



Writing At Home



Some of the homework asks the children to write. Children should be encouraged to use invented spelling in their writing. For those of you unfamiliar with invented spelling, here is some information I found about invented spelling:

Invented spelling refers to young children's attempts to use their best judgments about spelling. In one of the first major studies of children's beginning attempts at learning to spell, linguist Charles Read (1975) examined the writing of thirty preschoolers who were able to identify and name the letters of the alphabet and to relate the letter names to the sounds of words. The students had "invented" spellings for words by arranging letters. Read writes, "One sees clearly that different children chose the same phonetically motivated spellings to a degree that can hardly be explained as resulting from random choice or the influence of adults."

In other words, even at an early age, the children were able to detect phonetic characteristics of words that English spelling represents. Read concluded that, by and large, "learning to spell is not a matter of memorizing words, but a developmental process that culminates in a much greater understanding of English spelling than simple relationships between speech sounds and their graphic representations."

As your child writes this year, he /she may use only one letter to represent a word (for example, "R" for "rocket") while others may hear more sounds and write ("RKT" or "ROKT" for "rocket"). Either is fine... encourage your child to stretch out the words like a piece of bubble gum from his/her mouth and try to hear all the sounds in the word (vowels are hardest for children to hear).

Also, at this point in the year, children are writing almost entirely in capital letters. For now, this is okay. We will transition to lower case letters later in the year. Over the course of the year, the children will be exposed to 25 sight-words also known as "snap words" (we need to know them in a "snap"!). As the children are introduced to these words, there will be NO EXCUSES for spelling them incorrectly!