

YOUNG Readers ...



... And Writers

Tips for Supporting First to Third Grade Writing Skills at Home

Three tips for supporting writing skills at home:

1. Help your child use the writing process for a variety of purposes.
2. Help your child practice handwriting, spelling, typing, and word processing.
3. Provide a supportive environment that encourages your child to write daily.

1. Help your child use the writing process for a variety of purposes:

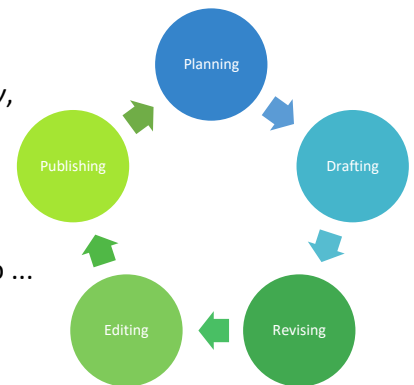
Young writers need to think carefully about the purpose for writing, plan *what to say*, *how to say it* and understand *what the reader needs to know*.

Parents can reinforce the writing strategies that their child learns in the classroom.

They can help their child figure out where they are in the writing process and which strategy they might choose for that stage. For example, a child can be encouraged to ...

- **Plan** by brainstorming writing ideas. Allow time for your child to plan their writing. This may include dawdling, finding the right paper for writing, or researching the topic.
- **Write a draft** of their ideas without worrying about correct spelling. Children who worry about spelling every word correctly may become frustrated and avoid writing altogether. Remind your child that they can always go back and correct the spelling later.
- **Reread and revise** what was written. Ask your child if there is anything else they would like to add to their writing. Ask your child does their writing make sense.
- **Edit** by checking for proper capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.
- **Share your child's writing** by reading it to family members. Praise your child's writing by finding good things to say.

Writing is a great way for young learners to organize their ideas and express their thoughts and creativity. Parents can help their child understand the different purposes of writing and how to write effectively for those purposes by talking about their writing goals. Ask your child what they are trying to accomplish with their writing (see examples below). Before they begin to write, you can use the tips below to help guide your child's writing.



| Examples of writing purposes | Tips to share with your child |
|---|--|
| Describe something in vivid detail | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> descriptions of people, places, or events write about something in nature or in the neighborhood | Prompt your child to use their five senses to describe something: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does it taste? How does it smell? |
| Narrate a story of an experience or event while holding the listener's interest | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> diaries, journals, or notebooks short stories eyewitness accounts | Consider asking your child: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When and where does the story take place? Who are the main characters and what do they want? What happens when the main characters try to do it? How does the story end? |
| Inform to share previously learned information or provide new information | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> instructions or directions books about things that interest him or her newspaper articles | Help your child organize their thinking around: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What they know What they want to know about books What they learned |
| Persuade the reader to take a specific action or believe a point of view is valid | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> persuasive letters book or movie reviews posters | Encourage your child to do the following as they write: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell what he or she believes in a (main) topic sentence Provide reasons End with a strong conclusion Examine their work to make sure they have all three parts stated above |

2. Use teacher's tips to help your child practice handwriting, spelling, typing, and word processing.

Handwriting and spelling are basic writing skills that all children must draw upon to translate their ideas into writing. Children also use typing and word processing skills when composing electronically.

- Support very young writers to hold a pencil correctly and form letters.
- Help your child to spell words correctly, such as words from spelling lists.
- Support your child to learn to type and use a word processing program.



| Skill | Suggested activities | Change it up |
|--------------------|--|--|
| Handwriting | Very young writers can practice writing letters from memory or by copying handwriting. Your child should also apply handwriting skills in sentences. | Your child can practice writing letters with sidewalk chalk outside, on a whiteboard, or using watercolor or finger paints. |
| Spelling | Make note cards from current or old spelling lists to reinforce learning. Have your child spell words out loud and on paper. Help your child learn to use a dictionary (book or online version). | Your child can bounce a ball or jump for each letter they say as they spell a word. You can help your child make personal dictionaries with words they have previously misspelled. They can add to their dictionary as they write and use new words. |

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| Typing and Word Processing | If there is a computer with a keyboard available, show your child how to use a typing instructional tool or word processing software. Practice opening and saving files, adding, moving, and deleting text. | Your child can practice typing using an online typing game. |
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3. Provide a supportive environment that encourages your child to write daily.

Communicating the message that writing is valued can help young writers become more engaged and motivated to write. An effective way to help your child grow as a writer is to show through your own example that writing has useful purposes and is a part of daily life. Having dedicated time to practice writing can help children gain confidence in their writing abilities and help them practice their skills.

Parents can help their child be engaged in writing and excited about what he or she writes.

| Tips for engaging your child in writing | Activities |
|---|---|
| Allow your child to choose what to write about. | Encourage your child to keep a notebook to record potential topics, such as memories, pets, or favorite games or foods. |
| Write and share examples of your own writing. | Write something together, such as a letter to a friend, an email, a birthday greeting or get-well message, or a thank you note. Write a review for a restaurant from where you ordered takeout and ask your child to add something they liked or disliked. |
| Display or share your child’s writing. | Hang your child’s writing on the refrigerator or a wall at home or share it with friends and family through social media, email, or the mail. |

Provide your child with daily opportunities to practice writing in lots of ways at home.

| Examples of ways your child can practice writing | Skill emphasized |
|---|--|
| Create grocery lists or weekly meal plans | Planning and organizing information Spelling |
| Write letters to friends, a relative, a teacher, or the local newspaper | Adding details to writing Writing for a specific audience |
| Create captions or descriptions for a family scrapbook or photo album | Describing or narrating a thing or event. |
| Review a book, movie, or game | Persuading or expressing an opinion |

The Division of Early Childhood Services acknowledges the term “parent” to indicate any adult who plays a legal and significant role in a student’s life. This includes parents, stepparents, parents’ partners, foster parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, extended family, caretakers, and others who regularly contribute in important ways to a child’s education and development. The term “parent” may be used interchangeably with the word “family” or the phrase “parent and family” when referencing those who share responsibility for the well-being of a child.

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