






Early Developmental Writing Stages

and
Suggested
Materials

RANDOM SCRIBBLING	CONTROLLED SCRIBBLING	MOCK LETTERS AND LETTERS IN NAME	LETTER STRINGS	FIRST LETTER SOUNDS
<p>(15 months–2 years)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Just starting to hold crayons with fist and making marks on paper ● Uses just one color ● Straight lines in scribble fashion 	<p>(2–3 years old)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Better control of crayons and markers ● Uses variety of colors and lines ● Starts to draw circles 	<p>(3–4 years old)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Makes letter-like forms: sticks, round shapes, dots ● Tries to write some letters in their name ● May tell story about their writing if asked 	<p>(4–5 years old)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Writes letters side by side or all over paper ● May try to “read” their writing ● Letters don’t match the sounds ● Writes first name 	<p>(4–6 years old)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Spells some high-frequency words right (<i>I, love, a</i>) ● Uses letters to represent first (then last, and finally medial) sounds in words ● Writes first and last name
				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Thick short crayons and markers ● Large blank white unlined paper ● Bathtub markers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Crayons, markers, pencils, chalk, shaving cream, paints or water and brushes, dry erase supplies ● Large blank unlined paper (white or dark) ● Paintbrushes and water or paints ● Standing and using vertical surfaces (e.g., easel) or sitting and using horizontal surfaces (e.g., table) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pencils, markers, crayons, pens ● Alphabet strip or name to trace ● Blank white unlined paper ● Pencil grips ● Vertical or horizontal surfaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pencils, markers, pens, dry erase, stamps and pad ● Blank white unlined paper ● Special paper with drawing box and one to two lines (see printables online)

Note: A special thank you to the author’s grandchildren for appearing in these photos.