

# Family Writing Activities

## 1 2 3 GO!

**1 BUILD FINE MOTOR SKILLS.** Try the activities below to help your child build hand strength and coordination. This will help them hold a pencil comfortably and write without frustration.

- **CLAY PLAY** Invite your child to be creative with play dough or soft clay. Roll it with a rolling pin. Roll “snakes” using the palms of their hands. Roll it into tiny balls using only their fingertips.
- **SPRAY AWAY** Help your child use a spray bottle to spray house plants. Go outside on a warm day to spray plants (or each other)! If you have snow, add food coloring to spray colorful designs!
- **PAPER ART** Let your child tear or cut a piece of paper into small pieces (using child-safe scissors). Your child will develop their fine motor skills and have fun making a mess! Arrange the pieces to make designs or pictures, gluing them to a sheet of paper.
- **PICK UP** Using a spring-loaded clothespin, help your child pick up small objects like cotton balls. Can they pick them up from a bowl and place them in an egg carton or ice cube tray?

**2 EXPERIMENT WITH LETTERS.** Try some of the following activities. Keep in mind that bigger pencils, crayons, and markers are easier for little hands to hold!

- **LETTER SHAPES** Letters are formed from a small number of basic shapes. To learn more, look at the chants on the **Letter Writing Practice** pages. Help your child practice these basic shapes.

- For example, make 10 slanted lines. Say *Slant down* as each is formed.

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- Make 10 counterclockwise curves. Say *Curve back around* as each is formed.

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- **BIG LETTER TRACE** Write BIG letters on paper. Help your child trace the letters with their finger, saying the chants provided on the **Letter Writing Practice** pages to reinforce correct formation. For example, as your child traces capital *B* say, “Down, jump, curve around, curve around.” Let them write letters with their finger on foggy windows or on a baking tray covered with sand or shaving cream.
- **CAPITALS FIRST** Capital letters are easier for little hands to form. Practice the letters in your child’s name first! Don’t worry about writing on lines yet. Just encourage them to form the letters correctly.

**3** Use the **LETTER WRITING PRACTICE** pages in your Waterford UPSTART Activity Book.

- **TALK ABOUT LETTERS** As your child works on each **Letter Writing Practice** page, talk about the *name*, *shape*, and *sound* of the letter.
- **LETTER CHANTS** Each time your child traces a letter, say the chant provided on the practice page. For example, as your child traces capital *F* three times you would say, “Down, jump, across, across! Down, jump, across, across! Down, jump, across, across!”

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- **RAINBOW WRITING** Give your child some crayons or markers. Invite them to trace a letter multiple times, using a different color each time to create a “rainbow letter.”

## **GO!** ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD TO EXPRESS IDEAS ON PAPER.

- **JOURNAL** Staple some blank pages or create simple pages like the **Journal Pages** in this activity book. Give your child many opportunities to express ideas through drawing and writing. Praise *all* of your child’s attempts to communicate their ideas!

The typical stages of development are

- Expressing ideas through drawings
- Scribbling from left to right or writing symbols that look like letters
- Writing random letters that are familiar (*ASFPR* = “I love my dog.”)
- Writing the first letters of words (*ILMD* = “I love my dog.”)
- Writing letters that reflect more sounds (*I LV MI DG* = “I love my dog.”)
- Eventually, your child will write, “I love my dog!”

Each of these examples is a natural step. And each step is a cause for celebration!

- **PLAYTIME** Encourage writing as part of playtime. For example, your child might build a zoo from blocks and make signs telling the names of the animals. They might plan a show and make paper tickets for family members to use for admission!
- **SURPRISE NOTES** It’s important for your child to have meaningful reasons to write. Encourage them to write notes to special people: Dad, Grandma, a neighbor or a caretaker. After your child writes a note, ask them to tell you what it says. Write the words under their writing. Help your child deliver the note!