

# Interactive Writing



## *Presenters*

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**Children explore concepts about print every day in Kindergarten Place as they read and write together and on their own. Children are guided to focus on words, spaces between words, and sentence structure. The Write Together! activities, in which children explore concepts about print by sharing the pen with you to write words and sentences, is one specific place where print is concentrated on.**

*Welcome to Kindergarten Place, p. 19*



**The best way for children to learn about sound/letter relationships and concepts about print is for them to engage in the writing process. In Kindergarten Place, children write together every day. The writing activities follow a consistent approach, stressing the importance of teacher modeling and hands-on experience.**

*Welcome to Kindergarten Place, p. 20.*



**We learn best when we are learning something that is useful and connected to our lives.**

**Pinnell, Gay Su, "Children's Early Literacy Learning", in *Putting Research to Work*, Scholastic Inc. 1996.**



**Reading and writing are interrelated and complementary processes. What is learned in one area supports and contributes to learning in the other; integrating writing and reading makes it easier for young children to figure out how to use language (Y. Goodman, 1980).**

**Pinnell, Gay Su, “Children’s Early Literacy Learning”, in *Putting Research to Work*, Scholastic Inc. 1996.**

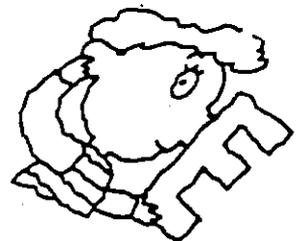


**When they (children) attempt to write, they take a close look at the details of written language; eventually, they explore letter-sound relationships in the construction of words.**

**Writing contributes to reading development by slowing down the process so that it is easier for the young learner to understand how print works.**

**Through reading, children get a chance to experience the process. At first, they approximate the reading of texts that they have heard read; they focus on meaning, making predictions from their own knowledge of language syntax and meaning. As they gain more experience and begin to notice the visual details, they check their predictions against the information in print and also begin to use visual detail as a part of their problem-solving repertoire.**

**Pinnell, Gay Su, "Children's Early Literacy Learning", in *Putting Research to Work*, Scholastic Inc. 1996.**

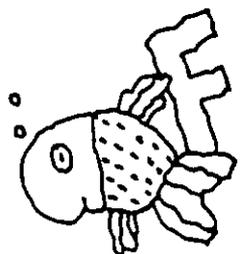


## **Shared Writing**

**Teacher and child work together to compose messages and stories; teacher supports process as scribe.**

**Fountas, Irene C. and Gay Su Pinnell, *Guided Reading*, New York: Heinemann, 1996.**

**Advantages:**



## **Interactive Writing**

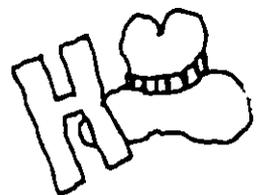
**As in shared writing, teacher and children compose messages and stories that are written using a “shared pen” technique that involves children in the writing.**

**Fountas, Irene C. and Gay Su Pinnell, *Guided Reading*, New York: Heinemann, 1996.**

**Advantages:**



**The use of quality literature scaffolds the development and integration of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and thinking.**



# ► Paying Attention to Concepts About Print

Children explore concepts about print every day in **Kindergarten Place** as they read and write together and on their own.

Children are guided to focus on words, spaces between words, and sentence structure. The Write Together! activities, in which children explore concepts about print by sharing the pen with you to write words and sentences, is one specific place where print is concentrated on. **Kindergarten Place** offers children a variety of other opportunities to focus on print.

## ► Big Books

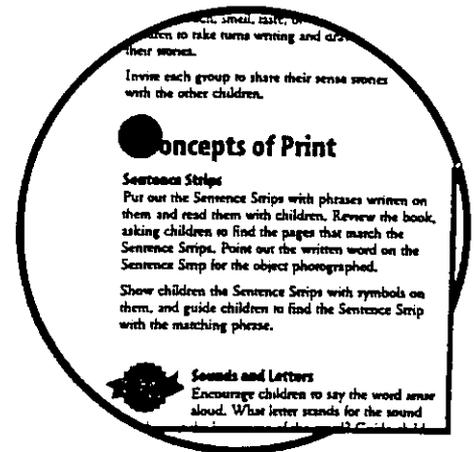
Special attention is given to concepts about print in Session 3 when children revisit the Big Book. Children review the Big Book, focusing on particular elements of the story, such as sentence structure, periods, exclamation marks, environmental print in illustrations, and important frequently used words such as *I* and *we*.

## ► Sentence Strips

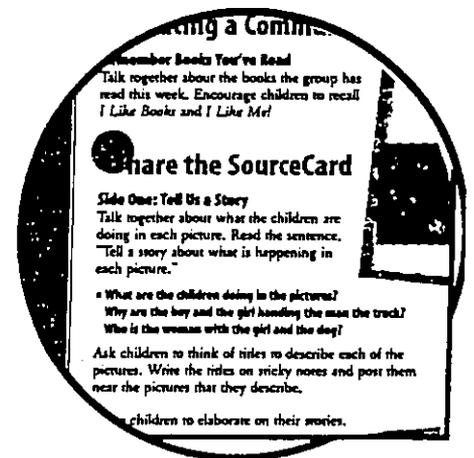
Each unit includes a set of Sentence Strips for all of the poems and rhymes in the Big Book of Rhymes and Rhythms. One of the Big Books also includes Sentence Strips. Sentence Strips show the entire rhyme or selected sentences from the book, and are an excellent tool for exploring concepts about print, story structure, word-to-word matching and left-to-right directionality. Children are encouraged to read the Sentence Strips together, focusing on particular aspects of the text, and are invited to place them in a pocket chart in the correct order as you reread the rhyme or story.

## ► SourceCards

The SourceCards contain many different types of text, with large print designed for shared-reading experiences. As children read the SourceCards with you, they explore various forms of print and focus on sentence structure, question marks, and punctuation.



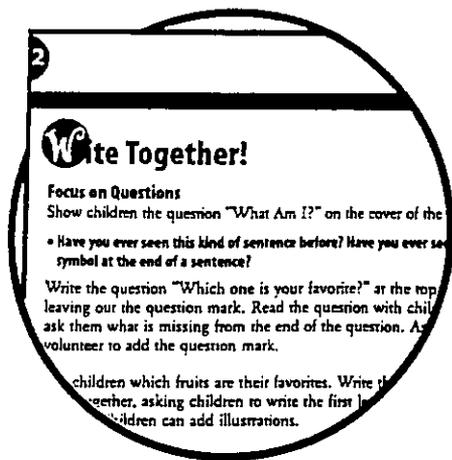
## ▲ Managing Information *I Spy!* Plan 1, Session 3



## ▲ Personal Voice *Stories About Us* Plan 3, Session 6



## ► Writing



▲ **Problem Solving**  
*See It, Solve It*  
Plan 1, Session 2

The best way for children to learn about sound/letter relationships and concepts about print is for them to engage in the writing process. In **Kindergarten Place**, children write together every day. The writing activities follow a consistent approach, stressing the importance of teacher modeling and hands-on experience. Children are engaged in several kinds of writing experiences in **Kindergarten Place**:

### **Shared Writing**

Shared Writing is a dynamic literacy event that involves using literature as a basis for writing, cooperative composition and negotiation of text, constructing words by connecting sounds and letters, and learning how written language works. Children connect writing and reading, and produce a text through group support to serve as a resource in the classrooms. See *Shared Writing at a Glance* on page 22.

### **Journal Writing/Independent Writing**

After every rereading of the literature, children have opportunities to communicate their thoughts through written language. They write about what is happening in their daily lives and in response to literature being shared in the classroom. Many children will begin to use Journal Writing time as their private time to write independently. You can demonstrate how you write in your own journal by displaying your writing on a chart or message board. Prompts are offered if children seem to need them at writing conference time.

### **Story and Book Writing**

Children often begin with drawing and scribble writing, then move to random letters, copying environmental print, trying out their own temporary spelling, and writing stories with a beginning, middle, and end. Simple stories, such as *The Little Red Hen*, help children in the creation of their own stories and books. It is always helpful to ask children to read what they have written, no matter what form of writing they have used, rather than to simply tell about it. Your request that they read their message honors children as readers and writers.



## WRITE TOGETHER

**A**fter children have heard *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*, they discuss other adventures Peter might have had. They decide on another story about Peter Rabbit.

- You begin the story by starting to write the words on a chart. Children offer to add the letters they know.
- Together, you create *Another Tale of Peter Rabbit*.
- Children reread their story together and may even want to copy what you have written on their own papers.
- Individual children can take turns reading the story throughout the week.

## Dictation

Along with child-initiated efforts, you may want to write down children's stories by taking dictation of their words so that they see you modeling conventional writing. The act of shared writing provides a model for children in the same way, yet has the added advantage of involving the child in a concrete, hands-on way.

## Language Experience Charts

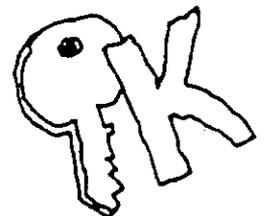
Language experience charts can be used as group reading experiences after a meaningful field trip or special activity.

- Write down all children's ideas in their own words.
- When children's ideas are recorded, read the chart to the class, pointing to the words.
- Help children see that the words describe experiences they shared.
- Invite children to read the chart.
- Keep the language experience chart posted in the classroom so children can reread it independently during the week.

In addition, Scholastic's *Kindergarten Place* provides you with ideas for creating a Compare and Contrast Language Chart. At the end of each unit, children are asked to think about the books they have read and the stories they have listened to. A model of what a Language Chart might look like is pictured in the "Put It All Together" session. This model is intended to give awareness of the links among stories.

## Writing Conferences

You observe children closely as they write and read their writing. Keep a portfolio of work that includes samples of children's independent writing. You can then analyze children's writing to document their progress.



## WRITE TOGETHER

**A**n example of a Shared Writing experience would be the writing following the reading of *Louise Builds a House*. Since the story is about a fantasy house that the main character builds, children pretend that Louise planned to sell her house.

- Children decide, with you, the kind of writing they might do to let people know that the house is for sale.
- Children may agree that creating posters might be a good way to advertise Louise's house.
- You and the children decide on the words to use on the poster. A volunteer begins writing the words "House for Sale" on a chart. The child writes the letters *H* and *o*, you write the letter *u*, the child writes the letter *s*, and you complete the word *house* by adding the letter *e*. This sharing of the writing experience is what is known as "sharing the pen (or marker)."
- Using the children's language, you continue to "share the pen" to write the message for the poster: "Buy my house! It has a moat!"

BUY MY HOUSE!  
It has a moat!

## Shared Writing at a Glance

At Kindergarten Place, you and children establish a purpose or reason for writing. Then you can negotiate a message or a story together. The following are examples of shared writing steps based on the literature children have heard and responded to in a literacy session.

- After talking together about the literature, negotiate the type of writing you will do together. Look at the Write Together! section of each day's literacy session for specific ideas. Ideas for writing include a variety of functional forms: names, lists, sentences, letters, invitations, descriptions, stories, observations, information reports, verses and poems, and books.
- Read the literature or portions of it again.
- Write the first sentence of the message or story on chart paper. Read it together.
- You and children can "share the pen" at various points in the writing. The message is written word by word, and is reread up to the word for each new word attempted. Sometimes you write the word; often, different children contribute a letter or whole word.
- Introduce concepts about print such as spaces, words, punctuation, and capitalization.
- By sharing the writing experience, children gain syntactic awareness, the knowledge of the way in which words are put together to form phrases, clauses, and sentences.
- As children feel more comfortable with the process of writing, refer to some words, such as *I* and *like*, as "words we almost all know." Make a word wall on which often-used words are posted, to be used by children as a learning tool.
- Add artwork such as a mural or rebuses to the group's work.
- Shared Writing can be used as a basis for Shared Reading in the future so it should be neat enough to keep as a reference.



# ► Writing



## The Values of Shared Writing

by Gay Su Pinnell  
Ohio State University

- Children can be authors and illustrators right away!
- Children become apprentices, working alongside you, the more expert writer. Everyone in the group gets a chance to contribute something, and they can see how it all fits together.
- Children have the experience of composing a message to be written. Their language and ideas are considered and shaped through conversation prior to the writing experience.
- Through demonstration and inviting children to participate, you make explicit the conventions of print such as spacing, punctuation, and beginning on the left. Children can more easily see the purpose of these conventions because they are using them to produce their own text.
- Children enjoy playing with the sounds of language as they try out the letters that stand for the sounds they know.
- Children have a sense of control and ownership over the text being created. They pick up the story language from the literature, use it in the shared writing experience, and reuse it in their personal writing.
- Children develop early strategies, such as paying attention to letters, that help them participate in shared reading.
- The most important thing about Shared Writing is the opportunity it presents to make visible to children the way written language works.

## WRITE TOGETHER

**A**nother example of Shared Writing occurs after you have shared the reading of *Listen to the Desert* by Pat Mora.

- You and the children decide to write a book that follows the pattern of the book you have just read. You negotiate a particular place you'd like to write about.
- You write the repetitive lines of *Listen to the Desert* on a chart:

Listen to the \_\_\_\_\_

It goes \_\_\_\_\_

- Children are guided to follow the pattern of the verses as they make suggestions for sounds in the environment they have chosen. If they have chosen a forest, they might use the following sounds:

Listen to the cricket sing.

It goes zing, zing, zing.

- You distribute large sheets to each child, encouraging them to add their own ideas to the Big Book by writing the repetitive pattern and drawing a picture describing what they hear. The children's work is bound together to make a class Big Book.
- Together you choose a title.



# Shared Writing

- Talk about the writing
- Plan the type of writing you will do:  
Names, lists, sentences, letters, invitations,  
descriptions, stories, observations, information,  
reports, verses, poems and books
- Read the literature or portions of it again
- During the initial stages, write the first sentence of the story or message on chart paper. Teacher gradually releases the support for writing the text based on observation of students
- Read it together
- “Share the pen” at various points in the writing.
- Introduce concepts of print
- By sharing the writing experience, children gain syntactic awareness
- Make a word wall where often-used words are posted. When using these words in writing, refer to them as “words we almost all know”
- Add artwork to the group’s work
- Shared Writing can be used as a basis for Shared Reading in the future so keep it neat

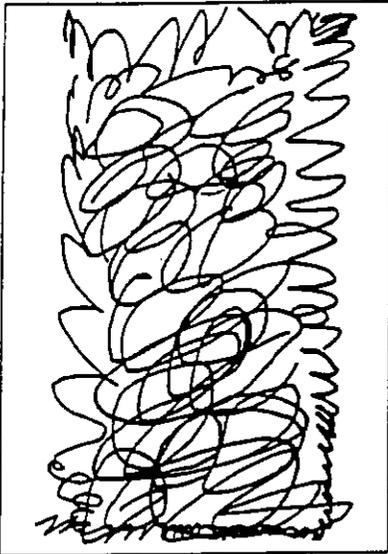


# Writing

## How to Evaluate Writing

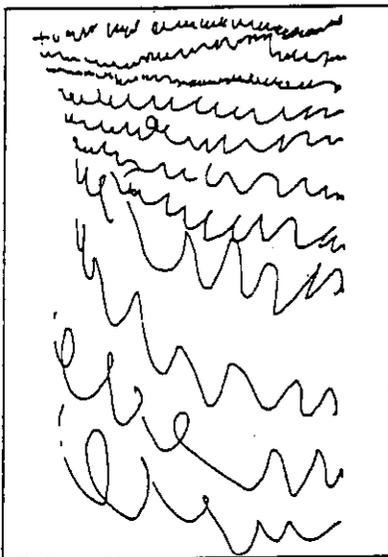
### Evaluating Writing Progress

Use the six-point scale below to evaluate children's writing performance on the Name Writing/Picture Drawing and Oral Language/Picture Comprehension sections. First find the description and picture that best describe each child's writing. Then assign the correct number to the writing.



#### Scribble/Picture Writing Stage — 1 point

- Child may explore the empty space of a sheet of paper.
- Child may use pictures to represent words or letters.



#### Linear Scribble Writing Stage — 2 points

- Child draws "squiggles" and other shapes to represent letters.
- Child writes forms that look like letters.



# Writing



## Drawing and Scribbling Stage — 3 points

- Child uses letters, but there may be little relationship between letters and sounds in words written.
- Child forms some letters.
- Child may write "strings" of letters or shapes to show thoughts.

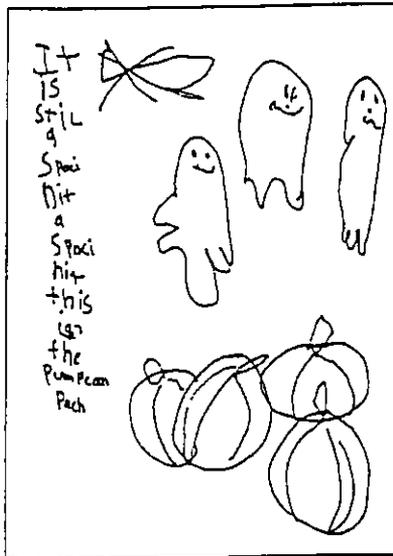


## Early Phonemic Writing Stage — 4 points

- Child uses some letters to stand for sounds in words.
- Child forms some letters correctly.
- Child may use rebus writing (with letters and pictures).



# Writing



## Transitional Stage Writing — 5 points

- Child's writing shows a mixture of conventional and phonetic spellings.
- Child uses a top-to-bottom arrangement for writing.
- Child writes some readable words.
- Child may write some sentences.
- Child forms most letters correctly.

## Conventional Writing/Spelling Stage — 6 Points

- Child writes readable words and sentences.
- Child spells most words correctly.
- Child forms most letters correctly.
- Child uses some form of punctuation.

Taken from "Developing Literacy: A Whole-Child View," a Scholastic Literacy Research Paper by Dr. D. Ray Reutzel.



As you are doing the “Write Together” portion of the lesson, think of where you will get the most learning.

Think of when:

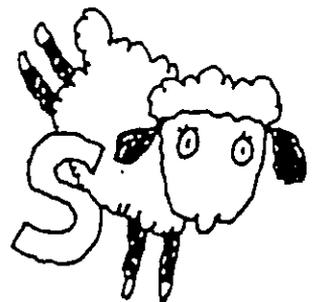
- ✓ children analyze words by saying them slowly
- ✓ children know the word and write it as a high frequency word
- ✓ children use an analogy from another word that they know
  - a visual chunk such as to and so
  - a phonics connection such as Billyy and happyy
- ✓ the teacher writes the word in order to spend teaching time in a more “profitable” way



## Prompts Some Teachers Use During Interactive Writing

These questions and the instruction they represent vary according to the knowledge and needs of the children.

1. Where do we begin?
2. Where do we go now?
3. After writing one word, what do we have to remember to do? Why?
4. How can we find out what word we are writing next?
5. What word are we writing next?
6. Say the word slowly. Let's stretch the word out with a rubber band. What sound do you hear at the beginning, end?
7. Can you write the letter that stands for that sound?
8. Can you find the letter on our alphabet chart, name chart, other piece of writing in the room, etc.?
9. Does that make sense, sound right, look right?
10. Please point and read what we have written so far or (with child as pointer) please read with me.
11. (after an incorrect attempt) Here's \_\_\_\_\_. What do you think?



## READING & WRITING SKILLS THROUGH INTERACTIVE WRITING

1. Print Concepts
  - words
  - spaces
  - left to right
  - sentences
2. Letter Formation
3. Letter Matching
4. Word Matching
5. Beginning Sounds
6. Ending Sounds
7. Rhyming Sounds
8. Capital Letters
9. Names
10. Color Words
11. Number Words
12. Punctuation
13. Vowel Sounds
14. Plurals
15. Antonyms
16. Synonyms
17. Root Words
18. Compound Words
19. Contractions
20. Grammar

# Using the Shoebox Library



## Characteristics of Text

The books in Level 2 are those that young children can begin to read. Most have a simple story line carried by the illustrations. The language includes naturally occurring syntactic structures (although not exactly like oral language) that are familiar to children. Teachers can use books at this level to introduce children to word-by-word matching and to locating known words. The amount of text ranges from picture captions only to one or two lines per page. Most books

have predictable language patterns that repeat. Print is regular, clear, and easy to see, and there is adequate space between words so that children can point to words as they read. Subject matter and most concepts are familiar to most young children.

## Behaviors to Notice and Support

In addition to independently using behaviors in Level 1, use the criteria below to guide your assessment of whether children have the skills that will enable them to read Level 2 books.

|   | Child's Name |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|---|--------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Reads words from left to right  |              |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Uses word-by-word matching  |              |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Locates both familiar and new words   |              |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Remembers and uses language pattern in text   |              |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Points to words as s/he reads   |              |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Predicts what will come next in the story   |              |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Begins self-monitoring by checking own reading and noticing mismatches in meaning or language |              |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |



# Ideas for Interactive Writing

Daily news

Student of the day, week

Class stories

Labels for classroom or to go with drawings

Lists

Weekend news

Favorite stories .

Story maps

Letters

Recipes

Posters

Bulletin board caption

Directions

Rewrite stories on cards that are cut according to words, word parts and reconstructed

Above all, always relate the interactive writing to other models of text and use it for repeated rereadings. It is not merely "eye wash" but a product of learning and a tool for learning!



## ***References to Scholastic Products***

*Kindergarten Assessment Handbook* , ISBN 0-590-54891-3

Pinnell, Gay Su, *Shoebox Library, Teacher's Guide* , ISBN 0-590-84308-7

Pinnell, Gay Su and John Shefelbine, *The Beginning Reader, Success From the Start* (Video Workshop), ISBN 0-5900-92294-7

*Putting Research to Work* , ISBN 0-590-94509-2

*Welcome to Kindergarten Place*, ISBN 0-590-612938-1

### **Additional References**

Button, K., M. Johnson, & P. Furgerson. 1996. "Interactive Writing in a Primary Classroom." *The Reading Teacher* 49 (6): 4466-454.

Fountas, Irene C. & Gay Su Pinnell. 1996. *Guided Reading: Good First Teaching for All Children*. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann.

Fountas, Irene C. & Gay Su Pinnell. 1998. *Word Matters: Teaching Phonics and Spelling in the Reading/Writing Classroom*. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann.

