

Thank you for coming out to our writing workshop. We hope you found some good food for thought. Please don't hesitate to contact us for more info on the topics or programs we discussed. Below is a summary of what we discussed.

Main Points

- There are developmental stages of writing (and reading) to be aware of.
- Phonological Awareness is crucial before learning to spell or write. (Hearing words broken into sounds)
- Phonics is learning how letters correspond with certain sounds.
- "Bubblegum writing" can take pressure off for perfectionist kids who won't write because they can't do it perfectly right away. And it is a good assessment tool.
- Word Work is foundational for literacy (should be part of daily routine). Learning about word patterns and spelling rules is helpful.
- Writing takes a lot of effort and uses various parts of the brain. It is helpful to break down the task and practice the skills separately.
- Model good writing. (And talk about what you notice about good writing in books that you read)
- Every child is different. What works for one may not work for another. And what motivates and helps today may not do it tomorrow. The beauty of learning at home is that you can adapt without sacrificing good practice and skill development.

Programs That We Explored

Words Their Way (available to borrow from our library) -has assessment, uses word sorts

All About Spelling and **All About Reading** -also good programs (We have some to borrow)

Excellence in Writing (We have some of their resources; it is not as user friendly but see Kerry if you want more info)

Writing with Ease (We have the book and two workbooks to borrow). The author advocates scaffolding through copywork, narration and dictation.)

Adreinne Gears Writing Power and Reading Power -great ideas for teaching writing ideas -using anchor books

Ideas for Motivating Writing

- Cultivating a Growth Mind Set (hard is not boring -its an opportunity to grow more dendrites) See website on Big Life Journal as well as work by Carol Dweck. See Jenny for good resources on the Growth Mind Set available at our Resource Library.
- Use an anchor book as a "hook". EG. Read Diary of a Worm then see if they can write their own "Diary of a ___"
- An audience motivates (E.G. penpal)
- Write for a purpose: (E.G. to convince someone of something)
- Publish (e.g. making a bound book, using "pretty paper" can motivate for going through the whole writing process)
- Kids should know WHY writing is an important skill.
- Make sure expectations are clear when given a writing assignment -checklist or rubric.
- Scaffold writing appropriately. (use graphic organizers, 3 key words, notes, 5 finger paragraph etc.)
- Celebrate improvements -focus on praising effort and growth rather than being smart