

Thomas Russell Infants' School



Random Word



- Select a book.
- Ask someone to give you a page number and turn to that page.
- Ask someone for another number and count that number of lines down the page.
- Ask someone for a small number and count the words on the selected line until you reach your small number.
- Try to write a sentence using the selected word as quickly as possible.
- Can you write a sentence in one minute?
- Did you include any adjectives?



You could make the challenge harder by selecting two or three words and writing a sentence that includes all the words.

Have you remembered **capital letters** and **full stops**?

Expand the sentence

- Select or create a simple sentence.

The dog ran.

- Add an adjective to the noun in the sentence.

E.g.

The angry dog ran.

- Add an adverb to the sentence. E.g.

The angry dog ran quickly.

- Give a reason for the action. E.g.

The angry dog ran quickly to catch the robber.



Here are a few suggestions of different types of writing that you could do with your child at home. Don't forget that if they aren't yet at the writing stage they can always tell you what they would like to write and you can be their scribe!

Adverts 

Application Form

Autobiography

Biography

Blurb

Captions 

Certificate

Contents

Diary 

Glossary


Greetings card

Index

Instructions


Interview

Jokes

Letter to a friend 

Letter to complain

Thank you letter

Newspaper article 

Play script

Poem

Postcard 

Poster

Recipe 

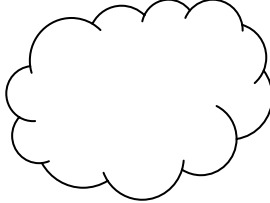
Recount

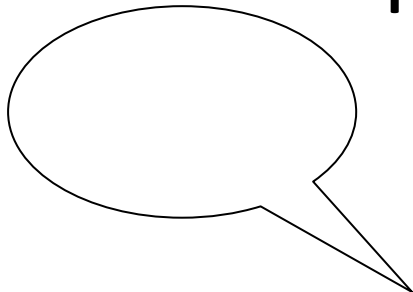
Report

Slogan/Jingle

Song lyric 



Think it 

Say it 

Write it 

Read it 

Check it 



To help with pencil control and writing



- Do lots of threading activities at home - beads, cotton reels or just hole

punched pieces of card and a shoe lace!



- Have a go at tracing a picture and then colouring it in.
- Colouring in books are great to help you with your pencil control - can you keep inside the lines?

- Practise writing your letters in paint, sand or on a whiteboard.



- Use different coloured pens, gel pens, chalks, crayons, pencils or paints.
- Old rolls of wallpaper are great for drawing **BIG** patterns and letters on.
- Take a paintbrush out into the garden with a bucket of water and

practise writing your letters on the garden path.



Vocabulary Bank



- Try different or new food items.
- What do they taste like?
- Can you think of some **adjectives** to describe the taste? E.g. spicy, bitter.
- Can you think of a **simile** that describes how the food tastes? E.g. as hot as fire!
- Write down all your ideas.



Why Storytelling Matters

Stories are magic. Everyone who has ever read to children knows that. As soon as the story begins, their eyes widen and they gaze at you – seeing you, but, more powerfully, seeing the story in their minds. This extraordinary ability – to imagine – is crucial to human development. Memorable stories change your imagination, expanding what the inner eye can see.

Why some children can't write

If you read an author avidly then it is inevitable that you internalise their patterns of stories. It seems to be universally true that children who read a lot find writing easier. They must be internalising language and then calling upon that storehouse of narrative to create their own stories.

So what can this idea tell us about children whose writing does not echo the shape, flow and syntax of narrative? It seems fairly obvious that we have to encourage children to read more. How else will they internalise a language bank? It has to come from somewhere – you cannot create something out of nothing.

The importance of reading

What sorts of patterns are internalised through constant reading? Firstly, the overall shape of narrative. The sense that it begins by placing characters within a situation where a complication arises that has to be resolved. Constant reading also helps us to internalise the building blocks of narrative – character, setting, action, dilemma, resolution. It also provides the flow of sentences. For instance, in written narrative it may well be that some sentences start with an adverb, e.g.

Cautiously, Jenny crept into the room... Because the sentence is organised in this way, the reader begins to wonder why Jenny is being so cautious. Is she a thief? Is she scared of something? A sentence with an adverb at the start is not the sort of sentence used in everyday speech. Constant reading helps us to internalise the big patterns of narrative shape, the building blocks, sentence patterns and specific vocabulary, such as connectives.

Connectives are an interesting little group of words. They are a key indicator of more mature language usage. They enable us to use higher order expression because connectives help to reason, argue, order and explain. Without connectives, higher order thinking and expression become difficult.

Connectives are vital even from nursery age **because** if you look carefully at what I am writing, you will notice **that** I have to use a range of connectives **in order** to explain complicated ideas.

Connectives are essential to fluency. How can a small child tell a story without a few words or phrases such as, **Once upon a time..., One day..., Unfortunately..., Luckily..., Finally...,** etc?

How children learn the language of storytelling

And how do children learn language? How might small children acquire connectives? The language that children learn is the language that they hear **repeated** in a **memorable** and **meaningful** fashion.