



**Belfairs**  
ACADEMY

**Supporting Writing:  
A guide for parents**

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***“If there’s a book you really want to read but it hasn’t been written yet, then you must write it.” Toni Morrison***



Adolescents entering the adult world in the 21st century, will read and write more than at any other time in human history. They will need advanced levels of literacy to perform their jobs, run their households, act as citizens, and conduct their personal lives. They will need literacy to cope with the flood of information they will find everywhere they turn; to feed their imaginations, so that they can create the world of the future. In a complex and sometimes even dangerous world, their ability to read can be crucial. (www.teachingasleadership.org)

As your child moves to secondary education they will need to develop a range of literacy skills. At Belfairs Academy we will encourage our students to be independent learners and to continue learning outside of the classroom.

This booklet aims to provide some ideas to encourage your child to write at home. There are practical suggestions for writing outside the classroom as well as top tips to get them started.

## Ten ideas to encourage your child to write for pleasure.

1

**Interviews.** Encourage children to ask family members about life experiences, take notes and write short articles or stories based on what they learn. This can be especially fun if they ask a grandparent about a historical anniversary or an activity that is no longer common, like listening to radio shows.

2

**Journals.** Buy your child a special notebook to write in. Encourage him or her to write about daily activities, important life events, feelings and other personal topics.

3

**Television.** Turn watching television into an educational activity by asking children to explore the values and meanings expressed in it.

4

**Reading.** Read aloud to your children. This will improve their writing by exposing them to well-written sentences and well-expressed ideas.

5

**Proud displays.** Have a place in your home where you display your child's writing. This will build their confidence and encourage them to write more often.

# 6

**Dictation.** This encourages young children to generate ideas and think in complete sentences. It will also help prepare them to write alone when they get older. Encourage children to dictate stories and ideas to you and keep them so they can read them later.

# 7

**Pass It Along.** (requires three or more people): In this writing game, each person writes a sentence in the story, and then passes it on to the next person to continue. Sounds easy — but there's a trick! Before passing the story, each writer folds the paper so that only the sentence she just wrote is visible to the next writer, who has to continue the story knowing only the last sentence and none of the previous ones. Decide on how many rounds the paper will make, then read aloud the hilarious results.

# 8

**Hide and seek with words.** Hide some key words around the house. Once your child finds them, get them to put the words together in a sentence using appropriate connectives. This will help to build sentences.

# 9

**Day in the Life.** Have your child pick an object that he/she uses/carries/sees every day, and write a story from the perspective of that pencil/backpack/TV remote. How does it feel about its job? About the people who use it? Have him or her write down observations and details about what happens to his or her chosen object over the course of a day to make the story rich and real.

# 10

**Make a Book.** To really help your young author feel a sense of accomplishment, collect some of his or her best writings and bind them up. You can easily do this with cardboard covers, or by putting contact paper over a specially created cover illustration on heavy paper. Have him or her make a table of contents, a title page, and a bio about himself or herself to include between the covers.

## Some helpful websites

**Check out these fun writing games for children.**

<http://www.funenglishgames.com/writinggames.html>

**A range of interactive activities to encourage a range of writing styles.**

<http://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/en/make-your-own/story-maker>

**A range of interactive activities to encourage a range of writing styles.**

<http://www.scholastic.com/kids/stacks/games/>