

Spellings

Help your child to be a spelling detective. What is it that makes the word memorable?

- Can I split it into syllables? e.g. **Wed nes day**
- Does it have a word inside it? **Definitely**
- Do I know another word like it? **could, should, would**
- Can I make up something to remind me? e.g. because = **big** elephants **can** **always** understand **small** elephants
- Practising a word by writing it lots of times using joined-up handwriting also helps to fix the word in your head. **people people people people**
- Play spelling games by looking at spelling in shops - spot the mistakes - you'll find plenty!
- Use car number plates - which spelling can you make including the three registration letters in the order they appear? e.g. **PN58 HUS** house; husband, hustle; Thursday; shuts; shouts; hushed; shuffles; chuckles.
- Play spelling snap - write spellings onto cards - each spelling on two cards. Turn them all over so that the spellings are hidden. Pick them up in turn and try to match pairs.
- Play 'How many words can you make?' games. e.g. st-p
- st-p. how many words can you make by filling in the missing letter/s. How many words can you make from the letters in *constantinople*?
- Play Rhyme it. How many words can you think of that rhyme with...

Stories

If you read a story to your child every day, s/he will have hundreds of characters, places, plots and ideas to use for their own stories.

They will be able to hear the flow of story language and the way in which story writers structure their ideas into the beginnings, middles and ends of stories.

They will learn new words and phrases every time you read to them.

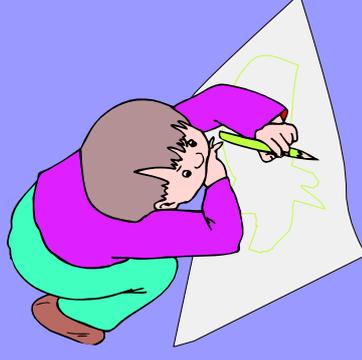
They will imagine people, places and ideas that they would not find any where else; traditional stories that have been passed down from one family to another for hundreds of years.



At home encourage your child:

- To write for fun;
- To talk about their writing;
- Not to worry too much about spelling - it's what they want to write about that is important;
- To be adventurous with new and exciting words;
- To write for lots of reasons from shopping lists to diaries, letters, post-cards, instructions; recipes; invitations; information; stories.

Writing at Home



Helping your child to become a confident writer



Talk - for - writing

One of the most important ways to help your child to write . . . is to talk!

Tell your children lots of stories. Stories about you, your family and relations. Re-tell the traditional stories that you were told as a child. This can help children to shape their own stories and have something to write about.

No one can write down anything that they cannot say. Children need to practise saying and hearing whole sentences so that they become used to hearing the flow and sound of whole units of meaning.

People don't talk in sentences. They skip about from one topic to another and use their faces and gestures to create emphasis.

If children don't hear sentences, they will write as they speak - without punctuation and without structure.

Practise changing some of the things you say into sentences that you could write down.

Connectives

Connectives are the words and phrases that join ideas together and make writing flow along nicely. Play story consequences with your child. Start a story and stop at the word *because*. Your child takes over and stops at the word *while*. This continues, swapping the role of story-teller at words and phrases such as:

- After a while;
- Then;
- Next;
- Suddenly;
- Later on;
- Finally;
- In the end.

e.g. Once upon a time there was a little boy called Billy who was feeling really fed up *because*...



Sentences

A sentence is a unit of meaning. It can stand alone and makes sense on its own. In writing, a sentence begins with a capital letter and ends with a full stop so that the reader knows when to pause.

In school, your child will be encouraged to practise sentences by saying them aloud before writing them down. By doing this, the sound of the sentence can be heard:

- Does it make sense?
- Is it clear?
- Can I make it more interesting?
- Would it sound better if I re-arranged it?

Play silly sentences with your child. Think of two or three unconnected words and try to make a sentence from them. e.g.

- policeman and skateboard;
- zebra and humbug;
- vicar and ballet shoes;
- fish and potato;
- alien and dustbin;

Start the silly sentences in different ways:

- Exhausted,
- In the wink of an eye,
- Singing merrily,
- Like David Beckham,
- Suddenly, without warning.



Words

The more words that your child knows, the more precise they can be when they write.

Using good...

- **adjectives** - describing words;
- **adverbs** - words to describe how or when something is done;
- **verbs** - doing words

...can make all the difference.

Look at people, animals and objects with your child. How many words can you think of to describe them?

A dog - fierce; shaggy; obedient; intelligent; aggressive; handsome; glossy-coated; friendly

Funny Faces: Pull faces and ask your child to describe how you feel using adjectives: miserable; happy; unhappy; fearful; anxious; horrified.

Acting Adverbs: Walk, or act in a particular way and ask your child to describe how you are doing it - cautiously; boldly; happily; slowly; quickly; loudly; softly; gracefully; etc.

Similes: Compare things that you see to other things:

- as big as;
- as fast as;
- as gentle as;
- as noisy as;
- as fierce as...etc.

