

# Past Tense – Irregular Verbs

A verb is an *action* or *doing* word such as walk, sleep or give.

Regular verbs all follow the rule that, when talking about something that has already happened, you add 'ed' to the end. For example, I jumped, I painted, I kicked.

Irregular verbs don't follow this rule. For example: go-went, catch-caught, eat-ate.

Some irregular verbs can be grouped together:

- Words that stay the same in the past or present (shut, cost, put, hurt)
- Words that end in 'd' change to 't' (built, sent, lent, bent)
- Words that change to -ew (flew, blew, drew, knew).
- Words that change to -ought/aught (caught, thought, taught, fought).

Some irregular verbs don't follow any pattern and so just have to be learnt.

## Activities for working on Irregular Verbs

- **Photos:** Take a photo of your child doing (or pretending to do) an activity, such as eating or writing. Show them the photo and ask them what they did – 'I ate a sandwich'; 'I wrote a letter'.
- **Silly Sentences:** Take turns making up sentences which contain an irregular verb. E.g. Last night I ran to the shops...Last night I ran to France...Last night I ran to the moon....
- **Today-Yesterday:** Make up a sentence about what you are doing today and then ask your child to say they did it yesterday. E.g. 'Today I am fighting a dragon...'Yesterday I fought a dragon'.
- **Turn Taking Games:** Play a simple game such as Jenga or Snakes & Ladders. Before each turn look at an action picture and say what the person did. E.g. 'She threw the ball'; 'He drank some juice'.

## Tips for Working on the Past Tense (Irregular Verbs):

- Focus on just a few verbs at a time. Where possible, group similar words together (such as those that change to -ew).
- If your child makes a mistake, model what they should have said.
- Use everyday opportunities to practice using irregular verbs. For example, ask your child to tell you one thing they did at school.