

Writing Vocabulary

How to Help Your Child Learn to Write Words

Children need to learn how to write words. This may sound simple but young children need to first learn how to write the individual letters, including which direction the letters go. For example, some children may write letters backwards. They may confuse "b" with "d" or "p" with "q."

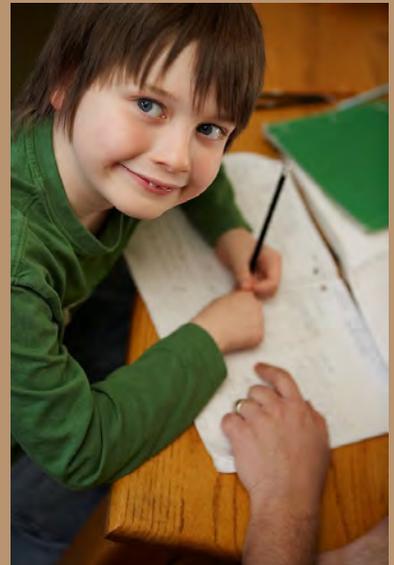
Once children can write the individual letters, they need to learn how to put letters together from left to right to make words. The number of words a child can write is what teachers call their Writing Vocabulary.

Writing vocabulary is important because children need to learn how to write letters and words before they can learn how to write sentences and stories.

There are many fun games you can play with your children to help them learn to write words. Here are just a few ideas:

I Can Write Letters

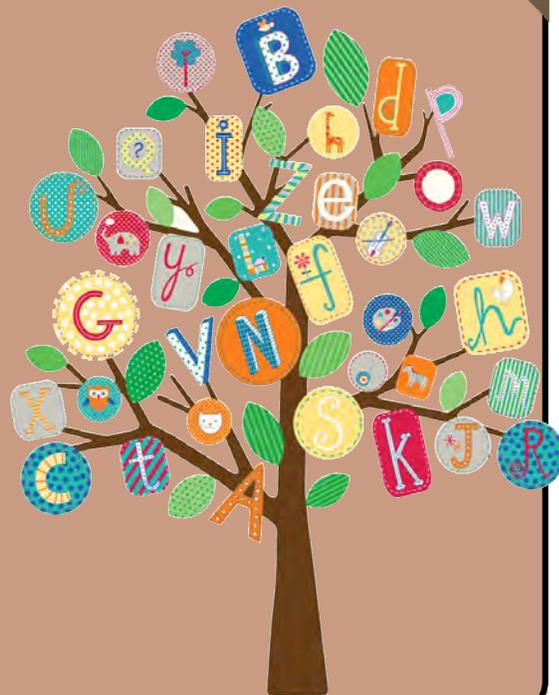
Included with this Tip Sheet are several sheets with lines that your child can use to practice writing letters. On the first line, have her trace the first letter with the dotted lines, the capital "A". When she can trace the dotted letter, have her write one or two more capital "A's" on that line to finish the rhyme. On the next line, see if she can trace the lowercase "a". Then see if she can write one or two more lowercase "a's" on the same line. Have her do the same with the other letters of the alphabet until she has practiced writing all 26 capital and lowercase letters. At the end, your child can write her name on the last line. When she is done, read the rhymes together. Try to come up with other silly rhymes using the letters of the alphabet.



The Alphabet Tree

Included with this Tip Sheet are several sheets of leaves. Have your child write a capital "A" and a lowercase "a" in the first leaf and a capital "B" and a lowercase "b" in the second leaf. Have him do this for all 26 letters of the alphabet, putting both the capital and lowercase letters on each leaf. Have him cut out the alphabet leaves and glue or tape them onto the tree. Have your child put this on a wall or the refrigerator to help him remember all of the letters.

For some more fun, the next time you are at the library check out the book *Chicka, Chicka, Boom, Boom* by Bill Martin Jr., John Archambault and Lois Ehlert. It is a book about letters that climb up a coconut tree.



Everyone Has a Name

The first word that many children learn how to write is their name. Have your child write her name on a piece of paper and tape it to a door, her favorite chair, or the end of her bed. If she has not yet learned how to write her name, write her name for her with a light colored marker and have her trace over your letters with a pen, pencil or marker. Show her how to write her last name, too. Have her do this for everyone who lives with you. She can practice writing her name and the names of her family members until she can do them on her own. Have fun with this game. If you have pets, include their names as well. You can decide if your child should learn to write your first name or write down mom, dad, mama or papa for you.



Does the Furniture Have a Name?

When young children are first learning to write and spell, it is helpful if they can match words to the things they go with. For this activity, help your child write names or labels for things around the house. For example, he could write "stove" or "couch".

If your child is still learning how to write letters, have him write the first letter of the word instead of the whole word. If he wants to label the stove, he could write, "s", on a piece of paper and put it on the stove. If he can write words, help him think of things to name and let him write the words. For example, he can write the word "table" on a piece of paper and put this word on the table. It's okay if it's not spelled right.

Some other examples of things found around the home: wall, door, shelf, chair, books, refrigerator, bathroom, closet or garage.



A Card for Every Season



Grandmas, Grandpas, Uncles, Aunts and friends enjoy getting cards made by children. Having your child make a card for someone is also a great way to practice writing. It can be a birthday card, a get well card, a holiday card, or just a card to say hello. Have her fold a piece of paper in half and draw a picture on the front. Ask her what she would like to say on the card. If she needs help writing the words, there are two ways you can help her. You can write the words for her on a separate piece of paper so she can copy them onto the card. Or, you can use a light

colored marker to write on the card so she can trace over your words. Don't forget to have her write her name on the card. Show your child how you write the name and address of the person you are sending it to in the middle of the envelope and her name and address in the top left corner. Have her help you put a stamp on it and put it in the mailbox.

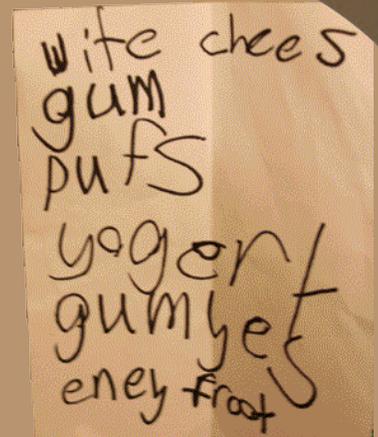
Kindergarten and 1st Grade

Grocery Lists

The next time you need to go to the grocery store, have your child help you write your grocery list. If he is still beginning to write letters and words, you may want to help him. Either you can write the list out and let him copy it onto his own piece of paper or write it with a light colored marker and let him trace over your words. When he is done, go through the list and read the words together. When you go to the grocery store, let him hold the list and cross the items off as you get them. You may have to help him at first by reading the next word on the list together.

Remember when children are first learning to write, they spell things as they sound. This is okay. Don't worry about correcting his spelling at this time. Just have fun with the activity!

Other lists that your child can practice writing include lists of items he wants, lists of things to do, lists of colors, lists of his toys, lists of his favorite cereals, etc.



When your child can write simple words on his own, try this activity for more writing practice:

This is My Story



Have your child draw a picture of something that interests her. Then have her write about her picture to create a story. When she has finished her story, have her read it to you while showing you the picture. Once she has several of these pictures and stories, you can staple them together into a book that you and your child can read together.

Watch Families Doing Activities

To watch families doing these activities, please go to: www.schoolsuccesslibrary.com and click on the "Parents" link at the top of the page. Next, click on "Literacy Resources". Then, click on the button that matches your child's age group. Scroll down the page and click on the video that goes with this tip sheet. Other tip sheets and videos are there as well.



STRIVING READERS



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