

Reading for Success

Reading & writing go hand in hand

As your child grows older, the link between reading and writing becomes more important. Your child needs to write to improve reading skills. And writing is a skill that improves with practice. You can help your child practice that important skill at home.

What to expect

When writing, your child should:

- **Be able to focus** on forming ideas rather than simply forming letters.
- **Write about readings** in order to think more deeply about them.
- **Revise and edit** work so it makes sense and includes descriptive words.
- **Benefit from your support.** Give compliments and display your child's work proudly!

The writing process

When authors write stories, they rarely finish their work in one sitting. Good writing involves this step-by-step process:

1. **Brainstorm.** It's fun to think of cool topics. Listen to your child's ideas. Help pick a favorite topic.
2. **Draft.** At first, your child can write the story without focusing on mistakes. Be encouraging while your child works.
3. **Revise.** Show interest when your child reads the story aloud. Ask questions if you're confused about something so your child can improve it.
4. **Edit.** Have your child check for spelling mistakes and other little errors. Do not expect perfection! Let your child's age and abilities be your guide. Celebrate your child's success!



What you can do

Here are some ways to encourage your child to write:

- **Read books about writing**, such as *Harriet the Spy* by Louise Fitzhugh and *Mostly Michael* by Kimmel Smith.
- **Give your child a “writer’s toolbox.”** Include a special notebook or journal and different kinds of paper, pens and pencils.
- **Write notes to each other.** Leave them in a “secret” spot.
- **Let your child see you writing.** (Send a card or letter in the mail to your child.)
- **Spark creative writing.** Find a picture book with few words. (Consider the “Carl” series by Alexandra Day.) Have your child write a story to go with the illustrations. Then read the adventure together!
- **Write stories together.** Write the start of a sentence (“Two elephants got loose at the zoo ...”), then have your child continue.
- **Ask your child to teach you** a game by writing step-by-step instructions.
- **Make a family cookbook.** Let your child name a favorite recipe and write a short story about a time you ate that dish.
- **Design a bookmark** together. Have your child write a favorite verse, song or quote.
- **Praise your child's writing.** The best reward for a writer is an appreciative reader!

