



Our Lady Star of the Sea School

Ways to Help at Home

During First Year

- ☐ Say a word, and listen for the dominant sounds i.e hospital. I can hear 'h' 's' 'p' 't' 'l'. When writing stories get your child to do the same thing but check they only write the letters they hear.
- ☐ Use an alphabet placement at dinnertime to support letter recognition. "We are having beans for tea. What letter does beans start with? Can you find it on your placemat?"
- ☐ Play word games like I'm thinking of a word that starts with 'b' like ball.
- ☐ Make letters with playdough.
- ☐ Talk about the things you see as you travel together, interesting signs, cars, buildings, and people.
- ☐ Encourage your child to write their name independently

During Second Year

- ☐ Set the timer on the microwave and get your child to write as many words as they can by themselves. Challenge them to write a few more each time. Call them out as they write i.e. can you write mat, what about cat, how about pat etc
- ☐ Cut out letters from the newspaper and make words with them.
- ☐ Write words on the window with a whiteboard marker
- ☐ Make words with playdough or magnetic letters.
- ☐ Get your child to check they are leaving spaces between their words. Talk to them about picturing the space between the words with their eyes – an 'eye' space rather than a finger space.
- ☐ Look at pictures together and talk about what you see i.e 'a blue sky' could become 'a clear and cloudless sky.'
- ☐ Encourage your child to draw their story in a sequence like a comic strip and get them to write underneath each picture what is happening.
- ☐ Use photos from a family outing or trip and write a story underneath.

During Third Year

- ☐ Clap the syllables in words and counting the claps i.e. croc – o – dile 3 claps
- ☐ Talk to your child about the purpose of the different punctuation in the stories they read. Get your child to find all the commas one night and another night look for exclamation marks.

- ☐ Make up stories together adding in describing words to give more detail to the story i.e 'The elephant went up the hill' could become 'The old grey elephant slowly trudged its way up the mountain.' This can be done in his home language as well as English.
- ☐ Make a treasure hunt and get your child to write the clues
- ☐ Encourage your child to write shopping lists, emails, cards, messages, notes etc

During Year 4

- ☐ Encourage your child to write shopping lists, notes, thank you messages, cards, instructions etc to see that writing comes in many formats.
- ☐ Send emails to family members stating what happened today.
- ☐ Discuss ways of bringing a story alive through the use of descriptive language.
- ☐ Talk to your child about the steps you are taking as you make dinner or as you fix something. Ask them why particular steps are of importance. They could then write out the steps.
- ☐ Encourage your child to make a plan before they write thinking about all the things they want to include in their work
- ☐ Help your child to write to elders in your family in your first language to find some information about where they come from.
- ☐ Talk to your child about words in your home language and talk to them about what they mean.
- ☐ Tell your child stories about family events, and then ask them to re-tell in their own words.
- ☐ Tell your child stories about events that are important to your history and help them to think about how and why they are important today.
- ☐ After going out as a family, get your child to write about it in an email to a family member.
- ☐ Encourage your child to keep a daily dairy or a journal
- ☐ Discuss features of texts with your child. Look for alliteration, onomatopoeia, idioms etc and get them to practise including them in their own writing

During Years 5 and 6

- ☐ Encourage your child to plan their writing before starting and then organise their ideas into the order they will record them in.

- ❑ Help your child to describe events vividly using descriptive language that does not tell the reader what happened but shows them instead.
- ❑ Help your child go over a piece of writing and synthesise their ideas so that the work flows from beginning to end
- ❑ Discuss pieces of text with your child and look at how the author has used words effectively to create images
- ❑ Show your child how to use a thesaurus to come up with words that are more descriptive than those they have used - focus on the verbs (doing words)
- ❑ Look at how articles are written and identify the main points in each paragraph and what the author does to make their point.
- ❑ Show your child how to note take and not make using a piece of text from articles, magazines or favourite books.
- ❑ View different types of writing posters, comics, graphic novels, non fiction texts, sophisticated picture books etc to see how the author has shared their message.
- ❑ Read sophisticated picture books with your child and discuss how the author has used language to capture their audience.
- ❑ Look at the different purposes of writing with your child and discuss the different ways texts are written i.e. to inform, persuade, entertain, describe, explain etc