Adding '-ly' to Words: A Guide for Year 2 Parents and Carers

Key points

- In Year 2, children learn to create adverbs—words that describe how an action is done—by adding '-ly' to an adjective.
- An adjective describes a person or thing (a quiet child), while an adverb describes the action (they spoke quietly).
- Most of the time, you simply add '-ly' to the end of the word, such as turning 'slow' into 'slowly'.
- If a word ends in 'y', like 'happy', the 'y' usually changes to an 'i' before adding '-ly' to make 'happily'.
- Children are taught to check if a word describes a verb (an action word) to help them identify it as an adverb.
- Specific spelling rules and expectations can vary slightly between schools, so feel free to ask your child's teacher for their preferred method.

Things to try at home

- Play a game of 'Simon Says' using adverbs, such as asking your child to 'walk slowly' or 'clap loudly'.
- While reading a story together, spot a word ending in '-ly' and ask which action it is describing.
- During a walk, describe things you see using '-ly' words, like 'the wind is blowing strongly' or 'the bird is flying quickly'.

Find out more

- The GOV.UK website for the National Curriculum in England.
- Your child's class teacher or the school's literacy lead.