🧊 The Sounds of the Consonants: When Letters Talk (or Just Breathe)

Consonants are the non-vowel sounds in our language. Some are voiced (you feel vibration), others are voiceless (just air). Learning how these sounds work helps us spell, pronounce, and understand unfamiliar words more easily.

# 🔁 Sound Twins: Voiced vs. Voiceless Consonants

Most consonants come in pairs, with one voiced and the other voiceless:

b / p

d / t

v / f

g (hard) / k

j / ch

z / s

th (in thine) / th (in thin)

zh (as in azure) / sh

Other important consonants include:
- Liquids: l, m, n, r (blend well with others)
- Sibilants: s, z, sh, zh (hissy sounds)
- Misc: w, y, h

# 🎵 Why Does This Matter?

English changes some sounds to make pronunciation easier, like turning sub + port into support. Knowing how sounds interact helps with spelling and recognizing patterns.

# ⚠️ The “C” and “G” Trick

C and G can be soft or hard depending on the letter that follows:

C is soft (like s) before e, i, y (e.g., city, center, cycle)

C is hard (like k) before a, o, u, or consonant (e.g., cat, coat)

G is soft (like j) before e, i, y (e.g., giraffe, gym)

G is hard (like g) before a, o, u, or consonant (e.g., goat, glad)

# ❗ Exceptions You Should Know

Words like give, get, girl, gift, giggle, etc. use a hard g before e or i

Soft g appears in judgement, acknowledgement even before consonants

Soft c is preserved in French words using a ç (e.g., façade)

# ✅ Practice: Sound Detective

Label the c or g in each word as soft or hard:

1. circus → c1: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ c2: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. ginger → g1: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ g2: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3. goat → g: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

4. celery → c: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

5. giddy → g: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

6. success → c1: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ c2: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

7. façade → c: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

8. gem → g: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

9. get → g: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

10. cycle → c: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_