

Tip Sheet: Count the Number of Words in a Book Title

FOR PRESCHOOL PARENTS

For additional support on this topic, visit <https://bit.ly/QTCount> to view a short video.

WHY?

Young children don't automatically understand where one word ends and another begins. When children begin to understand there are spaces between words, it helps them notice the connection between each word on the page and the ones you read.

WHAT?

Although it may seem obvious to us, children need to learn about **word boundaries**, or that individual words are separated by spaces. This is a small but important element of **print awareness**.

HOW?

Before you read to your child, take just a minute or two to read the title and count the words. This is an easy way to support your child in developing an understanding of word boundaries. As you count the words, be sure to point under each word. Explain that the spaces let you know where one word ends and another one begins.

If you have more time, here are some other ways you can use the title of a book to help your child develop an understanding of word boundaries:

- After you model counting the words in the title, invite your child to count with you out loud.
- Challenge your child to find the longest or the shortest words in the title. Ask them to compare these words to other words in the titles of books you recently read.
- Read the title backwards, pointing at each word. Laugh with your child about reading in the opposite direction.

With practice, your child will begin to notice the separation of the words, the word boundaries, on their own. This is an important skill that helps them get ready to read!