

Teaching Writing From Letter Writing to Composition Writing

Stages of Teaching Letters

Children need to internalize the English letters especially when their own language has a different alphabet. It is important that they become familiar with the shapes of English letters and manipulate them.

They require using the body and space rather than pencil and paper activities to have a strong imprint of the shape of letters in their mind's eye.

Body Letters

Ask children to make themselves into the shape of given letters. For example ask them: *"make yourself an 's'".*

Children make their bodies into what they think the letter looks like and you can model this easily by showing them an "x" by standing with your feet apart and your arms in the air and wide apart or you can show a "T" by standing with your feet together and your arms stretched out to the sides or ask children to make a letter and the whole class has to try to recognise what the letter is.

Tracing Letters

Ask students to shut their eyes and with your finger trace a letter on their hand or back. They must tell you what this is. They can play the game in pairs.

There may be giggles from the ticklish in the class, but the activity requires them to "see" the letter in their mind's eye and it's great fun, too.

Air Writing

Before writing letters on paper, get all the students to stand up and you stand at the front of the class with your back to them. Using your writing hand draw a big letter in the air saying its sound at the same time. Get the students to copy you, moving their arms to form the letter in the air.

Letter Sculptures

Give out plasticine (soft modeling clay) to all the children (half-cooked spaghetti works too, but is messier). Ask the children to make certain letters. They have to concentrate on the shape of the letter and its proportions.

The children can choose their own letter and make a big one out of plasticine or card, then stick it on a large piece of card.

Give out magazines and newspapers and let the children look and find either words or pictures of things that begin with the same letter. They cut these out and create a collage with their big letter. Decorate the classroom with these posters.

Word Writing Activities

- Copying.
- Matching.
- Dictation.
- Fill-in exercises.
- Write words according to picture prompts.
- Completing a crossword.

Sentence Writing Activities

- Choose words from a list to complete a text.
- Reorder words to make a sentence that is grammatically correct.
- Use guide words to make a sentence.

Connected Text Writing (Composition Writing)

You can use Process Writing in the creation of a composition by students in the classroom.

This approach acknowledges that any individual will often require more than one draft in order to satisfactorily create a composition.

As a teacher, you should also give feedback after each draft so that the next version will be much improved.

Before Writing:

- Select an age-appropriate topic for writing.
- Help students to generate ideas for writing by discussion as a class or in small groups.
- Use a variety of methods to help students organize their ideas, such as making lists or drawing diagrams or graphic organizers.

Writing Drafts:

Students draft their ideas with your guidance using pictures, labels and words.

In the primary draft, the main ideas are more important than anything else.

Students should check their composition and correct their errors after they have written down their main ideas.

- Help them to order and structure their work.
- Encourage them to check their work themselves before giving it to you for feedback.
- Give positive comments on early drafts of students' composition. This supports their confidence.

After Writing:

- Help students to add more details or to clarify their ideas.
- Encourage students to share their work and to make amendments in accordance with suggestions made by other students.
- Encourage students to check their work, paying attention to the use of punctuation marks and correct spelling.

Thanks for Reading