**How to Get Kids to Love Writing**

**Have a story-filled life**

The best writers are avid readers. Read to your child every day. You say your child’s in middle school? Read to your child every day. Pick a book above your child’s reading ability, or take turns reading pages in a book of his choice. When your children are young, tell stories in the car, the doctor’s office, or when you’re pushing the stroller. Above all, talk to your children.

**Let your child see you write**

When you’re in a rush to head out the door and are scribbling down a grocery list – and your child hangs over your shoulder and asks what you’re doing – take a second. Show him. Let him watch you make lists, send e-mails, write thank you notes, and compose a note for his lunch box.

**Writing Tools**

**Provide a great variety of writing tools and surfaces for writing, and give your child easy access to them:**

* Magna doodle
* Aqua doodle
* Crayola wonder
* Crayola 2 in 1 doodle board
* GloDoodle
* Crayola Explosion
* Crayola Secret Writer
* Bathtub crayons
* Highlighters
* Paint
* Chalk
* Markers
* Pens

**Create a writing space**

Set up a quiet corner for your child to write. If space is an issue, pack writing materials into a portable container that your child can pull out at the kitchen table. Include pens and pencils, pads of paper and envelopes, a notebook, and a spelling dictionary appropriate for your child’s age.

**Schedule quality writing time into your day**

Don’t put a writing prompt in front of your child and call that teaching writing. While prompts can serve a useful purpose, the focus of your writing time should be fun. Give your child writing time as often as you can.

* **The photographic activity**

Children and parents take pictures around town and the neighborhood, capturing places and scenes that are important or engaging. Share photos in groups, make journal entries, write captions, and write what the pictures have in common.

**Give your child authentic writing experiences**

* letters/notes
* thank you cards
* pen pals
* grocery store list
* emails
* various lists

**Disney Character Letter**

Did you know that you can write a letter to YOUR favorite Disney character? And in return, you’ll get a postcard from them?  Even better, the postcard will be autographed!  With a little planning on your part, your children can receive some fun snail mail from their favorite character.

Attn: Characters name

Walt Disney Communications

P.O. Box 10040

Lake Buena Vista, FL

32830-0040

**Let art be a part of writing**

Have your child draw a detailed picture. Have your child write about what they drew.

**Diaries/Journals**

Children can write down everyday experiences.

**Encourage your child to write in all different genres**

**Book Review/ TV Review**

**Children can write a book review for a book that they have read. Publish the book review.**

**Have realistic expectations about spelling and grammar**

Spelling and grammar are absolutely important, but not all at once. Focusing too much on spelling and grammar will squelch creativity in young writers and destroy enthusiasm in older ones. As your child’s literacy grows, you’ll know what words to hold him accountable for.

**Play games to teach writing skills**

Take a break from the radio or DVD player in your car. Instead, play word games to increase vocabulary.

* Bananagrams
* Scattergories
* Apples to Apples
* Scrabble Junior
* Boggle
* ABC Bingo
* Word Concentration

**Publish your kids’ writing. Let them make their own books**

Submit their writing to contests or children’s magazines. Let them type their work on the computer. Consider putting their finished stories into a book with an online publishing program.

**Give support and encouragement**

When your child is writing, be as helpful as you can. Talk through ideas. Supply help with spelling and punctuation when it’s asked for. Think of yourself not as a critic, but as a helper and encourager.

**Websites to Support Reading and Writing**

Read Write Think Resources for Parents

Looking for engaging ways support your child with reading and writing? Grades K-12

<http://www.readwritethink.org/parent-afterschool-resources/>

Scholastic Website for Parents

Resources that give parents activities for reading, writing and math,

book lists by grade level, and child development articles.

This site does contain some advertisements.

<http://www.scholastic.com/parents/>

Early Learning Games: Scholastic Site

K-2

<http://www.scholastic.com/parents/play/>

Howard County Public School Media Literacy Links

<http://www2.hcpss.org/met/media/currlinks/currlinksK-5.html>

Vocabulary Building Games and Activities

<http://www.vocabulary.co.il/>

Reading Is Fundamental Site

Reading and Writing interactive games!

<http://www.rif.org/kids/readingplanet.htm>

Story Online

Video streaming program that features actors reading children’s books.

Some of the books are animated.

<http://www.storylineonline.net/>

Story Time for Me

Free online children’s stories

<http://www.storytimeforme.com/>

Wonderopolis

Site funded by the National Center for Family Literacy to promote

discussion, inquiry and writing.

<http://wonderopolis.org/>

Zoo Borns

Website sponsored by Zoo Books featuring new born

animals from zoos around the world.

<http://www.zooborns.com/zooborns/>