

# Help Me Write My Name

"That's my name. My student starts with \_\_\_\_." Maybe your child is trying to write or even make letters you can recognize. If so, it's time to demonstrate how to write a few letters. Here's how:

1. Be a good example.
2. Write in all capitals.
3. Starts every letter at the top.
4. Teach letters step by step.
5. Write on paper strips, placing a smiley face in the top left corner.

## **How can I be a good example?**

Hold the crayon correctly. Your child will be watching how you form letters and hold the crayon or pencil. Be a good model. You may need to make a special effort to hold the crayon correctly.

## **Why should I use all capitals?**

Capitals are the first letters that children can visually recognize and remember. They are the first letters children can physically write. If they can write their names correctly in capitals, you may introduce letters.

## **Does it matter where my student starts?**

Yes, it does. English has one basic rule for both reading and writing: read and write from top to bottom, left to right. When you write with a child, always start at the top.

## **What do I say when I learn the letters?**

Always say, "I start at the top." Then describe the part you're making. Say "big" or "little" for size. Say "line" or "curve" for shape. Let's look at D as an example. "I start at the top. I make a big line. Now I make a big curve."

## **What do I use and how do I do this?**

Use two strips of paper, one for you and one for this child. Place your strip directly above the child's and demonstrate the first letter in the child's name. Say each step as you make the letter. Be sure the child can see the strokes as you write. (Avoid blocking the child's view with your hand.) Then tell the child to make the letter on his/her paper. Say the steps as the child writes them, encouraging the child to say the steps aloud with you. Continue letter by letter.

To make paper strips, use a standard sheet of paper. Fold it in half the long way, and then in half again. Cut on folds to make four strips.

## **Extra Help**

If a child struggles to imitate your letter, you may use a gray crayon to pre-write each letter on the child's paper. Do this letter by letter, and let the child crayon-trace over your letter. Make your gray letters progressively lighter and discontinue pre-writing as the child gains ability.

