

Development of Writing

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Stages of Writing Development

Stage	Approximate Age	Characteristics
Pre-Writing	2 years	• Draw and/or Scribble
Early Emergent Writing	3 years	• Writes with letter-like forms
Emergent Writing	4 years	• Writes random letters • Writes name
Transitional Writing	5 years	• Writing with Invented Spelling • One letter may represent entire syllable • May not use spacing between words • May not use punctuation
Fluent Writing	8 years	• Writes quickly and accurately • Uses conventional spelling • Uses writing conventions: spacing of words, punctuation, straight lines, etc.

Writing Skills

- The ability to write integrates skills from multiple domains of development:
 - Eye-hand coordination
 - Fine motor skills
 - Vocabulary
 - Knowledge of letters
 - Identify sounds in words (phonemic awareness)
 - Sound-letter correspondence (phonics)
 - Communication/Composition skills
 - Grammar and punctuation

Three Basic Writing Skills

- **Handwriting:** Make the proper letter forms
- **Spelling:** Ability to name or write letters in a word
- **Composition:** Generate and organize ideas into a meaningful text

Progression of Handwriting Development

- Scribble/Draw
- Letter-like shapes and symbols
- Mix letters with other figures and symbols
- Conventional handwriting with correct letters, write in a straight line, and proper spaces
- Writing fluency: Write quickly and accurately

Learning Handwriting

- Handwriting develops by practice drawing/writing
- Exposure to print in the environment helps children develop greater familiarity with the shapes of the letters
- Handwriting also improves by direct teaching of how to shape each letter

Spelling Development

- Skills necessary for basic spelling
 - Phonemic awareness
 - Phonics
 - Alphabet knowledge
 - Print awareness
- Additional spelling skills:
 - Strategies for spelling an unknown word
 - Learning how to spell high-frequency words

Invented Spelling

- **Invented spelling:** Spell words based on the sounds a child can identify in the word
 - This is a natural and functional stage in writing
 - With encouragement and feedback, invented spelling gradually transitions to conventional spelling

Composition Development

- Draw pictures that communicate information (e.g., tell a story)
 - “What did you draw?”
- Ability to tell a story (oral language)
 - “What did you do at school today?”
- Mix pictures with letters or words to communicate
- Learn the five stages of writing

Five Stages of Writing

- **Pre-Writing:** Choose a topic and generate ideas on the topic
- **Drafting:** Write an original piece
- **Revision:** Refine **ideas** in the text
 - Share with peers or teacher for feedback
- **Editing:** Correct the written mechanics (e.g., spelling and punctuation)
- **Publishing:** Create final neat copy



Conclusion

Writing Skill	Phases of Development	Levels for Instruction
Handwriting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scribbles • Letter-like shapes • Mix letters with symbols • Conventional handwriting • Writing fluency 	Crèche through Primary 3
Spelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invented spelling • Transitional spelling • Conventional spelling 	Pre-Primary through Primary 6
Composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell Stories • Draw pictures • Pictures with words • Text with words only 	Crèche through Primary 6