



Parents in the Know

Early Reading

Language Experience

One way that you can practice writing with young children is through an approach called the Language Experience. This is a form of dictation.

1. Talk with your child about something he would like to write about. Choosing to write about a recent experience, like a trip to the zoo often helps ideas flow easily.
2. Ask your child to tell you about the event.
3. Write down your child's words as they are said. Don't change or correct things!
4. After each sentence is dictated, read back what you have written pointing to the text.
5. Encourage your child to read back to you what has been written after each sentence, then at the end.
6. Allow your child to illustrate his story!



Images provided by clipart.com

There are many benefits to the Language Experience Approach:

1. Helps your child see the connection between spoken and written language.
2. Provides a model of writing for your child.
3. Allows your child an opportunity to "write" beyond his current ability.
4. Offers a model of conventional letters and words.
5. Increases your child's self esteem and feeling of accomplishment.
6. Provides your child with a text that he can read independently after practice.

Based on: "Activities for Supporting Early Writing Development, Level II", Project ELIPSS, Center for Best Practices in Early Childhood, Western Illinois University, http://www.wiu.edu/itlc/ws/ws1/docs/Writing_Activities_Level_2.pdf

Invented Spelling

Cn U Rd Ths? Many parents wonder, "Will my child ever learn to spell? Is it o.k. for her to spell things the way they sound even if it's wrong?" The answer is YES! Learning to spell is a process. Children do not just memorize words from a list, they learn to sound words out, learn about spelling patterns, word families, and find relationships between words. They learn to spell "traditionally" over time and with much practice. Invented spelling allows children to apply what they know about letters, sounds, and spelling to writing. So, don't worry. Your child will learn to spell!

Based on: Elaine Lutz, "Invented Spelling and Spelling Development", ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills, <http://www.ericdigests.org/pre-924/spelling.htm>

Meet Audrey Wood

Audrey Wood has written an extensive collection of children's books. Her husband Don Wood has illustrated several of her books. Many of Audrey's books are meant for young children and are wonderful to read aloud. A few of her more well know books include:

The Napping House
King Bidgood's in the Bathtub
Piggies
Silly Sally

You can find these and many other books by Audrey Wood at your local library. Learn more about Audrey Wood and her husband Don Wood, find online activities for children, and get a complete list of their books at www.audreywood.com.

What Research Says



Research shows that children need a balanced literacy approach. What is balanced literacy? Balanced literacy is an approach that combines the teaching of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The environment is literature rich, and the students are actively engaged in reading and writing. Phonics is still taught; however, not in isolation, but in relation to reading and writing.

Based on: J. A. Schickedanz, "Balanced Literacy Background Knowledge", National Association for the Education of Young Children, <http://www.earlyliterature.ecsd.net/balanced%20literacy.htm>

Focus on Early Reading

Helping Your Child Become a Reader

You can help your child become a reader. The first and most important thing is to read to your child every day. As little as twenty minutes a day can make a dramatic difference in your child's achievement. Other things you can do include:

Talking: Ask open ended questions instead of questions that can be answered "Yes" or "No".

Imagining: Tell made up stories to your child and ask for her help. This will help develop her oral language, sense of story, and interest in reading.

Listening: Listen to what your child has to say and offer feedback that lets your child know that you value her thoughts, ideas, and opinions.

Limiting: Limit the amount of time that your child spends watching TV, playing on the computer, or playing video games

Singing: Singing with your child helps develop vocabulary and a love of language.

Based on: Bonnie Armbruster, Fran Lehr, & Jean Osborn, "A Child Becomes a Reader", National Institute for Literacy, <http://www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading/publications/readingk-3.pdf>



Reading Aloud to Your Child

There are many things that you can do when reading aloud to your child to extend the experience.

Before Reading

Discuss the cover

Flip through the story looking at the pictures and guess what the story is about

Who are the characters?

While Reading

Point to words as you read

Stop while reading and ask your child what he thinks will happen next

After Reading

Review the beginning, middle and end aloud

Share your favorite part

Ask your child to retell you the story

Based on: "Book Learnin': Discover How to Read to Your Kids", PBS Kids, Between the Lions, http://pbskids.org/lions/parentteachers/activities/literacy_tips-reading.html

Books to Read Aloud

No Jumping on the Bed, by Tedd Arnold

The Very Clumsy Cricket Beetle, by Eric Carle

Today I Feel Silly, by Jamie Lee Curtis

The Napping House, by Audrey Wood

"Reading aloud with children is known to be the single most important activity for building the knowledge and skills they will eventually require for learning to read."

Marilyn Jager Adams

Activities to Try at Home

Here are some fun, easy, and inexpensive things that you can use with your child to help making writing exciting!

To Write On:

Note pad
Stationary
Envelopes
Chalkboard
Dry erase board
Post It notes
Junk mail
Etch-a-sketch

To Write With:

Markers
Pens
Colored pencils
Rubber stamps
Gel pens

Other Fun Items:

Magnetic letters
Magazines
Stamps
Stencils
Ink pad
Children's dictionary
Index cards
Catalogs

