

Parent Guide

We are excited to share this content with you. If you are interested in finding more resources made especially for Parents, then check out these links to different areas of the **Twinkl Parents** hub.

SEND Support



@twinklparents



Subject Guides

Pregnancy & Baby



Health & Wellbeing

Supporting Learning



What is this resource and how do I use it?

Learning to write their name is a big step for children and an exciting one for parents! Seeing your child proudly present their handwritten name is a lovely moment, but there is some work involved in getting there. Aiming for fun, active and engaging activities can really help your child develop the skills they need to write their name.

What is the focus of this resource?

Name Writing

Motor Skills

Mark Making

Letter Formation

Further Ideas and Suggestions

Concerned about your child's pencil grip or control? Have a look at this [Early Years Pencil Grip Development: A Guide for Parents](#) and hopefully feel reassured or know what to do next. This [Are you ready for writing?](#) prompt is also great for when your child is at the writing stage.

Parents Blog



Parenting Wiki



Parenting Podcast



twinkl

Parents Hub

Learning to Write My Name

Activity Ideas

Writing is a complex process. In order to be able to write, children need to develop their gross and fine motor skills (so that they have the strength and movements necessary for writing), recognise and copy letter shapes (graphemes) and, to write confidently, know what the names or sounds (phonemes) are for the letters they are writing. They need to be able to hold a pencil comfortably, know how much pressure to use, be able to move it in different directions around the page - have you ever noticed your child pick a pencil up and, by the time they feel happy holding it, they have forgotten what they were going to write? Yep, there's a lot for them to think about!

We have broken down these name writing activity ideas into categories: 'Building Motor Skills'; 'Playful Writing' and 'Getting Pen to Paper'. You can mix and match activities - your child may still benefit from (and enjoy!) the fine motor activities even if they are beginning to be able to write their name independently.

Building Motor Skills

Dig, Dig, Dig!

Developing shoulder movement and strength is essential for being able to write letters. Let your child explore digging with large and small tools. Why not hide some letters in the sand or mud (if you dare) for them to find? Bonus points if they can spell out their name with the letters!

Use the Park

Climbing is another excellent activity for developing strength in the arms and shoulders. It also helps your child develop their spatial awareness, which again proves useful in writing. So encourage your child to climb the tricky ladder in the park or go old-school with some tree climbing.

Little fingers

Encourage fine motor activities with children from a very young age and continue to offer them, even after your child has begun to write. Things like these [Masking Tape Fine Motor Activities](#) are great for building strength in little hands. As they get a bit older, you can introduce activities like threading, cutting and colouring to really develop those fine motor skills. These [Space-Themed Threading Cards](#) are just one example of the enticing activities we have in our [Fine Motor Skills](#) area - check it out!



Learning to Write My Name

Activity Ideas

Making Shapes

Encourage your child to make different shapes with their body, perhaps through yoga or 'move like an animal' activities. Draw large shapes and patterns outdoors with chalk for them to trace over with a large paintbrush that's been dipped in water. Practise making and tracing a range of shapes - big circles, straight lines up and down, zigzags - to help them start to learn the shapes they will need for writing their name.



Playful Writing

Engage the Senses

Sensory play is great, helping to make learning memorable. You could try writing your child's name in large letters on different textures (carpet squares, sandpaper, bubble wrap) and encourage them to trace them with their finger, helping them to learn the formation of the letters in their name.

You could also get your child to copy their name in sensory trays filled with different materials. Cover the bottom of a tray (a baking tray would do) with salt, sand, shaving foam, flour or coloured rice and give your child their name written on a piece of paper to copy. They could use their finger to start and, as they get more confident, you could later introduce different tools to make marks with. Sticks, paintbrushes, glow sticks - whatever interests your child!



Write Anywhere and Everywhere

Get your child to write their name at the beach using a stick in the sand, then lay shells and stones over the lines. Let them write their name in fogged up car windows. Dip a stick in a muddy puddle at the park and encourage them to write their name on the pavement.



Learning to Write My Name

Activity Ideas

Go Big

Encourage your child to start forming large letters initially to really practise getting the movements right. You could write their name in large letters on the ground in chalk and get them to trace over them with a wet paintbrush, making them disappear like magic. If you want to go really big, write their name in huge letters and they can walk along the lines like a tightrope - you can give them directions of which way to go - and then, when they get to a place where the pencil would be lifted off the page, they need to jump to the next starting space - 'the human pencil game', if you will. Or encourage your child to follow the lines by laying materials on top, like in this [Pebble Letter Formation Activity](#).

If you have skipping ropes or thick wool or twine, make the letters from your child's name by shaping these. Your child could run their hand over the shapes as you both say the direction they are going, e.g. 'Go all the way up, then down the other side.' This again brings in the sensory and active elements that can be crucial to learning.



Getting Pen to Paper

Build Pencil Control

Use some [Pencil Control Activities](#) alongside name writing practice - these can be easy to keep to hand and great to whip out while waiting for appointments, meals, etc.

Say It, Make It, Write It

This can be great to help your child learn the sounds of letters in their names as well as spell and write them. Try using this [Editable Name Recognition Make Read Write Activity Mat](#).

Variety Is the Spice of Life!

Write on paper, card, cardboard boxes, envelopes, old diaries and notebooks. Use bath pens, water pens, crayons, magnetic drawing boards and chalk. Put the paper on the floor, an easel or even under the table so your child has to lie under it to write on it (great for shoulder strength!).



Learning to Write My Name

Activity Ideas

Follow Me

To begin with, you may want to encourage your child to follow the letters of their name with something like a bingo dabber, which is nice and chunky for them to hold and is a fun introduction to this kind of activity. Then, encourage your child to use a pen or pencil to trace over their name. You could write their name for them to trace in dots, faint pencil lines or, as is often done in schools, in a colourful pen. Remember to encourage them to go the correct way around the letters. If they are at school, ask the teacher if they have any letter formation mantras they follow and use these at home, too.

For a reusable activity, place a piece of paper with your child's name on it in a ziplock bag. Your child can then trace the lines on top of the bag with a dry wipe pen. This should wipe off easily, making it a great quick set-up activity.

With these tracing activities, it can once again be a good idea to start fairly large on the page. Gradually decrease the size of your writing as your child gains more confidence and control in writing their name. Eventually, begin to leave out certain letters as they progress towards being able to write their name independently.



Write a Rainbow

Whether tracing their name or writing independently, this activity could keep your child engaged with writing for longer! Simply provide pens, pencils or crayons in a range of colours and let your child write and rewrite their name to make it multicoloured. You could even encourage confident writers to write their name in an arch shape first so it really looks like a rainbow!

Encourage the Everyday

Not setting out to do these things everyday, but rather take advantage of the 'everyday' moments where your child may be able to write their name - birthday cards, invitations, thank you cards, on drawings or paintings they have made, making signs for their bedroom and so on. Making writing their name part of their lives in this very ordinary way helps them learn that writing has a purpose and usually encourages them to want to be able to do it.



Learning to Write My Name

Activity Ideas

Our **Mark Making** and **Letter Formation and Handwriting** areas have lots of activities and resources that you can use or adapt to go with the activity ideas listed here. There are a range of themed letter formation cards, like these [Magic-Themed A to Z Lower-Case Letter Formation Tracing Cards](#), that you use with some of the activities here. Print the letters you need for your child's name and you're all set!

Remember that learning to write can take time and all children develop at their own pace. Offer fun, frequent opportunities for your child to practise writing their name but try not to push them if they don't seem ready.



Sensory activities can engage children in their play and learning, but supervising adults should check for allergens and assess any potential risks (such as the risk of choking from small objects) before the activity, and only proceed if it is safe to do so. We cannot be held responsible for the health and safety of those participating and cannot accept any liability. By using this resource, you acknowledge that it is the responsibility of supervising adults to ensure the safety of children in their care.

Outdoor areas provide great opportunities for play and learning, but always check for any environmental risks before taking part in outdoor activities, and only proceed if it is safe to do so. Ensure children always wash their hands after being outside. Please be respectful of nature and take care of animals and plants. We will not be held responsible for the health and safety of those participating in activities, and cannot accept any liability. By organising or participating in any activity described, you acknowledge that it is the responsibility of supervising adults to ensure the safety of children in their care.