



Your kindergartner is beginning to realize that he is a writer. Many kindergartners love to write, and they naturally weave writing activities into their play. They pretend to be a waiter writing down customers' orders on a notepad and create signs for a "post office." While not all kindergartners write lengthy stories, most can draw a picture and write a one-word label for their picture. When your kindergartner sees himself as a writer, he is more likely to practice.

Kindergartners use invented spelling. Kindergartners use what they know about letters and sounds to write messages using "invented spelling," or spelling words by the way they sound. By learning to "stretch out" the words to help them hear individual sounds, kindergartners can label a picture. Your child may write "BR" for "bear" or "I MAD MI BD" for "I made my bed." Kindergartners generally use mostly consonants in their writing, as vowel sounds are harder for them to discriminate from one another. Using invented spelling actually helps your child practice the letter-sound relationships she needs for reading.

Kindergartners can write some words the "right" way. In addition to writing words according to the sounds they hear, kindergartners are developing a bank of words that they write frequently and can spell the "right" way. These words might include their own names and names of friends and family members. Writing these words over and over the correct way will help your child be able to read them too.

Kindergartners can read what they have written. Although you may have difficulty deciphering the writing of your kindergartner, he can most likely read the message he has written. In school, many kindergartners take pride in sharing their writing in front of the class. Many classrooms have special writing celebrations or "author's chair" times set aside for children to share their work. Not all children like to share their writing, so it is perfectly acceptable for a child to "pass" on sharing.