

## **12. Special Attention to Writing (Composing)**

The child's writings form a portfolio of earliest writings, useful now and to be treasured for years. When measuring progress, remember to review the entire portfolio.

### ***Composing and Writing***

Literacy is the combined skills of reading and writing and understanding what is read and written. Writing in this case is composing, not copying and not handwriting. As you encourage your child to write, do not encumber the situation with overconcern about mechanics. According to the great teacher, Sybil Marshal, a child writing is no more an adult writing than a tadpole is a frog. Here are some things you can do to get the flow of writing going and keep it going:

- Encourage the child to attempt all the writings at the end of each word lesson.
- Encourage the child to read all writings to you, even if they make them up as they go.
- Make positive, not negative, comments, no matter how juvenile the writings appear.
- Extend writing and composing activities to writings in nonteaching situations.
- Give your child experiences to write about.
- Provide the child with audiences for the writings: family, friends, and playmates.
- Provide avenues for publishing the writings: homemade books, scrapbooks, home newspapers, etc.
- De-emphasize errors in spelling and mechanics; proofreading can be taught after the writing is flowing.

### ***Experience, Speak, Read, and Write to Learn***

The aim of literacy is independent learning. In this sense, students experience to learn, speak to learn, read to learn, and write to learn. The more opportunities the child receives in all these areas, the more the learning, and the better the learning. No effort will substitute for proper parenting or care giving.