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Writing in Early Childhood Classrooms: Guidance for Best Practices

Hope K. Gerde · Gary E. Bingham ·
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Abstract Writing is a critical emergent literacy skill that lays the foundation for children's later literacy skills and reading achievement. Recent work indicates that many early childhood programs offer children materials and tools for engaging in writing activities but teachers rarely are seen modeling writing for children or scaffolding children's writing attempts. Early childhood educational settings hoping to support children's literacy development should provide multiple opportunities for children to observe teachers model writing, provide teacher support and scaffolding for children's writing attempts and engage children in meaningful writing in their play. This paper provides twelve research-based guidelines for supporting children's writing development in early childhood classrooms.

Keywords Emergent writing · Early childhood education · Teacher practice · Home-school connections · Emergent literacy

Writing is a critical activity in early childhood classrooms because it supports the integration of important language and emergent literacy skills that lay the foundation for children's reading skills. In the National Early Literacy Panel (NELP) report (2008, p. vii), writing is identified as

one of six variables representing early literacy skills that had "medium to large predictive relationships with later measures of literacy development." Given the importance of writing in developing early literacy skills, one could assume writing activities would play a central role in preschool classrooms. However, a recent study by Gerde and Bingham (2012), in which a large sample of preschool classrooms was observed, found that writing was not only an underrepresented activity in preschool classrooms, in some instances, writing was non-existent. The findings also indicated that teachers were not always sure about ways in which writing could be integrated into their classroom activities.

The purpose of this paper is to provide a brief review of what research tells us about writing and young children. This review provides information on the developmental progression of writing in young children and offers suggestions to teachers for implementing writing activities across their daily curriculum. Also, suggestions are provided for extending in-class writing experience to families to create positive home-school connections.

Defining Writing

It is important that we define what we mean by writing. Writing is the activity of expressing ideas, opinions and views in print: writing for communication or composing. For young children, writing is frequently confused with handwriting or penmanship (i.e., creating well-formed letters). Unfortunately, when people speak about writing in early childhood classrooms, it is the activity of forming letters that is frequently the focus. Although practicing the formation of letters is an important process, we are not including this as part of our discussion of writing. This paper focuses on how children use writing to communicate

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and develop an understanding that print is something that is read.

Research on Writing

In this section, we provide a brief review of research on writing as it is related to early literacy to provide an understanding of why writing instruction is critical in early childhood classrooms. We also present qualitative research that documents the developmental progression that children frequently demonstrate as they engage in emergent writing. It is helpful to identify the various stages of writing so that teachers can support writing as a developmental process.

Writing Related to Early Literacy

Although research on writing is limited, the findings indicate that young children's writing, including name writing, is related to later reading and literacy skills (Hammill 2004; NELP 2008). In particular, children's emergent writing in kindergarten predicts later literacy skills including decoding, spelling, and reading comprehension in first grade (Shatil et al. 2000), and spelling in second grade (Aram 2005).

As one of the earliest forms of writing, preschoolers' name writing is related to letter knowledge (Welsch et al. 2003), word recognition (Bloodgood 1999) and phonological awareness (Blair and Savage 2006). Longitudinal research indicates that children's writing in preschool predicts growth in letter knowledge (Diamond et al. 2008); children who used letters in their writing knew more letters and learned letters at a faster rate across the preschool year than children who did not use letters in their writing. This work suggests that the act of writing may support the development of other literacy skills, particularly letter knowledge.

In writing, children often practice the formation of letters and, in turn, this activity leads to understanding the relationship of sounds in words and then builds on the understanding of the alphabetic principle, that is, that letters represent sounds of words (Levin et al. 2005). In sum, there is strong empirical evidence suggesting that early writing is important for young children's literacy development. Therefore, writing is a critical activity that should be integrated into young children's learning environment.

Developmental Progression of Writing

Qualitative research demonstrates that children progress through various stages of writing as they develop writing skills (Bloodgood 1999; Levin et al. 2005; Lieberman 1985). Schickedanz and Casbergue (2009) provide a detailed picture of preschoolers' writing development as

they develop from meaningful scribble to script. Children often begin writing using small marks on the page that may not resemble any letters or drawing pictures that communicate a message. Next, children begin to make continuous scribbles with a consistent shape, often a zigzag or looping pattern. Then, writing begins to represent separate letter-like symbols or forms. Later children use a combination of letters and letter-like shapes. Then children begin a process of using increasingly advanced invented spelling. Invented spelling is a technique of spelling words based on the sounds heard in spoken language often beginning with isolated, salient sounds and moving toward accurate spelling (Bear et al. 2008; Read 1975). The final stage is writing a word accurately. It seems, however, that children move back and forth between these stages, particularly as they transfer between writing tasks (e.g., name writing vs. word writing vs. story writing) using consistently higher levels of writing for name writing than for other forms of writing (Levin et al. 2005). All of these forms are considered emergent writing (Sulzby and Teale 1985).

Classroom Writing Practices

In a current study, Gerde and Bingham (2012) observed the writing practices in 65 preschools representing a variety of programs including Head Start, public pre-K, university laboratory schools, and non-profit early childhood centers. The complete findings are presented in Gerde and Bingham (2012). However, we will provide a brief summary of these findings because they are critical to understanding the role that writing plays in early childhood classrooms. This study provides a snapshot of what is occurring in classrooms and suggests the need for a greater focus on writing throughout the early childhood curriculum.

In sum, most programs that were observed had writing tools (e.g., pencils, markers, crayons, chalk), a variety of paper, and tools for forming letters (e.g., stencils, sand paper letters). In fact, most classrooms had a well-equipped writing center. Importantly, a large percentage of these writing centers were distinct from art centers, indicating that teachers were aware, at least to some extent, of the importance of providing children with opportunities to participate in both writing and art activities (Neuman et al. 2000). However, writing materials were almost exclusively found in the writing center and rarely found in other classroom centers (e.g., dramatic play, blocks, science). This is important given the findings of Gerde and Bingham (2012) that classrooms typically provide writing materials but teachers rarely incorporate writing into daily activities or routines, draw attention to writing, engage in shared writing (i.e., where teacher and child write together), or scaffold child writing. In summary, writing that supports literacy development is not consistently and regularly

occurring in early childhood classrooms and this potentially can impact children's literacy development.

Guidelines for Effective Practices

To help guide early childhood practitioners to implement meaningful classroom writing practices, we suggest twelve research-based guidelines for integrating writing activities in children's daily schedules (see "Appendix 1" for a checklist). Each of these strategies represents developmentally appropriate practice (Copple and Bredekamp 2009) and can be successfully incorporated into early childhood classrooms, including those serving children at risk. In addition, ways to support home-school connections via writing are discussed.

Build Writing Into Your Daily Schedule

Create opportunities for children to write during daily activities and routines. For example, support children to write their name to sign in for attendance or sign up for a job on the job chart. Encourage children to make a check mark or X by their name when they complete a daily routine (e.g., tooth brushing), graph the weather (i.e., number of sunny, cloudy, raining days), or circle all the *T*s in the morning message. Much like other literacy skills, writing must be included in the classroom on a daily basis in multiple ways to encourage all children to participate.

In addition, build about 15 min into the daily schedule devoted specifically to composing ideas into print. This not only elevates the importance of writing in children's daily learning but also ensures that writing will be done regularly. Plan writing and writing activities that are connected to the daily theme, the books that are read, or a special field trip activity. If the theme is spring and you have just read *The Carrot Seed* by Ruth Krauss (1945/1973), have the children write about their impressions of the story or what they would have done if the seed didn't sprout. See "Appendix 2" for a list of other books and poems that inspire children's writing. After a trip to the neighborhood community garden, have the children write about what they experienced. This writing may contain both pictures about what children have experienced as well as children's attempts to capture their language through the use of scribbles, letter-like shapes, letters, or just writing their name. What matters is that they write to represent their thoughts and ideas.

Accept All Forms of Writing

Young children vary considerably in their ability to write even their name (Cabell et al. 2009; Drouin and Harmon 2009). Initially, children's writing ability does not

generalize across tasks. That is, children who can write all the letters of their name accurately and in order, might scribble if asked to write a story, indicating a lack of understanding of the alphabetic principle or that writing represents oral language (Bialystok 1995). Embrace the scribbles, scribble writing, and letter-like shapes as children begin to write and move from name writing to other forms of writing (e.g., letter/word writing, story writing). It is more important for young children's writing development for them to engage in writing activities than it is to focus on correct letter formation. See "Appendix 3" for example.

Explicitly Model Writing

Teachers need to make the writing process public to children. For example, rather than pre-writing the morning message, write the morning message with children at circle time. For example, if the message is, "Welcome to school. Today we are continuing our study of enormous elephants. What do you want to learn?" a teacher can engage in self-talk to explain her/his thinking about writing as s/he writes the morning message. The teacher could also (a) ask children what letter might start the word /w/ welcome and what type of letter should begin the sentence, (b) ask them what you should write after you reach the end of the line, and (c) ask them what is the better word to select when describing the elephant—"big" or "enormous"—showing them that writers work on finding the right word that captures their ideas. Finally, the teacher might ask "What do we need at the end of the last sentence so the reader will know it is a question?" The benefit of ending the morning message with a question is that this sparks a conversation in which the teacher can write some of the children's ideas regarding what they want to learn. Notice that there are several short words included in the example message in which children could be asked to write (e.g., to, we, are).

Often teachers will write down what children say as a means of supporting their writing and modeling how their words can be transformed into print. Although capturing children's words is a very powerful modeling activity, often teachers feel obligated, or are required, to write down every word the child says. This is incredibly time consuming and does not achieve the intended outcome given the time costs. For some children, teachers need to write their words and indicate that, "I am writing your words here so we can read them later" for the child to understand the connection between their words and print. For other children teachers can provide word cards or posters from which children can copy words, or support others to sound out words they want to write. All of these methods support children's writing. Using a combination of these methods

with children individualizes the instruction based on the child's need and skill level.

Scaffold Children's Writing

Like reading, writing skills do not develop naturally (i.e., in the absence of instruction or adult support). Research indicates that simply providing writing materials throughout the classroom is not sufficient to support children's writing development (Diamond et al. 2008). A multitude of strategies exist for scaffolding children's writing and these strategies can be tailored to support children's differing needs. One set of scaffolding strategies includes verbally reminding children to use writing in their classroom activities (e.g., sign their art, sign into the classroom) or providing instructions for a writing activity available in the writing center. For example, teachers can point out to children when new writing materials are available in the writing center (e.g., chalk and chalkboards) and demonstrate to everyone during group time how to use the new materials. Explaining how writing can be used in children's play is important for supporting children to write in meaningful ways during center play. For example, teachers should discuss with children during group time that when children go to the doctor's office in dramatic play they will need to sign in with the receptionist if they are a patient or write a diagnosis in patient charts and sign prescriptions if they are the doctor or nurse. Teachers can demonstrate writing as they play alongside children in centers. For example, if they are in the post office, teachers could ask if they need to sign for the package/mail a child delivers to them. In the block area, teachers may ask how other children might know what a child built to support them to create signs for their city or write labels for parts of their building. Teachers should make this process real for children by showing them some of the signs in the classroom that help children and adults know how the classroom and building functions (e.g., exit, bathroom, office).

Some children might need hints about how to make a letter or spell a word. For these children, teachers could say the letters or sounds of words for children, or point to a word in the room that contains the letter. Further, it is important to have a print-rich environment that is related to the classroom theme or ongoing investigations. These postings not only stimulate children's reflection on their previous classroom experiences, but provide a useful set of words to write. For example, after creating a graph of "Our Favorite Flowers" during large group time the graph should be posted in the science area to be used as a reference for children who want to write about their favorite flowers by copying words from the title and other text of the graph. Housing theme-related books in each area of the classroom provides another source of words from which children can copy or gain new ideas for

their drawing and writing experiences. These books may be particularly helpful in the dramatic play/housekeeping area, block/construction areas, and science areas.

Teachers can provide more explicit scaffolding in order to help children develop their emergent literacy skills. To guide children's writing, teachers can engage children in conversations about the writing process and ask children to sound out words and identify letter-sound matches. In doing this, children are made aware of the explicit relationship between writing, and individual sound/letter correspondence. Below is an example dialogue of a teacher scaffolding a child to write after taking a trip to the zoo (or reading a book about the zoo). This is a small group activity in which the teacher helps to guide individual children's writing.

- T Let's talk about what you saw at the zoo yesterday.
 C Lions, a penguin, and a peacock. I liked the penguin best of all.
 T I liked the penguin, too. What do you remember about the penguins?
 C They liked to swim; they swam a lot. They could jump out of the water. They were black and white and you said that they looked like they had a suit on.
 T You remembered a lot. Can you write in your journal about our trip to the zoo and talk about some of the things that you liked, including the penguin.
 C (Child begins to write, and asks) I can't write penguin.
 T Ok—let's work on that. What sound do you hear at the beginning of the word penguin?
 C I hear a /p/ sound.
 T Yes, good, now try and think about the sounds and write what you hear.
 C Child writes "pgwens swm in watr."
 T Great sounding out. Write some more about what you learned and liked about penguins.

The child's writing is an excellent representation of the sounds heard in the words in this sentence.

Encourage children to Read What They Write

Support children to read what they wrote to help make the important connection between reading and composing; that you read what you write. This should be done even when children's writing does not include formal letters.

Teachers should set aside a portion of the writing time for 2–3 children to read what they have written that day. This helps children to celebrate the writing process and also helps them make the connection that writing is something that is read, reinforcing the connection between print and their writing. When children write stories, teachers can support them to read their story and the other children to act out the events of the story, reinforcing to children the meaning of the writer's words.

Encourage Invented Spelling

An important benefit of the writing process is to encourage children to discover the letter-sound relationship and how it is related to writing words. When children are encouraged to write as they are exposed to meaningful print and are learning letter names, they engage in invented spelling. Invented spelling—using letters to represent the sounds (or some sounds) in words—is a signal that children are beginning to understand more about the alphabetic principle, that letters represent sounds. Initial invented spelling may include only salient sounds (e.g., ILM for I love Mom) or initial sounds (e.g., B for book). Later, children progress to identifying initial and final sounds (e.g., BK for Book) and then use phonemically accurate representations (Bear et al. 2008).

In writing about spring, one child might draw a picture of flowers and write, “ICFP” and say they wrote, “I saw flowers at the park.” Notice how this child has identified an initial sound of several words of his sentence. Another child might write, “I sal Flowrs at th prk” to represent the same sentence. This child’s writing represents a stronger command of letter-sound correspondence by identifying more than the initial or salient sounds of words, though some sounds are missing or inaccurately identified (e.g., l instead of w in saw). This type of writing can be supported by asking the child to identify the sounds of letters in the words they want to write, sound out the words, or by helping them to identify which sound comes next in a word.

Because invented spelling is a critical process for developing writing and phonological awareness, it is acceptable for children to not initially include every sound in a word or write using conventional writing. Although invented spelling may simply look like inaccurate spelling to untrained adults, it is important to allow children to engage in invented spelling as an essential first step to making connections between words, letters, and sounds. Requiring spelling accuracy may reduce children’s writing attempts. As children progress in this process, adults can offer hints or reminders about conventional spelling processes but should not insist on spelling accuracy, particularly for irregularly spelled words. For example, when children begin the word circus with an S, you might say, “I notice you are hearing the /s/ sound at the beginning of circus and you are right S makes a /s/ sound. Circus begins with another letter. What other letter can sound like /s/? It is tricky because this letter has two sounds one is /k/ and the other is /s/.” This statement shows children that you recognize and appreciate their understanding of sounds and letters, but offers them information to correct their spelling as well.

Make Writing Opportunities Meaningful

Providing meaningful purposes for children to write is motivating and helps writing make sense to children. Often

children begin writing by writing their name (Bloodgood 1999). Names are meaningful. They show ownership and do not change, which provides children a dependable source of letters to practice (Tolchinsky 2006). As mentioned above, providing opportunities to write their name in meaningful situations (e.g., sign up to use the computer, write name on a graph under favorite flower, write name on art as artist’s signature) are significant ways to make writing part of everyday classroom activities.

Also, show that writing is used to communicate ideas and information. Have children write messages to each other. Send *Thank you’s* to the local bakery for inviting the class to visit their shop and have the opportunity to make bread. Send a letter to the local firehouse asking if you can visit and meet their new mascot that they read about in the local paper. Inviting children to engage in writing that has a purpose and can help communicate their ideas and needs is an effective way to encourage children to write.

Have Writing Materials in All Centers

If you build it, *and support it*, they will come! When children are provided with meaningful writing opportunities in the context of their play, they write. For example, if the dramatic play area is a grocery store, providing strips of paper and pencils will support children to write a grocery list. When dramatic play is a kitchen or office, pencil and paper by the phone can support children to write down a phone message. In the block area, a clipboard, graph paper, construction books, and a pencil can promote child “architects” to draw a blueprint of their building or make signs or labels for their buildings or roads. Of course, children will need adult guidance on how these materials can be used. For example, teachers need to discuss with children that when people go grocery shopping they take a list with them so they know what they need to prepare the foods they want to eat or ask children, “How will we remember what to buy at the grocery store if we want to make the recipe in this cookbook?” Teachers need to discuss why we might take a phone message and what information we would need to take from the caller. In the block area, teachers should discuss that builders need a plan for their building. This plan is called a blueprint. Architects are people who design buildings and draw blueprints. We can create a blueprint and build our drawing by comparing our building with our blueprint. Notice how these types of conversations about the use of writing materials extend play and discovery. Once teachers and children have engaged in these conversations about how to use writing materials *and* writing materials are provided in the area, children will write and develop new ways to use writing in their play. However, if the materials are not there, no writing will occur. Similarly, when materials are present but adult mediation or assistance is not, very

little writing will occur. When planning a center or dramatic play experience think about, “How would an adult in this scenario use writing?” and include materials for each way an adult would use writing. Shopkeepers write sale signs and price items, scientists use a notebook to draw and write their observations, waiters take orders, we sign for certified mail and address letters at the post office, zookeepers take note of animal health, weight, and feeding times, etc.

Display Theme-Related Words in the Writing Center

Posting theme-related words around the room allows children to observe, manipulate, and write words that are meaningful for their ongoing classroom investigation. While engaging children in a study about fall harvest, one might read *Pumpkin, Pumpkin* by Jeanne Titherington (1986/1990), which includes the words: seed, harvest, squash, and pumpkin. Post these words in the writing center or other prominent places in the room. When writing about the story, ask the children if they can use any of those new words. In addition, these words can be put on cards connected by a ring allowing children to move these writing supports from center to center as needed during free play. For example, continuing the investigation of fall harvest, children might want to write about the vegetables they like in their journals at the writing center or use the word cards to label a picture they drew in the science area depicting the contents of a pumpkin. When the classroom theme changes, new word cards should be added, but the old word cards should remain in the writing center or posted on a word wall so children can continue to use these supports for word writing and to make connections between past and current work. For example, if a study of transportation occurs after the fall harvest, children might want to write about which types of vehicles they could use to transport an enormous pumpkin from the farm to the market.

Engage in Group Writing Experiences

During group writing, teachers can “share the pen” with children to support child writing. These activities should be meaningful and focused on ongoing classroom experiences. For example, in writing a thank you card after a field trip, each child can have the opportunity on a large sheet of paper to write or draw what they learned during their visit to the grocery store and thank the store manager for taking them on their tour. In the science center, working in small groups, children can generate their hypotheses of what will happen when too much wet sand is placed in a funnel. Children can write their predictions and revisit them after they conduct their experiment. For young children, teachers can help craft categories of predictions based upon children’s ideas and then allow children to mark an X, write the beginning letter

of their name, or write their names to indicate what they think will happen next. In this way, the adult is facilitating and encouraging children’s interactions with writing, regardless of where they are in their writing development.

In making writing public as part of group process, children can observe what other children are thinking. It also allows children to understand the importance that print plays in documenting what they said so they can revisit their ideas and reflect on their thoughts. Remember to post these group writings around the classroom so children can use their work as a meaningful source of words and letters to write, or so children can repeat or extend the work they conducted during the group writing session.

Make Writing a Way to Connect with Families

Writing can create the needed bridge between the classroom and children’s families. Writing shares with families what is occurring in school but also begins to teach families the values of writing. On average, parents provide relatively low supports for writing at home and the supports they do provide tend to fall into two categories: (a) *graphophonemic*, which typically includes spelling the word by saying each letter separately as the child writes or saying each word without breaking it into units of sound or (b) *print support*, which primarily includes parents writing the words for children instead of promoting the child to write independently. Previous research suggests that parental support of writing is related to children’s literacy outcomes, including decoding and alphabet knowledge (Worzalla et al. 2009).

Parents often encourage correct spelling. However, in the beginning stages of emergent writing, it is very important that children experiment with using different marks and letters to indicate different sounds. This is a critical part of the writing process and also helps develop phonological processing skills, which are imperative to success in reading. Helping parents understand the many acceptable forms of writing, ranging from drawing pictures and invented spelling to correctly formed words, might support parents to (1) accept and celebrate all forms of writing as part of the developmental process (2) engage children in more independent writing, and (3) use more varied strategies for supporting child writing.

There are many ways to create home-school connections through writing. Ask families to create family books in which the child and family members draw and write about something they like to do at home. This activity can be theme-based, which connects parents to the ongoing classroom curricula, and conducted regularly so parents and teachers see child growth in writing. For example, at the beginning of school, children can draw and write about who is in their family, during the study of fall harvest they can write about the vegetables their family likes to eat, and in

spring they can write about what their family does when it is rainy. Be sure to have children read these books at school so they can share about their families and their writing with their peers. Have children write messages home to their parents telling them about their day—this makes a great transition activity as children prepare for departure—and encourage parents to take 2 min to have the child share their writing at home. Ask the parents to write a message back to the children and read the message to their children. This helps reinforce the use of writing as a means of communication. In their monthly parent newsletter, teachers might also include samples of children’s writing (along with helpful interpretations, if needed) to highlight the importance of writing in the classroom and how it helps connect home and school.

Use Technology to Support Writing

Encourage children to use various forms of technology in writing. Many tablets and computers have programs (e.g., paint/draw), which permit children to use touch-screen technology to form letters and shapes. Also, interactive whiteboard technology (e.g., SMART Board) allows children to use stylus (pens) or their fingers to draw and write directly on the interactive board. Children can write in these programs and their writing can be saved and reopened later for them to expand on it. Children will also be able to share their writing with other children and it allows teachers to document or assess their writing and parents to view their writing. Multiple documents of a child’s writing

can be stored to examine growth across time or writing skill across task (e.g., writing of name, letter, or story).

Summary

Because children’s emergent writing skills are an essential part of children’s literacy development and related to later reading ability (NELP 2008), writing should be clearly and meaningfully integrated into the early childhood classroom. Although many early childhood teachers include well-equipped writing centers offering a variety of writing materials and tools in their classrooms, writing materials alone are not enough to support children’s development of writing skills (Diamond et al. 2008). This paper presents research-based guidelines for designing engaging and meaningful writing activities for young children. In order for children to develop the important emergent literacy skills of letter-sound correspondence and the understanding that print communicates meaning that people read, children need multiple, meaningful opportunities to write daily. These meaningful opportunities should include the integration of writing into classroom activities and extending this important activity into children’s homes. These suggested writing opportunities will help children develop the emergent literacy skills they need to learn and develop reading readiness skills.

Appendix 1

See Table 1.

Table 1 Guidelines for best practice in writing checklist

Guideline	Description
1. Build writing into your daily schedule	Create writing opportunities during daily activities or routines (e.g., sign in, weather, daily journaling time)
2. Accept all forms of writing	Celebrate and support scribbling, drawing, letter-like shapes and letters as children develop writing skills
3. Explicitly model writing	Write with children present and discuss how and what you are writing to draw attention to the process
4. Scaffold children’s writing	Provide hints and prompts to support children to write independently; individualize these hints by child
5. Encourage children to read what they write	Use group time to support children to share their writing with others by reading to the group
6. Encourage invented spelling	Permit children to spell phonetically and support them to “write the sounds you hear”
7. Make writing opportunities meaningful	Use writing opportunities to help children make predictions, observations, and summaries of their work; write letters, lists, maps, charts, graphs.
8. Have writing materials in all centers	Include writing tools, various papers, and posters, books and theme-based word cards to support writing opportunities
9. Display theme-related words in the writing center	Include meaningful, theme-related words children can copy for their writing posted or on cards
10. Engage in group writing experiences	Model the writing process, support all children to become involved in offering ideas, post group writing around the room to support children’s writing and discussion of the posted activity
11. Make writing a way to connect with families	Support parents to understand the importance of meaningful writing experiences
12. Use technology to support writing	Support children to write using interactive boards, computer paint programs, stylus pens

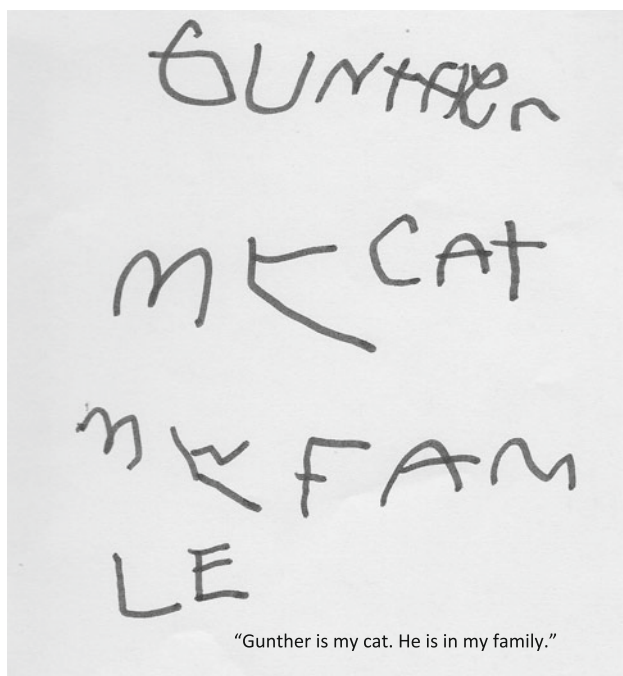
Appendix 2

See Table 2.

Table 2 Children's books provide inspirational writing prompts

Books that inspire children to write about themselves and their family	Books that discuss the writing process or illustrate various writing genre	Books and poems that inspire writing to develop other literacy and cognitive skills	Repetitive or additive storylines are great models for making class books
<i>I Like Me!</i> by Nancy Carlson	<i>Spot Bakes a Cake</i> by Eric Hill (write a grocery list)	<i>What Pete Ate from A to Z</i> by Maira Kalman (Vocabulary—write a list of edible/inedible items)	<i>Brown Bear, Brown Bear What Do You See?</i> by Eric Carle
<i>What I Like About Me</i> by Allia Zobel-Nolan	<i>Click, Clack, Moo: Cows that Type</i> by Doreen Cronin (write a letter)	<i>Whatever Happened to the Dinosaurs?</i> Bernard Most or <i>What Happened to the Dinosaurs?</i> Franklyn Branley (Prediction—Write predictions about extinction)	<i>The Napping House</i> by Audrey Wood
<i>This is My Family</i> by Gina Mayer	<i>The Jolly Postman</i> by Allan Ahlberg (write letters, address envelopes)	<i>Duck in a Truck</i> by Jez Alborough (Rhyming—write a list of rhyming words)	<i>If You Give A Mouse A Cookie</i> by Laura Numeroff
<i>In My Family/En Mi Familia</i> by Harriet Rohmer & Carmen Lomas Garza	<i>Just Me and My Mom</i> by Mercer Mayer (building, street, and advertisement signs)	<i>Snowballs</i> by Shel Silverstein from <i>Falling Up</i> (Letter Knowledge—circle all the Ps)	<i>Our Class Took A Trip To the Zoo</i> by Shirley Neitzel
<i>My Family is Forever</i> by Nancy Carlson	<i>Math Curse</i> by Jon Scieszka (making a graph and chart)	<i>The Character in the Book</i> by Kaethe Zemach-Bersin (Characterization—creating characters)	
<i>If You Take a Mouse to School</i> by Laura Numeroff (write about school)	<i>The Awful Aardvarks Shop for School</i> by Reeve Lindbergh (write a shopping list)		
<i>The Jacket I Wear in the Snow</i> by Shirley Neitzel			

Appendix 3



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