

Northfield Reads & Counts Tutor Manual

St. Olaf College and Carleton College
Northfield Public Schools

Section 6: Tips For Tutoring Writing

Writing Knowledge By Grade Level.....	2
Strategies For Writing With Children.....	3

Writing Knowledge by Grade Level

The following are the expectations of what a student will learn of writing and the writing skills he/she will acquire in each grade level.

First Grade

- ✓ Writes own name
- ✓ Pretends to write other words

Second Grade

- ✓ Begins to write words and sentences with accuracy

Third Grade

- ✓ Continue to create different modes of writing, individually or with a group, using process writing skills including prewriting, drafting, editing, spelling skills and publishing
- ✓ Writes in different modes (e.g. poetry, letter, journal)
- ✓ Begins to edit own work

Fourth Grade

- ✓ Take notes, outline, and map/web and use several reference sources to organize and write reports, using process writing skills
- ✓ Uses grammar skills

Fifth Grade

- ✓ Uses reference materials independently

Sixth Grade

- ✓ Demonstrates use of study skills, extensive reading, locating information, note taking, outlining, summarizing, cross referencing, index and appendix
- ✓ Develops written drafts and edits them
- ✓ Uses information for support in writing



Strategies for Writing with Children

To encourage writing, you might consider ending each session with a brief writing assignment. For example, your student could write a summary of what was accomplished during the session, or you could give a writing prompt such as “If you could change one thing about your school, what would you change and why?” Strategies for helping your student with writing follow.

- Let the student see how you write, how you hold your pencil, etc.
- Link spoken words to written words.
- Always talk about what you will write before you begin writing.
- Help your student put words onto paper.
- Accept invented spelling during the writing phase, and then work on corrections during a rewriting phase.
- Do activities that develop the small muscles used for writing.
- Make alphabet/word cards or an alphabet/word book.
- Have your student write you a letter/note, or rewrite part of a story recently discussed. Make sure to stress the planning of a composition, including an outline (for longer assignments), writing a first draft, and editing to check for misspelled words.
- Help with spelling or circle words that are misspelled and ask your student to look them up in a dictionary.
- Encourage your student to participate in all the steps of the writing process: choose a topic, draft the story or report, revise and edit, and then share the result with others (parents, classmates, teachers).

In all writing projects, stress overall structure and expression. Suggest descriptive adjectives and lively verbs that stretch your student’s vocabulary. Provide overall feedback on the completeness, organization and expression of your student’s compositions; also encourage rewriting with specific editing aims, such as changing the order of ideas, adding more detail, etc.

