

2nd December 2015



I went swimming.

Becoming readers and writers

Before children can learn to read and write they need to develop their understanding of the English language. For all of us this happens through talk.

Through talk we learn new vocabulary and the knowledge of how to structure sentences.

In school we encourage the children to talk in a variety of situations.



What can you do at home to help with speaking?

Encourage your child to: -

- explain a game or activity
- describe a person, place, picture or thing
- retell stories
- talk about things they have done e.g. visits, day at school - encourage detail
- predict what might happen next in a story, TV programme or sequel to a film
- play word games



- Speak to your child in sentences.
- Have regular discussions with your child
- Introduce new words and explain what the words mean.

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Writing

For children who are beginning to write:

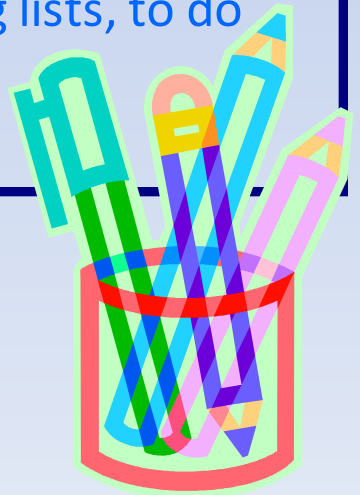
Once a child is physically able they will start by making simple marks. The child will often put meanings to these marks.

In school the children are exposed to all types of handwriting and text.

As they become more confident they will try to form the sounds that they have learnt. Many children will begin with the sounds in their name.

What can you do to help?

- Encourage and praise all mark making
- Ask questions like: Which sound does it begin with?
- Support your child in writing in **lower case** not **CAPITAL LETTERS** as this will help them identify the sounds.
- Model your writing with your child so that they can see its purpose; shopping lists, to do lists etc.



We are our children's most important role models....

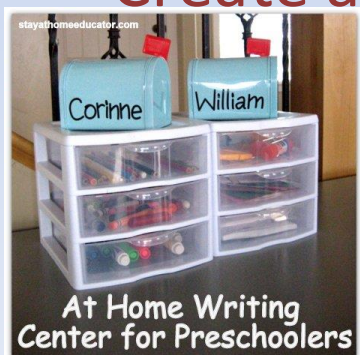
- Be a writing model and encourage your child to write alongside you for real purposes e.g. shopping lists, birthday/Christmas lists, labels, invitations, thank you letters, emails to friends, postcards, cards for relatives, scrap books of holidays/hobbies/special events, diaries, posters for real events, short stories or poems for family members, menus, texting, bedroom or house rules.



Useful kit...



- Have an exciting selection of writing materials available eg. a range of pencils, pens, coloured crayons, writing icing, writing soaps for bath time, chunky chinks, whiteboard & dry wipe pen.
- Remember to praise your child for trying and don't dwell on mistakes. Focus on content and enjoyment of writing for fun and for purpose.
- Create a special area for writing.



At Home Writing Center for Preschoolers

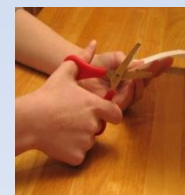




Early writing...



- Encourage your child to look at print on road signs, food packets, in books, magazines and catalogues. Go to the library and read favourite books over and over again. Enjoy them.
- Try fun activities that strengthen your child's hand e.g. cutting, painting, squeezing play dough, picking up small things with tweezers and pegs.
- Use magnetic letters and make small words together. Leave a message on the fridge door and encourage your child to reply.



Helping at home...



- Praise play writing – early squiggles and marks show that your child is beginning to understand writing.
- Make up a story together about one of their toys. You write the story as they say the words. Make up a little booklet. Take photos and use the pictures in the book.
- Buy stickers of a favourite TV programme or book. Make your own little book about it.

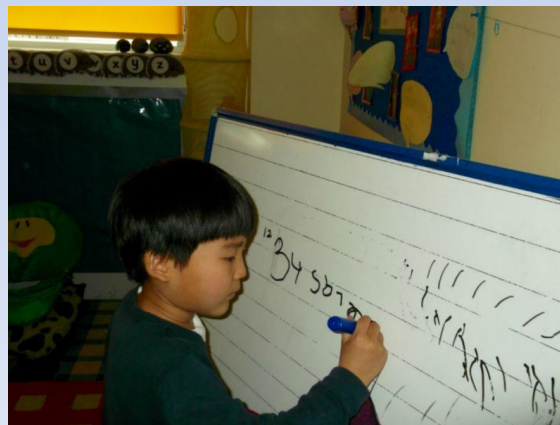


Have fun...



- Let your child write their own Christmas cards, thank you letters, cards or emails to friends or relatives, invitations to a party, or a list of things they need to take on holiday.
- Cut up letters from magazines for children to make their names and short sentences.
- Make handwriting interesting – practise drawing letters in sand, water, or paint, use white boards, playdough, pastry or shaving foam.

Mark making is fun....



Be creative...



How do I help more confident writers?

- Continue talking about experiences. This remains the key to good writing. Talk about what has been seen, heard, smelled, tasted and touched with as many details as possible.
- Play word-building games to develop descriptive vocabulary such as Boggle, Scrabble, Guess Who, 'What am I?' (one person thinks of something to describe. They give clues by describing it, without saying its name. Other players have to guess what it is with as few clues as possible.)





- Create silly sentences or tongue twisters using alliteration (a group of words that all begin with the same sound) e.g. Sad Sid slipped on Sam's salad sandwich.
- Encourage your child to rehearse their sentence out loud before they write it down.
- Also encourage children to punctuate their sentences with a full-stop and capital letter. Celebrate what the writing says first of all rather than focusing on errors.
- Let children write part of shopping lists and then let them be responsible for carrying the list and finding certain items.





- After making a cake, doing a craft activity or playing a game, challenge children to write instructions for someone else to follow.