



Supporting your child's learning at home

Writing

You can't write a story unless you can tell a story.

You can't tell a story unless you have heard a story

- Talk! Talk! Talk! – ask children to describe anything and everything.
- Write! Write! Write! – encourage them to write letters, a diary, email friends and family, send postcards, make lists, play vocabulary games, write stories and illustrate them.
- Take the opportunity to comment on interesting use of VCOP when reading with your child.
- Use a dictionary or a thesaurus to find interesting words to use.
- Encourage children to think about how to improve work completed at home through use of VCOP.
- Be prepared to explain new words to your child and give examples of how to use them.
- Take it in turns to tell a story. One person starts it, the other says what happens next etc.
- Look at a picture or photo and describe it; use it to tell a story or develop ambitious vocabulary.

V- is for vocabulary (ambitious 'WOW' words) and children are encouraged to widen their use of language to make their writing richer. In the classroom, new and expressive words are collected and shared.

C - is for connectives (joining words) such as and, because, so, besides, although, however, but etc. This makes writing more cohesive and interesting.

O - is for openers (opening your sentences in a variety of ways). Varying the way you open sentences makes them more engaging to read. There are three main ways of opening sentences – using connectives and words ending in 'ly' and 'ing'. Another way includes starting a sentence with a word ending in 'ed'.

P - is for punctuation – correctly using punctuation appropriate for age or level. Children are taught the names of the different punctuation and they learn how to use them to 'up level' their writing.

How you can support at home

- Encourage children to read and listen to a range of genres of writing, e.g. poetry, higher level texts being read aloud, newspapers, etc.
- Encourage children to use phrases or words seen in a book in their own writing.

Ideas for Word Games

- Car number plates – Make nonsense sentences from letters in car number plates
B D D – Bill Dug Deep
- Acting verbs – Brainstorm alternatives for look, said, went, got, ate, touch. Then act them out.

look might be peer, stare, gaze, glance, peek

said might be muttered, whispered, yelled, shrieked, snarled

Ideas for Story Games

- Odd Word stories — make a list of random words and somehow connect a story from two of them. E.g.

horse	chocolate	tree	space	slipper	bath
train	scooter		kangaroo		toothpaste
clownpumpkin		astronaut			

One morning, while an **astronaut** was busy brushing his teeth, he noticed how beautifully white they were looking. He was due to launch off into space that day, so he decided to take a rocket full of **toothpaste** with him so he could make the stars sparkle even brighter.

Ideas for Story Games

- What if?

What would happen if pencils could talk?

What would happen if trees could walk?

What would happen if dogs could fly?

What if the sky was green?

What if the flowers could sing?

Then create a story based on one of these strange what if questions.

- In the Street I saw... (in the supermarket/playground/kitchen etc)
- In Grandma's bag there is...

Person 1 — In the street I saw a dog

Person 2 — In the street I saw a dog and a bicycle

Person 1 — In the street I saw a dog and a bicycle and a post box

Ideas for Story Games

Pass the Story

- Write the first sentence for the child
- Pass to them to write the next one. Keep taking in turns.
- Child reads back the story you've created

Ideas for Story Games

Finishing sentences

- Give the child the start of a sentence

We drove into the carpark and then...

We arrived at the castle but....