Writing at Home — Year 4

School Logo

Talk, Talk, Talk!

Talking with your child is one of the most powerful activities you can do. Use a wide range of **vocabulary** and try to use new words they have discovered when reading. Enter into discussions or debates with your child about issues they care about and talk through ideas they have for their writing. All of this talk will help them to develop vocabulary and refine their ideas for writing.

Be storytellers!

Photographs, objects and images are a great way to stimulate memory and imagination. Explore your home, looking for photographs or objects that trigger memories. A pair of special shoes, photos of a family day out or a precious gift can be a great starting point for telling a story. Tell your own stories/memories to your child and let them tell theirs to you.

Handwriting

In Year 4, your child will continue to develop fluent handwriting skills, making their writing more consistent and easier to read. This includes:

- joining letters whenever appropriate
- making sure that letters look consistent throughout writing
- keeping the spacing between lines of writing parallel and consistent.


Sit at a desk


Put both feet on the floor


Left hand paper position


Right hand paper position

Audience and Purpose

Encourage your child to think about **who** they are writing for and **why** they are writing. This will help them to make their writing more effective.

Who are you writing to?

What are you writing for?

How do you want to make your reader feel?



Check and progress!

A great way to help your child to improve their writing is to encourage them to read aloud what they have written. Can they spot any missed punctuation? Can they spot any spelling errors? Can they add in extra detail?



How can you motivate your child to write?

Make sure your child knows their work doesn't have to be perfect first time. They can go back and make improvements later.

Share your own writing. Let your child see you writing. Whether it be a postcard to a family member, a journal entry or text messages, let your child know you're using your writing skills for real purpose.

Encourage your child to write about their interests and hobbies. Let them use a computer if they'd prefer to type and they engage more in their writing.

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Writing checklist:

Is your child using capital letters, full stops and question and exclamation marks in the right place?

Can your child use these words in their writing: *when, before, after, while, so, because, then, next, soon, therefore, before, after, during, in?*

Can your child use speech marks " " to show when someone is speaking?

(Direct speech)

Does your child stay in the same tense throughout their writing?

e.g. past tense

https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zh4thbk

Can your child read aloud, with expression, what they have read?

Can your child spell these tricky words?

accident, accidentally, actual, actually, address, answer, appear, arrive, believe, bicycle, breath, breathe, build, busy, business, calendar, caught, centre, century, certain, circle, complete, consider, continue, decide, describe, different, difficult, disappear, early, earth, eight, eighth, enough, exercise, experience, experiment, extreme, famous, favourite, February, forward, forwards, fruit, grammar, group, guard, guide, heard, heart, height, history, imagine, increase, important, interest, island, knowledge, learn, length, library, material, medicine, mention, minute, natural, naughty, notice, occasion, occasionally, often, opposite, ordinary, particular, peculiar, perhaps, popular, position, possess, possession, possible, potatoes, pressure, probably, promise, purpose, quarter, question, recent, regular, reign, remember, sentence, separate, special, straight, strange, strength, suppose, surprise, therefore, though, although, thought, through, various, weight, woman, women

Can your child tell you what these words are/mean?

adverb	a word that describes a verb or adjective. e.g. *quietly, above, yesterday, very, sometimes*
preposition	linking words that tell us where or when something is happening. *e.g. under, on, while, down*
conjunction	a word that links sentences together. e.g. *and, but, or, so, because, when, after, while*
word family	words that are related to each other. e.g. *teach → teacher, medic → medical → medicine*
prefix	added at the beginning of a word to make a new word. e.g. *dis*appear, *over*take, *en*joy
clause	a special type of phrase https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pWS3Cbf5h9U
subordinate clause	a clause that relies on another part of the sentence. It cannot be a sentence by itself.
direct speech	a sentence which contains the exact words spoken, surrounded by speech marks" "
consonant	most of the letters on the alphabet represent consonants except a, e, i, o, u
consonant letter vowel	the letter 'y' sometimes acts like a vowel. .e.g. rhythm
vowel letter	a, e, i, o, u
inverted commas (or 'speech marks')	" " The punctation marks used for direct speech.

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Other ways you can make a big difference

Look for opportunities to give your child some real-life reasons to write. You could try out some of these ideas:

- Is there an issue your child cares passionately about? Encourage them to write to a local MP or business to see whether they can create change. This kind of writing can make big differences in the community.
- Work together to send a tweet to your child's favourite author. Many authors are now on Twitter and love to engage with their readers. What would your child like to ask their favourite author?
- Your child might like to write the book version of a film or TV programme for younger children to read. If your child has watched something they've really enjoyed, they could try and tell the same story in writing. Watching the story on screen can give them a great starting point to get going with.
- If you've had a recent visit to a park, library or museum, etc that you have enjoyed with your child, help them to add a review on https://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/. Having a real audience who will read their review will often motivate children to write.
- Write book reviews for books your child has read. https://www.lovereading4kids.co.uk/ is a great website for this.
- Could your child start a blog around their own interest?



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Important Information

- Children should be encouraged to edit their own work. As mentioned previously, it doesn't have to be right first time. It is equally as important for your child to re-read their work and be able to identify things like: spelling mistakes, missing punctuation, whether they have missed a word out or could enhance their writing by adding in an additional adjective or a fronted adverbial etc.
- In Year 4, children should be encouraged to avoid repetition in their writing by using pronouns. Pronouns are words that replace nouns, for example he, she, us, we, them or it. Instead of writing Jack went to the park to play football and he kicked the football into the net, your child should write Jack went to the park to play football and he kicked **it** into the net. A possessive pronoun is a pronoun that shows something belongs to someone. Gill was cold so I let her borrow **my** jacket. I forgot my sun cream so Bob lent me **his**.
- Children should be encouraged to use apostrophes for possession and omission. An apostrophe for possession is showing something belongs to someone: I'd like to borrow **Sarah's** pencil case. An apostrophe for omission is when it is used to replace missing letters in a word e.g. did not is shortened to **didn't**, I am is shortened to **I'm** and we will is shortened to **we'll**.
- Although it is important for children to understand the grammatical element of writing, it is also important for them to feel like they can enjoy their writing and can free flow their ideas without feeling the pressure to think about where a fronted adverbial should go or if they've added a comma in the right place. Once they have fully immersed themselves into their writing, they can they go back and check it to make sure all the elements are there.