

Occupational Therapy Tip Sheet

PRINTING PRACTICE AT HOME



Why is it important for children to practice printing skills at home?

- To reinforce skills learned at school
- To help teach children that printing is a part of everyday life
- To give children practice in different ways from what they do at school

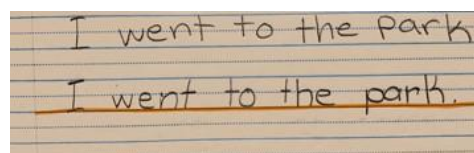
How can printing be practiced at home?

Printing can be practiced during homework completion as well as during fun home activities. Once a child can copy from a well-printed model, have them progress to copying from a book and finally to printing on their own. Below are some fun ways to practice printing with children:

- Write jokes
- Write letters to family
- Make homemade cards
- Write out favourite song lyrics
- Write stories or regular journal entries
- Make lists (e.g. things to pack, groceries, holiday presents)

Use consistent printing lines: Use the same style lines that are being used at school and add these lines to other activities as well (e.g. grocery list, jokes).

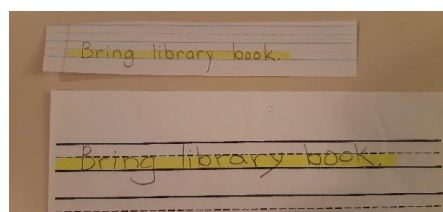
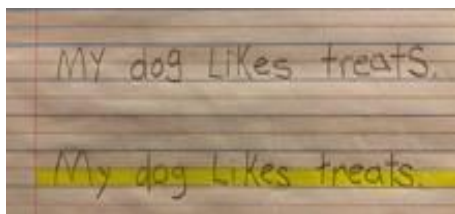
Place letters on the baseline: Draw over the baseline (bottom printing line) with a bright colour to draw attention to where letters are supposed to touch. Make it fun by calling letters that do not touch the baseline “popcorn” letters (as they popped off the line) and make a “no popcorn letters” rule.



Review letter placement/sizing: Highlight the lower half of the printing space or use a dotted half line to make placing letters easier. There are three groups of letters:

TALL - Letters start at the top line and go to the bottom line (b, d, f, h, k, l, t) **SHORT** - Letters only fill the bottom half of the printing space (a, c, e, i, m, n, o, r, s, u, v, w, x, z)

DIGGING/DIGGERS - Letters are short but their “tails dig” under the line (g, j, p, q, y)



Use proper spacing: Good spacing between letters and words is important.

- Use the idea of “spaghetti and meatballs” to help your child: put tiny spaghetti spaces between letters and large meatball spaces between words.
- Use a finger spacer or a popsicle stick to help space out words if necessary.



(The Finger
Spacer)



Quality over quantity: It is better to print a few letters/words neatly, than to print many letters/words in a messy rush.

Practice by copying:

- Model clear examples of letters/words.
- Start by having your child print directly below your model.
- Use same style printing lines that your child is using.
- Have your child match your spacing.

Edit work together:

- ✓ Did the sentence begin with a capitol and end with punctuation?
- ✓ Do the words have spaces between them? Did it match the model?
- ✓ Are the letters all sitting on the line? (No popcorn letters!)
- ✓ Are the letters placed correctly for Tall, Short and Digging letters?
- ✓ Are the letters facing the correct direction? (No reversals)
- ✓ “Can I read my own work?”