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## **Guidelines for Helping Students at Home with their Writing Assignments**

The purpose of Writing Coaches of Montana is to help students in the public schools in western Montana become better writers. For more than 20 years, our community volunteers have supported teachers by conferencing individually with students in the classroom on writing assignments that require critical thinking and revision.

Given that students now must work on their school assignments from home, Writing Coaches of Montana offers these simple steps for caregivers on how to help students improve their writing:

- Ask students to **describe** the writing assignment.
- Ask students to **read aloud** what they have written, or, if they haven't yet begun, to describe what they are planning to write.
- **Listen for the big ideas.** Tell your students what you enjoyed about what they have to say.
- **Ask questions. Discuss** what you didn't understand and brainstorm suggestions for how they can make their ideas clearer.
- Try to **focus on ideas**, rather than on grammar and spelling.
- Ask students to **make their own corrections** on their papers. Avoid writing on the paper yourself.

Writing Coaches of Montana is pleased to partner with the Montana public schools as they help students continue their education at home. When this crisis has passed, we look forward to once again working with students in the classroom.

For more information about our program, please go to [www.writingcoachesofmontana.org](http://www.writingcoachesofmontana.org)