

Tips for Accurate Letter Formation

Handwriting Help

- Teach capital letters first. Capital letters are easier to learn than lower case letters because they all have the same height, all start at the top, and are easy to recognize.
- Teach kids to always write letters from the top to bottom. Forming letters from the bottom up is slow and inefficient, and will lead to poor handwriting. Cue your child to start "at the top" as they form letters.
- Start by teaching individual letters, then words, then sentences (all in capitals).
- Progress to lower case letters once the upper case letters have been well established.
- Use blank printer paper or simple lined paper. Using worksheets with pictures is distracting.
- Use a multi-sensory approach to teaching letters. Use multiple techniques to practice letters using sensory bins, proprioceptive techniques, gross motor kinesthetic techniques, or high contrast activities. The possibilities are endless for creative learning with handwriting!
- Practice during short sessions.
- Use consistent verbal cues for letter formation.
- Make sure the child has a good posture in their chair.

Tips for Better Line Awareness

Handwriting Help

- Highlighter under the bottom line
- Highlight bottom half of writing space
- Trace baseline with bright colored crayon
- Trace baseline with white crayon for waxy stopping point
- Marker on the bottom and top lines
- Bold single lined paper
- Low Vision Writing Paper
- High visual contrast bold lined paper
- Bold raised lined paper (in single space or double space forms)
- Adjust line height to fit the student's handwriting
- Raised Line Paper
- Use a serrated tracing wheel to create DIY tactile paper
- Make a stencil from a cereal box

Tips for Better Spatial Awareness

Handwriting Help

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- Draw boxes for words on worksheets for them to write within.
- Use stickers placed along the right margin of to cue the student that they are nearing the edge of paper when writing.
- Spacing Tools for spacing between words or letters.
- Draw a red stop sign at the right margin.
- Graph paper Try 1/2 inch wide rule first.
- Raised line paper
- Slant board
- Try smaller width of lines instead of primary paper.
- RediSpace paper has a green line along the left margin and a red line along the right margin.

Movement Activities

to Improve Spatial Relations

- Create a paper obstacle course. Draw obstacles on paper and have your child make his /her pencil go through the obstacles. Draw circles, holes, mud pits, and mountains for them to draw lines as their pencil "climbs", "jumps", "rolls", and even erases!
- Create an obstacle course using couch cushions, chairs, blankets, pillows to teach left/right/over/under.
- Write words and letters on graph paper. The lines will work as a guide and also a good spacing activity.
- Use stickers placed along the right margin of to cue the student that they are nearing the edge of paper when writing.
- Highlight writing lines on worksheets.
- Draw boxes for words on worksheets for them to write within.
- Play Simon Says.
- Practice directions. Draw arrows on a paper pointing up, down, left, and right. Ask your child to point to the direction the arrow is pointing. The child can say the direction the arrows are pointing. Then create actions for each arrow. Up may be jumping. Down may be squatting. The Left arrow might be side sliding to the left, and the Right arrow might be a right high kick. Next, draw more rows of arrows in random order. Ask your child to go through the motions and try to go faster and faster.

Motivating Handwriting Activities

- **Write Jokes.** Look up jokes in a joke book and write them on index cards. Send them to a friend in the mail, drop one in a neighbors mailbox (if you know the neighbor and first let them know to expect something in the mail!) or give one to teachers. Find a buddy who would be interested in exchanging jokes.
- **Write letters to favorite celebrities.** Use those interests and look up addresses to your child's favorite artist, musician, or sports hero. Kids can compose a letter and address the envelope.
- **Exchange letters with a pen pal.** Kids can exchange letters with friends and relatives in other states or towns. Getting mail addressed to themselves is very rewarding for a child.
- **Pass notes.** Write short notes to members of the family. Leave them in places where they will be found, like on bedroom dressers or in shoes.
- **Plan a scavenger hunt.** Write out hints on slips of paper. The child can plan the steps and hide notes for family members or friends.
- **Practice letter formation during fun games like Tic Tac Toe.** Instead of x's and o's, write printed or cursive letters in the squares.
- **Write your own comic books.** Draw large rectangles on a page for a comic story. Students can draw pictures and write comic bubbles for handwriting practice.
- **Tape paper to a window and write on the paper.**

MORE Motivating Handwriting Activities

- Location, location, location! Change spaces for something fun and different: go to the library and try the tables there. Write outside with a clipboard. Where can you go to write that is new and fun?
- Change positions. Sit on the floor and write on the chair seat. Lay on couch cushions and write on the floor on a clipboard.
- Take brain breaks. Every 3-4 minutes, take a mini-break for jumping jacks or wall push-ups.
- Write to classical music..
- Write out the family grocery list.
- Write your family's return address on bills.
- Write out a family calendar with sports schedules, outings, and family night events.
- Write out the phone messages from an answering machine.
- Write out the day's schedule on a weekend day.
- Write out favorite television shows. Add the day, and time of each show.
- Write out a holiday or birthday gift wish list.
- Write out a list of items to pack for vacation. Include little squares next to each item to check off as items are packed.

Handwriting Self-Assessment

- Am I writing my letters like we practiced?
- Am I writing on the lines?
- Am I spacing between letters and words?
- Are my upper case letters bigger than my lower case letters?
- Do my tall letters touch the top line?
- Do my tail letters fall below the bottom line?
- Am I taking my time?
- Can I read my writing?
- Did I start at the left margin and stop at the right margin?