

Helping Your Child Enjoy Writing

Have you ever stopped to think about how much is involved in writing a simple sentence? The writer has to have the idea and be able to hold it in his head. He has to remember it. As he puts pen to paper he has to form letters and remember how the sounds make words. He has to write these words in an order which makes sense and follows the rules of grammar. He has to remember a capital letter at the start and a full stop at the end. There's a lot to think about!

Easy Ideas for Improving Writing

Follow your child's interests: Does your child like cricket, cycling, fashion or cookery? Whatever their interests, there are good writing opportunities. Perhaps a diary for reports on test matches or a recipe card for a favourite meal?

Talk comes first: To write, children must be able to express their ideas clearly, put thoughts in order and discuss what they want to say. All of these depend on speaking, so talk to your child, encourage him/her to express him/herself, listen and respond to their ideas.

It all helps:

- It will encourage your child to write if you offer plenty of praise. Writing takes practice and perseverance, both of which are hard if you are feeling discouraged. Think of nice things to say e.g. 'I love the way you've put that! It's brilliant.'
- Allow different forms of writing. Writing emails, typing messages or posting on a blog are all perfectly good ways for children to express themselves in written form.
- Focus on what matters most. Spelling and handwriting are important, but they are only small pieces of the jigsaw. The main criteria for a good piece of writing are that: It makes sense, following grammar and punctuation rules; it is well expressed and interesting; it fulfils its purpose – i.e. if it is a thank-you letter to granny, it says thank you!



Helping your Foundation Stage Child

- Encourage your child to write their own name, letter sounds and key words
- Explore writing with paint, chalk, play-dough etc...
- Develop their gross motor skills in controlling their bodies with care, such as making circles with their arms
- Ask them to say and try to write simple sentences



Helping your Key Stage 1 Child

- Encourage writing in play and everyday life e.g. shopping lists, sports results, diaries of days out or family events
- Engage with their writing through: saying what you liked in it; asking where their ideas have come from and might go next; asking them to show you where a sentence begins and ends
- Help them to organise and sequence their writing by asking them to talk about their ideas or to draw a sequence of simple pictures to show how the main events in a story might be organised



Helping your Key Stage 2 Child

- Encourage their personal writing, e.g. a journal or diary, social networking on the school website, a blog
- Talk through their ideas with them before they start to write, for example, prompt them to think about how they intend to tackle a subject or task
- Encourage and support them with planning a piece of writing, so that it has a clear structure for them to follow as they write
- Help them to reflect on their writing, particularly the effect they hoped to have on the reader, checking the writing fits the purpose and contains all the features of that text type
- Encourage and support them to read through their work, making sure meaning is clear, grammar is correct and punctuation is used all the way through

Remember – writing is a form of self-expression, a creative art. It is vital that you and your child both enjoy working on writing together – if either feels tired or bored...stop and save it for another day!

Happy Writing!