












Let the children write!

Let them have paper, e.g.

-  loose paper in all sizes and colours, adhesive notepaper, letter writing paper, cards and postcards
-  plain paper, lined paper and patterned paper
-  bound paper in notebooks, exercise books, diaries and lockable 'secret' journals
-  envelopes and stamps
-  tablets and computers with word processing and drawing software

Let them have implements, e.g.

-  lead pencils, coloured pencils, fine pencils, thick pencils
-  jumbo crayons, fine crayons, wind-up crayons
-  charcoal
-  felt-tipped pens (thick and thin tips), black, silver, gold, pastel and bright shades
-  paints
-  tablets and computers with word processing and drawing software

Please keep in mind as you read this list that the suitability of each suggestion will depend upon the abilities of the individual child and the level of support required. The focus and response should always be upon the **content of the message**, rather than the spelling, punctuation or handwriting. The idea is to encourage a love a writing; not to discourage it through negative attention to details which will improve with practice – and reading!














Just as writing is a great way of improving reading, reading is a great way to develop writing skills through exposure to correct use of grammar, spelling and punctuation, as well as the richness of language!

The possibilities for writing opportunities are limited only by your imagination!








The trick is to not make writing an onerous task that must be endured, but one that gives pleasure for its own sake e.g. stories and poems; or for a purpose e.g. writing a shopping list or things to remember; or thank you letters for gifts received.

Setting aside time to write alongside your child and sharing the enjoyment of each other's creativity will do much to encourage a real love of writing; for yourself, maybe, as well as for your child.

20 suggestions to get children writing during the school holidays

-  Use adhesive notepaper to write messages to your child. Encourage your child to write a message back.
-  Encourage children to write letters or emails, cards or postcards to grandparents, aunts, uncles and friends. These can be to inform them of the holiday or the year's activities, or to thank them for a visit or gift.
-  Demonstrate that you value writing by making time for your own writing, e.g. keeping a diary, writing letters and cards to family or friends, writing a shopping list.
-  Display a message board prominently in the home and list important events, reminders and messages. Encourage your child to add their own messages to the board.
-  Provide a calendar or diary and ask your child to note family birthdays, holidays and events for future reference.
-  Encourage your child to keep a diary in which important events and feelings are noted.
-  Play word games e.g. *Scrabble* and other crossword games; *Boggle* or 'hangman'. (If you don't like the connotation of 'hangman', give each player ten counters to start with. Each time an incorrect guess is made, they give away a counter. If all counters are used they forfeit the word.)
-  Write poems and songs together.
-  Encourage children to write and perform 'plays' for the family.
-  Take photos of events during the day and use them to make a photo book. This can be done instantly on a computer with photos taken using a phone or tablet and emailed with accompanying text.
-  Insert photos from a phone, digital camera or tablet into a slideshow program such as PowerPoint, then add text to create a digital story or record. With one click these can be saved as an automatic show or MP4 video.
-  Involve children in planning the weekly meals by selecting recipes for a menu they write, and for which they create a shopping list of required ingredients.
-  Write rebus messages to your children and ask them to write a rebus message back, e.g.



-  Invite your child to create lists e.g. activities they would like to do over the holidays, movies they would like to see, friends they would like to invite to a sleep over.
-  Encourage your children to write the step-by-step instructions for making a craft item they have just designed, or to write down the rules for a game so that everybody is sure how to play.
-  Suggest that your child write down questions they would like answered, and then write the information discovered during research (by interviewing or asking people, reading books or doing an internet search).
-  Suggest to children that they make a storybook for a younger sibling or friend.
-  When going out for the day, or journeying further away on a holiday, ask children to refer to paper or online maps for directions; and then write out the directions for consultation during the journey.
-  Help children to set up and maintain a blog to create a record of activities and events to be shared with family and friends. The posts could be regular e.g. daily or weekly, or follow particular activities.
-  Make the most of every writing opportunity that occurs throughout the day!

Write! Write! Write!