

Beginning to Write: A Parent's guide

Dear Parents,

Do you remember how excited you were when your child began to talk? You celebrated your child's cooing and baby talk. You listened to, accepted and praised your child's early attempts at speaking; and spoke to your child so that he or she could hear the correct pronunciation of words. In those ways, you joyfully taught your child to speak.

Written language development is learned in much the same way—your child is now learning to “babble on paper.” They will go through basic stages of development which you can help support and nurture. Keep in mind that *all* children who are learning to write *will* reverse letters. This is a natural stage of writing development.

This year, your child will be learning via an approach called “**Kid Writing**,” a *phonics-based spelling* approach. Children are given support to spell the sounds they hear to make words. After being introduced and studied, basic sight words will be expected to be spelled correctly. Through this process, your child will also receive phonics and penmanship instruction.

Key premises of this approach are:

- ♥ Your child will write everyday.
- ♥ Your child will write about topics of their own choosing.
- ♥ Your child will receive frequent demonstrations of writing (mini-lessons).
- ♥ Your child will write—the teacher will not take dictation.
- ♥ Your child will be immersed in a risk-free environment with high levels of challenge and support.
- ♥ Your child will have frequent, ongoing opportunities to play with written language.

My goal is for each child to enjoy writing and see them self as a writer. Your child, little by little, will begin to understand how to become a good writer. Remember, your child learned to speak gradually, and you celebrated each attempt. Together, let's celebrate your child's attempts and growth as they become a writer!

How To Help Your Child When Writing

1. Ask the child to tell you about his or her picture. If the child can't think of anything, point to part of the picture and say, "Tell me about this part."
2. Repeat the child's story back to them as one word, phrase, or complete sentence.
3. Beginning with the first word ask, "Do you hear any sounds in the word _____ that you know?" (say the word slowly and enunciate the sounds) Allow the child to write what they think the letter(s) are.
4. If the child has no idea of what letters or sounds to write for the word, give them clues to help or skip that word and move on to the next.
5. If the child knows the letter to write, but does not know how to write it, refer to the alphabet chart on the back side of their writing pocket or on the table top and help them form the correct letter(s).
6. After the child is finished with their "kid writing" write the correct spelling of words under their words. This is called the "**adult writing**".
7. Remember to praise the child for his/her attempts and ignore their mistakes.

Your help means everything. THANK YOU!