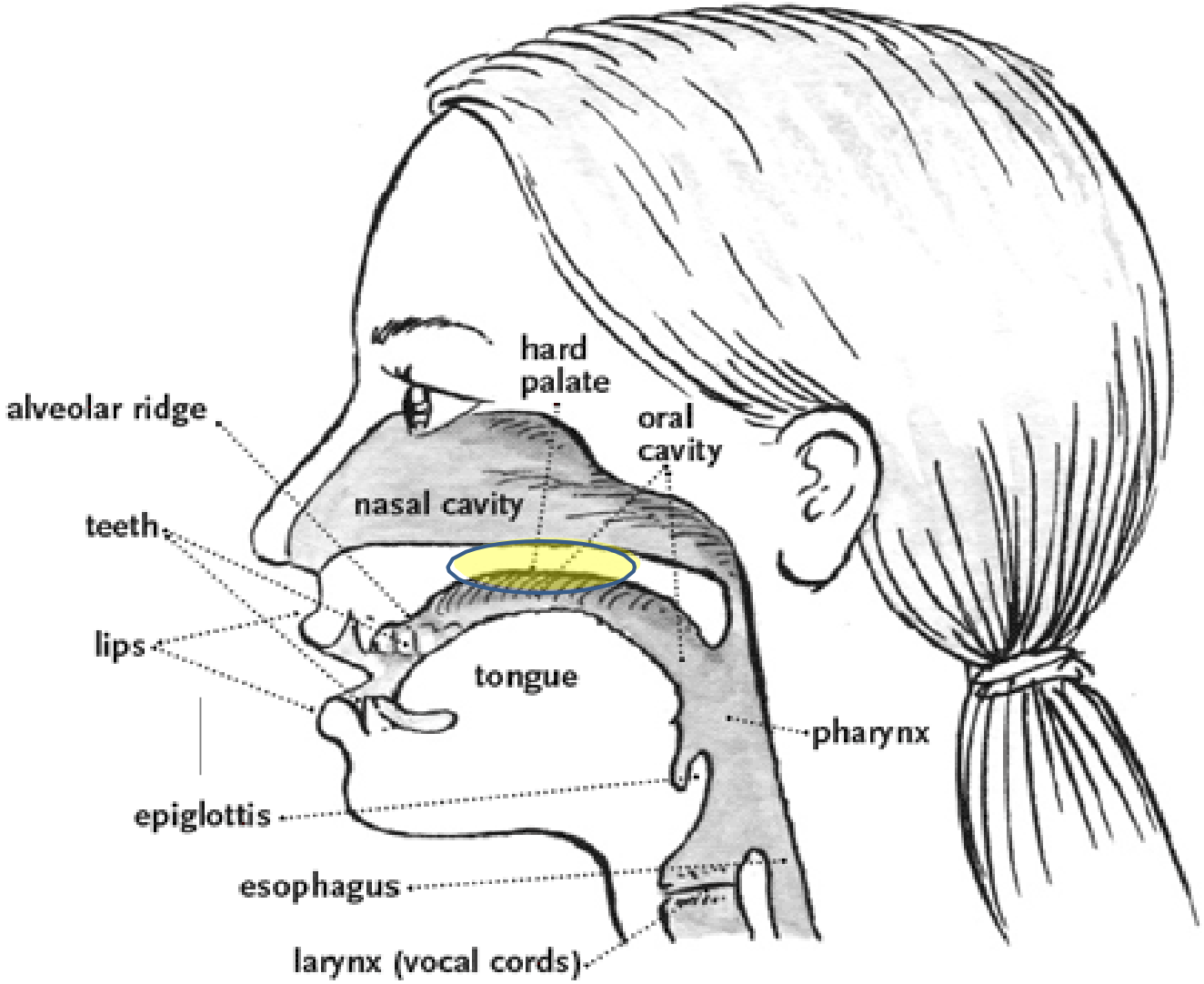
- Do NOT move the gum to your velum (soft palate) as you may choke!
- Remove it, but save it.
- Make the /h/ sound.
- Describe the position of your tongue.



back of tongue rises to touch velum

Put your gum back in your mouth.

Repeat the same process but use the *blade* (middle part) of your tongue to move the gum to the alveolar ridge and the hard palate.



Are there any English sounds made in this manner?

No

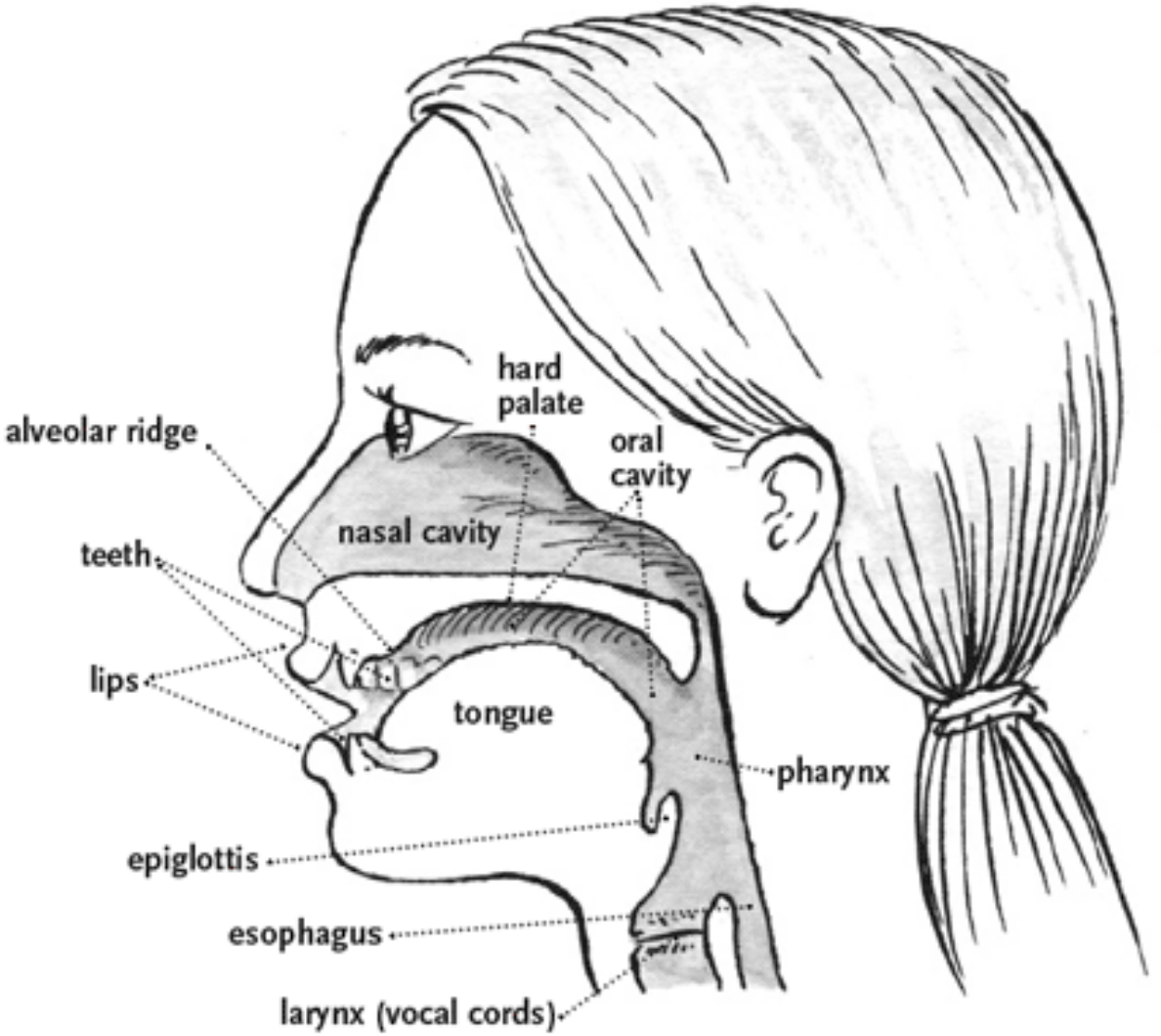
ESOL

Self- Practice Activity

Place a blank sheet of paper on top of the image.

Trace the parts of the speech articulatory system and label each part.

Write the sounds that were just identified at the alveolar ridge, hard palate, or velum.



ESOL

The Consonant System of the English Language

The chewing gum task did more than introduce you to some of the **organs of speech production**.

You also began to learn about **place and manner of articulation**.

Now, look in your textbook.

Does the chart account for all possible sounds made in human speech?

No, only those found in English.

Does the chart account for all the sounds in English?

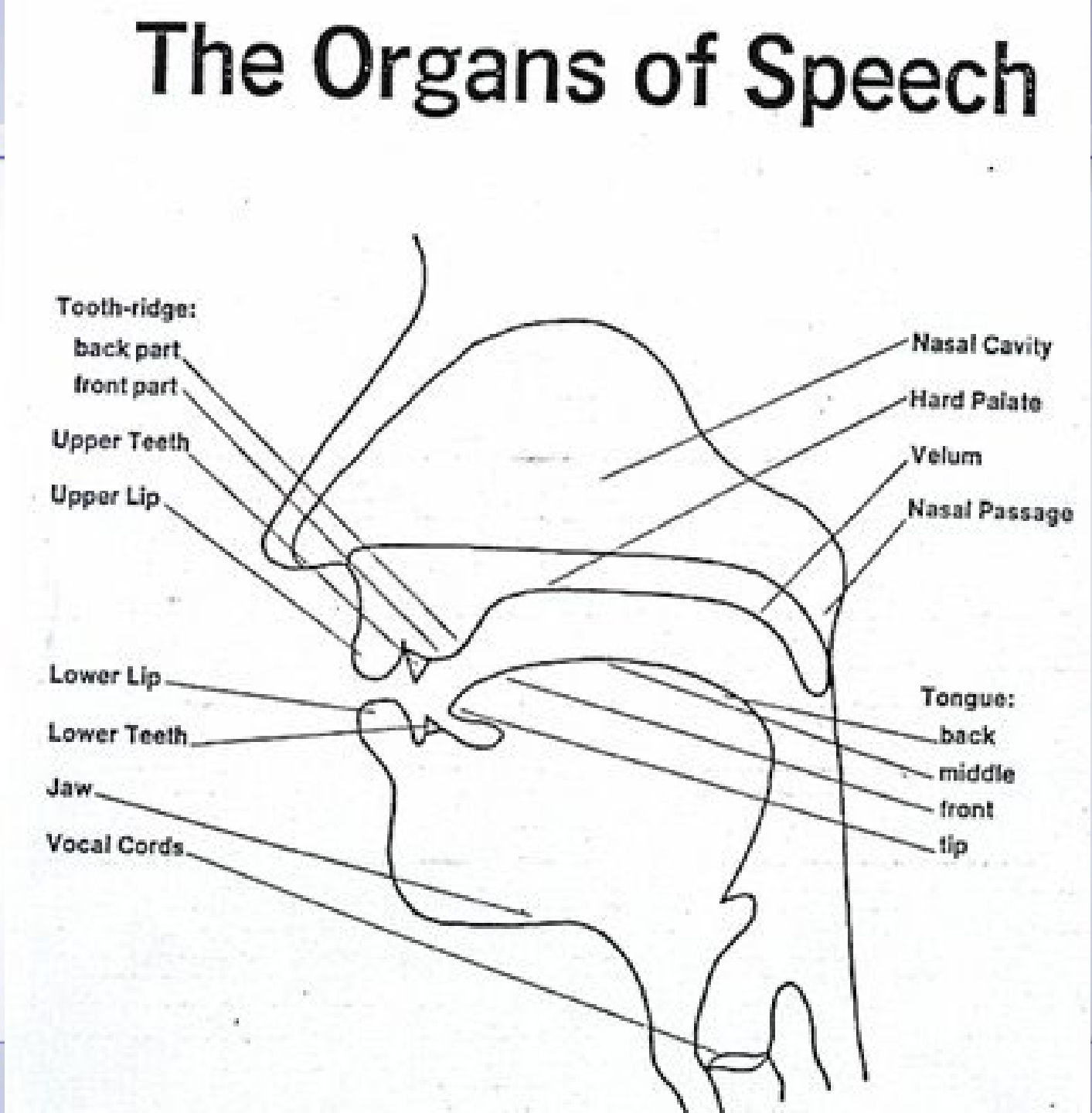
No, only the English consonants.

ESOL

Practice Activity

Briefly describe why teachers should be aware of the **Organs of Speech** in English.

Provide at least **one** example to support your reasoning.



CONGRATULATIONS !

You've earned yourself a trip to the beach.

ESOL
in Higher Ed