




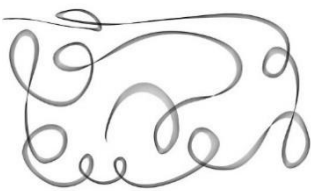




A Parent's Guide to Helping your child with Writing

Turning your child into a confident and effective written communicator starts with their oral language. Talking with your child is the best way to develop their vocabulary and ability to express themselves. The next most important piece of the puzzle is reading because it develops vocabulary, ideas and imagination. At all stages, it is important to praise writing as you would do their artwork and recognise your child's progress at each stage. Why not put their writing on the fridge for all to see or have them read out their story to someone?

Pre writing

<p><u>Speech</u> Your child's ability to pronounce words clearly and communicate their needs orally comes before being able to spell and write. Keep encouraging your child to pronounce words clearly by repeating back words in the proper way. Also repeat sentences back using correct language for example if your child says "My did that", repeat back "I did that."</p> 	<p><u>Vocabulary</u> Children may only be able to communicate to you in simple language, but they understand much more. Move away from using 'baby language' when talking to your child. Be thoughtful of the language that you use and try to think of different words to use such as "This meal is delicious, amazing, scrummy..."</p> 	<p><u>Fine motor skills</u> Before your child is ready to hold a pencil, they will need to develop control and dexterity in their fingers. You can help by providing lots of opportunities for this such as: using tweezers, picking up small objects, threading, doing up buttons, zips and velcro, turning the page in a book, cutting, tearing, playdough, pushing buttons. Get your child to practise using both hands at the same time eg when cutting, hold the paper with one hand and cut with the other.</p> 
<p><u>Imaginative play</u> Play is how children express themselves, experiment, explore and develop imagination. Ensure your child has access to toys. Encourage them to talk while they are playing and explain what they are doing to encourage their ability to tell a story. Don't be afraid to get down on the floor and join in!</p> <p>Role play and dressing up will help your child to take on another character where they can act out a story.</p> 	<p><u>Reading</u> Reading provides children with increased vocabulary and expands their imagination. Regularly read to your child making it an enjoyable experience. Look at the pictures and discuss what the story might be about. Talk about what happened in the story and any characters. Talk about why they did and didn't like the story. Allow your child to pick the story.</p> 	<p><u>Mark making</u> Making marks on paper is how young children begin to experiment with writing tools. Give your child plenty of opportunities and resources to make marks. This is an important stage in early writing. Ideas include pencils, pens, crayons, paint, chalk, rice, shaving foam. Even a trip to a sandy beach with a stick. You may need plenty of paper- old rolls of wallpaper can provide hours of fun!</p> 

Early level - Nursery and P1

Speech

Your child's ability orally can directly impact their spelling and writing. Continue to encourage your child to pronounce words clearly. Continue to correct grammar, for example if your child says "My did that", repeat back "I did that."



Have conversations with your child to develop their ability to string words into sentences.

Be thoughtful of using correct English when having conversations with your child since this is the language they will need to use in school.

Fine motor skills

As your child is getting ready to start forming letters, they will need to continue to develop control and dexterity in their fingers. You can help by providing them with activities and using both hands such as cutting and craft, threading, sticker books, playdough, dressing dolls, using cutlery, games like Jenga, Hungry Hippos, Pop up Pirate, Jigsaws.



Play

Role Play and dressing up will help your child create storylines. This could be a story from memory or from their imagination.

They can retell a story by acting it out or using puppets for example 'The Three Little Pigs'. Imaginative play with toys such as figures, vehicles, buildings, shops, tills, food etc will provide them with a platform for creating stories and is a great opportunity for you to engage your child in dialogue about what's happening while they play.

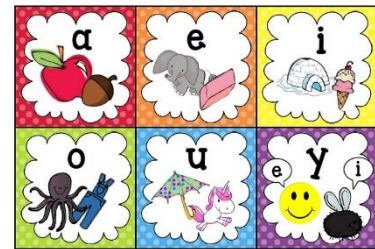


Reading



Reading provides children with increased vocabulary and expands

their imagination. When reading to your child, point out full stops, capital letters and spaces between words. Show that we read from left to right by moving your finger along as you read. Read a range of texts including nursery rhymes, fiction and nonfiction. Allow your child's interests to guide nonfiction reading. Reading the same book on repeat can help your child make sense of the order of the story and begin to be able to retell a story in the correct order. Focus on important points from the beginning, middle and end.



Sounds

Recognising sounds is the start of learning how to read and spell. Playing games like 'I spy' helps your child recognise the initial sounds of words.

Practise identifying the beginning, middle and end sounds of 3 letter words.

Make 3 letter words by blending sounds together.

Help your child spot some common words such as and, at, in, my, we, I.

When reading or listening to nursery rhymes, encourage your child to spot the words that rhyme and see if they can add any more to the list. Nonsense words count if they match the rhyming pattern.

Ensure your child completes any spelling activities sent home from school.

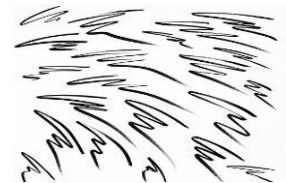
Experiences

Children's imagination and creativity is directly linked to the range of experiences they have had. Take any opportunity to visit a range of different places to expose your child to new environments. This could be the park, the beach or the forest for example and does not need to be expensive places. Talk about what you see, hear, feel, touch, taste. Can you make up stories involving that place together?





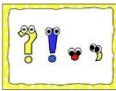



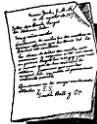


Mark making/early letter formation

Your child will now be showing more interest in writing. This may seem like just marks on a page, but they are actually experimenting with writing tools. Continue to provide a range of writing implements and surfaces. Encourage your child to make marks from left to right and top to bottom. Teach your child to recognise their name and encourage attempts to copy it.



First level - P2-P4

<p>Play As children get older they will have new experiences to bring to their play, so role play and dressing up will continue to help your child create storylines. This could be a story from memory or from their imagination. Children could retell a story by acting it out or using puppets.</p> <p>Imaginative play with toys such as  figures, vehicles, buildings, shops, tills, food etc will provide them with a platform for creating stories and is a great opportunity for you to engage your child in dialogue about what's happening while they play. Hamma/Aqua Beads, Playdough, Paint by Sticker books, games which require manipulation of small objects and craft activities which will all help continue to refine hand control.</p>	<p>Handwriting Now your child will have experience of writing letters. Continue to provide lots of opportunities and resources to encourage your child to write. Include paper with lines or notebooks.</p> <p>As your child gets older, the size of their writing should become smaller. Encourage your child to take pride in their handwriting and make it legible. Watch out for letter reversals. This is very common. By providing examples of correct letter formations, play 'spot the difference' to help your child recognise their own mistakes.</p> 	<p>Phonics/Spelling Your child is ready to move on to trickier sounds and spelling patterns. Encourage your child to 'sound out' unfamiliar words and praise them for their efforts. Talk about those words which cannot be sounded out. These are the common or tricky words such as because, said. Ensure your child completes any spelling activities sent home from school. Use your reading book to spot words which match the sound or spelling pattern being learnt. Play games such as i-Spy (you can adapt to match sound eg something beginning with sh, ch or rhyming with tree), Junior Scrabble, Boggle. Give your child word searches and crossword puzzles.</p> 
<p>Speech Your child's ability orally can directly impact their spelling and writing. Have conversations with your child to develop their ability to express their thoughts or retell a story. Ask them questions (when, where, why, what, how) to expand the detail and encourage thinking. Point out when children are using English or different languages/dialects. Continue to correct tenses when your child is talking to aid their writing (eg. 'I done that' should be corrected to 'I did that'). Play a game where you make errors and your child corrects you.</p> 	<p>Punctuation As children's writing increases in length, they will need to learn to use appropriate punctuation. When your child is writing, encourage the correct use of full stops, capitals, question marks, exclamation marks and commas for lists. Ask your child to find out where they have missing punctuation, rather than telling them. For example "I think you have missed a question mark, can you find where it should go?" or point at a place and ask "What's missing here?" Point out features of punctuation whilst reading.</p> 	<p>Experiences Children's imagination and creativity is directly linked to the range of experiences they have had. Take any opportunity to visit a range of different places to expose your child to new environments. This could be the park, the beach or the forest for example and does not need to be expensive places. Talk about what you see, hear, feel, touch and taste, developing the language used to describe each one. Can you make up stories involving that place together?</p> 
<p>Content of writing At this stage, children will be expected to write stories with a clear beginning, middle and end. As they grow in confidence, they will write with increased detail, such as using adjectives and adverbs in descriptions. You can help by encouraging the use of different words, rather than the most obvious (eg rather than 'said' could they use whispered, shouted, squeaked etc).</p> 	<p>Reading The wider the range of texts you read with your child, the more ideas and vocabulary they will develop to put into their own stories. Continue to ask questions about the beginning, middle and end of stories to aid planning of their own writing.</p> 	<p>Different writing styles At this stage, children will begin writing in a variety of styles such as creative and functional. You can encourage this at home by getting your child to write thank you letters, cards, the shopping list, journal/diary entries, emails and addressing envelopes.</p> 

Second level - P5-P7



Speech/oral language

Your child's ability orally is still developing. Help your child to expand their vocabulary by using varied language when talking to them.

You could even adopt a 'word of the week'. During conversations, continue to encourage extra detail and content by asking questions (when, where, why, what, how).

Handwriting

Good handwriting is important so that others can read your child's work. Being able to do 'joined up' writing, can actually help with learning spellings. Letter writing should now be more consistent with similar heights for groups of similar letters (eg aecuo, thb and with pfjy all hanging below the line). Continue to provide lots of opportunities and resources to encourage your child to write. Include paper with lines or notebooks. You can add dashes in the middle of the lines to show where half height letters reach.

Show your child examples of this to help.

Joined writing will be taught, so encourage your child to write this way at home.



Spelling

At this stage, your child will have learned all the sound patterns which make up words and will now be consolidating and learning exceptions to the rules. Ensure your child completes any spelling activities sent home from school. Play games such as Scrabble, Boggle, Bananagrams, Hangman, and give your child wordsearches, crosswords, anagrams. There are also plenty of online spelling sites games.

Assist your child in learning how to use an age-appropriate dictionary and encourage its use for double-checking spelling. Share any tips and tricks you have for remembering spellings such as chants or mnemonics (eg because - **big elephants can't always use small exits**).



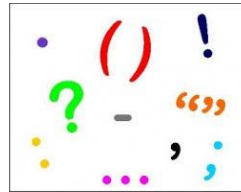
Content of writing

At this stage, children will need to think about engaging their reader, writing independently and with increasing length. Encourage your child to write longer and more detailed sentences using adjectives, adverbs and connectives. Aid your child in using an age appropriate thesaurus to add variety to their vocabulary. Focus on varying sentence openers to provide variety to their writing.



Punctuation

At this stage, children will be developing their use of paragraphs and more complex sentence structure. When your child is writing, encourage the correct use of full stops, capitals, question marks, exclamation marks, commas for lists and splitting phrases, speech marks and apostrophes. Ask your child to find out where they have missing punctuation, rather than telling them. For example "I think you have missed a question mark, can you find where it should go?" or point at a place and ask "What's missing here?" Point out these features of punctuation while you are reading.



Reading

Reading will continue to be highly influential on your child's language ability. The wider the range of texts your child reads, the more ideas and vocabulary they will develop to put into their



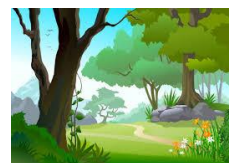
own stories.

Different writing styles

Children will now be expected to write in different styles such as a letter, persuasive, evaluative, scientific report, recipe, news article, script etc. You can help by showing them examples of these writing styles and talking about their features. Having a variety of reading material to refer to



can help.



Experiences

Children's imagination and creativity and understanding of the world is directly linked to the range of experiences they have had. Provide opportunities for your child to have conversations with others. Take any opportunity to visit a range of different places to expose your child to new environments. This could be the park, the beach or the forest for example and does not need to be expensive places. Talk about what you see, hear, feel, touch and taste, developing the language used to describe each one.

Useful Websites



<https://www.topmarks.co.uk>



<https://helpwithhandwriting.co.uk>



<https://bbc.co.uk/bitesize>



<https://literacytrust.co.uk>



<https://oxfordowl.co.uk>



<https://scholastic.co.uk>

Useful Apps

Phonics Hero



Alphablocks



Kaligo Practise

