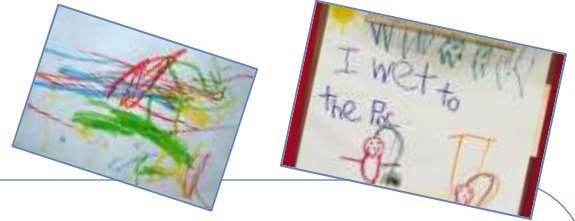


# Solgrid

## The Solihull grid for learning



### Helping your child at home: 'Writing and Mark Making' Part 1



Young children's early writing is often described as 'Mark Making' as this is writing in its earliest stages. Young children explore with making marks from an early age, this could be the marks they make on a foggy window, mark making with a stick in mud, the random arrangement of marks on a piece of paper that is a picture of mummy or the squiggly lines, random letters that demonstrate they have written as a list, letter or story.

Writing is part of the Literacy and Physical development goals children are expected to achieve by the end of the Early Years curriculum. Being a 'writer' and a 'mark maker' provides opportunities for children to express themselves and engage with those around them further supporting their language, social and artistic development.

### How to encourage mark making and writing at home

Share and model opportunities to experience writing with your child or encourage your child to have a go, this could include the following ideas:

- Shopping lists, Notebooks, old diaries, calendars and envelopes
- Cards for birthdays, anniversaries and celebrations
- Invitations and thank you notes for birthdays
- Letters and drawing pictures for friends and family
- Journal or diary entries your child could contribute to
- Scrap books of special events
- Labelling toys storage, boxes etc.
- Providing resources for having a go at mark making / writing:
  - ✓ Place paper and pens with a kitchen role-play area for orders or shopping lists
  - ✓ Chalks for outdoor floor mark making and drawing
  - ✓ Large pieces of paper to create a floor map and model labelling buildings and features
  - ✓ Arts and crafts to create celebration cards, invites and thank you letters.
  - ✓ Different sized paintbrushes with water for floor, wall and fence 'painting' outside.
  - ✓ Variety of resources, chalks, paints, pens, wax and pencil crayons, felts and pencils.



## What will help my child at home?

In order for young children to develop the dexterity and skills to become a 'writer' they need to have plenty of opportunities to develop, strengthen and coordinate their \*fine and \*gross motor skills. Provide your child with plenty of opportunities to develop these skills.

**\*Fine motor skills:** the term used for developing the smaller muscles in our hands and wrists.

**\*Gross motor skills:** the term used for developing the larger muscles such as the shoulder, arms, core strength in our torso to support our bodies when writing.

## Further information

- This document **What to expect, when?** Explains what your child should be demonstrating at each age and stage of development.
- Supporting your child with their listening skills and vocabulary will support their ability to understand letter sounds for writing.
- **Wordsforlife.org.uk**
- **www.bbc.co.uk teach school radio EYFS listening skills**

## Fine and Gross Motor Skill activity suggestions:

- Using tweezers or tongs to pick up small items such as pasta, rice, cotton wool balls and Lego bricks.
- Playdough, clay and slime - to roll, pat, poke, squeeze, stretch. Search for 'Dough Disco' on YouTube and have some fun!
- Transferring water from squeezing a sponge between bowls
- Food - making marks, patterns and letter shapes in a shallow tray of flour or shaving foam.
- Finger Aerobics! Fist squeezes and stretching fingers out, touching each finger with a thumb on one hand. Walking fingers across a surface, pushing opposite fingers against each other.
- Snipping paper with scissors
- Clipping pegs onto a coat hanger, transferring them from one side to another.
- Weaving with ribbons, paper, wool or string.
- Shadow drawing - place small toys outside on the floor in the sunshine to create a shadow and draw over and around the shadow lines.
- Doing up zips, buttons and laces.
- Threading pasta shapes, cheerios and beads onto straws or string.
- Everyday opportunities such as putting on clothes, doing up zips, buttons and laces, folding clothes, wiping up spills.
- Playing in sand with different sized containers for pouring and collecting and making marks.
- Building, stacking and balancing different sized construction toys such bricks and blocks
- Making small and large scale patterns such as vertical and horizontal lines, circles (anti clockwise)
- Climbing and hanging from bars.
- Whole body movements such as running, skipping, jumping, hopping, dancing etc.
- Catching and throwing balls
- Balancing activities, walking in straight line
- Rolling large objects such as tyres, balls and snow!
- Large scale mark making outside with chalks, paintbrushes and water.
- Gardening and planting
- Playing in water with different sized containers for pouring and collecting. Use pipettes to collect water to pinch and squeeze.
- Large and small scale painting, chalk and drawing activities.
- Lifting objects.

