

English:

Supporting your child with writing at home

Early writing activities-

1. Encourage children to look for print in their environment -road signs, food packets, shops, catalogues, etc.
2. Try activities to develop fine motor skills e.g. cutting, using playdough, using tweezers, using clothes pegs, tracing.
3. Use a chalkboard to write family messages on.
4. Make labels for things around the house.
5. Write a shopping list - real or imaginary - or any other sort of list.
6. Letter formation - practise forming letters using paint, in sand, using playdough or pastry.
7. Let your child write their own Christmas cards or birthday cards to people.
8. Use magnetic letters - your child can leave a message on the fridge.
9. Encourage and praise early squiggles and marks which show your child is beginning to understand writing.

Improving Writers

1. Write party invitations.
2. Encourage children to write thank you letters after birthdays and Christmas.
3. Write postcards when on holiday.
4. Write menu for a family meal or party.
5. Email a family member or friend.
6. Make a scrap book with labels and captions - maybe after a holiday or special event.
7. Write short stories involving the adventures of their favourite toys.
8. Write an information leaflet about something they find interesting e.g. dinosaurs, sports, etc.
9. Write a letter to a favourite author.
10. Invent and write rules for the house, bedroom etc. and put on a poster
11. Draw, label and explain their own inventions. Make up silly sentences and tongue twisters.

More confident writers

1. Write a secret diary.
2. Make up song lyrics.
3. Plan their own party.
4. Write a story for a younger family member, in the style of their favourite book.
5. Write a holiday journal.
6. Write instructions for an X-box game, Minecraft or similar.

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7. Write a recipe.
8. Write instructions for a more mature member of the family (e.g. grandparent) for a piece of modern technology they can't get to grips with!
9. Produce their own comic (www.comicmaster.org.uk)
10. Channel their interests - RSPCA, WWF, ActionAid etc. all have ideas for getting children involved in raising awareness of campaigns.
11. Write to the local newspaper about a local issue they feel strongly about or even to the local MP.
12. Talk to different generations of family about their life and compile a family history.
13. Make up jokes.
14. Look out for writing competitions e.g. Radio 2's annual 500 Word Competition. (A prize is always an incentive to write!)

It's also an incentive to write if there is a range of exciting writing materials available - pencils, crayons, felt tips, sparkly pens, writing icings, writing soaps for bath time, coloured papers, different shape and sizes of paper etc. Most of these things are available quite cheaply from a variety of budget friendly shops. Try to remember to focus on and praise the content of any writing your child shares with you, rather than dwelling on any mistakes they may have made.