

# WRITING AT HOME

## a guide 'where to start'

### UNDER 3 YEARS OLD

- Give your child as much or as little time as they need for each learning experience.
- Follow your child's interest. If they don't want to draw, paint etc. Don't make them. If they want to draw a pink dinosaur, or a rainbow zoo let them.
- Encourage them to use their imaginations.
- Write for a purpose; make a card, draw a picture for people in your street or family friends, make signs for imaginative play or for around the house, if you went somewhere exciting (say a zoo) gently encourage your child to draw a picture of their experience, help them to label it. Once completed put on display.

### 3-5 YEARS OLD

- Allow your child choice about which, and the timing of the play experiences and activities, they want to participate in, always encourage them to follow their interests.
- Encourage your child to 'make marks'. Before your child can write they will make letter-like shapes. As above get them to do this whenever they show interest.
- Write for purpose. When ready encourage them to write their name whenever possible, copy familiar words like mum, dad, dog, brother, sister, grandma, grandpa etc. Encourage your child to 'write' about experiences (this might be them drawing a picture, you labelling them and your child reading it back).

### 6-8 YEARS OLD

- Encourage your child to write whenever appropriate, they might fill out their name on forms, write cards, keep a diary or gratitude journal, thank you notes, shopping lists, recipes, create stories for you to read, make pictures for around the house etc.
- When you are writing show them, explain that being able to write is an important skill for adults to have (even with computers). Talk about your experiences with learning to write.
- Bring writing into your child's play. If you have magnetic letters in the house encourage them to make words with these. If they set a 'shop' encourage them to make signs, money, lists, labels etc. You may like to provide them with a letter chart to help them with this.
- Start to point out that an 'author' writes for a purpose. When reading discuss the beginning, middle and end of a story. Talk about who the story was written for? Read Non-Fiction texts and discuss the different language used compared with Fiction.

### 9+ YEARS OLD

- Continue to encourage to write for purpose (ideas as above).
- Encourage your child to write (and read) different genres. Often children develop a preferred genre and they don't like to try writing/reading other styles. Genres might include realistic fiction, historical fiction, science fiction, fantasy, mystery, poetry, tall tale, fairy tale, myths, fables, legends, informational, biography or autobiography.
- If you watch a movie or your child has finished a novel discuss it together, encourage them to write down their ideas and then you might even write an online review for it.
- Computer Literacy at this age becomes important. Give them practice typing on a device (if possible). Encourage them to write using the computer, you might use word, [Google Docs](#), [Canva](#), or an app of their choosing (remember they will know more apps than we do).

### TIPS FOR ANY AGE

- Make sure your child has the resources that they need. Set them up a space in the house where they can 'do their work'. Ensure they have pencils, paper, textas, pens etc.
- Always value writing and show a positive attitude towards it.
- Keep a family board and write messages to each other on it.
- Provide your child with 'Post It Notes' so they can write themselves reminders, or you notes.
- When reading discuss the writing process. What was the Author thinking? Why was this book written? Note the types of language used.