



Early Writing



Introduction.

Children at a very early stage begin to realize that they live in a world rich in written form of language. When children first come to school, we encourage them to behave as writers from the beginning. We encourage all children to write independently without worrying unduly about correctness. All attempts are valued. We invite children to bring writing that they have done at home and share it with their teacher, and with each other. You can help at home by encouraging your children to write e.g letters, invitations, messages, lists, birthday cards.

Practising letter formation.



Writing cards and invitations. .

Learning through play.

When children learn to talk they often 'rehearse' new words and phrases by talking of their toys and acting out conversations. In the same way, many children incorporate their understanding of writing into their play and draw on what they have observed in order to write shopping lists, birthday cards, letters to their family and friends.

These attempts are valued even though they may only be marks on paper.



Writing labels for their activity.

Role play situations.

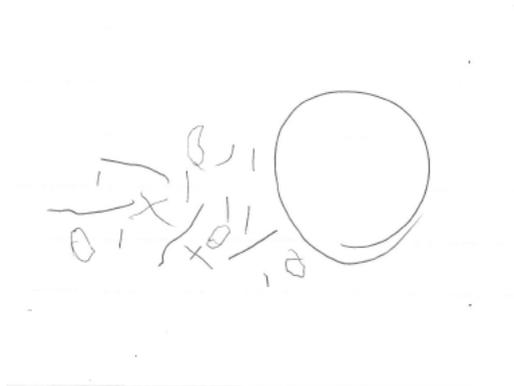
Creating pictures and
annotating in the snow.

Samples of children's writing.

Very Early Writing

Initially they can be very little differentiation between drawing and writing. Children experiment by making marks on paper.

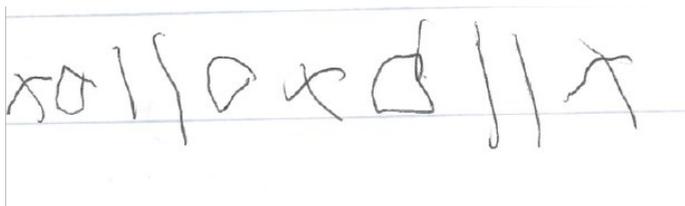
The child is able to hold a pencil, experiment with lines and thickness of lines, and has stayed on the page.



Pattern Writing.

By observation children learn that writing is made up of words and that letters and words make patterns.

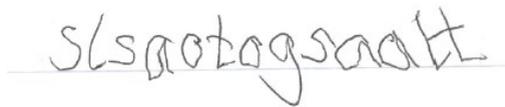
The child begins to understand that writing goes from left to right and along the page.



Random Letters

The child starts to form letters and experimenting with different sizes and shapes. At this stage when asked what their writing says they often reply 'it doesn't say anything, it's just writing'.

The child may use letters for his/ her name.



A sample of a child's handwriting showing a single line of scribbled letters on lined paper. The letters are not recognizable as words.

Word Structure Awareness.

Children begin to become aware that letters are grouped together to make words. They begin to put letters into groups. The letters may not necessarily make recognizable words but will show that the children are becoming aware of the structures of written language.

The child has put letters into to groups to look like words.

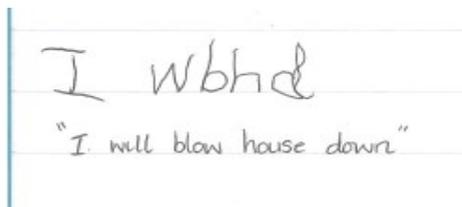


A sample of a child's handwriting showing four groups of letters on lined paper, separated by spaces. The groups are 'maf', 'hap', 'hipro', and 'gat', which do not form recognizable words.

Using Initial Sounds

Through talking about initial sounds, children develop an understanding of the sounds that individual letters make and begin to use the initial sound of words in their writing.

The child has used initial sounds to spell unknown words and is beginning to use basic sight vocabulary she has learnt.

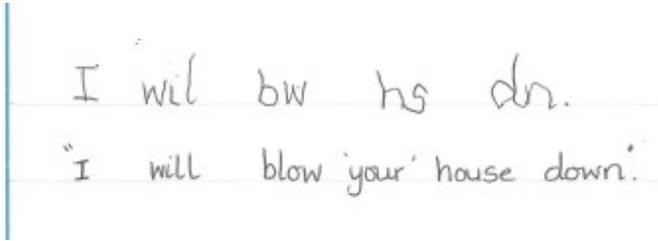


A sample of a child's handwriting showing the word 'I' followed by 'wblnd' on the first line, and the sentence 'I will blow house down' on the second line. The word 'I' is written in a large, bold font.

Identification of end sounds

As children become more experienced in sequencing and discriminating sounds, the identification of final sounds will be seen in their writing.

The child has identified initial and final sounds and is becoming aware of punctuation.

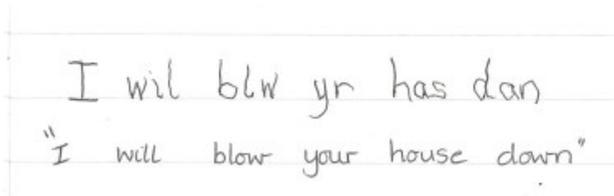


I wil bw hs dn.
"I will blow your house down."

Middle sounds

As the children develop the auditory discriminating skills by which they can hear the sounds that may appear in the middle of words, words then begin to show more meaning.

This child has used middle sounds and the work begins to show more meaning.



I wil blw yr has dan
"I will blow your house down"

Some questions parents ask.

What can I do To Help?

Children are interested in the writing they see around them – shop signs, street names, and will enjoy talking with you about their meaning. When your child sees you write, he or she may well want to join in and write a letter or a shopping list with you. You can encourage this by having a range of writing materials to choose from and by praising your child's attempts at writing. Don't worry about correctness of spelling or letter shapes or even whether you can read the writing.

Why are some of the letters backwards?

Most children go through the stage of muddling up some letters. This is not surprising when you have to consider how many new things they have to cope with. The commonest reversals are the letters 'b' and 'd' which are identical. Children normally know that have made a mistake once they have written the letters, but are often so involved in their writing that they choose to ignore the mistake.

Can they copy my writing?

Sometimes it is appropriate for the children to copy your writing, when you might want to draw your child's attention to correct letter formation. Most of the time, however, we encourage children to attempt to write for themselves. In the early stages of writing, when the children often say they can not write, we