

National Schools' Handwriting Competition

10 ideas to encourage writing

Handwriting is something that should be practiced little and often. In this digital age it is often challenging to find opportunities to get children to practice rather than in a school setting. Here are 10 ideas to encourage and hopefully inspire your child to write.

1. Shopping Lists

This is a great task that can be adapted depending on the age of the child. The younger children could draw the items, the older children can write down the names or just add one or two items if they can't manage the whole list. You could also take them to the supermarket and tick the items off the list as they go around the aisles. An activity with a real purpose and they can see that they are being helpful.

2. To Do Lists

Children like to be helpful so you could ask them to write down your daily "to do" list. This could include making breakfast, pack lunch, going to nursery, school, and work. Alternatively you could ask them to write their own "To Do" list. This promotes independence and also makes them think about their own tasks. You could get them to write down all the things they have to do in the morning before they go to school or nursery and include pictures. For example get dressed, brush my teeth, have breakfast etc.. They can then put this in the bedroom as a reminder!

3. Cards/Postcards

You could ask a relative or friend to send your child a card or postcard and then suggest that your child replies. You could buy a postcard of your local town or village and get them to write a few words or just pictures on the back.

4. Holiday Journals

Your child may like to create a holiday journal or scrap book where they record their activities and adventures. They could keep pictures, tickets, leaflets and stick them in their journal and add some text to it. It may be too much to write every day but they could do it at the end of their week and write the best things that happened that week.

5. Book or film review

Show your child book or film reviews on line and suggest they write one for their favourite book or film. Ask them to describe what the book/film was about; what did they particularly like about the book/film, what didn't like about it. Finally ask them to score the book out of 5.

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10 ideas to encourage writing contd.

6. Play date or Party invitations

Suggest your child writes the invitation to his or her party or simply writes a card / note to invite a friend to come over for a play.

7. Notes to your Mum and Dad

Write your child a note and you may be surprised that they write back. Keep the note going back and forth between you and fold it each time so they have to open it out to read it.

8. Pen pals

If you have any friends or relatives abroad suggest your child writes them a letter. A younger child could draw pictures and perhaps write their address out whilst the older children could write a description about where they live (they could also include photos) and in return ask the friend or relative about the country or place they live in. You could then take them to the post office and buy the stamp together. Children love to receive post especially handwritten letters or cards so hopefully they will continue to write to each other and have a Pen pal.

9. Best Ever Menu

Ask your child to write down a menu of all their favourite foods. What would be their dream lunch or dinner? Encourage them to write it down and decorate their menu. Alternatively they could just write a menu with what they are having for lunch or dinner that day and give one to each member of their family.

10. Handwriting competition

If your child is age 4 or over they could enter our handwriting competition. They have to write out a poem in their neatest handwriting and send it back to Cambridge University Press. Winners will be announced in National Stationery Week and they could win a stationery gift pack if they win. Click here www.handwritingcompetition.co.uk for all the details.