



What to do

Writing

*IMPORTANT Parent or Carer –
Please check that you are happy with any weblinks or use of the internet.*

1. Discuss a picture

Look at and discuss together the picture shown below in [A Big Mess](#). What can we see that has gone wrong? What is in a mess? What do you think was happening just before the scene in picture? Who do you think is asking the question? What do we think might happen next?

2. Use imagination to write speech

- Talk about the situation. What do we think the children are thinking? How do they think the children might answer the question? Try saying them together to sound like the children (with appropriate expression).
 - Oh no! The bowl tipped over!
 - There is a big mess in the kitchen.
 - We are fine. The cooking is going well.
- Now look at the sheet [What are they saying?](#), and discuss which things we might write in the bubbles.
- Together, with your child writing some parts and you writing other parts from their dictation, write inside each speech bubble to show what the children are saying.

NB. Getting young children to write is not easy! See [Guidance and handwriting groups below](#).

Try these Fun-Time Extras

- Look at some recipe books and discuss the dishes they are for.
- Make a cake or another recipe together. Will it end in a big mess?

A Big Mess!

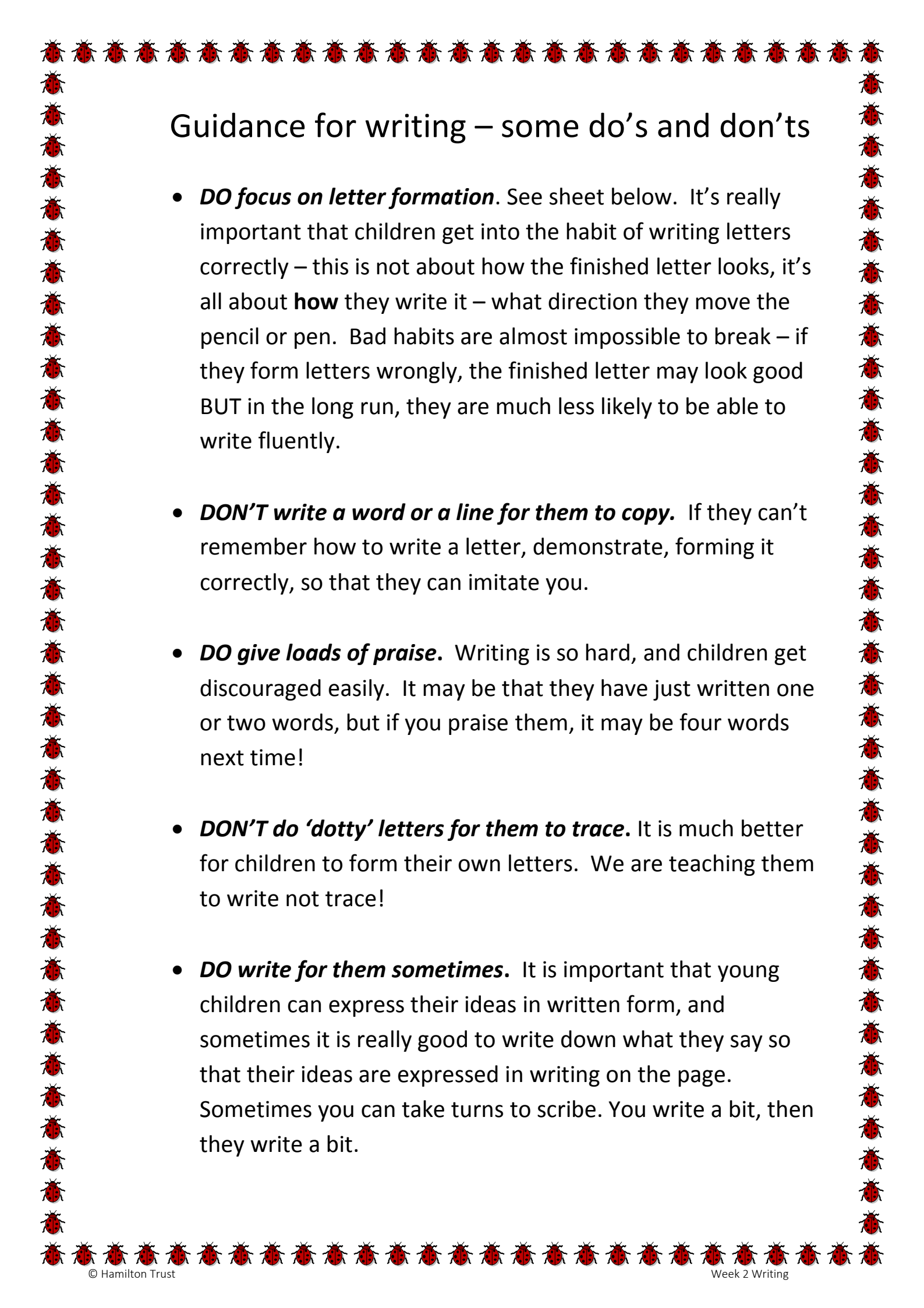


What are they saying?



Blank writing area for the boy's response.

Blank writing area for the girl's response.



Guidance for writing – some do's and don'ts

- ***DO focus on letter formation.*** See sheet below. It's really important that children get into the habit of writing letters correctly – this is not about how the finished letter looks, it's all about **how** they write it – what direction they move the pencil or pen. Bad habits are almost impossible to break – if they form letters wrongly, the finished letter may look good BUT in the long run, they are much less likely to be able to write fluently.
- ***DON'T write a word or a line for them to copy.*** If they can't remember how to write a letter, demonstrate, forming it correctly, so that they can imitate you.
- ***DO give loads of praise.*** Writing is so hard, and children get discouraged easily. It may be that they have just written one or two words, but if you praise them, it may be four words next time!
- ***DON'T do 'dotty' letters for them to trace.*** It is much better for children to form their own letters. We are teaching them to write not trace!
- ***DO write for them sometimes.*** It is important that young children can express their ideas in written form, and sometimes it is really good to write down what they say so that their ideas are expressed in writing on the page. Sometimes you can take turns to scribe. You write a bit, then they write a bit.



Handwriting Letter Groups

There are basically 4 groups of letters – in terms of how we move the pen to write these.

1. **Long Ladder Letters:** Start at the top and go down and then off in another direction, e.g. *i, j, l, t, u*
2. **Bouncing Ball Letters:** Start at the top, and go down and retrace upwards, e.g. *b, h, k, m, n, p, r*
3. **Curly Caterpillar Letters:** Start at the top and go anti-clockwise round, e.g. *C, a, d, e, g, o, q, f, s*
4. **Zigzag letters:** Zigzag from top then down, e.g. *V, w, x, z*

Scroll on down

Letter Groups

Group 1 – Long Ladder Letters

Start at the top and come down the ladder and go off into another direction.

i j l
t u

Group 2 – Bouncing Ball Letters

Start at the top, go down and then re-trace upwards.

b h k
m n p r

Group 3 – Curly Caterpillar Letters

Start at the top and go anti-clockwise round.

c a d e
g o q f
s

Group 4 – Zigzag Letters

Start at the top and zigzag down and up again.

v w
x z