

Top Tips For Getting Your Child To Write At Home

- Build a climate of words at home. Visit places and see things with your child, then talk about your experiences.
- Let older children see you write often. Make sure children see you write notes and letters and perhaps stories to share. Perhaps read aloud what you have written and ask your child their opinion of what you've said. Making changes in what you write confirms for your child that revision is a natural part of writing.
- Be as helpful as you can in helping your child to write. Talk through their ideas with them; help them to discover what they want to say. Give them help when they ask for help with spelling and punctuation.
- Provide a suitable space for your child to write. Perhaps provide different kinds of pens and pencils, pads of paper and stationery, a book for a diary or journal, a dictionary and thesaurus appropriate to their age.
- Encourage frequent writing and be patient with reluctance to write. Frequency of writing is important to develop the habit of writing.
- Praise your child's efforts at writing, resisting the temptation to focus on errors of spelling and punctuation. Emphasise your child's successes.
- Share letters from friends and relatives and urge them to write notes and letters to your child, no matter how brief. Writing is especially rewarding when the child gets a response. Write thank you notes alongside your child.
- Encourage your child to write for information, free samples etc.
- Be alert to occasions when your child can be involved in writing, for example, helping with shopping lists, taking down telephone messages, writing notes to friends, helping plan trips, drafting notes to school for parental signature and writing invitations for family get-togethers.

Writing for real purposes is rewarding, and the daily activities of family and friends present many opportunities for purposeful writing. Involving your child may take some coaxing, but will be worth the effort!