

Supporting Writing at Home

Preschoolers begin to write long before they learn to read. They scribble, make marks that look like letters, and play with writing, just like they pretend to be the mommy or daddy when they dress up. Here are some ways to help your child learn about and practice writing.

Display children's writing in a special place—the refrigerator, a bedroom door, on a cork board, or taped to a tile in the bathroom. This tells children that their writing is important and worthy of being shown.

Model writing. Whether writing a shopping list, letter, or e-mail and when completing an application or ordering from a catalog, explain what you are doing. Let your child join in.

Invite your child to dictate stories to you. At play time, ask your child to tell you a story about where the cars and trucks are going or who lives in the Lego house. Write down exactly what your child says, and read it aloud afterward.

Create greeting cards for special occasions. Provide paper and crayons or markers so children can make cards and then “sign” their names when finished. Show them old cards with phrases like “Happy Birthday,” “I Love You,” and “Season’s Greetings” to copy on their cards.

Create an “office” for your child. Include things like different kinds of paper, envelopes, pencils and pens, crayons, stickers, and labels on a shelf near a desk or table or in a basket your child can carry to a comfortable place for writing. Add interesting and exciting materials like address and date books, calendars, and an old computer keyboard.

A request

Please send us extra writing supplies. We can use junk mail, catalogs, envelopes, magazines, and writing tools. In short, we can use anything children can write on or with!



Give writing tasks while running errands. Have your child write a “reverse shopping list.” Provide a pad and pencil so he or she can make a list of things you’ve bought. At the bank, give your child a blank deposit slip while you fill out yours. These tasks let children write *and* keep them busy!

Put writing materials in several places around the house. Provide pencils, crayons, and/or markers in coffee cans or baskets and small unlined pads, notebooks, or clipboards with paper attached in the bathroom, kitchen, or in the car. Make sure you discuss that the only place in the room where the child should be writing is on the paper.

Take it outside! Let your child write or draw with chalk or old paintbrushes and water on sidewalks and fences.

Encourage all of your child's writing efforts. Families can make writing part of their children's everyday lives at home!

A message from your child's teacher