Right - Handed Letter Formation

Aa  Bb  Cc  Dd
Ee  Ff  Gg  Hh
Ii  Jj  Kk  Ll
Mm  Nn  Oo  Pp
Qq  Rr  Ss  Tt
Uu  Vv  Ww  Xx
Yy  Zz

Left - Handed Letter Formation

Aa  Bb  Cc  Dd
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Qq  Rr  Ss  Tt
Uu  Vv  Ww  Xx
Yy  Zz
Some Points To Ponder

On average students retain:
- 10% of what they read
- 20% of what they hear
- 30% of what they see
- 50% of what they see and hear
- 70% of what they say
- 90% of what they say as they do.

H Ebbinshaw

Speaking and Listening constitutes one third of the National Curriculum for English, equal to reading and writing.

Schools do not provide the whole of a child’s education, but contribute to it professionally.

Professor Bell

*Sometimes, stories can be planned very effectively by using a short series of pictures. This is much better than drawing the picture afterwards!

How you can help at home
* When spelling lists are sent home try to make practise fun by looking for spelling patterns or get your child to test and mark you and look for the deliberate errors you’ve made!
* We use the ‘look, say, cover, write, check’ method to help children learn to spell.
* Encourage and support your child to ‘have a go’ with unknown spellings. What does it start with? How does it end? Sound it out.

Conclusion

The best things you can do with your child are to:
- talk together,
- read all kinds of books together,
- enjoy writing together.

If you are unsure about anything discussed in this leaflet please see your child’s teacher.
mas
* Write a story that your child has told you. They can learn from watching you write.
* Use a computer to help them to make their own labels, notices, cards and books.

**Story Writing**
* If your child wants to write a story, help them to think what it’s about, what happens and how it ends. Ask questions about the characters in the story.
* In school we always plan before we start – a shorter story with an exciting or even sad ending is so much better than a long, rambling story with no ending. We plan how it is going to end before we start. Using very basic planning sheets where the minimum of words is necessary. This helps to organise thoughts before starting to write.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characters</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting (where and when)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of story: (adventure, thriller etc)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Start (introduction to who, where and when) |  |
| Events that happen |  |
| Ending (is it going to be sad, happy or exciting?) |  |

**Speaking and Listening**

Research has shown that good quality talk, not just teacher or adult talking, but children talking increases the quality of all their work. We have regular pair and group talking during parts of all lessons - to be able to talk coherently one has to organise thoughts into a sequential order.

Children get a range of vocabulary from the television but to learn how to use words pronounced correctly and in the right context they must talk and have conversations with others.

**Here are some suggestions to help encourage talk:**

**Provide a learning environment:**
* Sit comfortably together
* Try and establish eye contact when talking
* Discourage fidgeting. (if they are swinging on a chair they are not totally concentrating!)
* Take time to talk and listen - giving your undivided attention.

**Some Ideas For talk**
* Have 2 way conversations with your child at meal times - What’s gone well today? - what funny incident happened today?
* Start a story and get each person present to add another sentence - Once upon a time there were two chickens and a goblin who lived behind an old cow shed.
* Play round games such as going through the alphabet finding items of food starting with the letters: apples, bread, cabbage etc.
* Use a tape recorder to record stories and poems.
* Ask questions that need an extended answer – not yes or no.
* Discuss the TV programmes after you’ve watched it together.
* Talk about school based activities, including specialist vocabulary eg maths and topic words.

Reading

Most children learn to read by putting letters together that match up with the sounds that they remember hearing. They learn the sounds that letters make and how letters join together to make words.

Words are everywhere:

On signs around school
Shop windows and newspapers
Groceries and football shirts
Titles on videos and traffic instructions.

You can use the words you see every day to help your child learn. Look at the words with your child. Beginning readers also soon learn that print on the page actually means something. Words name things, they tell us stories or give us information.

You can help by:

• Singing. Rhymes help children see how letters make the same pattern in different words. Humpty Dumpty has the rhyming words wall and fall – later they will find out that if you can read fall and wall you can also read ball, call and tall (and then they will remember when they come to write).
• Play I spy

* Young children usually write about subjects of immediate interest, in a style that sounds like speech written down. This changes as they come into contact with a wider range of writing styles.

How you can help at home

* When you write for your child always use lower case letters not capitals - obviously names start with a capital letter, as do the beginning of sentences.
* At Riverside we use joined writing from the beginning, as it helps letter strings and word patterns. Even more importantly, it helps the child to read back their writing, as words and spaces are obvious and it's more than just a string of letters. At the end of this leaflet, there is example letter formation for the whole alphabet.

* Give your child plenty of opportunities to write: their own cards, invitations and letters to Father Christmas!
* Provide pencils, crayons, gel pens and different types of papers: post its, notices, football pads, lists for shopping etc. Children really enjoy using a diary too.
* Some young children get a great deal of satisfaction from colouring in or copying your writing. As long as this isn’t the only writing they do it is acceptable as using a pencil does help fine motor skills.
* Use an old magazine to play word finding games: draw a circle around every word that ends with -ing or every word that starts with t.
* See how many words you can find in the name 'Father Christ-
Writing

Children learn about writing very early by seeing print all around. Writing involves different skills that need to be used together. First they need to decide what to write. Then they have to be able to write it down. We constantly teach and practise these skills throughout school.

Mastering the writing skills of spelling, handwriting and punctuation are important. Being confident in these skills allows children to put their energy into composing what they want to say. It is important that the flow of writing isn’t interrupted because it is what is written NOT how it is written that counts. Read what the writing says and celebrate that first of all, rather than focus on errors. Try to pick out the best bits to praise; it could be a great ending or a clear description. If an unusual word has been used in an interesting way, this should be praised even if it is spelled incorrectly – we want our children to be real writers, authors. Written work can be edited with spelling and punctuation improved afterwards.

* Of course, it’s important that children eventually learn to write accurately too, but if you do correct your child’s mistakes, focus on a few points: perhaps one or two spellings or adding full stops and capital letters.

Encourage your child to choose a book for you to read to them. Don’t worry if it’s often the same story - they love to join in the text! When you are reading to your child point to the words - later when they are reading they will copy you.

How we teach reading at Riverside

All children from the youngest to the oldest share daily reading skills sessions in class as part of the literacy curriculum. Reading teaching and practice also takes place in small groups where each child has a copy of the same text. The adult introduces the text and discusses the focus for the session. For younger children this may be finding rhyming words or using punctuation to read with expression and for the older children this could be examining the intent of the author and the choice of words used. Sessions like this are called 'Guided Reading' and they allow the teacher and child to spend much longer working with a piece of text than is possible if every child reads a different book to the teacher.

Becoming an independent reader.

As well as sharing books with the class and guided reading sessions, children will also read and enjoy books in pairs or individually. At Riverside we think it is important to instil a love of books and, besides our incredible library, we have a large range of books in every classroom with frequent opportunities to read. We ensure that we have good quality fiction, non-fiction, plays and poetry in order that reading appeals to all tastes, ages and interest.

At Riverside we use a reading diary in order to check on the
books your child is reading – it may also used for messages from school to home and from home to school so please write a comment when you have read with your child.

We ask that you hear your child read regularly – children need frequent practise to increase their skills and in order that they become confident readers.

Reading is not a race through the books - we often read and reread books with children - if they are not reading with confidence and comprehension it is important that they consolidate their skills.

How you can help:

There are many ways that you can help support your child whilst they develop their reading skills;

* Hear them read and read to them - vary the time of day
* Read a story to them then read it again missing out key words for them to fill in. (if a different word with the same meaning is suggested that is good - it shows that your child is really thinking about the story.)
* Help your child to see that they already know the biggest part of words like play-ing, eat-en, walk-ed by breaking the word down.
* Help with long words by clapping or counting out the different chunks of the word (eg three for tram-po-line and four for all-i-gat-or) Write out long words and cut them into bite sized pieces. Get your child to reassemble them in the correct order.
* When your child reads and gets a word wrong, let them finish the sentence before you correct them. Children often realise by the meaning that something is wrong and will go back and self correct.
* If your child doesn't know a word in a sentence get them to say 'something' instead. They can often work it out from other words around it.

* MOST IMPORTANT: Keep calm - learning to read takes a lot of effort and your child needs lots of praise for every little step.

If Your Child Is a Reluctant Reader At Home

* Tell your teacher
* Find books that will interest them – some children prefer non-fiction so a book on horses or football may make them more enthusiastic!
* Many older pupils also enjoy reading graphic novels such as comics and annuals
* Read at a sensible time (not when the TV is on).
* Sit together comfortably
* Read alternate pages with them
* You read the narrative and let them read the speech
* Try reading alternate paragraphs - it takes away the pressure when it's only a chunk at a time!

An equally important part of learning to read independently is hearing books read aloud. It allows children to focus on the meaning without having to concentrate on the words. It also allows children to hear adults read with expression and intonation. So if your child is really adamant about not reading to you make sure that you are reading lots to them!!!