

Sharnford C of E Primary School



Writing in Key Stage Two

Writing can be one of the trickiest areas to support at home and one we often feel at a loss to help with. But helping at home doesn't mean having to write huge amounts, little and often really does help!

General helpful hints for all ages

Read to and with your child

Reading and writing go hand-in-hand; they support each other. The more your child does of each, the better they will be at both. Reading can also stimulate your child to write about their own family or school life. If your child has a particular favourite story or author, ask them why they think that story or that person's writing is special.

Play games with words

Use board games such as scrabble, bananagrams and Boggle. Do word searches or crosswords together.



Provide a setting and materials

Provide the place:

It's important for your child to have a good place to write, such as a desk or table with a smooth, flat surface. Ideally, this would be away from the television.

Provide the materials:

- Plenty of paper (lined and unlined) and envelopes

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- Pencils, pens, erasers, crayons, or markers
- Writing paper or notebook
- A notebook or journal
- An age-appropriate dictionary
- A thesaurus.

Brainstorm

Talk with your child as much as possible about their ideas and impressions, and encourage them to describe people and events to you. Oracy is an important part of the writing process and encourages children to verbalise their thoughts before committing.

Make it clear that you are interested in what the writing conveys, which means focusing on what the child has written rather than how it was written. It's usually wise to ignore minor errors, particularly at the stage when your child is just getting ideas together.

Allow time

Help your child spend time thinking about a writing project or exercise. Good writers often spend a lot of time thinking, preparing, and researching before starting to write.

Opportunities

Give your child opportunities to practice writing by doing things like helping with grocery lists, sending holiday and birthday cards, writing notes to friends, helping plan trips or jotting down what they've done that day. Diaries are a good place to start.

Regular Practice

The best way to improve writing skills, no matter the writer's age, is through regular practice. There will be times when a child is eager and enthusiastic to write, and other times, of course, when they are reluctant to do so. Frequency of writing is important to develop the habit of writing and to build up a child's writing 'stamina', though they must be in a frame of mind to enjoy the process, so that we do not turn them away from the joy of writing.

Help – but don't 'do'

Write along with them. While it's okay to help with the actual writing if asked, 'write along with them' actually means doing the writing assignment yourself alongside your child. Doing the assignment yourself and showing the results to your child shows him or her that you value creative writing skills. However, please try to avoid writing for your child: meeting a writing deadline, taking responsibility for the finished product, and feeling ownership of their writing are important parts of the writing process.

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Praise your child's writing

Review your child's work. Take a positive approach and find good things to say about your child's writing. Is it accurate? Descriptive? Original? Creative? Thoughtful? Interesting? Resist the tendency to focus on errors of spelling, punctuation, and other mechanical aspects of writing. Emphasize the child's successes. For every error the child makes, there are dozens of things he or she has done well.

Provide your child with spelling help when they are ready for it

When your child is just learning how to read and write, they may try different ways to write and spell. At first, your child may begin to write words the way that they hear them. For example, they might write "haf" instead of "have", "frn" instead of "friend", and "Frd" instead of "Fred." This actually is a positive step in developing their phonetic awareness.

Keep practicing with them and model the correct spelling of words when you write.

Provide them with the appropriate spellings and encourage consistency with high frequency spellings.

Make sure your child sees you writing

Your child will learn the most about writing by watching you write.

Let your child see you write often. You're both a model and a teacher. If children never see adults write, they gain an impression that writing occurs only at school. What you do is as important as what you say. Have children see you writing notes to friends, letters to business firms, perhaps stories to share with the children. From time to time, read aloud what you have written and ask your children their opinion of what you've said. If it's not perfect, so much the better. Making changes in what they write is another important part of the writing process.



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Enter writing or poetry competitions

Competitions such as 500 words give children a great opportunity to try out their story writing and they know it doesn't have to be too long! Poetry competitions are run by The Poetry Society and give children the chance to get creative in any way they choose.

Activity suggestions:

- ❖ **Letters/emails** - Make letter writing a habit for your child. Have your child write letters or emails to family and friends.
- ❖ **'Year in Review' book** - Keep an ongoing record of your family's life. Every family member can add to your family's story. Include important events that happen during the year.
- ❖ **Postcards** - Have your child write and mail postcards on family holidays or special outings.
- ❖ **Say "Thank You"** - Let your child get in the habit of writing "Thank You" notes for gifts or whenever it is appropriate to do so.
- ❖ **Diaries** - On your child's birthday, give them a special diary. Encourage your child to write in their diary as often as possible.
- ❖ **Make a Menu** - Let your child design and write the menu for a family dinner. This is a great activity that will keep a child busy while mum or dad is cooking. If some of the words are difficult, write them down on a separate sheet of paper for the child to copy.
- ❖ **Use Writing Prompts** - Writing prompts are a great way to help a child begin a story. An example of a writing prompt is— *Pretend you are the first person to create a flying car. Tell what the car would look like and how it would work.*
- ❖ **Travel log** - When you go on holidays, trips, or special outings, have your child record new sights and experiences from his/her journey.
- ❖ **Copy** - If your child likes a particular song, have him/her copy the lyrics. Children can also copy their favourite poem, quotation, or short book. Encourage neatness for legibility and ask that they join their letters (not capitals) when they are ready.

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Helpful websites:

BBC Bitesize.

The English page has lots of lovely grammar activities, games and ideas as well as general reading and writing hints and tips.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/subjects/zv48q6f>

Scholastic Story Starters

Use this website to generate story starters that you could use together to create your own story. Lots of lovely ideas and the children get to spin the lever to find a starter.

<http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/story-starters/>

The National Literacy Trust

Their parent site 'Words for Life' provides milestones, tips, fun resources and advice to help parents support their children's literacy development

<https://literacytrust.org.uk/parents-and-families/>

Oxford Owl

Follow the year group page that you need and it will take you to year group expectations, activities and ideas.

<https://home.oxfordowl.co.uk/>

Please do not hesitate to contact school or your class teacher for further support and advice; your help and support at home is crucial to your child's development and progress at school.

Thank You.