

K - 2 Handwriting Manual



Moore County Schools

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INTRODUCTION

This curriculum was developed as an instructional tool to be utilized by classroom teachers of grades kindergarten through two. Its contents are targeted to the needs of the beginning teacher.

Use of this curriculum by each teacher of each elementary grade will provide a consistent program in handwriting throughout all schools in the Moore County System. This curriculum is intended to be used as a standard procedure for teaching handwriting.

PHILOSOPHY

Grades K – 2

It is the belief of the K-2 Handwriting Committee members that appropriate letter formation, spacing, and overall legibility are essential elements in a child's ability to express his/her thoughts in print. A comprehensive, integrated curriculum must be in place and in use to move the student transitionally from one grade level to the next.

Kindergarten

Skills to Be Taught:

Left/right,
top/bottom,
up/down
directionality

Following
directions

Basic
strokes

Upper- and
lowercase
letter names

Numeral
formation
0-9

Letter
formations

Correct
crayon and
pencil grip

Correct
paper
position

Correct
body
position

Correct use of
upper- and
lowercase
letters in first
and last name

Transition to
lined paper
(toward the
end of the
year)

Kindergarten

First Six Weeks

- Prewriting skills focusing on basic writing strokes:



(Include left-right progression, top-bottom, and up-down)

- Correct pencil/crayon grip and correct paper and body position
- Write first name using correct caps and lowercase letters.
- Begin straight-line and slant-line letter and numeral formation:

Letters: I, i, t, E, F, H, I, L, T, W, Y, K, X, Z, A, N, M, V, v, y, w, k, x, z

Numerals: 1, 4, 7

- Straight-line shapes, square, and rectangle

NOTE:

Skills should be taught in a developmentally appropriate manner. Paper/pencil tasks should be completed on unruled paper. Emphasis should be placed on activities that require large hand and arm movements (i.e., finger painting, sand, clay, etc.)

Second Six Weeks

Continue first nine weeks skills (pencil grasp, paper position). Review straight-line and slant-line letter and numeral formation. Focus instruction on backward circle and curve-line letters. Continue writing on unruled paper.

Letters: O, Q, C, G, o, a, d, c, e, f, g, j, q, u, s

Numerals: 0, 6, 8, 9

Shape: Circle

Third Six Weeks

Continue first and second nine weeks skills. Introduce forward circle letters (b, p). Review and practice letters learned.

Letters: P, R, B, D, U, S, J, b, h, p, r, n, m

Numerals: 2, 3, 5

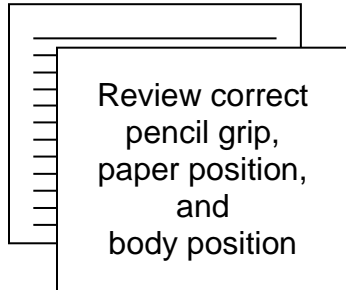
Students are introduced to and begin using ruled paper for instruction and practice.

Fourth-Sixth Six Weeks

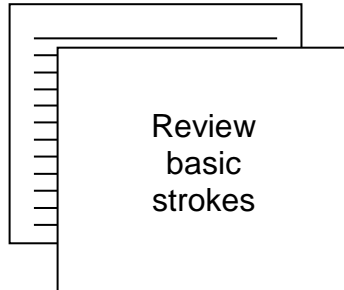
Practice and review all skills. Introduce correct use of upper- and lowercase letters in student's last name. Use correct letter formation as students learn to form letters, words, and sentences.

First Grade

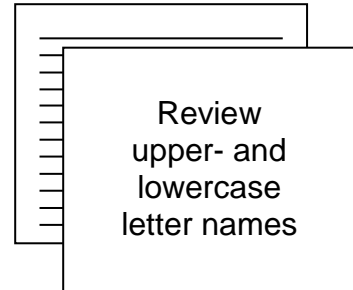
Skills to Be Taught:



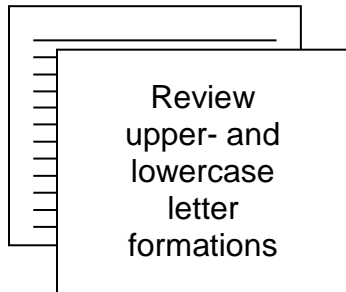
Review correct pencil grip, paper position, and body position



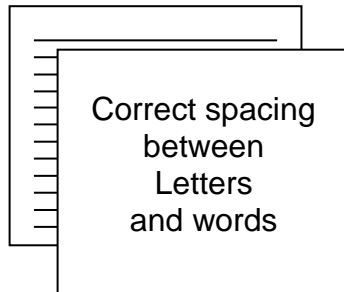
Review basic strokes



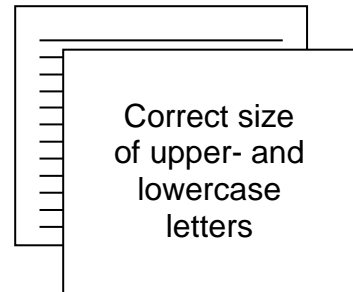
Review upper- and lowercase letter names



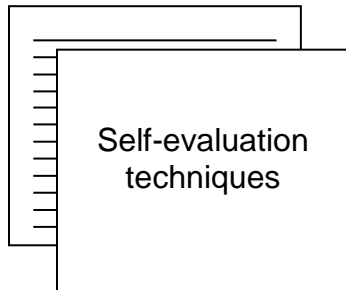
Review upper- and lowercase letter formations



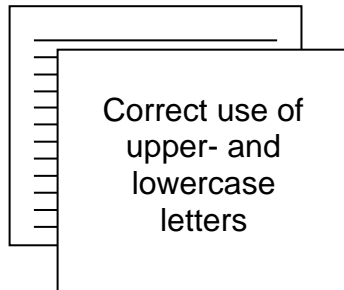
Correct spacing between Letters and words



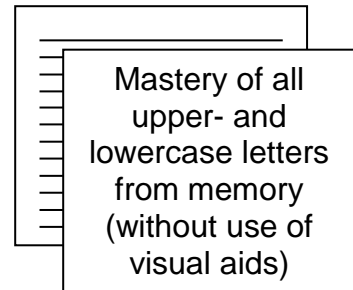
Correct size of upper- and lowercase letters



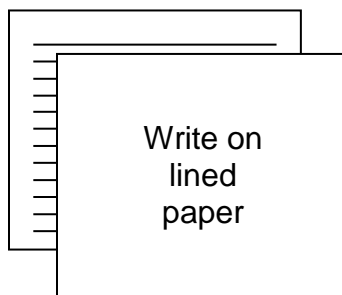
Self-evaluation techniques



Correct use of upper- and lowercase letters



Mastery of all upper- and lowercase letters from memory (without use of visual aids)



Write on lined paper

First Grade

First Six Weeks

- Review correct pencil grip, paper position, and body position.
- * Review basic strokes.
- Review upper- and lowercase letter names.
- * Review upper- and lowercase letter formations - lowercase and capital straight line letters; numerals 0-9.
- * Correct spacing between letters and words
- * Correct size of upper- and lowercase letters
- Self-evaluation techniques

Second Six Weeks

- Review correct pencil grip, paper position, and body position.
- * Review basic strokes.
- Review upper- and lowercase letter names.
- * Review upper- and lowercase letter formations - lowercase backward circle and curve-line letters and capital backward circle letters.
- * Correct spacing between letters and words
- * Correct size of upper- and lowercase letters
- Self-evaluation techniques
- Correct use of upper- and lowercase letters

Third Six Weeks

- Review correct pencil grip, paper position, and body position.
- * Review basic strokes.
- Review upper- and lowercase letter names.
- * Review upper- and lowercase letter formations - lowercase slant-line letters and capital curve-line letters.
- * Correct spacing between letters and words
- * Correct size of upper- and lowercase letters
- Self-evaluation techniques
- Correct use of upper- and lowercase letters

Fourth-Sixth Six Weeks

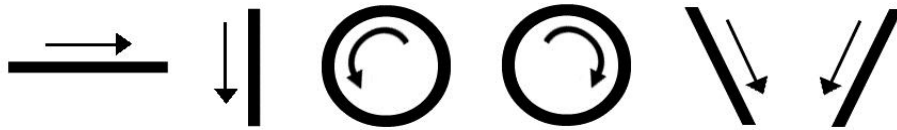
- Review correct pencil grip, paper position, and body position.
- * Review basic strokes.
- Review upper- and lowercase letter names.
- * Review upper- and lowercase letter formations - lowercase forward circle and curve-line letters and capital slant-line letters.
- * Correct spacing between letters and words
- * Correct size of upper- and lowercase letters
- Self-evaluation techniques
- Correct use of upper- and lowercase letters
- Mastery of all upper- and lowercase letters from memory (without the use of visual aids)

*Use lined paper to develop these skills

ELEMENTS OF LEGIBILITY MANUSCRIPT

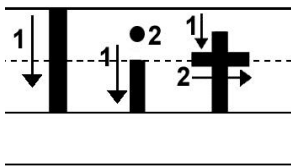
Letter Formation

Prior to learning the proper formation of letters, pupils must learn basic strokes. Practicing these basic strokes repeatedly will lead to a more legible handwriting. There are six basic strokes in manuscript writing. These are:

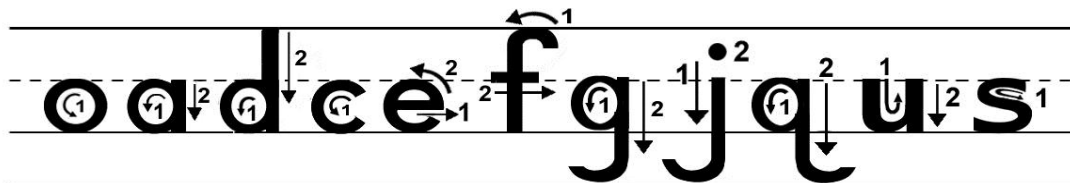


Lowercase letters should be taught within groups of stroke similarities. These groups are as follows:

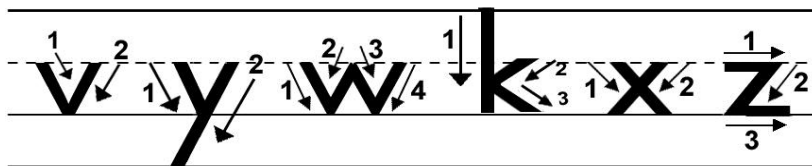
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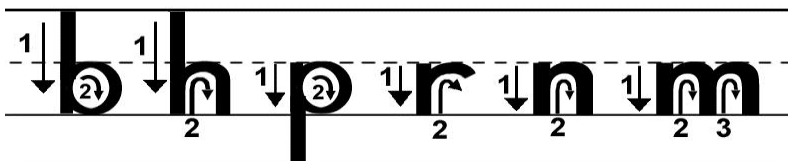
2. Backward Circle and Curve-Line Letters



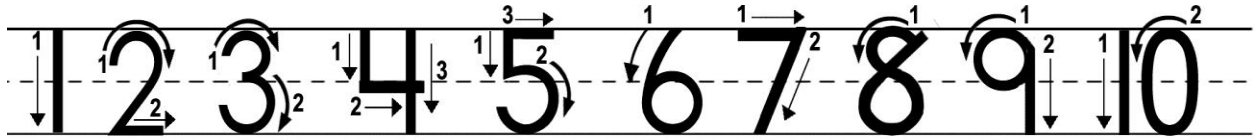
3. Slant-Line Letters



4. Forward Circle and Curve-Line Letters

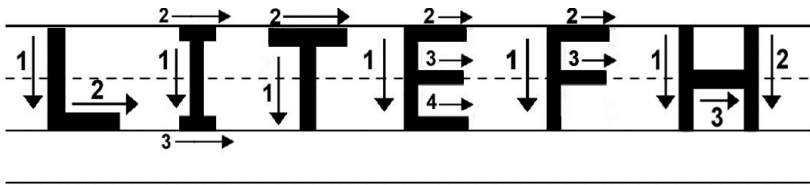


Numerals should also be taught using the six basic strokes.

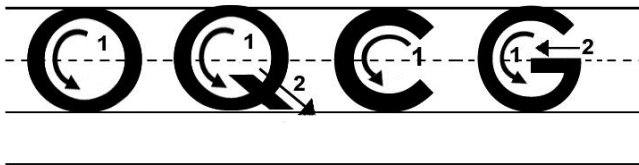


Uppercase letters should be taught within groups of stroke similarities. These groups are as follows:

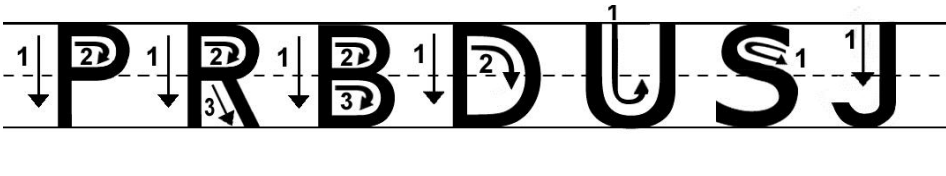
1. Straight-Line Letters



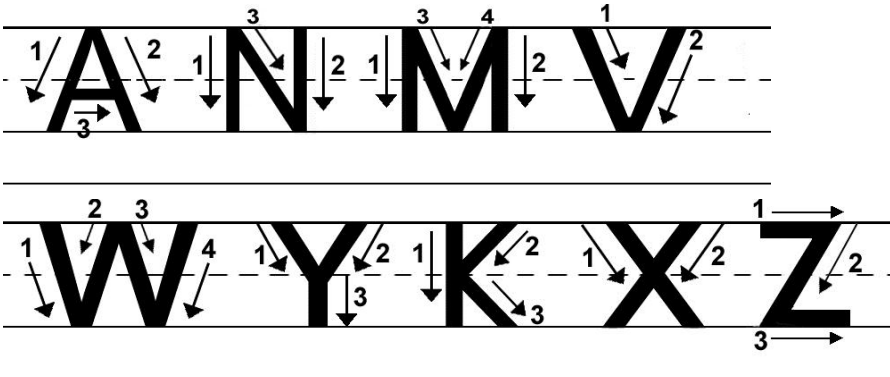
2. Backward Circle Letters



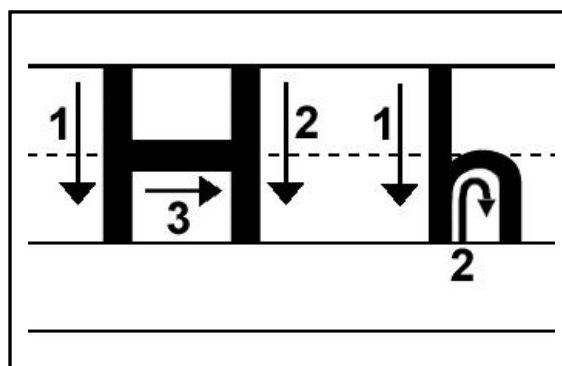
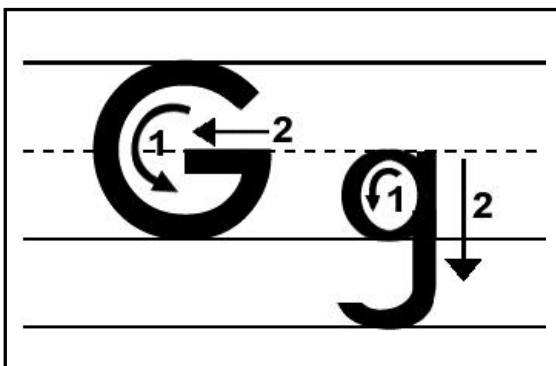
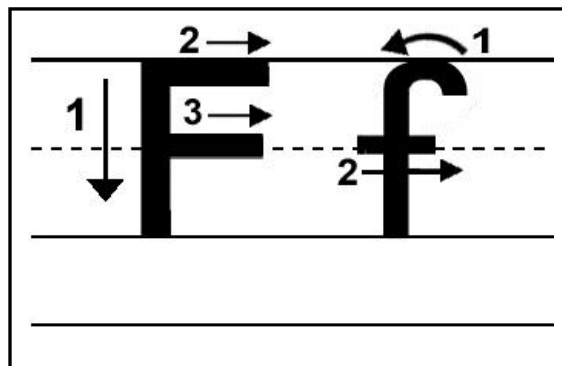
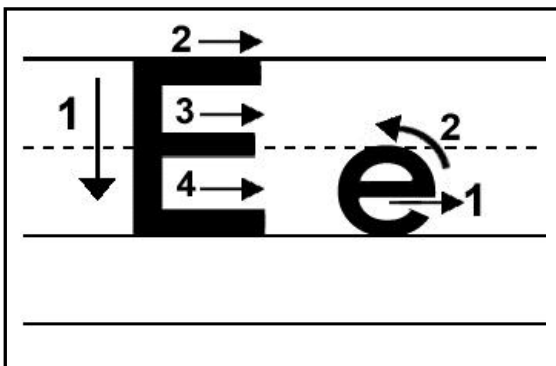
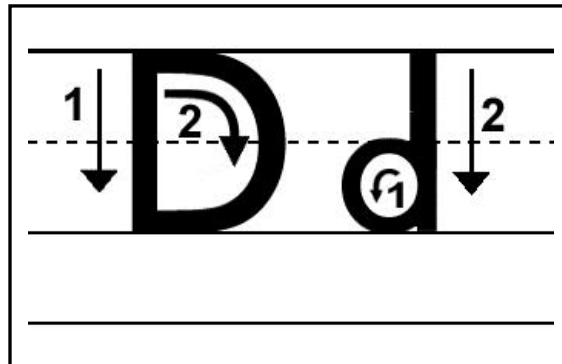
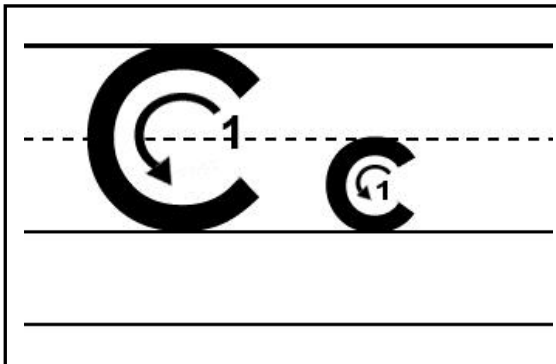
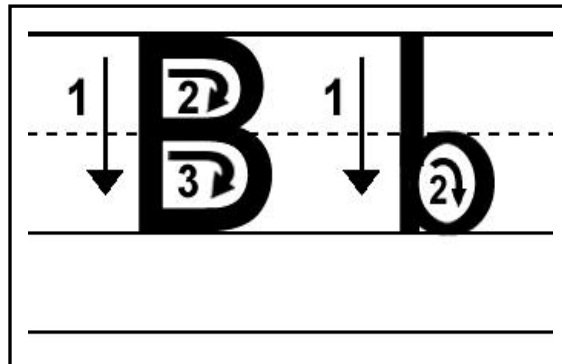
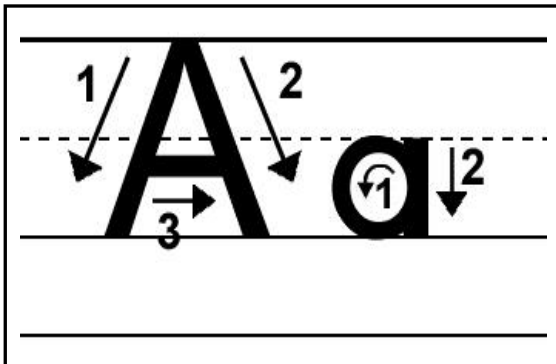
3. Curve-Line Letters



4. Slant-Line Letters

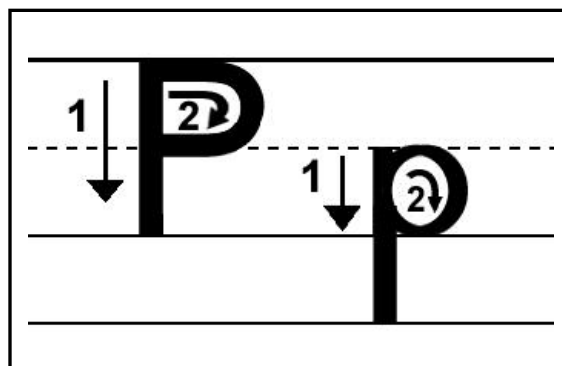
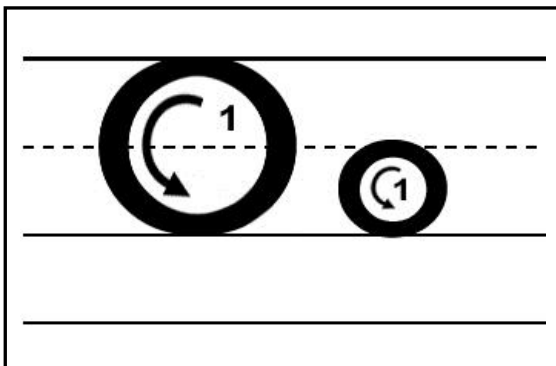
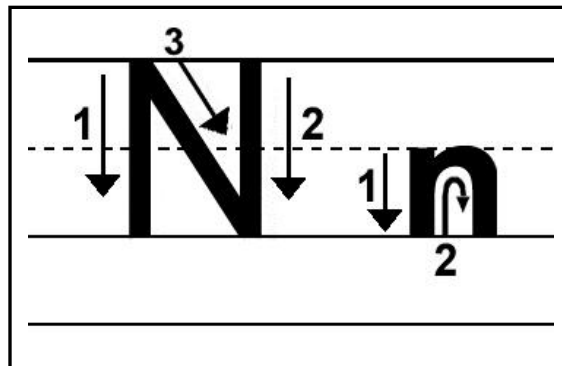
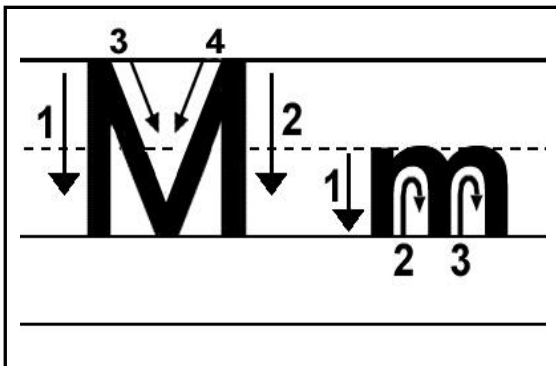
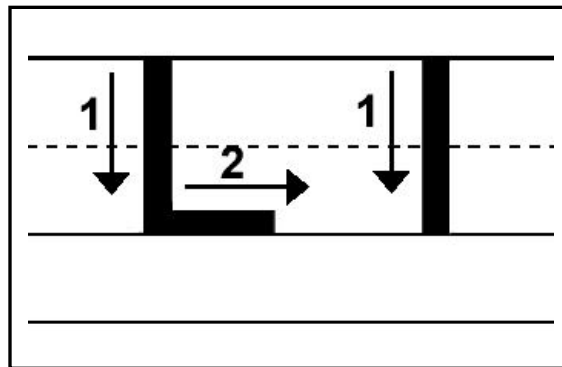
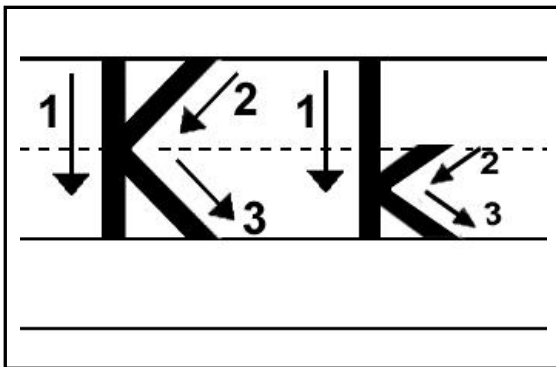
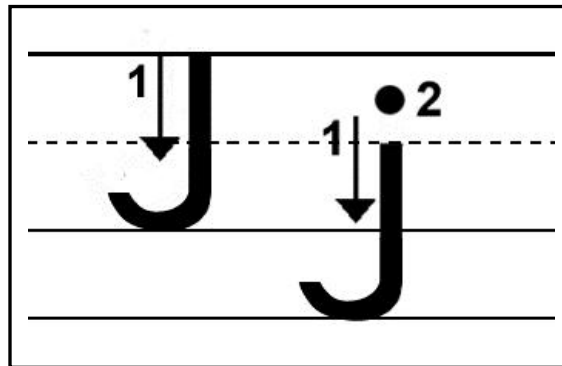
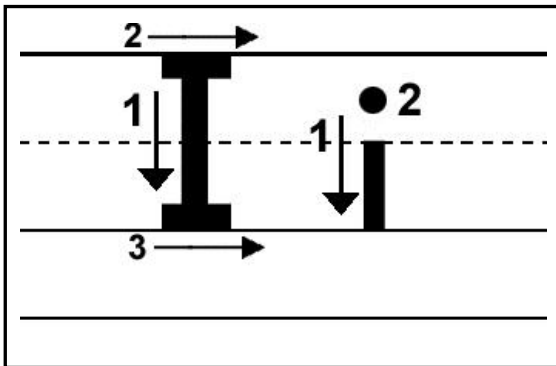


TRADITIONAL MANUSCRIPT



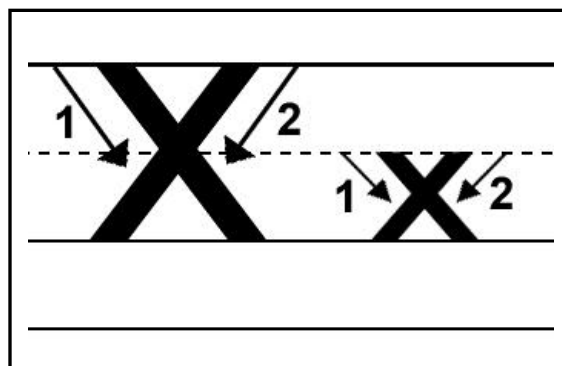
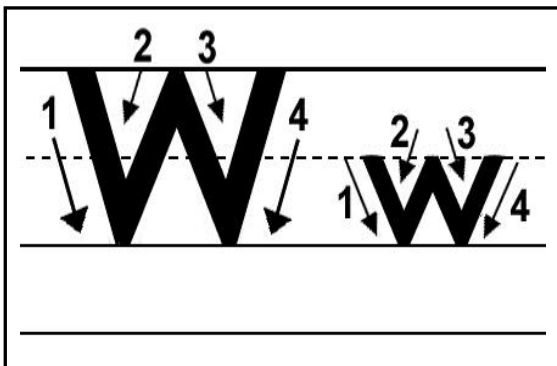
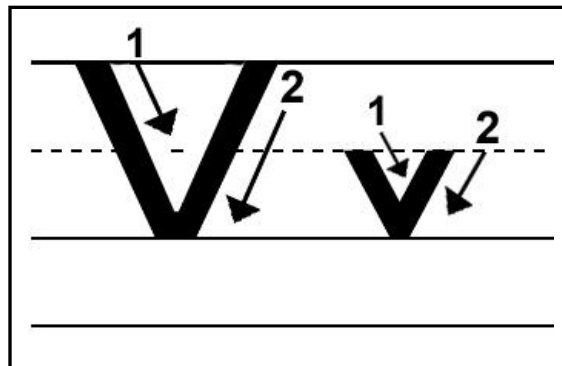
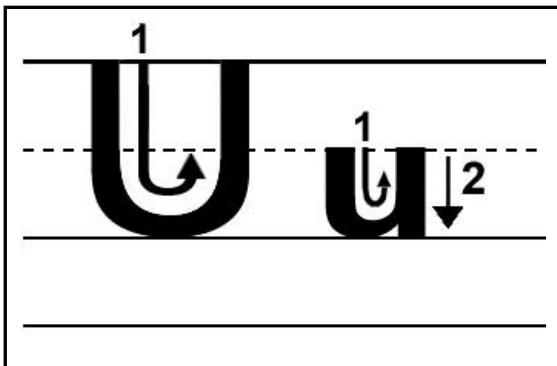
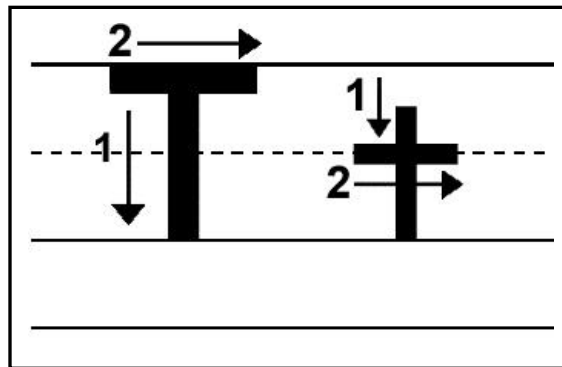
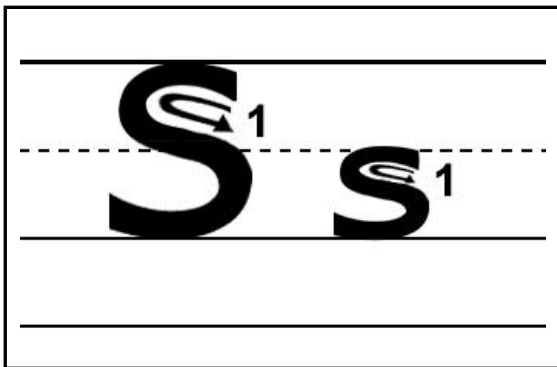
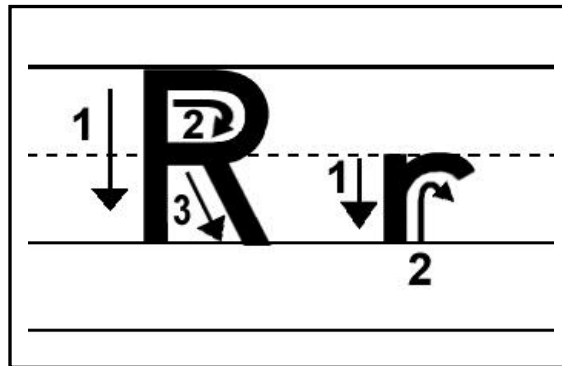
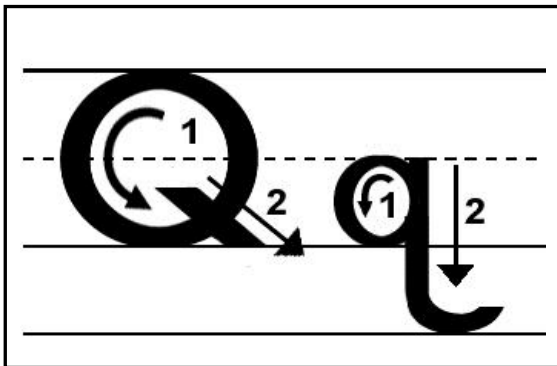
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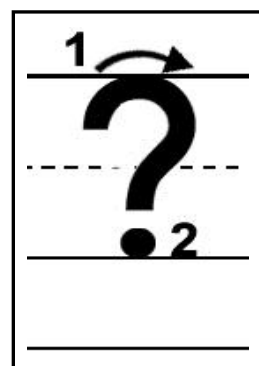
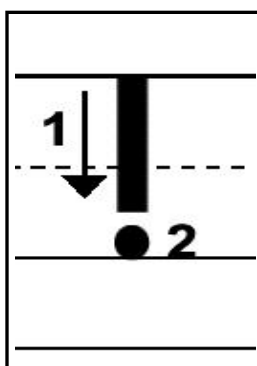
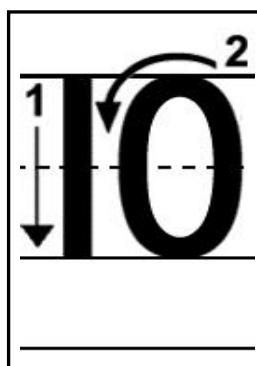
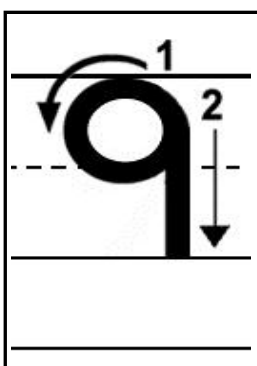
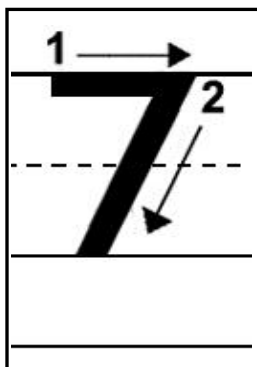
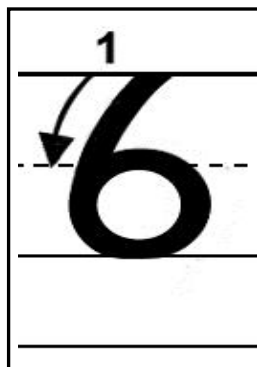
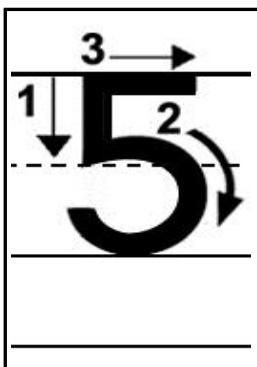
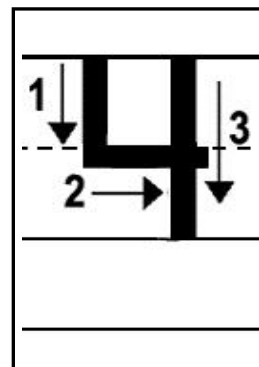
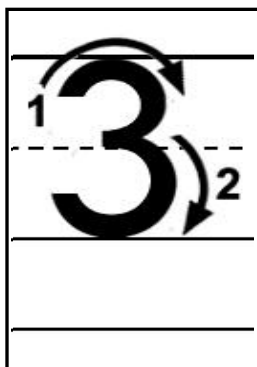
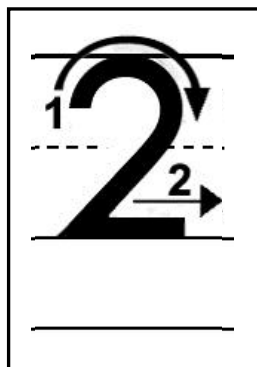
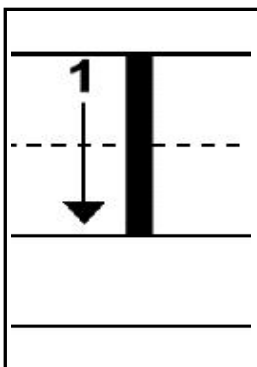
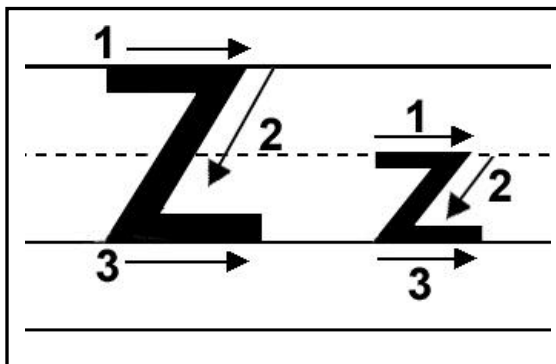
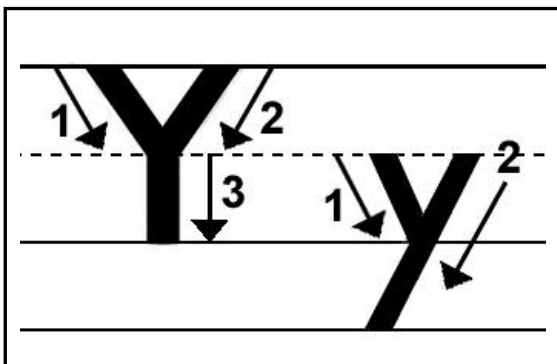
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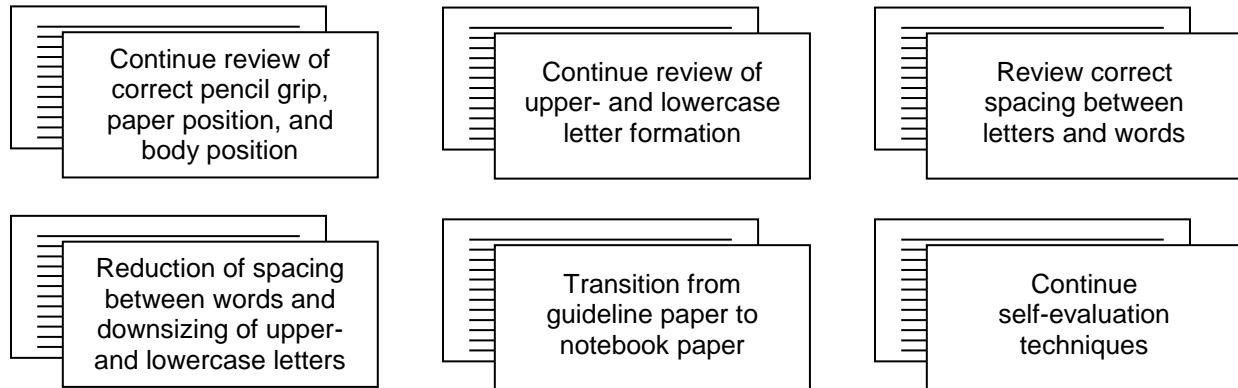
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Second Grade

Skills to Be Taught:



First Six Weeks

- Continue review of correct pencil grip, paper position, and body position.
- Continue review of upper- and lowercase letter formation with aim for manuscript mastery.
- Review correct spacing between letters and words.
- Continue self-evaluation techniques.

Second Six Weeks

- Continue review of correct pencil grip, paper position, and body position.
- Continue review of upper- and lowercase letter formation with aim for manuscript mastery.
- Review correct spacing between letters and words.
- Transition from guideline paper to notebook paper.
- Continue self-evaluation techniques.

Third Six Weeks

- Continue review of correct pencil grip, paper position, and body position.
- Continue review of upper- and lowercase letter formation with aim for manuscript mastery.
- Review correct spacing between letters and words.
- Reduction of spacing between words and downsizing of upper- and lowercase letters
- Transition from guideline paper to notebook paper.
- Continue self-evaluation techniques.

Fourth-Sixth Six Weeks

- Continue review of correct pencil grip, paper position, and body position.
- Continue review of upper- and lowercase letter formation with aim for manuscript mastery.
- Review correct spacing between letters and words.
- Reduction of spacing between words and downsizing of upper and lowercase letters
- Transition from guideline paper to notebook paper.
- Continue self-evaluation techniques.

*Basic cursive readiness for second grade will be a site-based decision and must adhere to the 3-5 guidelines established by the 2001 Handwriting Curriculum Committee.

MECHANICS

Manuscript

Pencil Position and Grip

After determining handedness of pupils, teachers should ensure that proper pencil grip and pencil position are being practiced.



**Left-Handed
Pencil Position
and Grip**

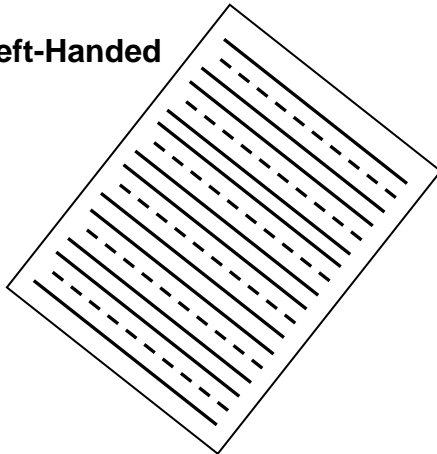
**Right-Handed
Pencil Position
and Grip**



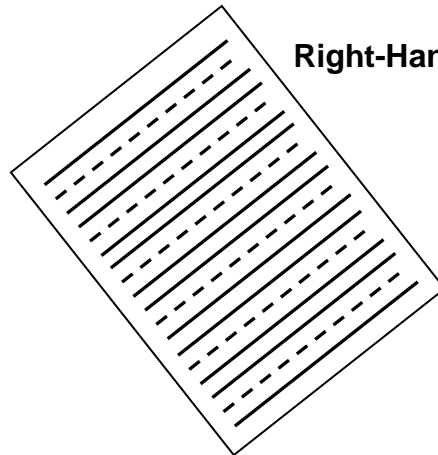
Paper Position

Position paper correctly, pull down-strokes in the proper direction, and shift the paper as the writing progresses across the line.

Left-Handed



Right-Handed



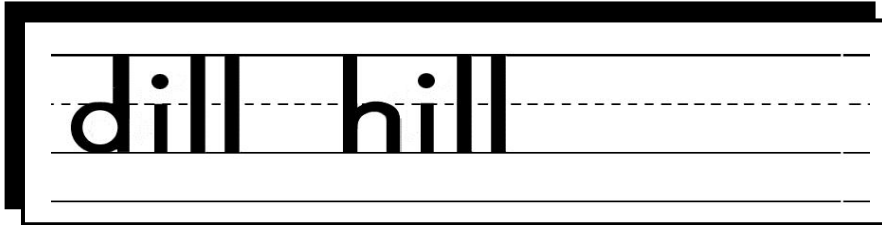
Body Position

Proper body position is important to ensure legibility in writing as well as to promote those factors that lend to good health. Students should sit straight in their chairs, leaning forward slightly to place arms on the desk top in the proper writing position.

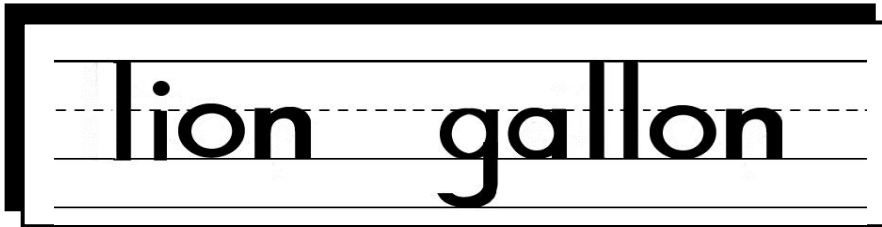
SPACING

Spacing between letters in words is done visually. Follow these three rules to help maintain correct spacing between letters.

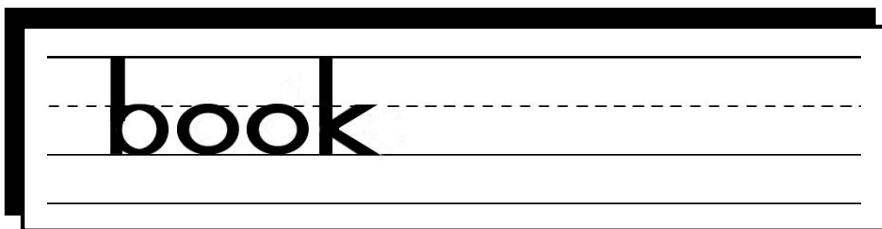
1. The widest space is between two straight lines. Write the words:



2. There is less space between a straight-line letter and a circle letter. Write the words:



3. The least amount of space is found between two circle letters. Write the word:



4. There should be enough space between words to insert a lowercase o. Allow enough space for two lowercase o's between sentences.

This is correct spacing. It...

HANDWRITING MOTIVATORS

The following are just a few activities to aid the teacher in keeping handwriting instruction interesting and maintaining legible handwriting with all students.

1

Prepare two handwriting stations. Decorate one with a bright smiley face and the other with a sad face. Encourage students to evaluate their own handwriting by comparing it to a displayed model and place it in the proper station.

2

Students will attempt better handwriting when they know outsiders will view it. Reserve a place in the hall or other central location to display the best handwriting of the week, month, etc.

3

During the first week of school, select one paper that each student has written that will provide an “average” sample of the student’s handwriting. Also ask for a sample of their “best” handwriting to be included in the folder. Be sure that the samples are dated. Repeat the process during the first week of each month of the school year. Each time a month passes and the new papers are added to the student’s file, take a few minutes to notice where the student’s skill is improving. Note also the improvement that is evident on the “best” paper samples as compared to the “average” samples that you choose at random from their daily work. Help each student set goals for each new month. Give awards for improvement.

4

To take the boredom out of handwriting, use catchy riddles or poems. Write these on sheets of paper so the students may each choose one to write that is different than those of his classmates. Students may then share riddles or poems and compare handwriting papers.

5

Begin by telling the class one handwriting problem that you have had and how recognizing the problem enabled you to overcome it. Next, ask the students to look over their handwriting to locate one problem they have. Ask them to suggest ways they can work to overcome the problem. Keep encouraging students to practice.

6

Write **Good, Better, Best** on the chalkboard and have the students write the same words at the top of their handwriting paper. Distribute the students' papers. (They should be recently written papers but may be from any school subject.) Ask the students to pick out five letters that they think are "Good" and write them under the word "Good." Next, ask them to find five letters that they think are "Better" and five letters that they think are the "Best." Have them write these letters under the proper headings on their handwriting papers. Have the students study and practice the letter forms of those they placed in the "Good" and "Better" columns. Encourage them to make the good "Better" and the better "Best."

7

Label a file folder for each student. Have each student pick out the paper he feels is his best work during that week of school. Keep the folder as an open file so that a student may challenge his best paper at any time with another he thinks is better. The better paper would then become the one kept in the file. In this way, the student has the opportunity at any time to compete with his own efforts.

8

Project an anonymous handwriting sample for all students to view using an overhead projector. Allow students to verbally critique the handwriting.

9

Award students who have learned to write a certain number of letters legibly and neatly.

10

Write a message containing one or two illegible words. Send the message through several people and consider the information gained by the last reader.

11

Arrange three pockets for students' papers to be filed in labeled "In a Hurry," "Just So-So," and "My Best."

TEACHING HANDWRITING THROUGH MODALITY STRENGTHS

Each person has a dominant modality. Whether visual, auditory, or kinesthetic, this modality is the style in which a student best receives and retains information. Barbe and Lucas, noted authorities on handwriting, present these three styles of learning as they relate to the handwriting curriculum in the following outline.

1



Visual
(with model)

- a. Given letter models, writes lowercase manuscript letters
- b. Given letter models, writes uppercase manuscript letters
- c. Given numeral models, writes numerals one through thirty
- d. Given models, writes number words one through ten
- e. Given letter models, writes without reversing letters that are frequently reversed: b-d, p-g-q
- f. Given word models, writes without reversing words that are frequently reversed: on-no, was-saw
- g. Given letter models, writes lowercase manuscript letters grouped by similarity of strokes
- h. Given letter models, writes uppercase manuscript letters grouped by similarity of strokes
- i. Given models, writes punctuation marks: period, comma, question mark, exclamation mark, quotation mark

2

Auditory **(with oral directions, letter name, or strokes)**

- a. Told letter names, writes lowercase manuscript letters
- b. Told letter names, writes uppercase manuscript letters
- c. Given letter sound, writes letter
- d. Told letter names, says letter strokes
- e. Told numeral names, writes numerals one through thirty
- f. Told numeral names, writes number words one through ten
- g. Given oral directions, writes lowercase manuscript letters grouped by similarity of strokes
- h. Given oral directions, writes uppercase manuscript letters grouped by similarity of strokes
- i. Told names of punctuation marks, writes: period, comma, question mark, quotation mark, exclamation mark
- j. Told letter names, writes without reversing letters that are frequently reversed: b-d, p-g-q
- k. Told words, writes without reversing words that are frequently reversed: on-no, was-saw

3

Kinesthetic **(tracing, monitoring, chalkboard)**

- a. Given example, traces or motions in air lowercase letters grouped by similarity of strokes
- b. Given example, traces or motions in air uppercase letters grouped by similarity of strokes
- c. Given example, traces or motions numerals

DIAGNOSTIC CHART FOR MANUSCRIPT WRITING

Shape

- Problem:** Letters slanted
- Possible Cause:** Paper slanted
- Remediation:**
- Place paper straight and pull straight line strokes toward center of body.
 - Visual model on paper or desk vs. board
 - Review strokes of specific letters.
 - Immediate feedback for correction

- Problem:** Varies from standard
- Possible Cause:** Improper mental image of letter
- Remediation:**
- Have pupil write problem letters on chalkboard.
 - Review strokes of specific letters.
 - Immediate feedback for correction

Size

- Problem:** Too large
- Possible Cause:** Improper mental image of letter
- Remediation:**
- Have pupil write problem letters on chalkboard.

Size (Continued)

Problem: Too large
Possible Cause: Poor understanding of writing lines
Remediation:

- Reteach size concept by pointing out purpose of each line on writing paper.
- Use of model for correct size
- Try larger paper; bolder lines
- Bold paper with dashed midline
- Have student identify which letters are too large.

Problem: Too large
Possible Cause: Exaggerated arm movement
Remediation:

- Reduce arm movement, especially on circle and part-circle letters.
- Encourage more finger movement-- stabilize at wrist.

Problem: Too small
Possible Cause: Poor understanding of writing lines
Remediation:

- Reteach size concept by pointing out purpose of each line on writing paper.
- Use of model for correct size
- Try larger paper; bolder lines
- Bold paper with dashed midline
- Have student identify which letters are too small.

Problem: Too small
Possible Cause: Improper mental image of letter
Remediation:

- Have pupil write problem letters on chalkboard.

Problem: Not uniform
Possible Cause: Overemphasis on finger movement
Remediation:

- Stress arm movement; check arm-desk and pencil-hand positions.

Size (Continued)

- Problem:** Not uniform
- Possible Cause:** Adjusting writing hand after each letter
- Remediation:**
- Stress arm movement
 - If age-appropriate, introduce cursive writing to proceed with uniformity
 - Use of model for teaching proper letter size using lines, etc.

Space

- Problem:** Crowded letters in words
- Possible Cause:** Poor understanding of space concepts
- Remediation:**
- Reteach uniform spacing between letters (finger or pencil width).

- Problem:** Too much space between letters
- Possible Cause:** Improper lowercase letter size and shape
- Remediation:**
- Review concepts of size and shape; provide appropriate corrections under size and shape.

Alignment

- Problem:** Letters not sitting on base line
- Possible Cause:** Improper letter formation
- Remediation:**
- Evaluate work for letter shape; stress bringing straight line strokes all the way down to base line.
 - Use color cues: blue is sky, fence is dotted line, and grass is green bottom line.

Alignment (Continued)

Problem: Letters not sitting on base line
Possible Cause: Poor understanding of base line concept
Remediation:

- Review purpose of base line on writing paper.

Problem: Letters not sitting on base line
Possible Cause: Improper hand-pencil and paper-desk positions
Remediation:

- Check positions to make sure pupil is able to reach base line with ease.

Problem: Letters not of consistent height
Possible Cause: Poor understanding of size concept
Remediation:

- Review concept of letter size in relationship to lines provided on writing paper.

Line Quality

Problem: Too heavy or too light
Possible Cause: Improper writing pressure
Remediation:

- Review hand-pencil position; place wadded tissue paper in palm of writing hand to relax writing grip; demonstrate desired line quality.
- Provide softer lead pencils.
- If too heavy, use mechanical pencil; if too light, use carbon paper to encourage pressure.

WRITING PAPER

Handwriting practice lines consisting of solid top and bottom lines with a dashed midline.

GLOSSARY OF HANDWRITING TERMS

MANUSCRIPT

<u>Alignment:</u>	The evenness of letters along the baseline and along their tops with all the letters of the same size at even height
<u>Backward Circle:</u>	The opposite direction from which the clock hands move (counterclockwise)
<u>Baseline:</u>	The line upon which the letters rest
<u>Cursive:</u>	Writing in which the letters are joined together in a flowing motion
<u>Descenders:</u>	Letters and/or their parts that descend below the baseline; the “tail letters” descend
<u>Descender Space:</u>	Space below the baseline which marks the lowest point to which “tail letters” descend
<u>Forward Circle:</u>	The direction the hands of a clock move (clockwise direction)
<u>Headline:</u>	The top line of the writing space
<u>Horizontal Line:</u>	Left-to-right or right-to-left progression of a line used in manuscript writing
<u>Imagery:</u>	The process of perceiving (visually, auditorially, kinesthetically) the form of letters and words
<u>Intermediate Letters:</u>	All letters that extend halfway between the midline and headline (In manuscript, only the letter t is an intermediate letter.)
<u>Line Quality:</u>	The smoothness, thickness, and evenness of the pen or pencil line

<u>Lowercase Letter:</u>	A letter written or printed in a size smaller than or in a form differing from its corresponding uppercase letter; also called the “small letters” in primary grades
<u>Manuscript:</u>	Writing in which the letters are not joined, and the writing instrument is lifted after most strokes; also called “print writing”
<u>Maximum Letters:</u>	All letters of the greatest height from the baseline upward; in the manuscript form of writing all uppercase letters and the lowercase letters b, d, f, h, k, and l
<u>Midline:</u>	A line that is halfway between the baseline and the headline
<u>Minimum Letters:</u>	All letters extending from baseline to midline; in a manuscript the lowercase letters a, c, e, g, i, j, m, n, o, p, q, r, s, u, v, w, x, y, and z
<u>Modality:</u>	The sensory mode (visual, auditory, kinesthetic) through which information is received
<u>Proportion:</u>	The relationship in height of letters to each other and to the writing space
<u>Retrace:</u>	Backtracking on same line for short distance
<u>Slant Line:</u>	The diagonal line that is a basic manuscript stroke and is always pulled downward
<u>Spacing:</u>	The distance between letters, between words, between sentences, and between lines
<u>Uppercase Letter:</u>	A letter often written or printed in a form differing from its corresponding lowercase letter; a capital letter of the alphabet
<u>Vertical Line:</u>	One of the manuscript basic strokes; it is always pulled downward (except in uppercase manuscript U)