

Phonemic Awareness and Emergent Writing

One of the big literacy focuses in the preschool class is phonemic awareness. Phonemic awareness is the understanding of sounds in words. This includes being able to identify beginning, middle and ending sounds, rhyming and segmenting words for example c-a-t. As the children become more familiar with the sounds in words their writing skills will begin to develop.

Emergent writing progresses along a developmental continuum. The stages a young child moves through begins with random marks and ends with conventional spelling. (Please see the Emergent Writing link to see examples of the different stages of writing)

You will see your child bringing home writing that they have been working on in class. During our writing time together we encourage the children to say words slowly and write whatever sounds they hear. If they hear only one sound, that is perfectly fine. They may hear two or three sounds and that is great too! Just keep in mind that at this stage it is very important to praise whatever efforts they make so that the child can feel successful and feel excited about becoming a writer! We never correct their spelling because developmentally the children aren't ready for conventional spelling. This will come in time, don't worry! The main thing is that the children are practicing sounding out words and do their best.

How can you help at home? Let your child see you reading and writing! Write your grocery list in front of your child. Have him/her help you by sounding out the items on the list. Give your child lots of opportunities to write and draw. When your child asks you how to spell something ask them to help you figure it out and sound it out together.

Make sure to offer lots of praise and encouragement as your child begins to show interest in phonemic awareness. Always make it a pleasurable experience for your blooming reader/writer!