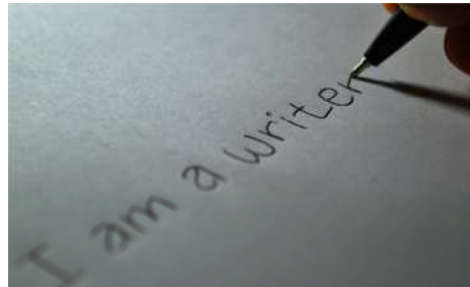


## Understanding the benefits of support my child through writing...



Children represent and communicate their stories through playing, drawing, and storytelling.

We can not stress enough how important these stages in writing are, they set the foundations for the building blocks your child will receive as they grown and develop through school.

Our children are supported as writers when we engage in conversation with them at home and school. As a school, we have the utmost respect for children and their out-of-school lives where writing begins. Just as important, we have emphasised that teachers can best support students by learning about and building on the experiences that children carry with them as they enter school. Parent and teacher conversations are critical. When we talk and listen to our children and each other, we all learn.

"If

WORDS ARE  
OUR MOST INEXHAUSTIBLE  
SOURCE OF MAGIC



More information can be found on our website or in school.



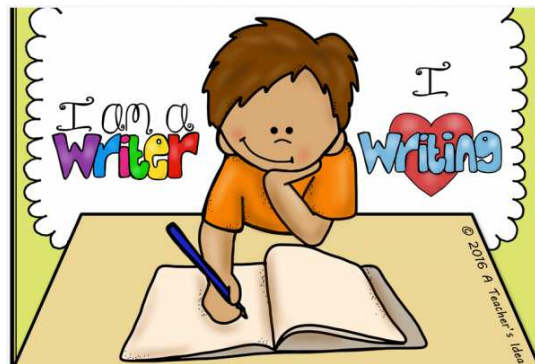
**TULLOS PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
LIGHTING THE WAY TO BRIGHTER FUTURES!

## Supporting my child with writing at home.

**Tullos Primary School, Aberdeen. 2020**

## Writing in school

In Tullos we strive to exceed expectations through our children's writing. We have no doubt that by now you will be aware that your children create their own "Big Books". This allows the child the freedom and pride to create their own masterpiece to showcase what they have learnt throughout their time at Tullos in writing. This booklet aims to help you support your child at home with their writing and to increase their excitement and enjoyment around it.



We believe all children can be writers.

Throughout this booklet we will look at different strategies and ideas to support your child from Early level through to Second level.

More information can be found online, through our website or others. You may also speak with your child's teacher on ideas to support your child and their own individual needs.

## Encouraging Reluctant Writers...

- ♦ As with early writers be aware of occasions when children can be involved in writing - shopping lists, cards, phone messages, notes to friends, invitations to family occasions, emailing friends, blogging, texting (be aware of e-safety). Help your child write a letter to their favourite author. Details can be found on the internet.
- ♦ Let your child see you being a model writer but also let them see that you are not perfect!
- ♦ Checking, making changes and editing what you write are a natural part of writing.
- ♦ If your child has barriers towards writing, or low self esteem as a writer, praising and valuing your child's writing is very important.
- ♦ Your child may need support when they write and may need you to talk through their ideas first and help with composing and structure.

Remember that writing does not have to be lengthy or boring! Writing for real purposes is more meaningful and rewarding for children and creates a fun and interesting way for children to develop their writing skills.

## Help your child publish her writing.

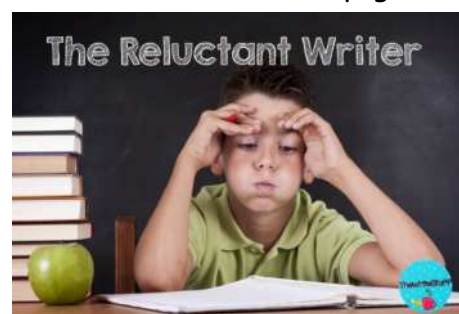
Publishing your children's writing isn't as technical as you might think at first. There are many simple ways to "publish" your child's writing.

- \* Share her writing with others, read it to other members of the family.
- \* Place it on the refrigerator.
- \* Encourage her to write for kids' magazines.
- \* There are many online companies who can publish your child's work.

## Encouraging Reluctant Writers...

Here are some tips to help encourage children who are reluctant to write.

- ⇒ Firstly, is there a reason? Can you pinpoint why they might not want to write? Do they struggle with spelling? Do they struggle with their imagination? If so, try to remove this barrier, give them a dictionary, give them a stimulus.
- ♦ Help your child go over problem spellings. It is extremely frustrating for children to have to battle with spelling and handwriting when they want to get their ideas down on paper. Knowing high frequency spellings will aid the flow of writing and enable the use of a vocabulary rich language. (Consider being trapped into writing 'big' when you really wanted to write 'enormous').
- ♦ Encourage children to sound out and have a go at more tricky words or give them the spellings. Read books to, and with, them that are at a higher level than their own reading to expose them to ambitious vocabulary and complex sentence structure.
- ♦ Ask your child what his/her writing targets are from time to time and help them work specifically on these.
- ♦ After your child has produced written work ask them to proof read their work for accuracy. After they have done this, have a look at the piece yourself.
- ♦ Provide your child with a comfortable place to work and exciting writing materials.
- ♦ A dictionary or spell check on a computer would also be useful. Write postcards from holidays and record holiday events in a diary that can be shared with friends or family.
- ♦ Write information pages or book-



lets about a hobby or something they find interesting e.g. dinosaurs, class

### Reluctant Writers.

- Nothing to write about. (ideas)
- No format to follow. (structure)
- Lack of words. (vocabulary and language)
- No reason to write. (purpose)



## Below are some useful website to use to support your child in writing:

<http://www.ictgames.co.uk/> A whole range of lovely interactive games for Primary aged children.

<http://www.starfall.com/> For early years - American site so watch the accent but the children love it!

<http://www.sebastianswan.org.uk/> Sebastian swan big books to share with the class, including some questions about the text (also available in French and Welsh!!!)

<http://www.blewa.co.uk/> Looks at the history of the written word, with ideas for making scrolls, writing during Victorian Times etc.

<http://www.storiesfromtheweb.org/> Book reviews, free stories, writing activities and games for Primary aged children.

<http://www.magickeys.com/books/index.html> Scroll down the page for free online animated stories.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/wordsandpictures/index.shtml> BBC website based on 'letter and sounds'. Includes some great online games and activities - particularly the blending games.

<http://www.candlelightstories.com/storybooks/grimms-fairy-tales/> Audio books, stories and games. Many of the stories are 'classics' eg. from the brothers Grimm (read with an American accent)

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/websites/4\\_11/site/literacy.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/websites/4_11/site/literacy.shtml) The Primary Literacy zone from BBC schools.

<http://www.seussville.com/> Games based on the stories

<http://ngfl.northumberland.gov.uk/ict/> For children in FS or early years with fine motor control skills

<http://tutpup.com/plays/new/2-word-game> A fun spelling game against an opponent (computer) and the clock. Also improves typing speed and accuracy.

[http://www.usborne-quicklinks.com/uk/uk\\_menu\\_areas\\_pages/reading\\_programme/reading\\_programme.asp?type=subject&menu=s115](http://www.usborne-quicklinks.com/uk/uk_menu_areas_pages/reading_programme/reading_programme.asp?type=subject&menu=s115) Links for books on the Usborne reading scheme but also helpful for topic work as it



## My child is too young to write...

Young children like to scribble, make marks that look like letters, and play with writing. Chances are, your child will experiment with writing long before he or she learns to read. Here are some ways to help your child learn about and practise writing.



- **Display children's writing/mark making in a special place.** Hang your child's work on the refrigerator, a bedroom door, or a cork board; tape it to a bathroom mirror or tile. Or, scan the writing and send it to the grandparents. You will be telling your child that her writing is important and worthy of being shared. She will want to write more and more.
- **Write in front of your child and talk about it.** Whether writing a shopping list, thank you note, or e-mail; completing an application, or ordering from a catalogue, explain what you are doing. Ask him what to add to the list or what to say in the thank you note or e-mail.
- **Invite your child to dictate stories.** While playing together, encourage your child to tell you a story about where the cars and trucks are going or who lives in the Lego house. Write down exactly what she says. Read it aloud afterward. Suggest that she draw some pictures to illustrate her story.
- **Create greeting cards for special occasions.** Provide paper and crayons or markers so children can make cards and then "sign" their names when finished.

Show them old cards with phrases like "Happy Birthday," "I Love You," and "Season's Greetings" to copy on their cards.

- **Create an "office" for your child.** Gather different kinds of paper, envelopes, pencils and pens, crayons, stickers, and labels. Place them on a shelf near a desk or table or in a basket your child can carry to a comfortable place for writing. Add inter-

esting and exciting items like address and date books, calendars, or an old computer keyboard.



As your child becomes more independent try to provide them with resources so they are able to help themselves. They should try to edit their own work, correct their own spelling and up-level sentences they have already written.

Up-levelling is the ability to take what is already written and make it even better.

### Original sentence :

The cat sat on the mat by the fire.

### Up levelled sentence:

*The old, ginger cat relaxed on the new woollen rug beside the roaring fire while listening to the wind and rain howling around the house...*

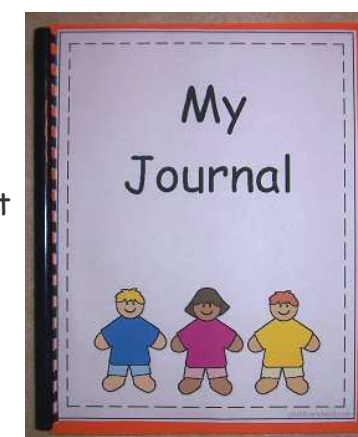
For example:



The up levelled sentence contains descriptive words, connectives, personification and punctuation. This is the child's opportunity to use what they have learnt in school and make their writing even better.

**A great way to encourage your child to write is to keep a reflective journal.**

at



This is excellent writing practice, as well as a good outlet for venting feelings. Encourage your child to write about things that happen home and school. This reflective journal can be used to develop the "senses" of writing. Have your child write about what he saw, heard or felt on a trip or adventure. Provide experiences in your community that will in-

## Third stages of writing...

Your child can now write their own short stories. This is a crucial time in their enjoyment of writing. As they continue to develop their skills at school, it is important to encourage their imagination and allow your child to express themselves through their writing.

Here are 5 ways to help improve your child's writing...

- ◇ **Give children the opportunity to write about things they know about.**  
Children find it easier to write about things they know about, have seen and experienced. It is difficult to ask a child to write a story or create an information leaflet about the seaside, if they have never been!
- ◇ **Give children plenty of first hand experiences.**  
Do things with children like: visiting a farm, going to buy fruit from the market, washing the car, going to the seaside, going by bus or train.
- ◇ **Act out experiences or situations (role play).**  
You can encourage children to do this by themselves, with siblings, friends or with an adult. Ideas for role play can include: playing shopkeeper and customer, dressing up as characters from a story, acting out all or part of a short / traditional story, being in a restaurant where one person is the chef/waiter and the other a customer, making a den or cave using cushions and blankets.
- ◇ **Become one of the characters from a story.**  
One person can be the main character from a story (e.g. Cinderella), the other person can then interview or ask questions based on the story or characters personality or events from the story. Encourage your child to put themselves in the characters place. Ask questions like: Why did you...?, Who is....?, How did you....?, What was....?, Where....?, When....?
- ◇ **Let children use all of their senses (sight, smell, sound, touch, taste).**  
Encourage your child to use their five senses to describe things. Activities to encourage describing could include: making a fruit salad (describe the different fruits whilst making and eating it), squash bananas or other food with your hands. Go into your garden in the morning and then at night - how is it different,?

## My child is too young to write...

- **Involve your child in writing while running errands.** Offer a pad and pencil and suggest your child make a "reverse shopping list"—a list of things you've already bought. At the bank, give her a blank deposit slip while you fill out yours. These tasks let children write and keep them busy as they learn new skills!
  - **Put writing materials in several places around the house.** Provide pencils, crayons, or markers in coffee cans or baskets, along with a basket of small unlined pads, notebooks, or clipboards with paper. Place these collections in the bathroom, kitchen, or living room. Be sure to remind your child to write on the paper and nowhere else.
  - **Take it outside!** Let your child write or draw with chalk or old paintbrushes and water on pavements and fences. Fill a backpack with writing tools and paper to take in the car or while doing errands.
- Encourage all writing efforts.** Make writing an everyday part of your children's lives at home! Remember, those first scribbles are important—they are the first step in learning to write.

- ⇒ **Remember to ask them about what they have written.**  
**Children have such amazing imaginations, it is important to encourage this to help further their writing as they get older.**  
**To your child every mark will mean something, it will be a way**



to communicate to  
you

"The tree is in a  
meadow of yellow  
flowers. The sun is  
going down behind it

what their marks



## The next stages of writing...

As your child continues to be confident in mark making and develops their reading skills, we will begin to introduce formal writing. At the beginning this may be more detailed drawings. If a child is unable to correctly place all the features of a person, i.e. fingers, hair, nose etc, we can not expect them to write about that person in any detail. Once they begin to correctly place all these things, we will then expect them to write simple sentences about this drawing. They will have access to a placemat or bank of words as well as the common words they should be learning in class. i.e. I, we, the etc.

At this stage it is very important to encourage your child to write, correcting high frequency words (a list of these can be found online).

make mistakes these. This is a learn new things mind-set for our learn. There is as failure, just new learning ex-

**There is No  
Such Thing as  
Failure,  
Only  
Learning  
Experiences.**

Allow them to and celebrate great way to and a great children to no such thing the start of a perience.

## How can I support my child in writing?

### Provide a place for your child to write

The area should be an area that is quiet and well lit. Stock the "writing centre" with supplies such as paper, pencils and crayons. You can also gather family photos and magazines in the centre that can be used as story starters.

### Read, read, read!

The best activity to improve writing is reading. If your child reads good books, he will be a better writer. Reading exposes students to general vocabulary, word study and content-specific vocabulary. Through reading, students see a variety of authors' techniques that they can use in their own writing.

### Provide authentic writing opportunities for your child

Have your child write his own thank-you notes, party invitations and letters to family. Let your child make the grocery list. Finding a pen pal for your child would make writing "real." Helping children make the connection between writing and the "real" world will increase an interest in writing.

### Be a writing role model

Make sure your child sees you as a writer. Point out times that you use writing to communicate with others. Discuss authentic writing in the community such as articles and letters in the newspaper, on billboards or in written advertisements. Discuss the purpose of the writing and the target audience. When your child writes, you should write. You can schedule a day of the week that you will turn off the television and share your writing.

### Start a vocabulary notebook

Teach your child new words each week and encourage her to use them. Make it into a game and give points for using the new words. Your child can keep a vocabulary notebook and get rewarded for the number of new words learned. The words will begin to appear like magic in her oral language and writing.

### Ask questions