

Helpful Tips for Writing with Your Child at Home



When your child is writing at home, there are some very important things to remember. First, establish a writing area that is accessible all the time or whenever your child feels the urge to write. Second, have the necessary tools needed for writing available and ready; lined paper and sharpened pencils. Finally, here are a few tips to keep in mind as you guide your student through the evaluation of their own writing. It is important to note that using a computer for writing is always an option also.

1. IDEAS- this is number one for a good reason. Notice the content or meaning first!

Ask a question or make comments that show the writer that you were listening to his/her piece.

Examples:

- I liked the part where...
- Your beginning really made me want to read more!
- I wonder why so and so did so and so...
- Your story reminds me of...
- I'm confused about... Is there a way to make that part more clear?
- Your ending comes really fast...Is there a way to add more info?

Encourage self-evaluation.

Examples:

- What is your favorite part?
- Show me some words that you really like.
- Are there any words that you could replace with more powerful or interesting words?
- Are there any parts that you want help with?
- Where do you plan to go next with this story?

2. CONVENTIONS - guide students towards correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

Spelling

- Ask the writer to circle words that he/she thinks are misspelled
- Mark any Priority Words with (PE)
- Help the writer correct the circled words
- Guide the writer in locating Priority Words on list and correcting them
- Help the writer put all corrected words on his/her Words to Learn List
- Point out and help the writer correct any other misspelled words in his/her piece
- Don't expect spelling to be perfect, only correct 5-7 non-Priority Words

Mechanics

- Read the piece out loud and pause where end punctuation should be
- Ask the writer to check for end marks while you read
- Encourage the writer to find errors by giving clues – I see a missing capital...

The End Result – Your editing time with each student may not always result in a perfect piece. I do hope that each student will walk away from an editing session with correct ending punctuation, proper use of capital letters (that includes not using them as well as using them), reasonable spelling with all Priority Words and most phonetically fair words spelled correctly, and, most importantly, a feeling of being respected and honored as a young writer.