Suggestions to Parents

• Read interesting stories (fiction and nonfiction) and poetry aloud to your child, regardless of your child’s age. Reading aloud exposes children to vocabulary and language they may not yet be able to read independently. Children need to “hear” literary language before they can use it in their own writing.

• Have lots of paper, cards, stationery, markers, pens, and pencils around and perhaps a blank book that could be used as a journal. Encourage writing for real reasons; thank-you notes, invitations, lists, letters, requests, room signs.

• Write notes to your child often. Tuck a complimentary note inside the lunch box, at the bedside. Write notes on birthdays and special occasions.

• Create a photo-memory book together. Label photos with captions you write together.

• Encourage your child to read widely. Join the public library. Give books as gifts for special occasions. Help your child establish a personal home library. Be a reading model yourself. The best writers are almost always the best readers.

• Limit television, video, and DVD watching to perhaps an hour a day to allow your child to participate in other activities.

• Help your child’s imagination blossom. Tell stories to and with each other. For many children, it is easier to write once they have spoken the words aloud to someone.

• Use reading and writing for pleasure, never punishment.