

Warren Wood Primary School

Writing Guide

Every child is born a natural writer!

Date

Reading is like breathing in, writing is like breathing out.

This guide is designed to help you to understand a little more about the development of writing skills. It aims to provide practical guidance on how you can support your child at home.

Writing is just not easy – and some children find it a chore rather than fun. Some children will happily write for pure pleasure, and others have to be encouraged to do even three lines of writing!

So how can you make writing seem just a bit more attractive?



The best activity to improve writing is reading. If your child reads good books, he will be a better writer. Reading exposes students to general vocabulary, word study and content-specific vocabulary. Through reading, children see a variety of authors' techniques that they can use in their own writing.

- **Remember TALK comes first!**

The standard of children's writing at school is not only how they form letters and handwriting. They must also be able to express their ideas clearly. Can they put thoughts in order and discuss what they want to say? All of these depend on speaking. So, talk to your child, encourage them to express themselves, listen and respond to their ideas.





+



Follow your child's interests: Does your child like football, cooking or making things, designing clothes or playing with Lego? Whatever their interest, there will be good writing opportunities around it. Perhaps a football diary, instructions or recipes. Use postcards or fancy writing paper, write in coloured pens and pencils. You could encourage them to write to family members. Provide post it stickers and encourage them to write messages to everyone, even the cat!



✓ DO allow different forms of writing. Writing emails or typing messages are all perfectly good ways for children to express themselves in written form.

✓ DO offer plenty of praise. Writing takes practice and perseverance, both of which are hard if you are feeling discouraged. Think of nice things to say ~ 'I love the way you've put that! It's brilliant.' Not 'I wish you would leave a space between your words.'

× DON'T get obsessed with spelling. The main criteria for a healthy piece of writing is that: • We can read it • It is well expressed • It fulfils its purpose – i.e. if it is a thank-you letter to granny, it says thank you! • If the writing satisfies all these criteria then a few mis-spelt words do not really matter.

× DON'T bribe a child to write (or read!). When desperate to get a child to do their homework, a good bribe can seem like a simple answer. But the problem with bribery is that it gives entirely the wrong messages. Writing and reading are not things we should be bribed to do! We do them because they bring their own rewards – honestly!

Writing at home

Foundation Stage

- Encourage your child to write their own name, family names, letter sounds and key words.
- Explore writing with paint, chalk, misty windows etc...
- Develop their gross motor skills in controlling their bodies with care, such as making circles with their arms.
- Ask them to say and try to write simple sentences.

Key Stage 1

- Encourage writing in play and what they do. For example: - lists for shopping, record the results for their favourite sports team.
- Engage with their writing through: – saying what you liked in it. – asking where their ideas have come from? – asking them to show you where a sentence begins and ends.
- Help them to organise and sequence their writing by asking them to talk about their ideas or to draw a sequence of simple pictures to show how the main events in a story might be organised

Key Stage 2

Encourage their personal writing, for example; a journal or diary.

- Talk through their ideas with them before they start to write, for example, prompt them to think about how they intend to tackle a subject.
- Help them to reflect on their writing, particularly the effect they hoped to have on the reader, for example, is the reader sufficiently prepared for the ending?
- Encourage them to read through their work, shaping their sentences for clarity and impact and checking their accuracy.

Here are some more ideas of things you can write together:

Riddles, rhymes, songs, jokes, poems, signs, labels, lists, charts, booklets, games, recipes, instructions, how to guides, everything I know about... letters, anecdotes, vignettes, true stories, invented stories, comics, fairy tales, myths, experiments, letters, scripts and plays.

Some fun writing ideas

Magic writing boards are great fun for children. These can be bought cheaply and used even on car journeys.

Write with your child – ‘think aloud’ so they can hear the decisions you make as you write. Children will want to write if they see a purpose to the writing.

Talk about the words they see in everyday life- food packaging, signs in the supermarkets, messages on birthday cards and invitations.

White boards encourage the children to write and practise mark making.

Chalk boards encourage the children to write and practise mark making.

Write a shopping list together- model and allow them to take their own list to the shop to give the writing a purpose.

Some fun writing ideas

Messages- leave messages with magnetic letters on the fridge for them to reply to.

Praise them for their play writing- those early squiggles and marks show that your child is beginning to understand writing.

Provide your child with a 'writing box'- put a range of writing items in the box – pens, pencils, rainbow pencils, old birthday cards, coloured paper, sticky tape to make little books. Rolls of wallpaper can be fixed to a table or a fence for large writing and drawing.

Strengthen their writing hand-Try fun activities which strengthen your child's hand. For example: cutting, painting, squeezing playdough, picking up small things with tweezers and pegs.

Set an example- make sure your child sees you writing!

Send an email- Your child says the message and you type it initially. Children can develop computer skills at the same time. Try writing an invitation to a story character.

Some fun writing ideas

Make up stories together- use their toys as characters and write the story with them so they say it. Make up a little booklet. Take photographs and use the pictures in the book.

Notices and signs- about important things in their play e.g. The Cave – Keep Out! Shoe Shop – Open, Don't walk on the seeds we have planted!

Captions- to add to photos that they or an adult has taken.



Useful website

<https://www.teachwriting.org/blog/2020/3/22/how-parents-can-help-with-writing-at-home>

Some other great ideas:

Start a vocabulary notebook.

Teach your child new words each week and encourage her to use them. Make it into a game and give points for using the new words. Your child can keep a vocabulary notebook and get rewarded for the number of new words learned. The words will begin to appear like magic in her oral language and writing.

Ask questions.

Always ask your child questions when he writes. Ask specific questions about your child's writing such as: "How did that happen?" "How did that make you feel?" "Can you tell me more about that...?" "What are some other words you could use to describe...?"

Help your child publish their writing.

Share their writing with others, place it on the refrigerator or encourage them to write for children's magazines. When your child's writing is published in a children's book, they will be on their way to becoming a lifelong writer and author. Check out these options for publishing children's work:

Be a writing role model.

Make sure your child sees you as a writer. Point out times that you use writing to communicate with others. Discuss authentic writing in the community such as articles and letters in the newspaper, on billboards or in written advertisements. Discuss the purpose of the writing and the target audience. When your child writes, you should write. You can schedule a day of the week that you will turn off the television and share your writing.

Useful resources to promote writing at home:

❖ sticky labels, e.g. for their letters, parcels, for labelling things they have made, labelling things for the role-play area.

❖ an easel.

❖ clipboards and pens for drawing and writing.

❖ an easily erected tent or a sheet for an office, cave or den to make a perfect writing area.

❖ a whiteboard.

❖ different sized writing implements – thick felt tips, paint brushes, fine pencils, sticks, wands, etc.

❖ a bag of puppets, monsters and other soft toys.

❖ envelopes.

❖ glittery / scented pens.

❖ paper in different shapes, sizes and colours for any of their needs!

❖ coloured pencils and pens

❖ sticky tape or glue.

❖ scissors.

❖ glitter.

Dear parents,

I hope that you have found this writing guide useful and that you will try out some of the ideas with your children.

Over the next few months, I will also be sending out guides for handwriting, spelling and reading.

Please do remember how closely reading and writing are connected. The more your child reads, the more words they will be exposed to. This will help them with their writing immensely.

If you do have any questions or further ideas, please do let me know.

Insert email address

Take care and happy reading and writing.

Name

English co-ordinator



Useful websites

<https://www.readingrockets.org/article/developing-writing-and-spelling-home>

<https://www.teachwriting.org/blog/2020/3/22/how-parents-can-help-with-writing-at-home>

<https://www.greatschools.org/gk/articles/tips-to-support-writing-at-home/>