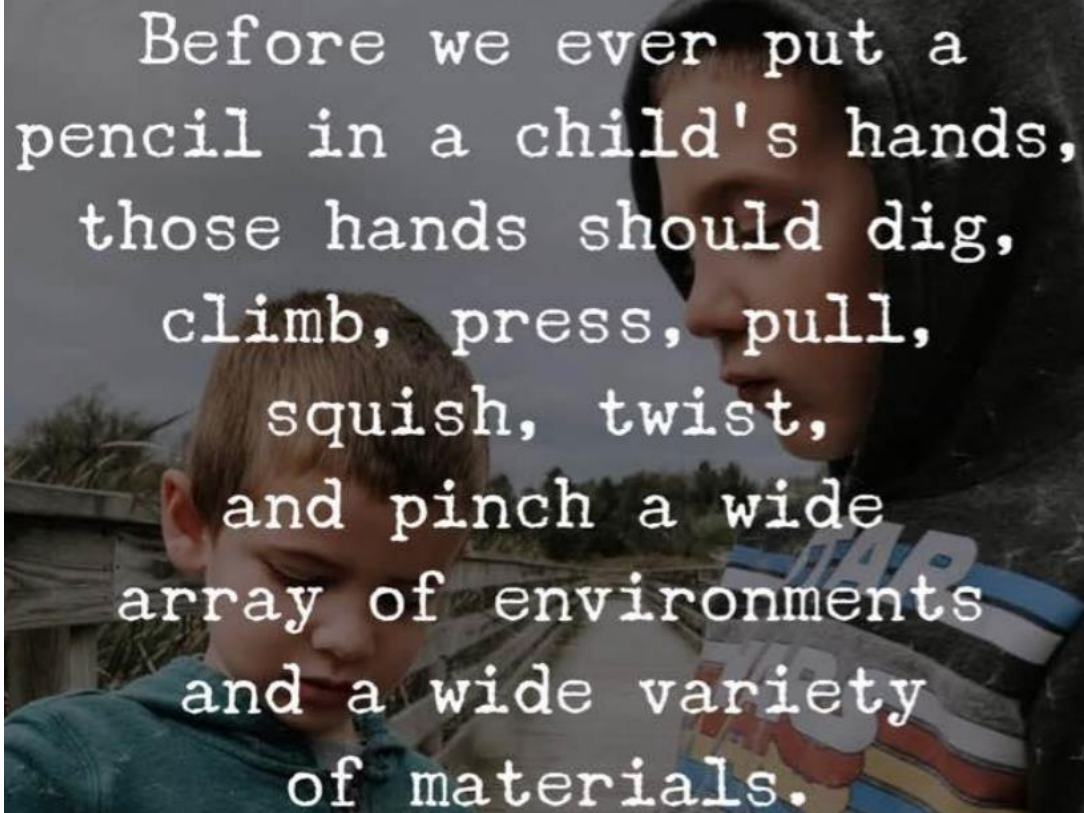


Writing in Reception

Welcome and thank you for coming to our whistle stop family learning all about writing. Today we are going to be focusing on:

- ▶ *Gross motor skills*
- ▶ *Early writing*
- ▶ *The writing journey throughout Reception*
- ▶ *The links between reading, phonics and writing*
- ▶ *What ELG writing looks like*



Before we ever put a
pencil in a child's hands,
those hands should dig,
climb, press, pull,
squish, twist,
and pinch a wide
array of environments
and a wide variety
of materials.

-Amanda Morgan

GROSS MOTOR SKILLS

Gross motor skills are the skills we develop in coordinating and controlling our large muscle groups, especially in the limbs, allowing for movement, balance, and coordination.

- ▶ Before children can learn to hold a pencil correctly and use it to form letters they first need to master gross motor skills
- ▶ •First children will be able to move their arm from the shoulder joint, gradually developing using the elbow to refine actions.
- ▶ •They then begin to understand how to control the hands.
- ▶ •Before finally the fine finger movements needed to mark make.

Gross motor activities

Dancing

Water balloons

Scooting

Washing windows

Making obstacle courses

Yoga

Squeezing water out of a sponge

Peddling bikes

Running

Gross motor

Jumping over things

Bubbles

Crawling through tunnels

Jumping from side to side

Climbing up and down steps

Ice skating using paper plates

Sweeping with brushes

ELG Gross motor

ELG Gross Motor Skills:

- ▶ Children at the expected level of development will: - Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others;
- ▶ - Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing;
- ▶ - Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping and climbing.

Fine Motor Skills:

- ▶ Children at the expected level of development will:
- ▶ - Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases;
- ▶ - Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutlery;
- ▶ - Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing

FINE MOTOR SKILLS

Fine motor skills refer to the skills we have in making small movements and adjustments using the small muscles in our hands, wrists, fingers, face, feet, and toes.

- ▶ Fine motor skills include pinching, gripping and finger isolation (using or moving fingers independently from each other).
- ▶ **Your child's brain is only developed to perform writing skills once it has learnt to do the gross motor skills.**
- ▶ Trying to write before this has happened is like trying to write with your non-dominant hand. It is awkward, physically uncomfortable and very frustrating! This obviously impacts on how fun children find learning to write!

Fine motor

Chalkboards

Playing Jenga

Sticking
stickers

Using eye
droppers
and
syringes

Whiteboards
and pens

Ripping
paper

Pick up
sticks

Fine motor

Puzzles

Use sticks in
the mud

Metal clips
on cardboard

Folding
paper

Finger gym

Using nuts
and bolts

Placing
coins in a
piggy bank

Playing
connect 4

Crossing the midline

- ▶ Most of us have a dominant side and will find movements easier on this side. In order to be able to write, your child needs to be able to coordinate both sides of their bodies together, with one hand holding the paper, while the other manipulates the pen.
- ▶ This ability to coordinate the two sides of your body, while doing different things with each side allows us to perform activities such as tying knots, or kicking a football.
- ▶ Your children need to learn how to 'cross the mid line' –to be able to control their movements across the centre point of the body. It is this that will let them write without changing the pen over to their other hand midway through a line.

Crossing Midline activities



Wash a large wall with big swopping arm movements

Rotate the body in a twisting motion

Play hand clapping games

Yoga

Play with scarves to music

Mid line activities

Stand and bend to touch opposite feet

Water the garden with a watering can

Marching

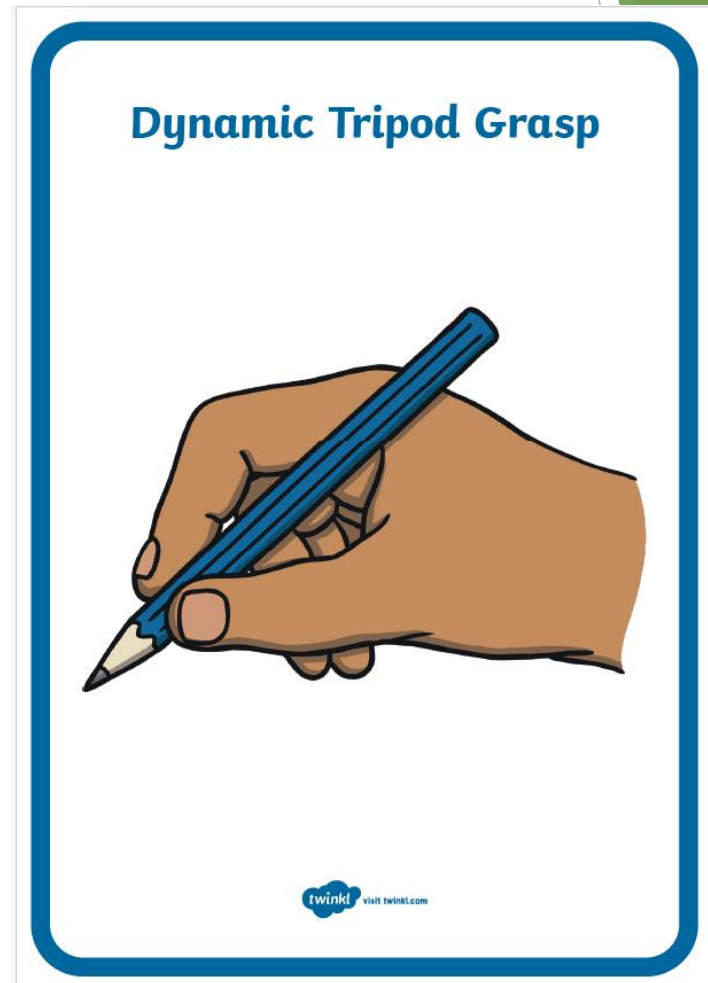
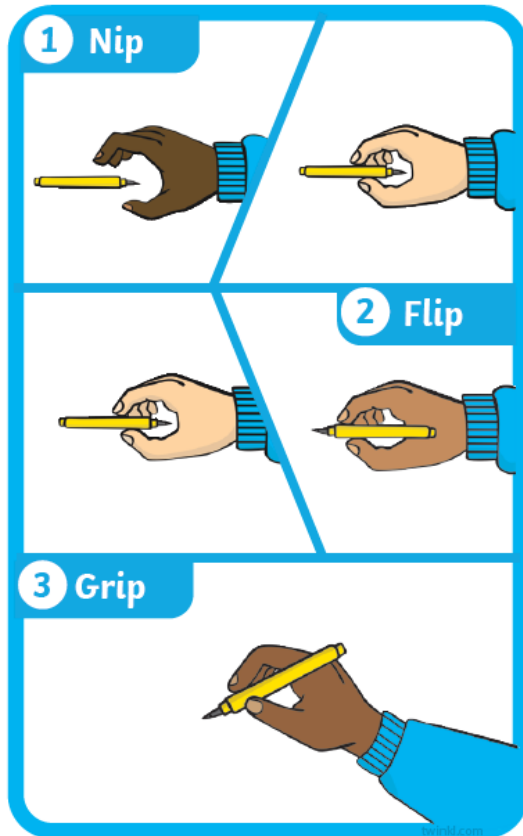
Simon says but with two commands

Washing a car

Water guns to hit a target

Figure of 8 ball through the legs

Pen grip



Pre-Writing

When should my child be able to make pre-writing shapes?

Pre-writing shapes are usually progressive and your child will be able to make more complex shapes as they get nearer to school age. Here is an estimate of when children are usually ready to make different pre-writing shapes.



About 2 years old



About 2 and a half years old



About 3 years old



About 3 and a half years old



About 4 years old



About 4 and a half years old

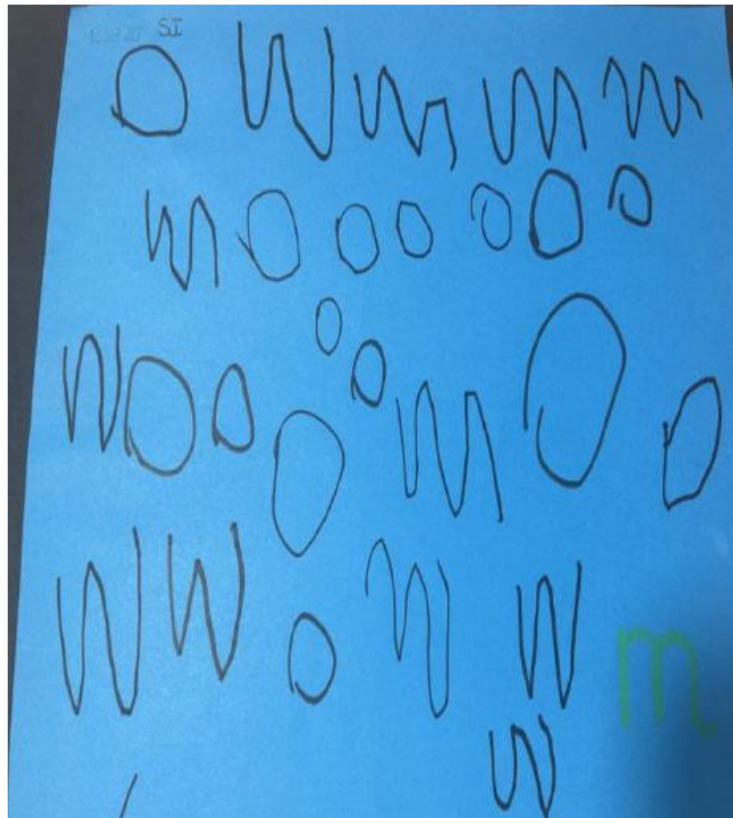


About 5 years old

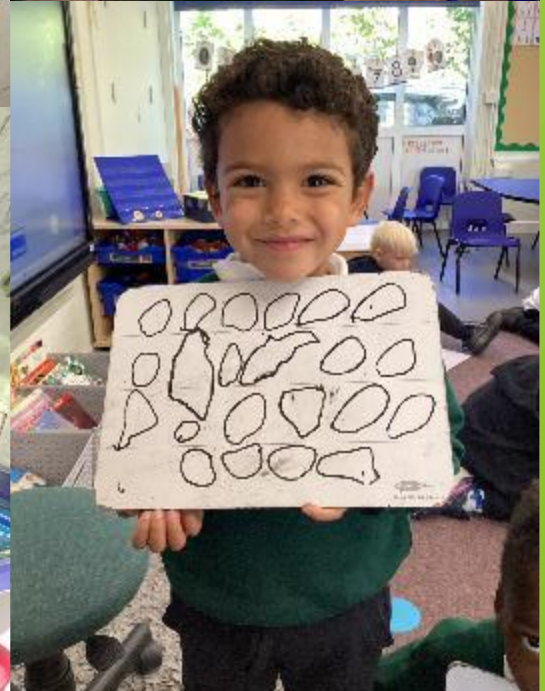
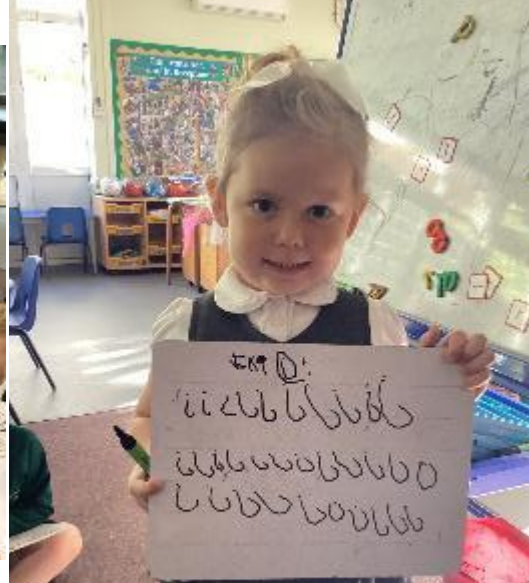
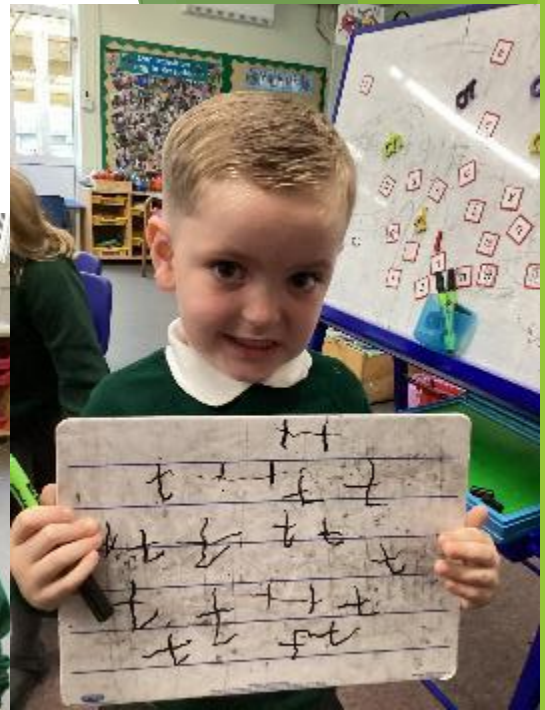
As you can see, by the time your child is getting ready to start school, they may have the skills to form most of these pre-writing shapes. However, please don't worry if they're not – that's what we're here for!

Before writing letters we focus on
anticlockwise
circles and retracing lines

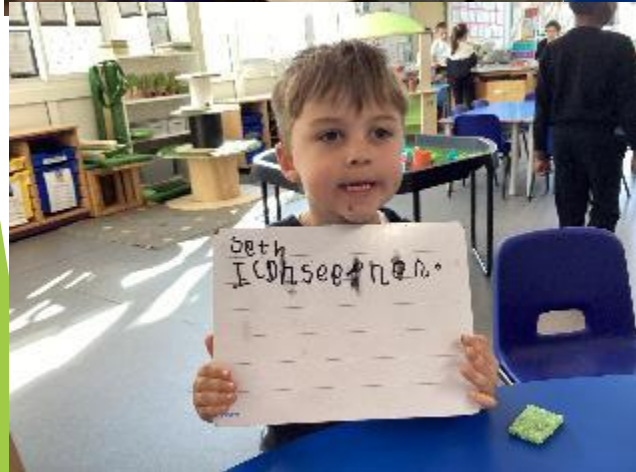
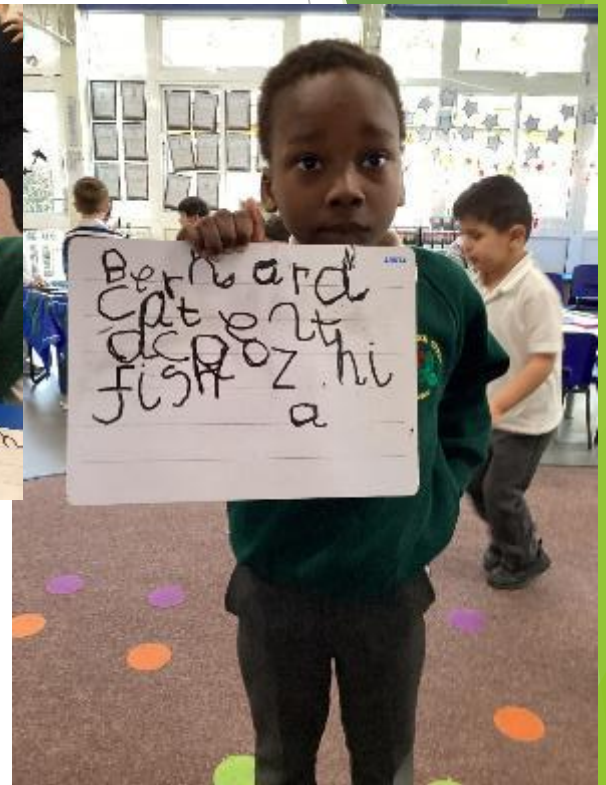
Writing will look like this at the beginning... shapes and lines to represent writing.



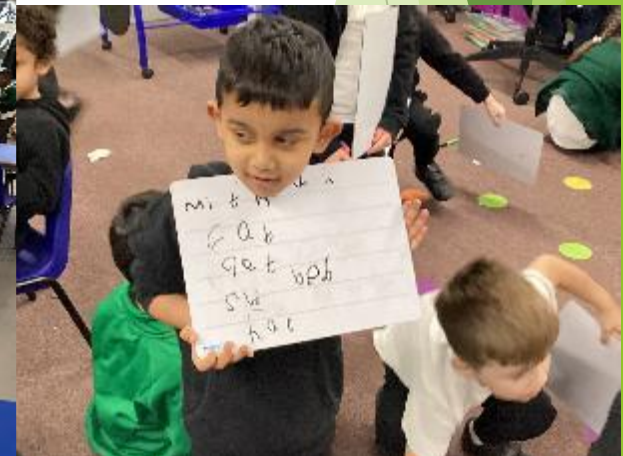
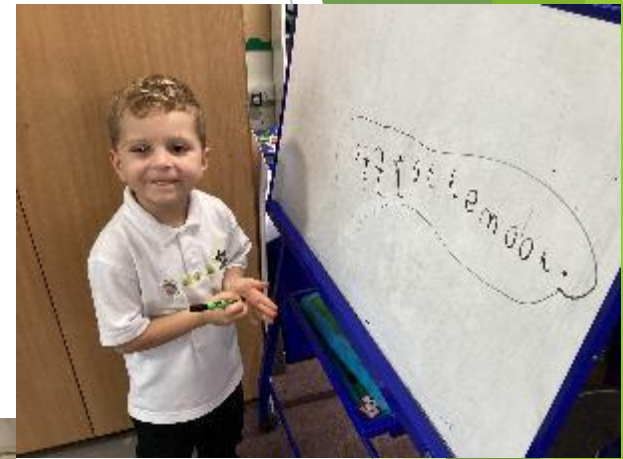
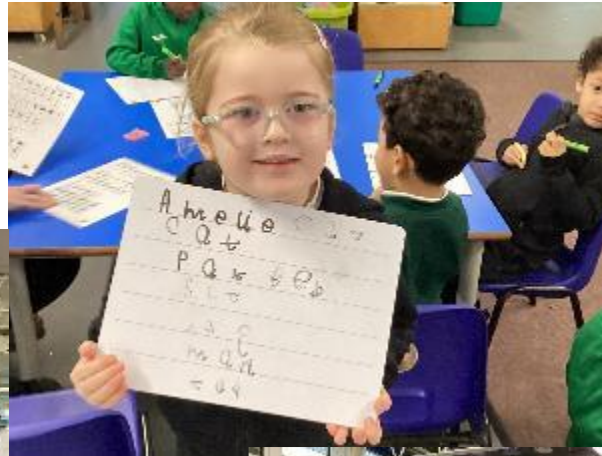
This will move onto initial sounds.



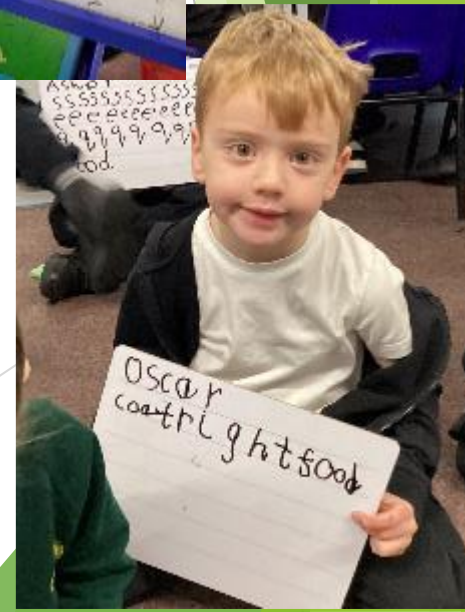
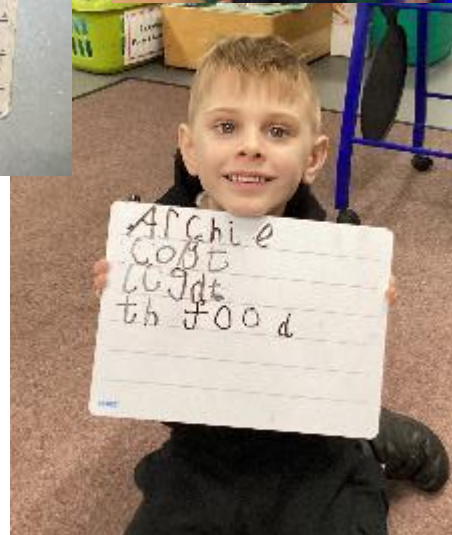
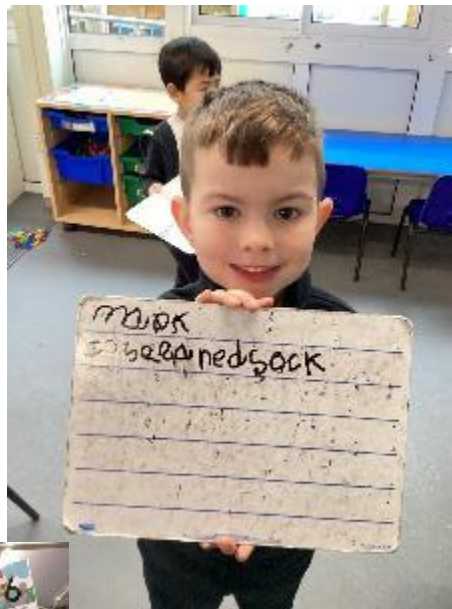
This will then move onto 3 letter words (cvc) and then longer words.



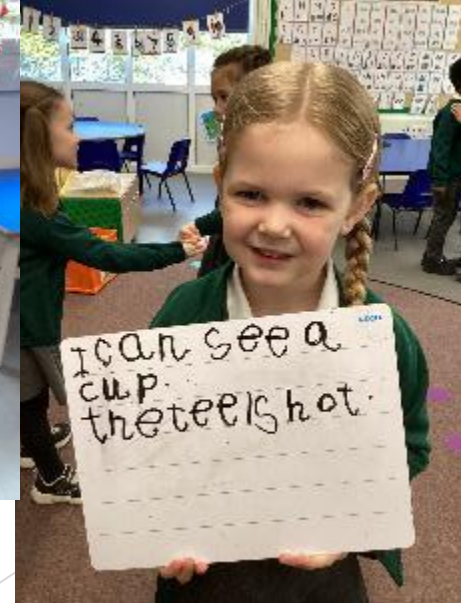
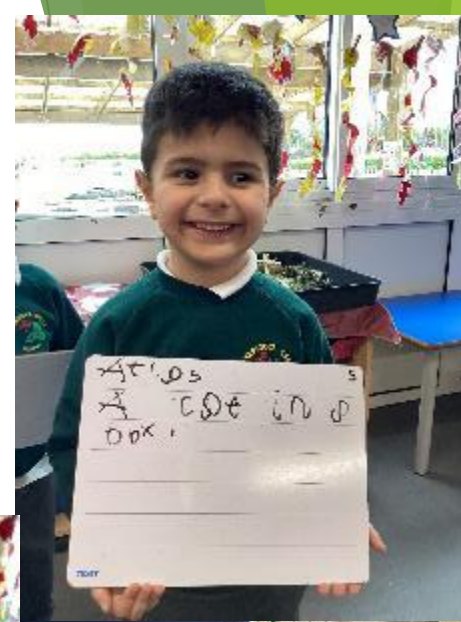
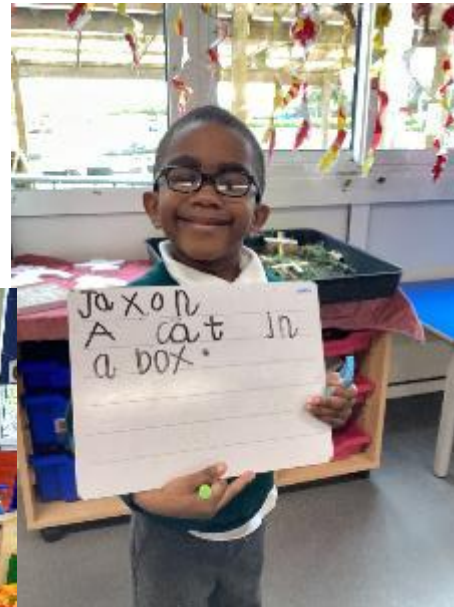
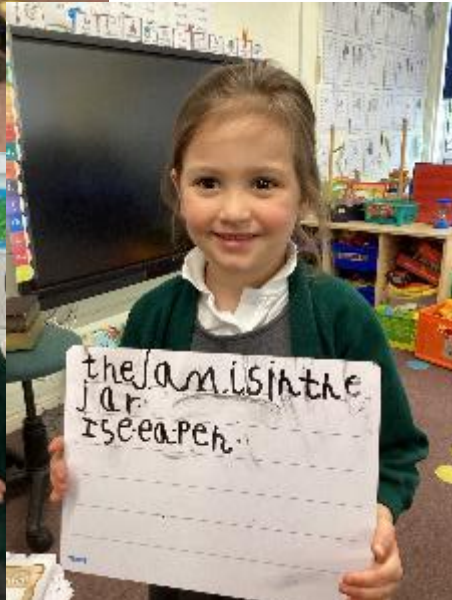
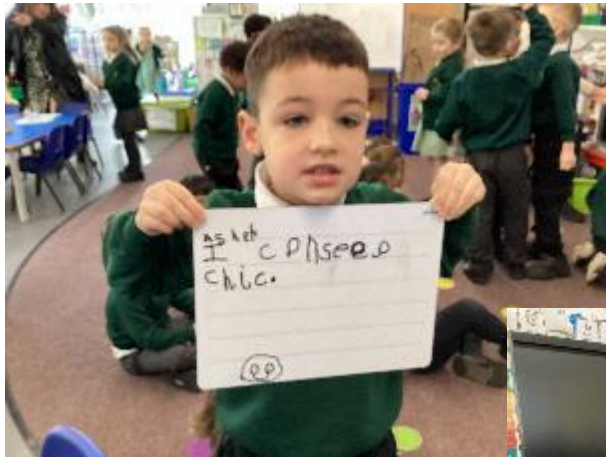
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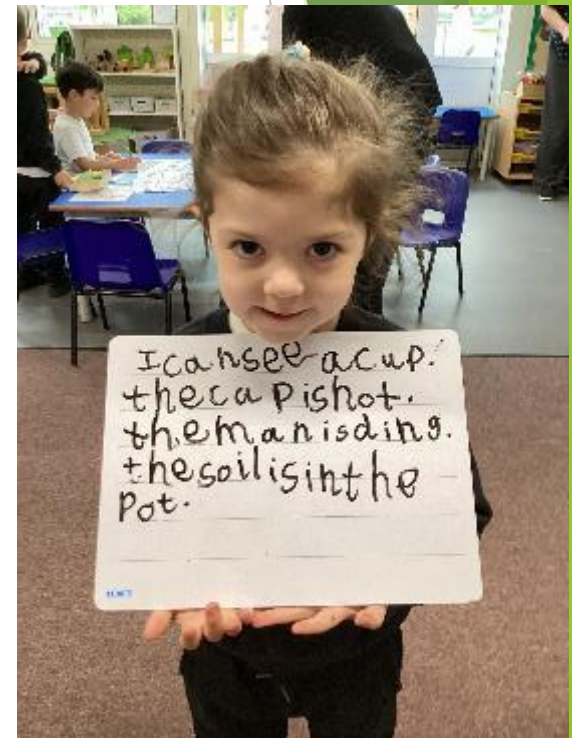
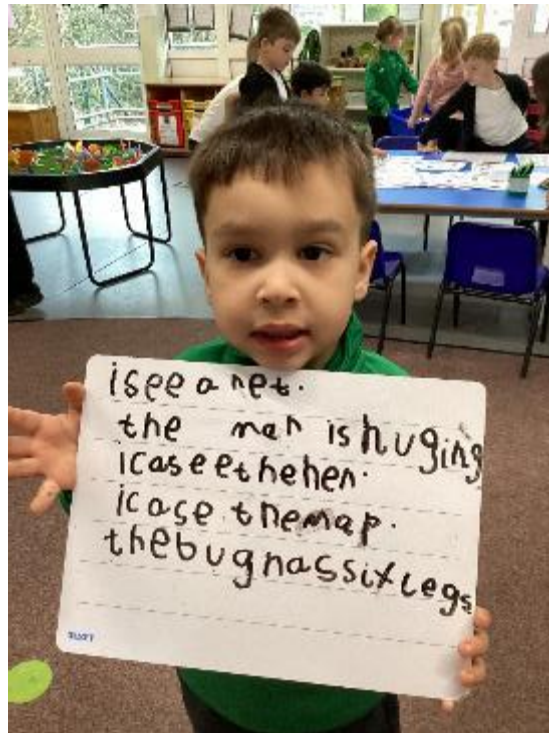
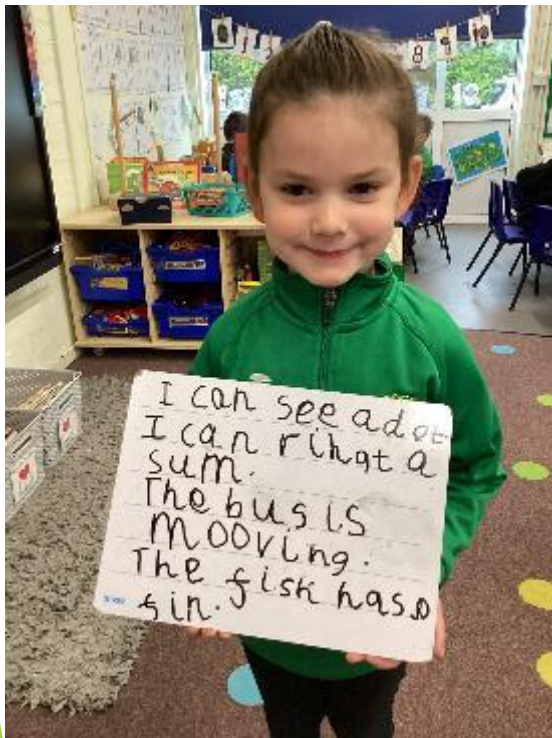
Before writing longer words and short sentences using the phonic knowledge they know.



Before writing longer words and short sentences using the phonic knowledge they know.



Before writing longer words and short sentences using the phonic knowledge they know.





I have a fish. I love
 my fish. It's name is
 goldy. It has a paw
 of tank. It is boy.
 It swims in water.
 Its tank has popp
 theirs.

caterpillars et
 legs. They
 hav legs
 of legs. He
 has a cocoon.

The shop maps
 help you find
 the shop.

I went to
 Land I saw dinosaur
 bones I went to
 the museum

Frog is splash in
 the WATER

What is the Writing ELG?

- ▶ **Recognisable Letters:** Most letters are correctly formed.
- ▶ **Phonetic Spelling:** Identifying sounds and representing them with letters (e.g., 'cat' for 'cat').
- ▶ **Readability:** Writing simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.
- ▶ Key Message: Focus on effort, not perfect spelling or long stories.

Phonics and Spelling

- ▶ Use phonics knowledge to "segment" (break down) words.
- ▶ **Activity:** "Sounding out" words together (e.g., /s/ /u/ /n/ - Sun).
- ▶ Encourage writing sounds they hear, even if spelling isn't perfect (e.g., "laik" for "like").
- ▶ Perfect spelling is not needed for ELG

Modelling Writing (Shared Writing)

- ▶ Show them *how* to write.
- ▶ "**Think Aloud**": Say, "I want to write 'I love you'. What sound can I hear first?".
- ▶ Let them see you writing in daily life.

Top Tips for Parents

- ▶ Nurture rather than rush—it should be fun.
- ▶ Praise effort over accuracy.
- ▶ Let them write when they are happy, not tired.
- ▶ Display their writing on the fridge or a "washing line" to boost confidence.

