

A Parent Guide to Writing With Your Child



How Can Reading Aloud Lead to Writing?

Many stories can provide a child with writing ideas. Here are some you might try with your child.

Continue the Story

After reading a story, ask your child to imagine that the book has just a few more pages. What would be written on those pages? What might happen next?

Wordless Books

Some books have no words. The story is told in the pictures. After "reading" one of these books, such as Tuesday, your child can write or dictate the words for each page of the story.

Letter Writing

Sometimes after reading a story, you might have some questions or comments about the story characters or events. Put them in a letter to the main character. Pretend to mail it. You might even write a return letter to surprise them!

Information Books

Children love nonfiction books, and quickly remember facts about favorite topics, like dinosaurs, whales or volcanoes. Give your child several sheets of paper stapled together to form a book. They can draw pictures about the facts they've learned, and write a sentence to go with each, creating their own information book.



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Writing Tools

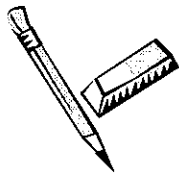
To create excitement about the prospect of writing, have on hand a variety of papers and writing utensils. Computer paper with holiday designs, lined and unlined paper, colored paper, adding machine tapes, and poster board are just a few ideas of the kinds of paper children love to write on. Pencils are fine, but markers, crayons, gel pens, colored pencils, chalk and even paint brushes can make writing a lot more fun.

No literate home is complete without a dictionary and thesaurus. These two reference books are fundamental resources. There are many colorful, attractive children's dictionaries available in bookstores.

The Ultimate Question: What Can We Write About?

Children are very imaginative and often create stories that I marvel at. Most children will "find" a story to write about. If your child gets stuck, here are some ideas to help. The list is truly endless, but here's a sample:

- Shopping lists
- People to invite lists
- Things to take on vacation lists
- Birthday cards
- Holiday cards
- Thank you cards
- Letters
- Signs
- Postcards
- Stories about yourself and family members
- Stories about imaginary characters
- Stories about magazine pictures
- Stories about objects
- Stories about stickers
- Forms for magazine subscriptions
- Forms to join a club
- Calendars to keep track of appointments
- Address books
- Itineraries
- Journals
- Diaries
- ABC books
- Captions for your photo albums



Writing At Home

- Write letters and cards to family members and friends, and encourage them to write back!
- Encourage your child to write stories about their favorite things.
- Keep a journal of Summer activities.
- Read comics in the newspaper and let your child create their own.
- Create a newspaper and write articles about weekly activities.
- Use fun writing tools such as markers, gel pens, crayons, pencils, etc.
- Let your child create a shopping list before going to the store.
- Gather kids in the neighborhood to write a play.
- Advanced readers and writers might enjoy Mad Libs, while parents could create their own version of Mad Libs for beginning readers and writers.
- Take turns writing back and forth to your child! Leave a note by their bed or in their lunchbox.
- Play word games such as Wheel of Fortune and Hangman. Hangman is an especially great way to pass time in a doctor's office or restaurant!
- Have a place in your home where you display your child's writing!
- Encourage your child to plan their writing and revise drafts before publishing!
- Publish your child's writing! Not only does it make them feel special, but it also makes a wonderful keepsake. StoryJumper.com allows you to order hardcover books of your child's writing! You could also use programs such as Microsoft Photo Story to publish a digital version of their book! Simply scan in your child's drawings and record them reading their story. Publish and you can immediately send it to family and friends or burn to a disc to watch on television!