

# Teaching Handwriting

1. Begin handwriting instruction with a brief hand warm-up activity. Examples include open and closing fists, walk fingers up and down pencil, stress ball squeezes, and/or finger push-ups. (For more activities see the fine motor skills handout).
2. Letters should be grouped according to how they are formed. *Note: Teach the letters in isolation. Once a letter has been introduced in isolation the child can focus on forming it correctly in written work. Once the correct letter formation has been mastered in daily work you then can choose the next letter to introduce in isolation.*

## Lower Case Manuscript Groups:

### Tall line down:

l – make a tall line down

t – make a tall line down then make a sleeping line across the middle

h – make a tall line down, climb up to the middle line then make a hill

b – make a tall line down, climb up to the middle line then make a half circle in front

k – make a tall line down, lift pencil, start at the middle line, slide in, kiss the line then slide down to the bottom line.

f – make a rainbow with a tall line down, lift the pencil, make a sleeping line across at the middle line

### Short line down:

i – make a short line down, make a floating dot at the top

j – make a short line down, continue into the basement then make a fish hook, make a floating dot at the top

p – make a short line down into basement, climb up to middle line then make a half circle in front

r – make a short line down, climb to the middle line then make a hill top

n – make a short line down, climb up to the middle line and make a hill

m – make a short line down, climb up to the middle line, make a hill, climb up to the middle line and make another hill

u – make a short line down, dig a hole up to the middle line then make a short line down

### C curve:

c – make a c curve

a – make a c curve, climb up to the middle line, make a short line down

d – make a c curve, climb up to the top line, make a tall line down

g – make a c curve, climb up to the middle line, make a line into the basement, then make a fish hook

q – make a c curve, climb up to the middle line then continue into the basement and dig a hole up

o – make a c curve then close the circle

s – make a small c curve then make a backward c curve

### Sliding line:

v – start at the middle line and make a sliding line down, then make a sliding line up to the middle line

w – start at the middle line and make a sliding line down, make a sliding line up to the middle line, make another sliding line down, make another sliding line up to the middle line

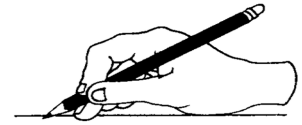
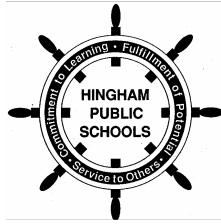
x – start at the middle line and make a sliding line down, lift pencil, start at the middle line and make a backwards sliding line that crosses the middle of the first line

y – start at the middle line and make a sliding line, lift pencil, start at the middle line and make a backwards sliding line that “kisses” the bottom of the first line then continues into the basement

### Sleeping line

e – make a sleeping line across, then make a c curve

z – make a sleeping line, make a backward sliding line, then another sleeping line



## Upper Case Letters

Letters are grouped based on the starting stroke.

### Tall line down:

F - Make a tall line down, jump up to the top line then make a sleeping line across the top lift pencil and a sleeping line across the middle

E - Make a tall line down, jump up to the top line then make a sleeping line across the top, lift pencil and make a sleeping line across the middle, lift pencil and make a sleeping line across the bottom

D - Make a tall line down, jump up to the top line and make a big belly down to the bottom line

P - Make a tall line down, jump up to the top line and make a half circle in front to the middle line

B - Make a tall line down, jump up to the top line make a half circle in front to the middle line then another half circle in front to the bottom line

R - Make a tall line down, jump up to the top line and make a half circle in front to the middle line, kiss the line then slide down to the bottom line

N - Start at the top line and make a tall line down, lift pencil, slide down to the bottom line then climb back up to the top line

M - Start at the top line and make a tall line down, lift pencil, slide down to the bottom line, slide back up to the top line then make a tall line down

H - Make a tall line down, lift pencil then make another tall line down, lift pencil then make a sleeping line across the middle line

K - Make a tall line down, lift the pencil, start at the top line, slide in, kiss the line, then slide down to the bottom line

L - Make a tall line down then a sleeping line along the bottom line

U - Make a tall line down, dig a hole up to touch the top line

T - Make a tall line down, lift the pencil, start before the tall line down and make a sleeping line across at the top line

I - Make a tall line down, lift the pencil, start before the tall line down and make a sleeping line across at the top line and another sleeping line across at the bottom line

J - Make a tall line down and then a fish hook, lift the pencil start before the tall line down and make a sleeping line across at the top line

A - Start at the top and make a backward sliding line down to the bottom line, lift the pencil and make a sliding line down to the bottom line, lift the pencil and make a sleeping line across the middle line

### C-Curve:

C - Make a big c-curve

G - Make a big c-curve, climb up to the middle line, make a little sleeping line in towards the C-curve. Stop before the line touches the C-curve

O - Make a big c-curve, then close the circle

Q - Make a big c-curve, then close the circle, then lift the pencil then

S - Make a small c-curve that starts at the top line and stops at the middle line, then make a small backward c-curve

### Sliding line:

V - Start at the top line and make a sliding line down to the bottom line then make a sliding line up to the top line

W - Start at the top line and make a sliding line down to the bottom line, make a sliding line up to the top line, make another sliding line down to the bottom line, make another sliding line up to the top line

X - Start at the top line and make a sliding line down to the bottom line, lift the pencil and start at the top line and make a backward sliding line that crosses the middle of the first line and stops on the bottom line

Y - Start at the top line and make a sliding line down to the middle line, lift pencil, start at the top line and make a backward sliding line that kisses the bottom of the first line then continues to the bottom line

### Sleeping line:

Z - Make a sleeping line across the top line, make a backward sliding line to the bottom line then another sleeping line

## **Cursive handwriting program Loops and Groups: (cursive is taught in second and third grade)**

### **Lower case:**

Clock Climbers (c, a, d, g, q)

Loop Group (e, l, h, k, b, f)

Kite Strings (i, u, w, t, j, p, r, s, o)

Hills and Valleys (n, m, v, y, x, z)

### **Upper case:**

Slim 7's (P, R, B, H, K)

Eggs (O, Q)

Deep Valleys (U, V, Y)

Half Hearts (W, X)

Fat Bellies (G, S, L, D)

Umbrella Top (C, E, A)

High Hills (N, M)

Sneaky Snake Tops (T, F)

Left Swingers (I, J)

Zip (Z)

3. It is important to watch how your child is forming his/her letters to ensure that they are using the correct approach and to prevent incorrect habits. For example, printed letters always start at the top. If a child uses an incorrect approach this can negatively affect fluency, spacing, and legibility. Once a child has learned an incorrect approach to letter formation it is extremely hard to break the habit.
4. The best way to teach handwriting is to use a multisensory approach in frequent short sessions. This writing technique focuses on seeing, hearing, and feeling the movement patterns by incorporating several senses to increase the number of neural connections in the brain and make the learning more automatic (i.e., correct approach to letter formation).

## **Ideas for Using a Multisensory Approach to Handwriting:**

- a. Use index finger of dominant hand to write in shaving cream, sand, salt, corn starch, lotion, pudding, or finger paints.
- b. Write using colored glue, squiggle/vibrating pen, pipe cleaners, wikki stix, sandpaper under paper, or streamers in the air.
- c. Have your child write on a vertical surface to promote wrist extension and stability: (i.e. chalkboard, easel, dry erase board, tape paper to wall, slant board, 3 inch binder held sideways).
- d. Have your child practice writing letters with his/her eyes closed either on paper, in the air, on a chalkboard, or on a dry erase board.
- e. Trace tactile letters such as pipe cleaners glued to index cards, letters written in colored glue or commercially bought tactile letters.
- f. Peel off stickers and place stickers on isolated letters, then trace with pointer finger.
- g. Have your child practice letters writing with whole arm movements using a flashlight, lightsaber, or using the whole body to make a letter.
- h. Write letters on your child's back using your finger and have them guess the letter.

A B C D E F G

H I J K L M N

O P Q R S T

U V W X Y Z

a b c d e f g h i

j k l m n o p q r

s t u v w x y z

? ! " " ' | 2 3

4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- Loops and Other Groups  
by Mary Benbow

a b c d e f g h i j

k l m n o p q r s t

u v w x y z A B C D E

F G H I J K L M N

O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z