What Are You Writing?

Children are fascinated with the process of writing. They start trying to write letters at about 15-months-old by scribbling lines and circles. Three and four-year-olds create letter-like forms. Learning to recognize shapes will help children write letter shapes. If they can recognize a triangle, they can see it in uppercase A, W, Y, X, N and M. If they can recognize a circle, they can see it in Q, O, P, B, and R.

The third stage is when children start stringing letters together. They don’t understand spacing or upper and lower case letters at this point. Upper case letters are the easiest to write with their current fine motor skills.

The last stage is being able to see the differences between letters and words.

Children are also starting to understand connections to letter sounds, e.g. bus starts with “b.” This usually happens between five to six years old.

The letters in a child’s name are the most important letters to them. These are the letters they usually learn to write first. Your child should see their name written as a capital letter first, and the rest lower case. This is the way their name will be written at school and throughout their lives.

Create opportunities for your child to write, and to see you writing. Write lists, notes, letters, and schedules. Keep on writing!

Featured Book

Click, Clack, Moo: Cows That Type, by Doreen Cronin

In this Caldecott Honor story the cows on Farmer Brown’s farm find an old typewriter and begin making typewritten demands. Not only will young children find humor and delight in the antics of the farm animals, they will see the power that written words can have.

Author Doreen Cronin has written several funny books including Diary of a Worm, Click, Clack, Quackity-Quack; Wiggle; Stretch; and Bounce.

Favorite Books about Writing...

- I Wanna New Room, by Karen Kaufman Orloff
- The Jolly Postman, by Allan and Janet Ahlman
- Dear Mr. Blueberry, by Simon James
- Jeffrey and Sloth, by Kari-Lynn Winters
- Corduroy Writes a Letter, by Alison Smith
- Mail Carriers, by Dee Ready
- Chester, by Melanie Watt
- If You Take a Mouse to School, by Laura Joffe Numeroff
More fun with 
*Click, Clack, Moo...*

**Around the house...** Children can learn the importance of writing by helping you make grocery or “to do” lists, writing invitations, greeting cards and thank you notes, etc. They can print words by hand or type them on a computer.

**Recycle it...** Make a writing kit for your child by using the back of printed pages, saving envelopes from junk mail, and cutting off the front of greeting cards (to write on the back). Add some pens or pencils, and put the materials in a box or basket. They’ll love having their own writing kit.

**Talk about it...** There are some great words and phrases to talk about in this story:

- The cows go on strike until the farmer meets their demands.
- The cows were growing impatient with the farmer.
- Farmer Brown was furious.
- Duck was a neutral party, so he brought the ultimatum to the cows.

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**Rhyme**

*Great A, Little A*

Great A, little A,  
Bouncing B,  
The cat’s in the cupboard  
And she can’t see me.

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**Song to Sing...**

*What Shape is This?*  
(to the tune of “Do You Know the Muffin Man?”)

Oh, do you know what shape this is?  
(hold up a shape)
What shape this is, what shape this is?  
Oh, do you know what shape this is,  
I’m holding in my hand?  
(repeat with different shapes cut out of paper)

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**What your library can do for you...**

Libraries have computers that your child can use to play educational games. Look for games that will help them learn how to write upper and lower case letters.

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**Books to go from your Library**

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