

Teaching Tips for Kid Writing

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How Phonics Works – Some things you need to know:

- ◆ **Difficulty levels of letters and sounds** – I have found that some sound/symbol correspondences are easier for children to learn than others. It makes sense to focus first on just the easier ones during teacher large chart demonstration writing and Kid Writing. After children learn the easier ones, start to focus on the harder ones. There is no prescribed order within each group; you will be focusing on all of the easy ones right from the beginning of the school year, then moving on to all of the harder ones.

Easy	b,d,j,k,m,p,s,t,v,z
Hard	c,f,g,h,l,n,q,r,w,x,y

- ◆ **Rime Chunks** – Linguistics call the initial consonant or group of consonants at the beginning of a word an *onset* and refer to the rhyming element as the *rime*. For example, in the word *pet*, *p* is the onset and *et* is the rime chunk. In the word *flat*, *fl* is the onset and *at* is the rime chunk. Although vowels make the same sound in words less than 50% of the time, vowel sounds in rimes are consistent 95% of the time. Therefore, I recommend that in teacher large chart demonstration writing and Kid Writing we focus not on individual vowel sounds initially, but on those rime chunks that have already been taught.

Steps in Kid Writing:

- ◆ **Step One – Draw-Your-Story**

Begin with telling child to “Draw-your-story....” Then talk with the child - “What’s happening in your story?” Pull details from the child; then restate the story to the child. (Do NOT say – “Tell me about your picture” OR “What did you make? OR “Tell me a sentence about your picture.”

◆ **Step Two – Kid Writing:**

Stretching process: Emphasize (louder and longer) the sound that you're up to in the word, keeping it in the context of the word. This is referred to as a *moving target*. Do NOT separate the sound! Only emphasize the sounds that you think the child you're working with has a chance of figuring out. As you pause at each sound you decided to emphasize, say "Write what you think you hear...!" Do NOT tell the child what letter to write.

Magic line: Kids are encouraged to use one magic line for a word if they have no idea of any of the sounds/letters in the word.

Word Wall Words and Kid Crowns – If you come to a word in a child's story that is already on the word wall or on a Kid Crown such as the Wiz of is, say, "Where can you find that word in our classroom?" Tell the child to take her journal over to the Wiz of is if she can't see the word from where she is.

Do NOT praise kids for accuracy at this stage. You will be praising accuracy when you get to the Adult Writing step. Do NOT point out anything that is wrong.

◆ **Step Three- Adult Writing**

Using your finger, point out and praise anything the child has written that is accurate or close to accurate – WHILE you are doing the underwriting. For example – "Great, you heard the *t* in *top* and – look, you figured out that *p* at the end of *top*." **ADULT WRITING IS NOT A SILENT PROCESS!** Read back the adult writing (not the Kid Writing), encouraging the writer to join in.

◆ **Step Four – Mini-Lesson**

Mini-lessons are **ALWAYS** done on a white board. If a white board is not used, it does not count as a mini-lesson!

◆ **Step Five – Quick-Share**

Each child reads or tells his/her story of that day to a child sitting right near him/her.