

Getting Growth in Writing

When children...	You can...
Draw pictures and not write with letters	Encourage drawings that represent the story: "Where are you in this picture? What are you doing?"
Write comments instead of creating	<p>Support storytelling across the day by rereading favorites and having students "tell" the story based on the pictures.</p> <p>Create many opportunities for children to story tell. "Tell your partner about a story that happened to you today on the playground."</p> <p>Support storytelling in conferences. "Tell me the story that goes with your picture...what's happening...Is that what you did next? Then draw that here...let's go back and remember the whole story...can you continue it?..."</p>
Write seemingly random strings of letters	<p>Notice and support ways their marks reflect growing knowledge of written language (top to bottom, left to right, etc.)</p> <p>Model and think aloud as you label drawings. "This is my garden so here I need to write GARDEN. Watch how I do it....It starts with /g/ so I write G....now let me listen for more sounds....I hear an r sound in there...do you?....what other sounds do you hear? Let's write them."</p>
Write fictional stories	Remind them that we are writing about real times in our life and help them see them as interesting.

<p>Limit their writing to what they can spell</p>	<p>Model and think aloud about a time when you got stuck with spelling but pushed past it. "Let's see, I want to tell you about my cousin's house...oops- I don't think I know how to spell the word cousin... I don't know if I can write about this...You know what? I am just going to do the best I can and keep going..." Keep telling them you will "do the best you can" every time you get stuck.</p>
<p>Write in too broad of topics</p>	<p>Teach children to focus on specific moments. "You have told me a lot about your grandfather. Can you think of one fun time you had with him? What happened first, next, etc.?"</p>
<p>Write great details by accident</p>	<p>Validate that they did it. "I noticed that you just described how the candy apple tasted so well I can taste it! That is what great writers do. They write so their readers can picture their story."</p>
<p>Write stories with only one episode</p>	<p>Help students grasp the idea of one small moment, but staying broader than one part of a sequence. "I love your story about going to the mountains. Can you tell me about the small things you did on this one big trip? What happened first, next, etc.?"</p>
<p>Write stories that sound like lists</p>	<p>Immerse children in a "culture of storytelling" and ask them to tell stories to partners and understanding that good storytellers make listeners scared, excited, etc.</p>