



## How can I help my child with writing?

When we write, we have to do a great many things at the same time. First we need to decide who our audience is and what form our writing will take, for example a letter to a friend, a shopping list, instructions for someone to follow. Then we need to think of what we want to say, what words to use, how to spell the words, what punctuation to use and how to best get our message across so that it can be easily read and understood by our audience. As we write we are continually reading, re-reading and editing our work. At the end we look over our work and proofread it to check spelling again and make sure it makes sense.

All of this is a great challenge for children and they need a great deal of encouragement and praise to achieve this goal. The key is to make sure they remain confident and enjoy writing.

I can help my child with writing by:

- ✓ Focusing on the good things your child can do, rather than on their mistakes.
- ✓ Praising your child's writing efforts and responding to the message rather than the grammar of spelling.
- ✓ Talking with your child about the sort of writing they are doing at school.
- ✓ Reading your child's draft writing and commenting on the things you like about it.
- ✓ Having fun writing messages to each other.
- ✓ Finding time to show your child that you value reading and writing for yourself and share reading and writing with them.
- ✓ Talking about the print in the environment, for example signs and advertisements.
- ✓ Showing your child how you use writing, for example writing messages, shopping lists, letters and greeting cards.
- ✓ Providing a special place for your child to write such as a small table or desk with writing materials, different types of paper, used greeting cards, envelopes, little notebooks.
- ✓ Giving presents that encourage reading and writing, for example Notebooks, diaries, envelopes and attractive writing paper, pens and coloured pens.
- ✓ Playing word games from magazines and newspapers such as simple crosswords and 'find-a-word' puzzles.
- ✓ Making sure that your child has access to a dictionary and a thesaurus that he or she can use.
- ✓ Encouraging children to read their own writing to you.