

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

## FOR PRESCHOOL TEACHERS

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 one-to-one correspondence between words that are spoken and the words on the page.

### 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?

Taking just a minute or two before a read aloud to count the words in the title is an easy way to support children in developing an understanding of word boundaries. Make it part of the book introduction. 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 other ways to use the title of a book to help children develop an understanding of word boundaries:

- After you model counting the words in the title, invite the whole group to count with you out loud, or invite an individual child to come to the book to count.
- Challenge children 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 the children about reading in the opposite direction.



### TEACHER TIP

Another way to help children develop an understanding of word boundaries is to "read around the room." When you read around the room, use a pointer and read the printed material hanging in the learning space, tapping under each word. After reading what the sign says, invite children to count the number of words.