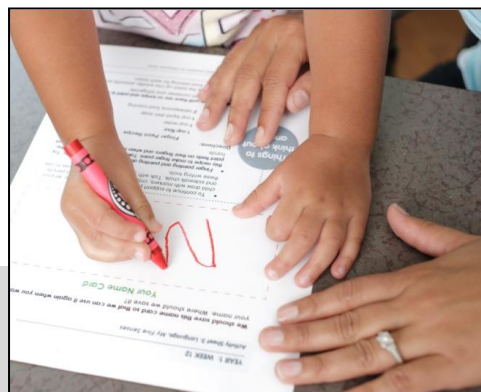




YEAR 1: SUPPLEMENT 3

Resources for Families: Supporting Your Child with Writing

Children start learning how to write when they first try to draw a picture or scribble a message on paper. When children and parents read books together or draw pictures, young children learn that marks and symbols have meaning. This is one of the very first steps of early reading and writing.

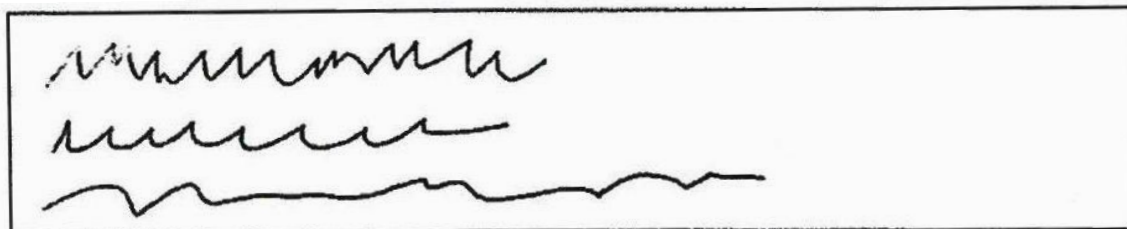


How to help your child learn to write:

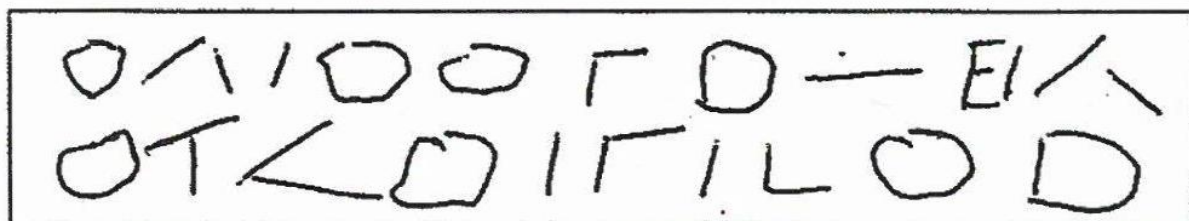
- Model for your child. Point out when you are writing.
You could say: "I am writing a list of things I need to buy at the store."
- Write your child's name on a piece of paper. Say each letter as you write it.
- Make sure that pencils, markers, pens, crayons, and paper are available for your child to use.

Children learn to write in a pretty predictable way. The usual stages are listed below:

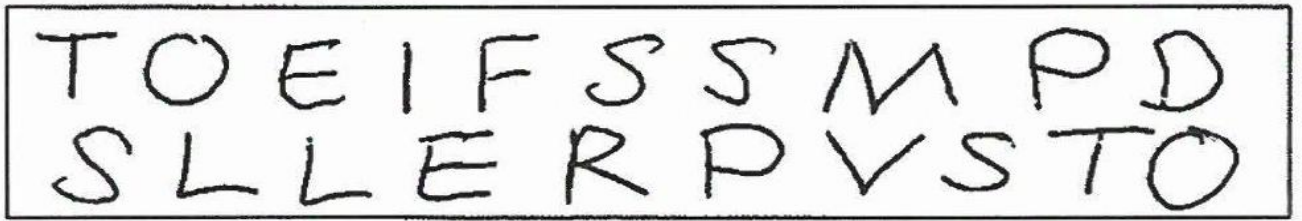
1. In the first stage of writing, children try to copy or imitate what they see other adults doing. The writing may look like scribbling.



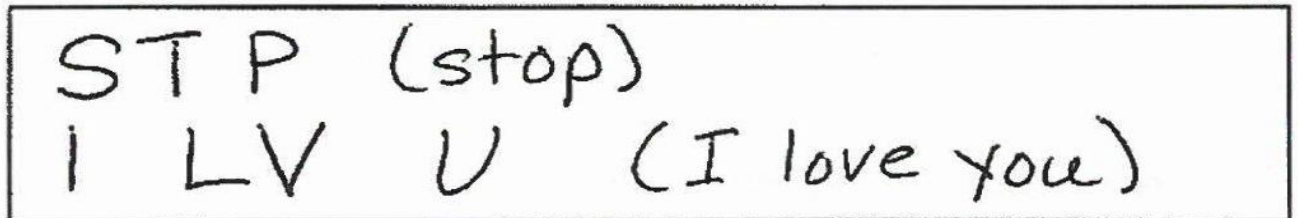
2. In the second stage, children continue with some scribbling but begin to draw letter shapes. Some of the first letters children write are the ones with circles and straight lines. They also might write the first letter of their name.



3. The next stage of writing includes letters you can recognize. Usually children are not connecting a letter to a sound yet, but simply writing letters they have learned. Writing some letters backwards is normal at this stage.



4. By the end of preschool and throughout the kindergarten year, children will begin to write letters that represent the sounds they hear in words. They may start writing words based on some of the sounds they hear. This usually happens before children learn to spell and is called *inventive spelling*.



How to help your child learn how to hold a pencil:

- Model for your child. Show your child how to hold a pencil with three fingers.
- Let your child use the left or right hand. Whichever hand they prefer.
- *Be patient.* Your child is working on the skills needed to grasp an object with only three fingers.
- Allow your child to use the whole hand or four fingers to grasp writing tools if needed. This allows children to use the shoulder and arm to push the writing tools on the paper.
- Encourage your child to experiment and explore using writing tools often.

