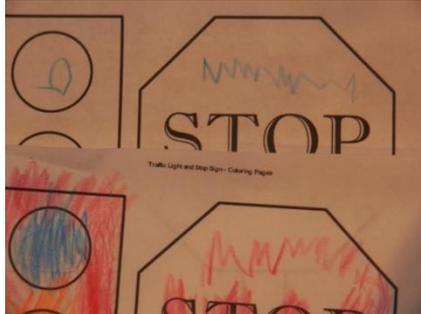


Hooking Children into Writing

As the weeks tick on some children may become less engaged with writing tasks. Here are a few ideas that I have put together to support writing at home.



Children could design and make their own 'writing station' with different tools, such as pebbles, stones, chalk to write with.



They could make 'stop – do not touch' signs so that siblings don't knock down their construction!

You can experiment with removing the pressure to write and introduce different 'tools', both indoors and outdoors, this might help them to engage spontaneously with writing as a seamless part of play.

- 'writing tools' could include exploring shadows in sunlight and torches in blackout dens (writing your name/drawing shapes with a torch in the dark – I do this on bonfire night with sparklers)
- use plant-misters, water pistols and wet decorating brushes on dry patios
- different paper, envelopes and postcards, Post-its and paper strips for memos and lists; blank booklets to create their own books; blank checklists and invoices. You could also provide paper in different formats, including tags, luggage labels, strips, speech bubbles, concertina books, old blank forms, envelopes and themed shapes such as paper 'leaves' for noting nature finds, or cut-out hearts for loving messages
- chalk for outdoor walls and floors

If possible, set up writing opportunities that provide 'real-life' rewards. For example, create a snack bar where children must fill in an order form before they can have their snack! This could be as simple as a 'tick' in a box first, then drawing a picture, building up to 'writing' their order.

Backpacks and builders tool belts containing a selection of mark-making resources (including clipboards) can be used. Children can be involved in choosing what resources go in their 'builders tool belts' or backpacks.

Writing doesn't have to be on paper - walls, paving slabs, wooden fences, windows, crockery, old furniture, fabric and battered picture books all have potential as mark-making surfaces (not sure I would do all of this at my house)!

The Dough Disco <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zJQ2CaA7E50> helps coordination between the hands and fingers, with the eyes. These fine motor skills support functions such as writing.

Later on, when they are ready to write again, children could have a writing partner - someone to scribe ideas or they could type what they want to write. Children could draw pictures or record what they want to write on an ipad (orally rehearsing sentences first – saying out loud) then listening back to make sure they are sequenced correctly. Finally, please don't worry too much – keep reading together, talking about what you are doing, sharing stories, introducing new and exciting vocabulary. By doing this, your child will have the foundations needed to write.