



TIDBITS From Your Partner in Education

Effective Writing Requires Practice

Georgia has implemented a new standards-based, world class writing curriculum. This is **not** your grandmother's curriculum! Below is a quick summary of what is expected of your child:

| Grade | Type of Writing Represented in Literary and Informational Text |
|---------|--|
| K | Text that develops a central idea or tells a story. Writing begins to reflect conventions of written English. |
| 1st | Short pieces (opinion, informative, etc.) of two or more events in sequence. Demonstrates ability to name a topic, supply details, and provide a sense of closure. |
| 2nd | Multi-paragraph pieces using sequenced events in order (beginning, middle, and ending). |
| 3rd | Well developed opinion / narrative / informative essays with support, sequence, and order. |
| 4th | Essays that use precise language, characters, and dialogue. Research projects with notes from a variety of print and digital sources. |
| 5th | Fully researched essays / research papers that use effective reasoning and documented notes. |
| 6th-8th | Continuing more complex essays / research papers, displaying effective logic, voice, and mechanics. |

How Can Your Child Become a Strong Writer?

Effective writing is a complex activity that requires multiple skills at several levels that a student must master:

- Core Writing Traits
- Ability to Write in Different Genres
- Structured Writing Process

The Six Core Traits of Writing

Effective writing is made up of six critical qualities. To be a strong writer, a student needs to achieve skills in each area.

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| Ideas | Be able to create a clear focus with supporting detail. |
| Organization | Create structure that is easily followed with a beginning, middle and ending. |
| Voice | The personal energy writers use to communicate with their audience. |
| Word Choice | Choosing words that speak to the senses and build images. |
| Sentency Fluency | Crafting sentences that are well built, with strong and varied structure that invites expressive oral reading. |
| Conventions | Mechanical correctness of the piece and includes five elements: spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar/usage, and paragraphing. |

Mastering Different Genres of Writing

In your child's academic career, they will be asked to produce writing in a variety of styles or genres.

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| Descriptive | Paint vivid pictures of a person, place or event. |
| Narrative | Tell of story of an event or experience. |
| Expository | Focus is on a topic that will be explored in a logical, sequential way so that the information is easily accessed. |
| Persuasive | Convince the reader of a stated opinion or belief. |
| Response to Literature | Summarizing stories, while forming opinions and making connections between texts and /or personal experiences. |
| Research | Building knowledge of different aspects of a topic, presenting them in a logical way and citing sources used. |
| Creative | Create an interesting story. |

A Structured Writing Process

For your child to become a strong writer, they should practice using a structure writing process. The process contains 5 steps.

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| Prewrite | Explore and select the topic. Collect details and plan out ideas. |
| Write | Developing the first draft. |
| Revise | Improving writing by adding, deleting, or rewriting parts. |
| Edit | Checking for conventions: capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and grammar. |
| Publish | Sharing writing with an audience. |

How to Help your Child at Home

As a parent, you can assist your child in improving their writing skills. Below are several hints at actions that will lead to improvements.

1. Build a climate of words at home. The basis of good writing is good conversation. Younger children especially grow into stronger control of language when parents share experiences and rich talk about those experiences.
2. Let children see you write often. From time to time, read aloud what you have written and ask your children their opinion of what you've said. Making changes in what you write confirms for the child that revision is a natural part of writing.
3. Talk through ideas with them; help them discover what they want to say. Your most effective role is not as a critic but a helper.

4. Provide a suitable place for children to write, a quiet corner or any other flat surface with elbow room and good light will suffice.
5. Give your child gifts associated with writing: pens, pencils, erasers desk lamp, stationary, envelopes, stamps, diary, dictionary, and a thesaurus.
6. Encourage, but do not demand, frequent writing. Be patient with reluctance to write.
7. Be alert to occasions when the child can be involved in writing, for example, helping with grocery lists, sending holiday or birthday cards, taking down phone messages, writing notes to friends, etc.
8. Use a standard rubric to evaluate your child's writing (see Crabapple Tutoring Rubric).

National Council of Teachers of English, . "How to Help Your Child Become a Better Writer (English version)." n. page. Web. 10 Aug. 2008. <<http://www.ncte.org/positions/statements/howtohelpenglish>>.

**Strong writing will differentiate your child
in their academic career and life!**