

Writing is one of the most important things for someone to learn how to do. It helps people learn how to read properly and how to spell. The younger you teach someone how to write the better they will be at it. The real question is, what is the best way to teach children how to write, especially in the Early Childhood setting. In early childhood education writing is not only the practicing of forming words and making letters, it is drawing and learning how to hold a pencil. The early years in a child's life are the most important to learning and helping children develop.

Scribbling is the start to a child learning how to write. "Teachers and parents should encourage children's writing without being concerned with proper letter formation (Santrock, 371). It is important for parents and teachers to realize that when a child is scribbling or trying to write it is part of their learning. Mistakes that children make should be viewed as growth of the child, and the child should never be criticized for making mistakes (Santrock, 371).

Planning is an important element in teaching children how to write. "Teachers should show students how to organize information and how to form an outline" (Santrock, 371). Teaching children how to organize and form an outline is important to becoming a good writer, although, early childhood students will not be writing stories it is still important for them to know. Children in the early childhood setting, for example, can practice organizing and forming outlines by the use of pictures.

Having children practice writing by working in groups is another best practice that can be used. "While student are working in groups, they experience the process of inquiry, clarification, and elaboration, which are important for writing" (Santrock, 373). Letting the children talk about their writing and get ideas from their classmates can really improve how they will write in the future.

Another method that can help teachers teach writing is by inviting outside guests into the classroom who are an expert in writing. Children love to have new faces in the classroom so by inviting someone new into the classroom it will help the children learn. Even though teachers try to teach information the best they can sometimes it helps to bring an outside source in to teach the children in a different way.

Teachers should build writing into their daily schedule to help children get the best practice in writing. A good example for children to be able to incorporate writing into their daily routine is by having them write their name on a sign in sheet (Gerde,Bingham, Wasik, 353). Incorporating writing into books that are being read to the students can also help children improve their writing.

Making sure teachers accept the way student's write is very important to teaching children how to write. In the early childhood setting it is important to “ embrace the scribbles, scribble writing, and letter-like shapes as children begin to write” ( Gerde, Bingham, Wasik, 353). Having teachers form writing activities is important in having the children learn how to write, even more important than letter formation.

One of the best practices for teachers to do when teaching children proper writing is demonstrate the writing. Making the writing public to the children helps them see how to write different letters and form sentences. This is also a good way to have the kids be actively involved by asking them questions about what the teacher is writing on the board, for example, “If the message is “Welcome to School” the teacher can ask the students what letter starts the word welcome and should the letter be capitalized or be a lower case letter and at the end of the sentence what would you put, an exclamation point or a question mark” (Gerde, Binham, Wasik, 353).

Encourage students to read what they write. Having the children read what they write helps make connections between reading and composing, even when the writing does not have formal letters being used (Gerde, Binham, Wasik, 354). Teachers should set aside time for children to practice reading what they write.

Having children write with a meaning behind it will help the students understand why people write. A way to show students how to have meaning behind what they write is showing them that people can communicate by writing. Having children write messages to each other is a way that is fun for the children while learning at the same time (Gerde, Binham, Wasik, 355).

In early childhood classrooms it is important to let students play, since when they play is when they will learn the most. Having centers for children is a great way for children to play but having a little bit of structure in how they are playing. By putting writing stuff in every center it helps so that the children can practice writing whenever they want to and it helps them make connections with daily activities.

Connecting families with writing is a great way to involve the children's families in the classroom even if they are not physically there. An example of involving families is "Ask families to create family books in which the child and family members draw and write about something they like to do at home" (Gerde, Binham, Wasik, 356). If the teacher has the families and students draw and write things about a certain theme it can be connected to what the children are doing in the classroom. One of the best practices a teacher should know is how to involve families in the classroom and this is a great example on how to do it.

Writing is something that everyone needs to know how to do. It is important to start teaching children in early childhood how to write, even if it is just scribbles. In order to teach the

children as best as the teacher can they need to find practices that best suit their teaching style and ones that will help peak the students interest in learning.

Gerde, H. K., Bingham, G. E., & Wasik, B. A. (2012). Writing in Early Childhood Classrooms: Guidance for Best Practices. *Early childhood Education Journal*, 351-359.

Santrock, John W. (2011). *Educational Psychology* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill