

Tips for helping at home

- **Provide a place:** It's important for a child to have a good place to write--a desk or table with a smooth, flat surface and good lighting.
- **Have the materials:** Provide plenty of paper--lined and unlined--and things to write with, including pencils, pens, and crayons.
- **Allow time:** Help your child spend time thinking about a writing project or exercise. Good writers do a great deal of thinking.
- **A Meaningful Task:** A child needs meaningful, not artificial writing tasks.
- **Interest:** All the time in the world won't help if there is nothing to write, nothing to say. Some of the reasons for writing include: sending messages, keeping records, expressing feelings, or relaying information.
- **Reading:** Reading can stimulate a child to write about his/her own family or school life. If your child reads good books, they will be a better writer.
- **Respond:** Do respond to the ideas your child expresses verbally or in writing. Focus on "what" the child has written, not "how" it was written. It's usually wise to ignore minor errors, particularly at the stage when your child is just getting ideas together.
- **Don't you write it!:** Support your child but do not write for them.
- **Pencil grip:** It is very important that your child is holding the pencil correctly. By increasing strength in their fingers through fine motor activities, they will feel more comfortable holding the pencil correctly.
- **Praise:** Take a positive approach and say something good about your child's writing. Is it accurate? Descriptive? Thoughtful? Interesting? Does it say something?