

Golden Rules

- DO offer plenty of praise. Writing takes practice and perseverance, both of which are hard to sustain if you are feeling discouraged. Think of things you can genuinely say something nice about - 'I love the way you've put that! It's brilliant.' Rather than 'I wish you would leave a space between your words.'
- DON'T bribe a child to write (or read!). We can all be desperate to get a reluctant nine year old to do their homework and a good bribe can seem like a simple answer. But the problem with bribery is that it tells the child that they are doing their writing (or their reading) for YOU rather than for themselves. If we want our children to become responsible for their own efforts then we need to keep this in mind from the start. Writing and reading are not things we have to be bribed to do! We do them because they bring their own rewards - honestly!
- DO allow different forms of writing. Writing emails, typing messages or posting stuff on a blog are all perfectly good forms of writing. They allow your child to practise expressing themselves in written form - which is what we want!
- DON'T get obsessed with spelling. The main criteria for a healthy piece of writing is that:
 - We can read it
 - It is well expressed
 - It fulfils its purpose - i.e. if it is a thank-you letter to granny, it says thank you!

If the writing satisfies all these criteria then a few mis-spelt words do not really matter.