

Handwriting - It says what?

My oldest daughter has the worst handwriting. She is old enough to know better, but seldom takes the time to slow down and write legibly. How often do you write in a day? Probably more than you think. And when your child has poor handwriting in school, their grades can suffer - merely by the fact that their teacher can't read what they've written. How can you help?

Cursive writing used to be a bigger deal than it is now. I remember being told in junior high that I would have to write in cursive once I reached high school. In high school, they told me I would have to write cursive in college. None of these held true. It doesn't matter whether your child writes in print or cursive, as long as you can read what it says.

If your child isn't writing well, find out why. Are they just too lazy to take the time, or are they having difficulty with the letters? Once you know the why, you can begin to fix the problem.

Have your child practice writing for 15 minutes a day. This can be done during regular homework time. Start with letters that are more difficult and work your way through the alphabet. Make sure they know how to hold their pen or pencil correctly. This will help their hand relax and not tire as quickly. Pens or pencils should be held with the thumb and forefinger pinching the pen, and the middle finger can go underneath as a rest.

Make sure your child is writing each word correctly. You can find notebooks with the alphabet written inside the cover, and these can be a guide. Most will show the correct way to write each letter. Give your child the tools they need to be successful in school.