Helping Your Child Segment Sounds for Spelling

Key points

- Segmenting is the skill of breaking a spoken word down into its individual sounds, such as 'cat' becoming c-a-t.
- This is the opposite of blending, which is when children push sounds together to read a word.
- Children need to be able to hear these separate sounds before they can start to write words down.
- Segmenting can be more challenging than blending, so it is normal for children to need a bit more practice.
- Every school uses a different phonics programme (the method used to teach reading and spelling), so please check with your child's teacher for the specific sounds they are learning.

Things to try at home

- Play 'Robot Talk' by using stiff 'robot arms' to chop a word into its sounds, like c-u-p.
- Count the sounds in a simple word by tapping your fingers or using buttons on a table.
- Play 'I Spy' with simple words and see if your child can tell you the first sound they hear.

Find out more

- Your child's class teacher or the school's phonics lead.
- The official GOV.UK website for information on the National Curriculum.