

# IMPROVING ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

*By Amanda Bishop, School Psychologist*

## **WRITTEN LANGUAGE**

Good writing skills grow from good reading skills. Reading well and about a broad range of topics gives your child practice in understanding the written word, and how others express themselves in writing. Even beginning readers can learn to write stories, with help.

- Encourage your child to write notes and letters to relatives or friends.
- Take pictures on vacation and have your child write something about them. These pictures can be placed in an album or sent to friends.
- Make a personal spelling dictionary for your child's use. When they ask the meaning of a word or how to spell it, add it to his/ her notebook.
- Take turns writing (four or five sentences) stories. The writer cuts the story apart sentence by sentence, and the reader sequences it in the right order.
- Have your child record a story if he/she has a hard time getting started on written tasks.
- Encourage him/her to write in a diary or journal. Make it a special shared parent-child time by also writing in a journal.
- Give your child story starters – for example, “The day I won the lottery I...” or “When I am a mom, I will...”
- Help organize your child's ideas by making a story web. One method of doing this is to draw a large circle and have your child write the story topic inside. Write the story details in smaller circles connected by lines to the large circle. Discuss which small circles should be placed (first, second, third, etc.) in the story.