



## Activities That Build Writing Skills

Young children are already building the language, thinking, and physical skills that they will use to write. They learn these skills through play activities in your home.

Children build muscles in their fingers and hands (for holding a writing tool) when they:

- ⇒ Thread beads on laces.
- ⇒ Roll, pound, and shape things with play dough.
- ⇒ Tear shapes out of paper.
- ⇒ Spread jelly on a cracker.
- ⇒ Draw and paint pictures.

Children learn to pay attention-and focus over long periods of time-when they:

- ⇒ Do puzzles.
- ⇒ Play with shape sorters.
- ⇒ Listen to stories.
- ⇒ Follow directions in games like Simon Says.
- ⇒ Play simple matching and sorting games.
- ⇒ Play peek-a-boo.

Children develop their memory skills-important for remembering letters, sounds, and vocabulary-when they:

- ⇒ Play simple memory games with pictures or cards.
- ⇒ Hear or read their favorite books and stories over and over again.
- ⇒ Hear their favorite songs and finger plays over and over again.
- ⇒ Retell stories by saying what happened first, next, and so on.





Children develop language-learn about the sounds of language, add new words to their vocabularies, understand word order and grammar-when they:

- ⇒ Talk with each other and adults.
- ⇒ Ask and answer questions.
- ⇒ Answer questions that begin with “What if ...?” or “What do you think ...?”
- ⇒ Describe what they see in pictures and photographs.
- ⇒ Visit new places and do new things.
- ⇒ Play with puppets.
- ⇒ Dress up and pretend.
- ⇒ Do finger plays.
- ⇒ Hear and sing songs.
- ⇒ Hear and recite poems.
- ⇒ Make up nonsense words.

