

Developing Written Language Handwriting



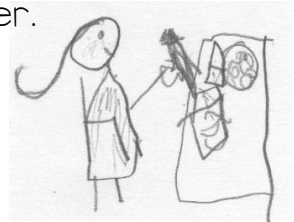
What is writing?

In the broadest sense, "Writing is a way of making marks that call to mind the ideas you had when you wrote." (Temple, Nathan, Temple & Barnes, 1993) When children make marks on paper that have meaning to them, they are writing!

There are 2 parts to writing, first the physical skill of holding the pencil and making meaningful marks – basically handwriting. The second part involves thinking of ideas and expressing yourself on paper.

Handwriting –

the act of forming letters correctly
transcribing, copying or recording someone's message

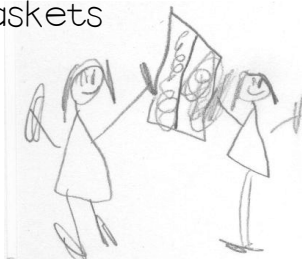


In order to write legibly children need to develop muscles and coordination in their shoulders, arm, hand and fingers. Babies develop physical control from the trunk of their body outward – starting with head control, then arms and legs, hand and finger dexterity develop later. Of course all children develop at varying rates, but when they come to school all children are asked to control scissors, crayons and pencils.

Here are a few ideas of activities you can encourage your child to do at home to help strengthen and develop his motor abilities:

Shoulder

play wheelbarrow
crawl under tables
play on monkey bars
play with scarves
shoot baskets



Arm

swing jump rope
play catch
paint at an easel or
paper taped on
a wall or fence
bounce a ball

Hand and fingers

use a hole punch
use scissors
play with Legos
use eye droppers
play with playdough
use tweezers
dress Barbie dolls

