

# Pointers For Parents

## Getting Kids “Wild” About Writing

(NAPSA)—A child’s education begins at home, as parents create a foundation for the learning process through their own words and actions. Although many parents recognize the importance of reading to their children, few realize they can help kids develop another skill—writing.

In addition to its practical uses, writing has important social and therapeutic implications. Whether you’re writing a thank-you note or letter to a friend, expressing feelings in a journal entry, or jotting down a grocery list, organizing your thoughts on paper is a part of everyone’s day-to-day activities in some way or another.

Encouraging children to write about the activities they enjoy is a great way to develop their writing skills. By recording thoughts about a visit to the zoo, a nature hike, or backyard explorations with friends, kids can have fun while learning at the same time.

Paper Mate has recently introduced another way to make writing fun by teaming up with Animal Planet and Jeff Corwin of *The Jeff Corwin Experience* to launch “Wild About Writing,” a national essay program for kids. By watching their favorite wildlife adventure on Animal Planet and submitting a brief handwritten essay about what they saw, kids ages six to 15 can win a chance to appear on Animal Planet in 2003. One lucky student will be randomly selected by Paper Mate from eligible essays received by October 7, 2002.

“We want to encourage kids to explore the world around them, stretch their imagination and express themselves through writing,” said Corwin. “The world is full of fascinating creatures, and kids can learn a great deal by observing and recording the behaviors of their favorite wild animals.”

To help get the creative juices flowing, Paper Mate offers these



**Wildlife enthusiast Jeff Corwin encourages kids to learn from the world around them.**

tips for parents to help kids jumpstart the writing process:

1. Encourage keeping a journal. As your children observe and explore the world around them, encourage them to write about things they see and what interests them.

2. Make writing fun with “cool tools.” Use fun writing instruments like animal-print pencils and neon-colored pens to get your creative juices flowing. Keep notebooks with colored paper around for additional inspiration.

3. Write together. Have your child help you with everyday writing tasks, such as letter writing and thank-you notes. This helps children to see firsthand that writing is an important and useful way to communicate.

You may be surprised at what develops next time your child puts words on paper. And who knows, their next essay may lead to an appearance on Animal Planet. For more information on Wild About Writing and for complete program rules, including alternative entry methods, visit [www.papermate.com](http://www.papermate.com).