

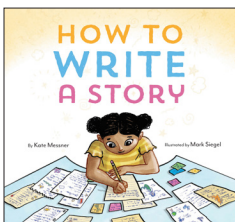
5 TIPS TO GET KIDS WRITING AT HOME

BY KATE MESSNER

Writing just a little bit each day can be a great way for kids to stay classroom-ready, and more importantly, to discover their voices. Here are some tips to make the writing experience creative and joyful for everyone.

1. **Take a notebook outside.** Writing helps us notice small, wonderful things in the world. Give your child a magnifying glass and invite them to flop down on their bellies in the backyard or the neighborhood park and write about what they see.
2. **Focus on sensory language.** Encourage your child to sit outside for two minutes, eyes closed, and write down everything they hear. What sound is that bird making, exactly? Is it a tweet-tweet or more of a chirp? Do the same with the sense of touch, noticing things like the tickle of grass and the cooling breeze and describe them through writing.
3. **Write something together.** Sit the family down in a circle and have everyone spend two minutes writing the beginning of a story. When the timer goes off, have everyone pass their paper to the right. This time, each person picks up the story where it left off, writing for two minutes until it's time to pass the papers again. You can set a number of rounds for this ahead of time. Then read each piece aloud so everyone can see what happened to the stories they started.
4. **Have a family open mic night.** Gather on the porch, around the campfire, or in your living room. Take turns reading your very own poem or short story aloud to one another. Don't forget to clap after each person finishes reading!
5. **Help write history.** Encourage your child to write down memories of their days at home during the pandemic, what it was like participating in their first protest, what they've learned about the upcoming presidential election, etc. Make sure you hold onto those stories so your kids can share them with their own children one day.

Happy writing!



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