

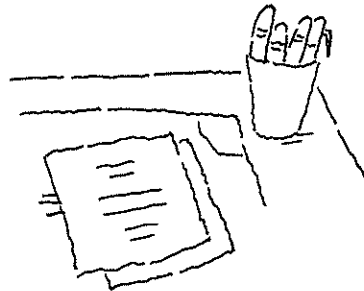
Writing Reminders

Targeted skill

This activity encourages young children to take part in language activities that extend their vocabulary and conceptual knowledge. They learn that print represents spoken language and proceeds from left to right across the page.

Materials

- ◆ paper
- ◆ pencil



What to do

Enlist your child's help in writing a reminder for an actual task or create an opportunity to do this. While you are working at another task, say, for example, "Hey! I just remembered that we are supposed to take the blue book back to the library. Will you use that paper on the counter to write a reminder and we'll tape it by the door to remind us?" Then help your child write by stretching out the sounds in the word and referring to the letters your child needs to write the message.

Accept the message as written at your child's ability level. Younger children might write "bl bk" or "libr" to represent "blue book" and "library." Ask your child to read the message and perhaps reread it to another family member. Then tape it by the door at your child's eye level. Say, "That reminder you wrote will help us remember to get the blue book when we go on our errands." Then, when it is time to do the task, show your child how the reminder helped by referring to it. Say, "Oh, I am so glad that reminder is by the door. We almost forgot the blue book, but now we see the reminder and we can take it with us."

When you write yourself a reminder and refer to it in front of your child, you are serving as a role model for reading and writing. When you involve your child in this activity, you are helping him or her learn important skills.

Writing Reminders (continued)

Extending the activity

- ✦ Involve your child in writing reminders for necessary tasks. Enlist his or her help to write a reminder to brush his or her teeth and place it on the bathroom mirror, to turn off the bedroom light and place it by the light switch, and so on.
- ✦ Encourage your child to use reminders as he or she plays. Make sure your child has paper and pencil within easy reach of the play area. Reminders can be created for dolls or action figures.
- ✦ Give your child his or her own scratch pad. Make it a practice to refer to it when there are tasks to be done. Suggest that your child use the special pad to record them.
- ✦ Using a computer, you can make scratch paper with your child's name at the top or insert familiar logos. Divide a page into four sections (two at the top and two at the bottom). Type the name or logo at the top of each section, print, and cut apart.
- ✦ Make it a part of your family's routine to "check the reminders" before beginning a task. Involve your child as much as possible in this routine so that he or she learns the importance of writing.

What your child is practicing

Your child is learning more conventions of writing, such as that writing proceeds from left to right, that words represent thoughts written down, and that writing is used for a specific purpose. Additionally, he or she is learning organizational skills and ways of remembering things.