

Teaching Your Child to Print Their Name Efficiently: The Beginnings of ABC Fluency

Dear Parents,

Learning to print one's first (and later last) name is an important literacy skill in kindergarten. Enclosed is a name card showing how we will teach your child to form the letters. Please encourage your child to practice several times a day at home. Your child will be asked to carefully practice forming the letters on a 2" x 4" blank card and then to name the letters first thing every day in kindergarten. If they make a mistake printing, they just take another card and do it again. Making improvement and giving our best effort is important to learning. We celebrate each child's progress and talk about the "best letter." Then we choose one letter to practice making over and over until the brain and fingers make the connection. Repetition builds control and confidence until efficient letter forms become automatic.

A child's name is the first and most important word he or she will ever learn to write. Once the child gains mastery over these letter formations, they will have internalized many handwriting principals and other letters will be easier to form efficiently.

Please post this name card on your refrigerator and keep one copy in the area where your child likes to write and draw. With daily practice at home and at school you'll be amazed at how quickly your child's ability to form letters improves.



- While good handwriting is not the most important focus for young writers, learning to automatically control letter forms within a growing number of high-frequency "heart words" frees the child to focus more energy into expressing their ideas in daily "kid writing."
- We honor and celebrate all children's initial writing explorations and understand that small muscle coordination varies greatly from child to child. Kindergarten letter formation instruction is always positive, individualized and encouraging. It is integrated into real writing activities so the children are motivated.

Incorrect muscle memories can be hard to unlearn later. Our aim is to encourage efficient letter forms right from the start—beginning with the child's name.

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