

## Your Child is a Writer... Really!

The moment a child puts crayon/pencil/pen to paper, he/she is a writer! Writing develops in stages. Children need to experiment with writing. We need to support and celebrate their efforts, even their very early scribbles. There are different stages of writing:

**Drawing:** In the drawing and picture writing stage, children begin to express their thoughts and feelings on paper through drawings. The pictures are often unrecognizable.

**Scribbling:** At this stage, the child begins to draw somewhat recognizable shapes and may tell about the pictures. Young children believe they are writing when they scribble and often "read" what they have just scribbled.

**Random Letters:** The child begins to print his or her own name and may put strings of random letters with his/her picture. They may attempt to read the message, but it is probably still unrecognizable.

**Early Phonetic Spelling:** The child begins to use some letters to match sounds, often using a beginning letter to represent the whole word. They may begin to use left to right progression. Letter reversals are still common.

**Phonetic spelling:** At this stage, children begin to write words with beginning and ending sounds. They also begin to spell some high frequency words correctly. Vowels may be inserted into words, but usually aren't the right ones.

**Transitional Spelling:** At this stage, children are writing words the way they sound. They are beginning to leave spaces between words and often spell many high frequency words correctly. They attempt to use punctuation marks and begin to write one or more sentences.

**Conventional spelling:** At this level, children can spell many words correctly. Phonetic based spelling still comes into play when they must spell longer unfamiliar words. They begin to use punctuation marks correctly and use capital and lower case letters in the correct places.

### Ways to Enjoy Writing with Your Child

*Give your child meaningful opportunities to write.* Involve your child in the preparation of invitations, thank you notes, letters to friends/relatives, reminder notes, shopping lists, catalog orders, etc.

*Have lots of writing materials available.* Keep different kinds of paper (lined & unlined), post it notes, pencils, crayons, markers, stapler, tape, hole punch, envelopes and note cards, within your child's reach.