

Taking a Child's Dictation

When it comes to making sense out of print what could be more helpful to children than seeing their own thoughts written down.

That's why dictation - writing down children's words exactly as they say them - is so important.

It allows children to see the relationship between the words they say and the words that appear on paper.

Children begin to understand that print is "talk written down".

Dictation makes writing and reading meaningful and compelling to children.

By working one on one with preschoolers you let them know their ideas have value.

Because print is permanent, children can see that it can be used to help them remember thoughts, feelings, and experiences.

Children can also see that dictation gives them a way to communicate with people who aren't near enough to hear what they say. By dictating their words children find they can send messages to people in other rooms in their home, or even to faraway friends and relatives.

Dictation gives you concrete examples to use as you observe children and talk with families about their children's development.

Gives family members a peek into children's feelings and thoughts while they are in your care.

Dictation tips:

- use open ended questions to invite children's dictation such as "Tell me about that" or "What should I write?"
- record children's words exactly as they say them
- match your writing speed to children's speaking as much as possible.
- Be patient. Give children plenty of time to compose their ideas and change their minds.