

# Enjoyable Activities Get Your Child to 'Write From the Start'

Until the last hundred years or so, most people never learned to write more than their names. But today, the ability to write clearly is important for everyone.

Parents can help children learn this important skill. Even the youngest students can have fun while improving their writing. Here are some fun things to do together:

- Make it real. Help your child see how she can use writing in her everyday life. Have her write a letter or an e-mail to Grandma. Expect her to write thank-you notes for gifts.
- Make it special. Nearly all writers tell the same stories about their childhoods. At one time, someone gave them a beautiful journal or a fancy pen. That was the start of their love of writing.
- Make it easy. Keep writing materials around the house so your child doesn't have to hunt for a pen and paper when the mood strikes.
- Make it fun. Start a poetry contest in your house. Who can come up with the silliest rhyme? Or write a story together. Have one family member write the first sentence. Then take turns writing sentences to finish the story.
- Make it public. Writers love to have their work read by others. Try "publishing" one of your child's stories. (Send it to Grandma.) Or create a folder of your child's best work. In years to come, you will treasure these keepsakes.

*Source: Stephen Stroup, "Parent Support of Early Literacy Development," ERIC Digest No. ED457521, 2001, [www.ericfacility.net/databases/ERIC\\_Digests/ed457521.html](http://www.ericfacility.net/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed457521.html).*

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