

## The Eight Key Components of Handwriting

When a child writes well, they're doing so many things! Can you name some of the components of handwriting skill? (Discussion)

Here are 8 components:

**Memory** – Remembering and writing dictated letters and numbers

Quick and automatic recall of letters and numbers is very important. Memory is essential for all independent handwriting. Poor memory hurts production, speed, and accuracy.

**Orientation** – Facing letters and numbers in the correct direction

Beginners may reverse a “few” letters and numbers. But with good instruction, children can learn how to orient letters and numbers correctly. Orientation errors are distracting; children stop to think about which way the letters or numbers go. Orientation errors cause spelling and legibility mistakes.

**Placement** – Putting letters and numbers on the baseline

Placing letters and numbers on a line makes writing easier to read. It is important for the flow of writing. Haphazard placement makes printing appear immature, messy, or even illegible.

**Size** – How big or small a child chooses to write

Children need to be able to control their movements so their writing isn't too big for the current grade. Writing too large causes problems with school papers, speed, and spacing.

**Start** – Where each letter or number begins

Good starting habits allow children to maintain neatness even when they print quickly. Children who become messy when they print quickly are typically children with incorrect starting habits. They often start letters at the bottom.

**Sequence** – Order and stroke direction of the letter or number parts

The ability to form letter or number parts correctly is acquired through direct teaching and consistent practice. If children do not form parts in the right sequence, speed and neatness are affected.

**Control** – Neatness and proportion of letters and numbers

Control does not usually require direct remediation. Problems with control are almost always caused by poor habits. If the child has an awkward pencil grip, control will be affected. If the child has a problem with start or sequence, control will be affected. As habits improve, so will the child's control.

**Spacing** – Amount of space between letters in words, and between words in sentences

Spacing is important to the legibility and uniformity of writing. Problems with spacing may be made worse by poorly designed worksheets that do not give enough room for writing.

## How to Recognize Problems with the Components (Discuss the Sample)

Story Map	
Title	BIG DUCK SOUP
Author	MAURICE SENN
Main Characters	1. LITTLE BRADDOCK 4 DUCK

### What to do if you suspect there's a problem...

Many handwriting problems can be avoided or solved by good teaching strategies and good materials. The first step is spotting the problem. Then use active teaching strategies and good materials to solve the problem. Consider consulting an individual trained in handwriting assessment and remediation if you need more help.

**Memory** – Play visual memory games with letters. Use flash cards or hands-on manipulatives to assist children in learning letter discrimination.

**Orientation** – Teach children that English is a top to bottom, left to right language. We want letters to be right side up and to face the right way. Teach orientation for B D E F P R N by having child write the big line on the left edge of a paper. Then next part will be on the right side. Teach children to make letter c, and then teach them to write c when they begin a, d, g. Those letters will face the right way then.

**Placement** – Model how letters sit on lines. Start with easy paper (one with few lines) and then introduce other types. Model how different paper is used and how letters sit on the lines. Create games where the child is encouraged to bump lines.

**Size** – Use age-appropriate paper. Avoid too much variety of sizes in worksheets and papers. Provide paper that guides the size of letters until children naturally develop a sense of size.

**Start** – Demonstrate starting position. Correct all bottom-up writing. No letters should start at the bottom, including lowercase.

**Sequence** – Demonstrate letter formation. Teach letters that use similar formation patterns together. For example: Letters p r n m h b all begin with a down stroke and then go up and over. Letters o a d g q all begin with a c stroke and then change into another letter.

**Control** – Control can be affected by poor handwriting habits. One of the most common is poor pencil grip. Teach children to hold their pencils correctly. If a child is only struggling with the area of control and everything else is fine, seek the help of an Occupational Therapist.

**Spacing** – Create and use worksheets that model good spacing. Create worksheets that give children ample room to write. Teach children how to leave room for “nothing” between their words.

# Handwriting Without Tears®

## Get Set for School™ Pre-K Overview

### Building a Foundation in Pre-K

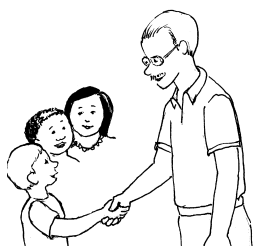
How well children succeed in school and life depends on the people in their lives and their early environments. Helping children develop a strong foundation is very important work and you are important! This presentation is going to help you understand how to build skills in the areas of:

- Playing and Singing
- Motor
- Social/Emotional
- Cognitive/Language
- Sensory
- Visual Perceptual

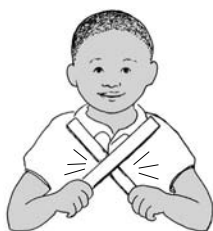
By developing these skills, we can assist children in forming good habits that will carry over into their abilities to color, draw, sing, count and later as they begin to write their letters and numbers.

### Begin to Organize Children with Music Activities and Wood Pieces

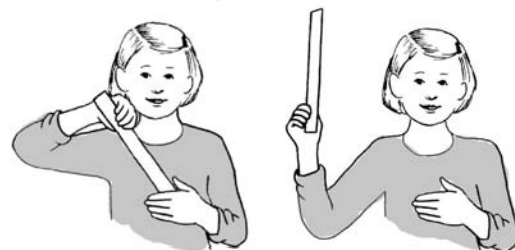
Shake Hands with Me and Shake Hands with A Friend



Using Music to Introduce Wood Pieces



Develop Language Using Wood Pieces



### Teach Body Awareness with Mat Man™

Mat Man™ activities are social and develop a child's body awareness, drawing and counting.

#### Mat Man™

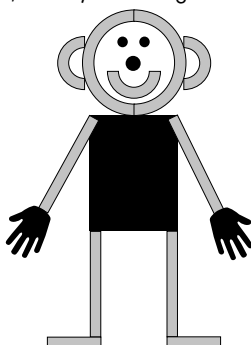
Tune: *The Bear Went Over the Mountain*

Mat Man has	1 head,	1 head,	1 head,
Mat Man has	2 eyes,	2 eyes,	2 eyes,
Mat Man has	1 nose,	1 nose,	1 nose,
Mat Man has	1 mouth,	1 mouth,	1 mouth,
Mat Man has	2 ears,	2 ears,	2 ears,
Mat Man has	1 body,	1 body,	1 body,
Mat Man has	2 arms,	2 arms,	2 arms,
Mat Man has	2 hands,	2 hands,	2 hands,
Mat Man has	2 legs,	2 legs,	2 legs,
Mat Man has	2 feet,	2 feet,	2 feet,

Mat Man has	1 head,	So that he can*
(repeat)	2 eyes,	(repeat)
	1 nose,	
	1 mouth,	
	2 ears,	
	1 body,	To hold what is inside
	2 arms,	So that he can*
	2 hands,	(repeat)
	2 legs,	
	2 feet,	

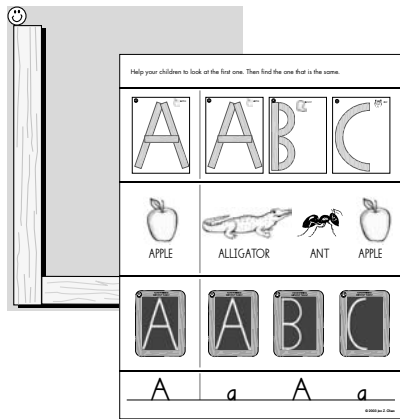
think
see
smell
eat
hear
heart, lungs, stomach
reach
clap
stand
walk

\* Wait for your children to respond. Add extra verses when you add new accessories. Your children may call out other body functions (feet= run, kick, dance). Encourage this while keeping the song/activity moving along.



# Hands-On Letter Play—There's Something for Everyone

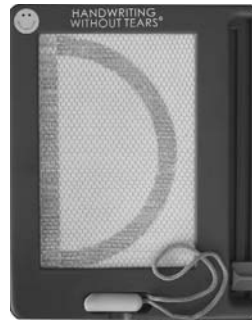
**Building Capital Letters**  
is fun and the ☺ will  
organize children



**Roll--A-Dough Letters™**  
strengthen hands  
while teaching letter skills



**Stamp and See Screen™**  
develops letter sequencing



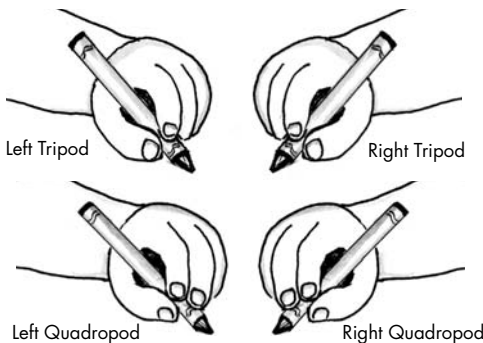
**Slate** work is multi-sensory.  
Small chalk/sponge  
prepares hands for writing.



## Hold On...You Have to Teach Grip

Research shows that close to 50% of three year olds have the fine motor ability to hold a small crayon correctly.\* But the correct grip has to be taught to children.

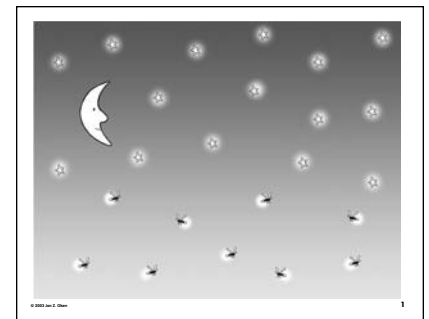
Standard/Alternate Grips



Demonstrate and Teach Grip  
using the **Crayon Song**



Teach children to "Aim and Scribble"



\*Research states that close to 50% of 3-year-olds are already using a mature tripod grasp.

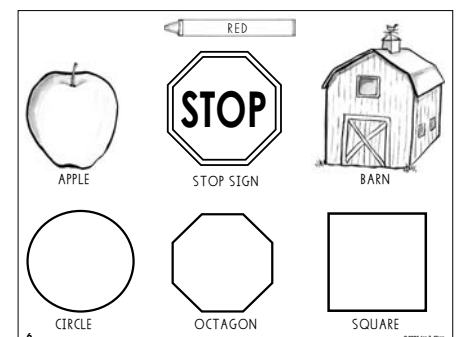
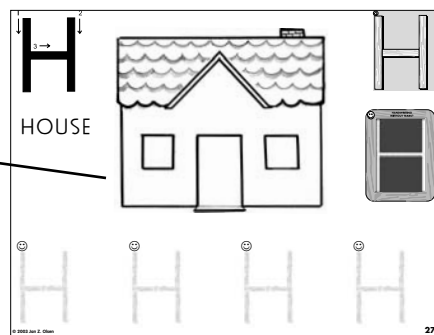
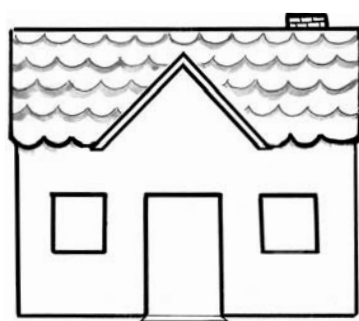
Schneck, C.M., & Henderson, A. (1990). Descriptive analysis of the developmental progression of grip position for pencil and crayon in nondysfunctional children. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 44, 893-900.

Tseng, M.H. (1998). Development of pencil grip position in preschool children. *Occupational Therapy Journal of Research*, 18, 207-224.

Yakimishyn, J.E. & Magill-Evans, J. (2002). Comparisons among tools, surface orientation, and pencil grasp for children 23 months of age. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 56, 564-572.

## Coloring Prepares Small Hands for Writing

Coloring is a fun, non-threatening task that promotes hand development and control. Coloring is a great pre-writing activity. The pictures in the HWT pre-writing workbook develop coloring skills in young children. The pictures are large, black and white illustrations without distracting background images. The pictures are easy for a small child to recognize. Pictures promote left to right directionality. The illustrations encourage children to add their own ideas to the page (i.e. grass around the house, window panes, or a door knob). Additionally, color pages help children learn shape recognition.



# Teach Strokes, Shapes, Letters and Numbers in Developmental Order

When introducing strokes, shapes, letter and numbers to children use developmental principles. Some strokes are easier to write (developmentally) than others. Children gradually develop the ability to copy forms in a very predictable order.\* This order is shown below:



\*Gessell, Arnold, and others. The First Years Five Years of Life. New York: Harpers and Row. 1940

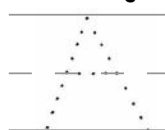
## Tips on Tracing

It is important to use a model that is familiar to what children see and do. When having children trace, use models that look continuous. Modeling shapes, strokes and letters with highlighters work well for tracing over.

Simple



Confusing



## Preschool Developmental Teaching Order

### Vertical/Horizontal Strokes, Shapes and Letters

Vertical/Horizontal Strokes

Cross

L

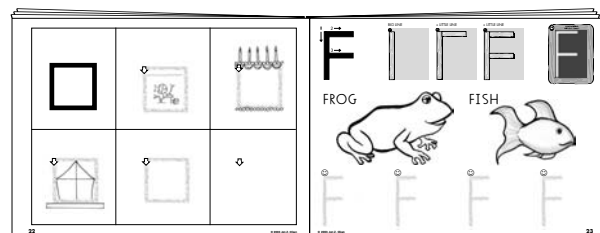
Square

F, E

Rectangle

H, T, I

U



### Magic C Strokes, Shapes and Letters

C

O

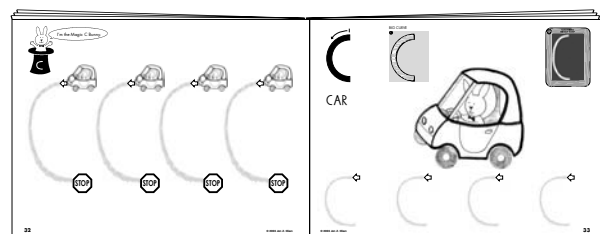
Circle

Q

G

S

J

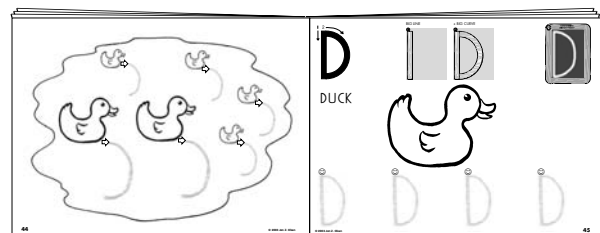


### Letters with Big and Little Curves

D

P

B



### Diagonal Strokes, Shapes, and Letters

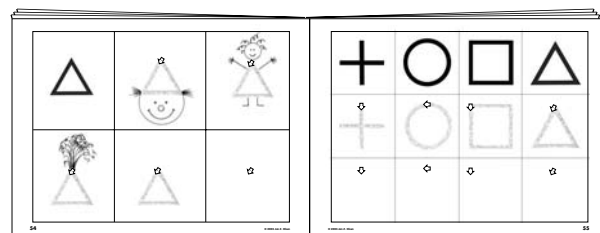
R, K, A

Triangle

V, M, N

W, X, Y, Z

Diamond



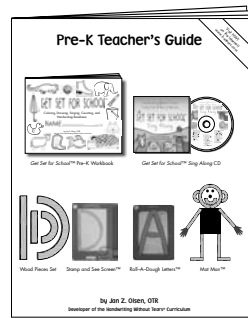
## Numbers and Counting

Teach numbers out loud. Teach numbers with meaning. HWT has fun songs, chants, fingerplays and workbook pages to assist with number recognition and counting skills.

# Take a Look at Pre-K School Readiness

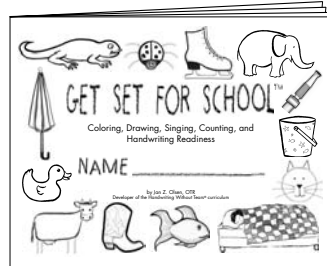
## Pre-Kindergarten Teacher's Guide

- Guide for the Pre-K workbook *Get Set for School™*
- Readiness activities for children of all ability levels
- Lesson plans for developing body awareness, good habits, coloring, drawing and handwriting skills
- Tips for using: Wood Pieces, *Get Set for School™ Sing Along CD*, Stamp and See Screen, and Roll-A-Dough Letters™



## Get Set for School™

*Get Set for School™* is a "crayon only" workbook for four year olds or older students at a Pre-K level. The workbook begins with coloring pages to develop color and shape recognition. The teacher uses these pages while helping children learn to hold the crayon correctly. This easy-to-do workbook uses a developmental sequence for shapes, pre-strokes, letters and numbers. The large, bold illustrations, are easy to color and so appealing that they encourage questions and conversation.



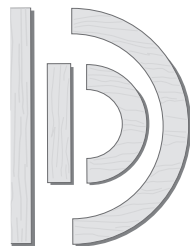
## Get Set for School™ Sing Along CD

When award winning, eight time Grammy nominated, Cathy Fink and Marcy Marxer (see [www.cathymarcy.com](http://www.cathymarcy.com)) bring their musical talents to Handwriting Without Tears®, the curriculum sings, taps, and dances! Learning the ABC's is so much fun when a dog comes to school and has to sing the ABC's. Numbers are easy when children sing about counting legs. For 6, it's "The Ant, The Bug, and The Bee" song. The songs and finger-plays on the *Get Set for School™ Sing Along CD* will delight and teach your children.



## Capital Letter Wood Pieces Set

The Capital Letter Wood Pieces set includes 26 pieces. There are: 8 big lines, 6 little lines, 6 big curves, and 6 little curves. The wood pieces are used to teach basic size, shape and position concepts. Wood pieces help children develop their fine motor, vocabulary and figure ground discrimination skills. By choosing pieces and placing them correctly, children learn to form capital letters.



## Stamp and See Screen™

Stamp and See Screen™ is a magnetic screen that measures 4" x 6" in a sturdy plastic frame. The 4 plastic magnetic pieces (big line, little line, big curve, little curve) allow children to stamp capital letters. A tool resembling chalk can be used to trace or write capital letters. The slide eraser clears the board so it can be used over and over.



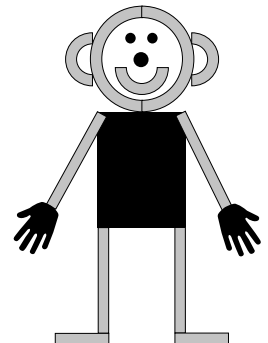
## Roll-A-Dough Letters™

Here's a product that meshes all the fun of dough and the advantages of the HWT curriculum. Use the tray with letter and number cards to delight and teach at the same time. The tray may also be used to make letters in sand or shaving cream. Set includes a plastic 4" x 6" tray, laminated letter and number cards and 12 oz of dough.



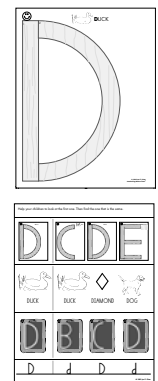
## HWT Capital Letter Wood Pieces and Mat

Build Mat Man™ and sing the "Mat Man™" song! This floor activity develops body awareness, position concepts, and pre-drawing skill. Mat Man™ is a real class pleaser for encouraging social participation and taking turns. Also use Wood Pieces with other songs to develop stopping/starting, listening, singing and position skills. When your children are ready, you can teach letters and numbers with the wood pieces and mat.



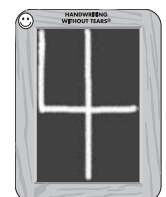
## Capital Letter Cards for Wood Pieces

The Capital Letter Cards are a readiness product for preschoolers and kindergartners. They are ideal for children who are just learning capital letters. The set includes 26 double-sided cards. The front of each card shows the image of a single capital letter formed with wood pieces and is used to teach children the stroke sequence for forming the capital letter. The back of each card has four beginning activities to help teach letter awareness.



## HWT Slate Chalkboard

The chalkboard is made of real slate, measuring 4" x 6", in a sturdy wood frame. The ☺ at the top left corner orients children and reinforces top to bottom, left to right directionality.



For more information contact:

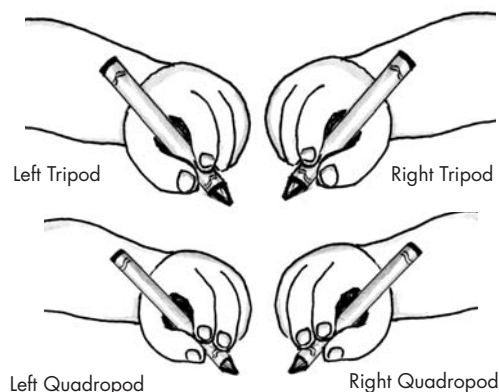
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# Handwriting Without Tears®

## Hold On...You Have to Teach Grip!

### Take a look at your neighbor's grip! What do you see?

Does your neighbor use one of these standard grips? If yes, circle the grip.



If not, mark what is standard and what is not.

	Standard	Not standard
Thumb position	_____	_____
Index position	_____	_____
Middle position	_____	_____
Position of last two fingers	_____	_____
Pencil position or angle	_____	_____

### Understanding the hand:

There are two sides to the hand. The first is considered the "mobile" side. It includes the thumb, index and middle finger. These fingers move when you write. The other side is considered the "stable" side. It includes the ring and pinky finger. These two fingers generally are closed and resting on the table during writing. The web space is the open area between the thumb and the index finger. It is where the pencil should rest during writing.

### Things to think about:

1) Good crayon and pencil grips should be actively and regularly taught. 2) Teach grips as soon as age 4 or whenever crayons are introduced. 3) Grips become automatic or habitual with repetition. 4) The older the child, the harder it is to change the pencil grip. 5) Try to change grips if it hurts to write, or if the grip makes writing inefficient. 6) Use physical devices only if demonstration and practice haven't worked.

### You can easily promote good crayon/pencil grips:

- 1) Encourage self-feeding for toddlers to develop skill using the pincer grip.
- 2) Start early writing/drawing with small broken pieces of chalk or crayon.
- 3) Encourage finger use and finger awareness with gestures, signs, and finger-plays.
- 4) Teach correct crayon grip with the Crayon Song.



### CRAYON SONG

Tune: "Open and Shut Them"

Pick up a crayon, Pick up a crayon, This is easy to do  
Pick up a crayon, Pick up a crayon, I just tell my fingers what to do  
My thumb is bent, Pointer points to the tip, Tall Man uses his side  
I tuck the last two fingers in, And take them for a ride

Now I'm holding it just right, But not too tight, Every finger knows what to do  
And now I have a big surprise, A big surprise for you  
Let's drop 'em and do it again

NOTE: As you are singing the song, it's very important to walk around the room and position children's fingers for them correctly on the crayon. It will take several repetitions before children will pick up the habit naturally.

## Pencil problems:

1) Thumb wrapped around, on top of index finger. 2) Thumb tucked in, under index finger. 3) Fisted grips. 4) Fingers splayed out, all gripping the pencil. 5) Pencils pointing straight up in the air. 6) Awkward wrist positions. 7) Pressure problems, such as too hard or too soft. 8) Difficulty with big pencils.

## How to help:

Always demonstrate proper finger position for children (especially young children). You may use devices as reminders. It's best not to use pencil grips in Kindergarten as children are just learning correct grip and just starting to write. There are a lot of devices available. Use what works for children (don't feel limited to the ones shown). If a device is used at school, parents should be educated and the same device should be sent home. It's handy to have one at home and one at school.

## Use general problem solving strategies:

Demonstrate, model, and teach the grip you want the children to learn. Use the 3 steps from HWT. Read more about them in the Teacher Guides:

- 1) Pick Up - Just pick up and hold the crayon/pencil in the air.
- 2) Aim and Scribble - Put the point on the dot and wiggle the pencil/crayon.
- 3) Color/Write — Use the crayon or pencil for drawing, coloring or writing.

Observe carefully to see what writing tool elicits a good grip:

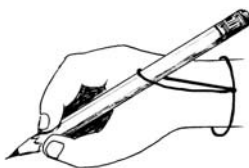
- 1) Does the child hold a small piece of chalk, or crayon correctly?
- 2) Does the child hold a different size or type of pencil correctly?
- 3) Does the child use a special grip or device correctly?

## Special tips:

1) Beginners — Avoid special grips or devices for beginners. During Pre-K and Kindergarten, focus on developing hand skills and teaching children. Use small pieces of chalk or crayon and activities to teach crayon/pencil skills.

2) Fingers splayed out — This atypical grip is difficult to discourage. Consider giving the child an extremely short pencil. Just sharpen the pencil and use pruning shears to cut it short.

3) Pencil pointing straight up in the air — Try two rubber bands looped together. One loop is on the wrist, and the other is looped over the pencil to pull the eraser/pencil back. There is a commercial version available or you may make your own with ponytail holders.

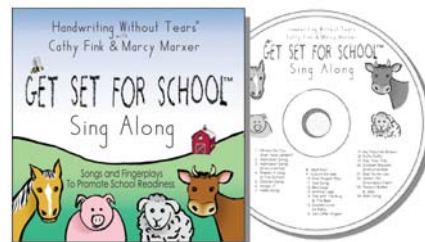


4) Pressing too hard — Actively demonstrate soft pressure. Use red or black pencils to make red/pink or black/gray marks. Experiment with mechanical pencils. Demonstrate invisible or very light writing. Let child experiment with cardboard under the paper to see if student can avoid making holes in the paper.

5) Pressing too soft — Try softer lead pencils. Use carbonless copies to see if marks go through to the yellow copy. Try to color small areas very dark with red or black pencils.

6) Awkward wrist position — Try demonstration with "Aim and Scribble" activity. Try a slanted desk/slant board or vertical surface. Place the paper correctly for the child's handedness.

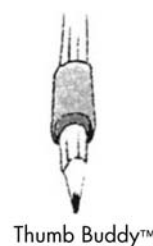
## Resource to purchase handwriting accessories:



[www.hwtears.com](http://www.hwtears.com)



Handi-Writer™



Thumb Buddy™



The Pencil Grip™



Stetro™

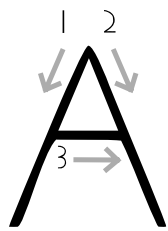


Grip Tec 3000 Pencil™

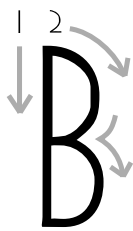
Therapro

[www.theraproducts.com](http://www.theraproducts.com)

# Handwriting Without Tears®



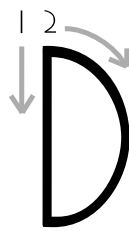
Big line  
Big line  
Little line



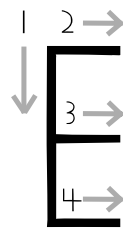
Big line  
Little curve  
Little curve



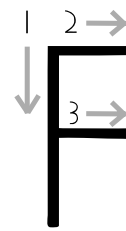
Big C curve



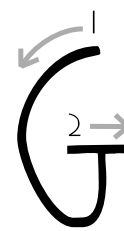
Big line  
Big curve



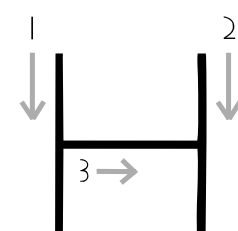
Big line  
Little line  
Little line  
Little line



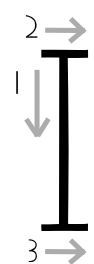
Big line  
Little line  
Little line



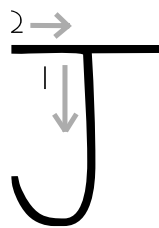
Big curve  
Little line  
Little line



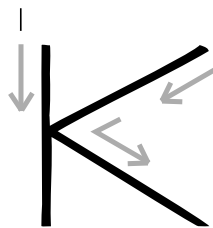
Big line  
Big line  
Little line



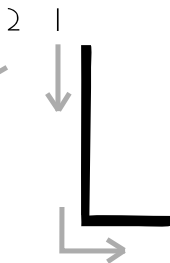
Big line  
Little line  
Little line



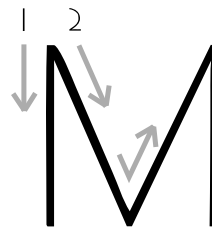
Big line  
Turn  
Little line



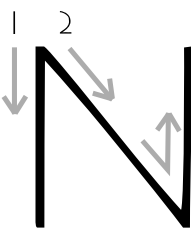
Big line  
Little line  
Little line



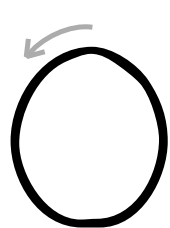
Big line  
Little line



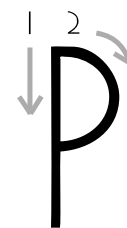
Big line  
Big line  
Big line  
Big line



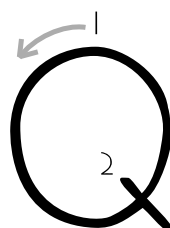
Big line  
Big line  
Big line



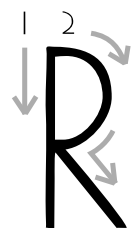
Big C curve  
Keep going



Big line  
Little curve



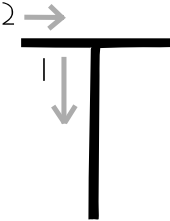
Big C curve  
Keep going  
Little line



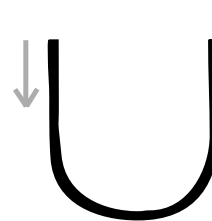
Big line  
Little curve  
Little line



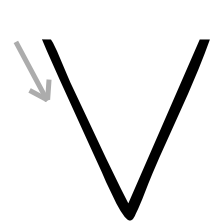
Little curve  
Turn  
Little curve



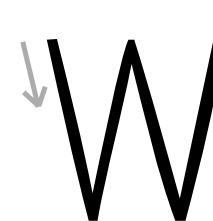
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Little line



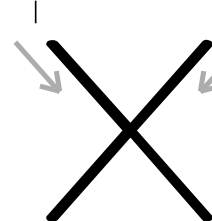
Big line  
Turn  
Big line



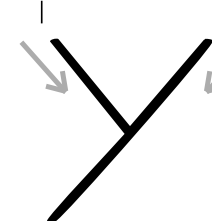
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Big line



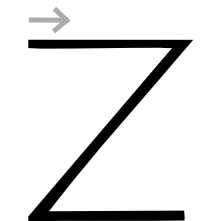
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Big line  
Big line  
Big line



Big line  
Big line



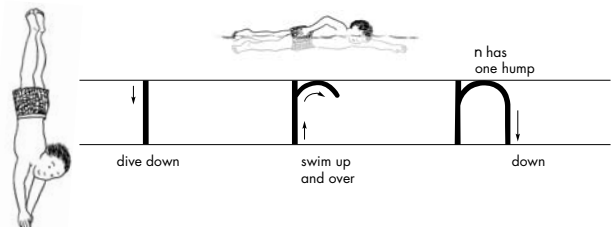
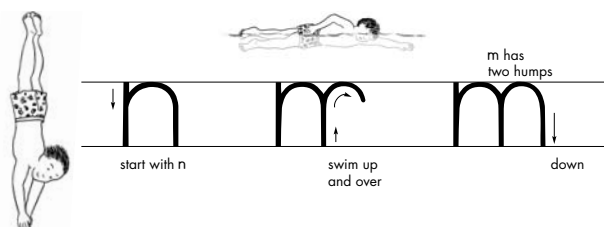
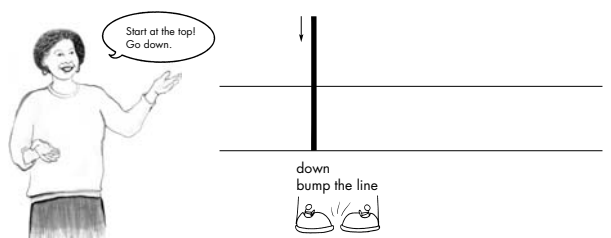
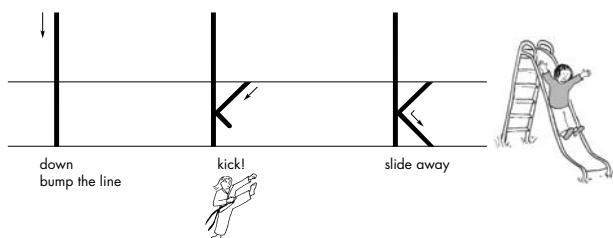
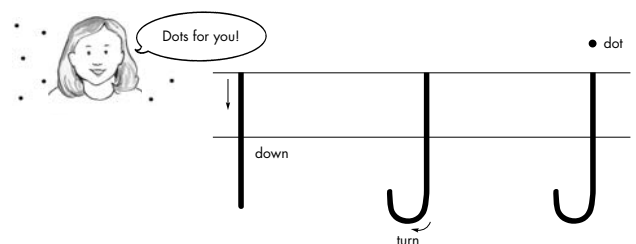
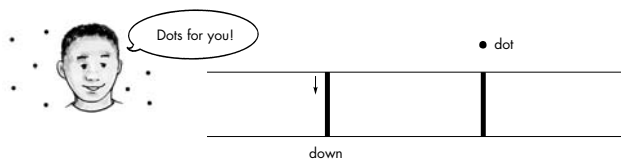
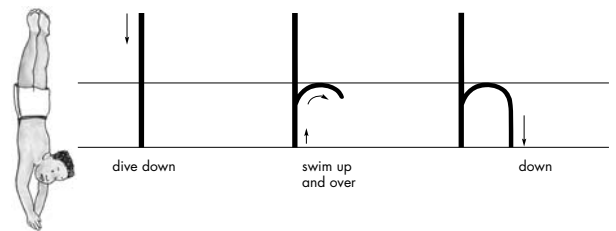
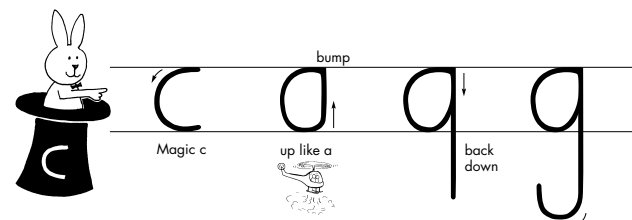
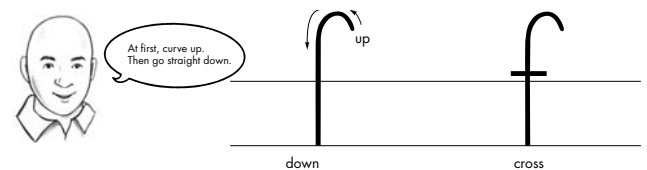
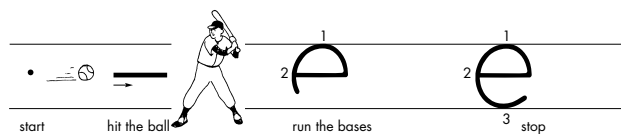
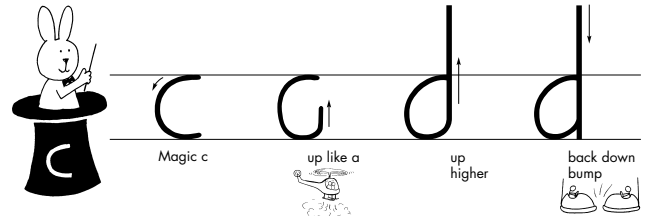
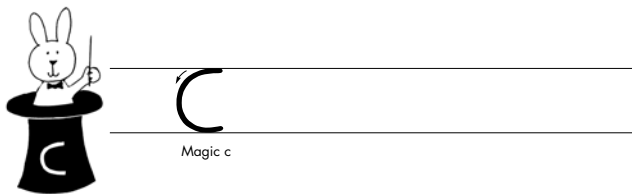
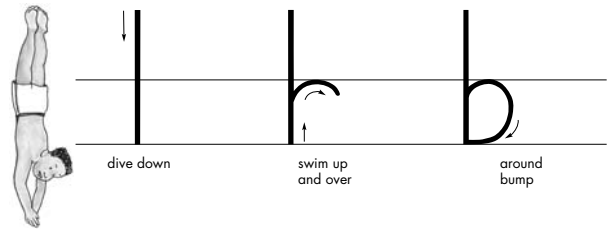
Little line  
Big line



Little line  
Big line  
Little line

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# Handwriting Without Tears®



# Handwriting Without Tears®



Magic c



keep on going



stop



swim up and over



around bump



Magic c



up like a



back down



dive down



swim up and over



little Magic c



little Magic c



turn down



curve around



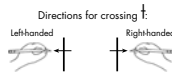
Start at the top!  
Go down.



down bump the line



cross



down, travel, up



back down



slide down



slide up



slide down and up



down and up



slide down



slide down



slide down



slide down



go across



slide down



go across

# Handwriting Without Tears®

1

1 starts in the starting corner.  
1 makes a big line down.  
1 stops in the corner.



2

2 starts in the starting corner.  
2 makes a big curve.  
2 stops in the corner.  
2 walks away on the bottom.



3

3 starts in the starting corner.  
3 makes a little curve to the middle.  
3 makes another little curve to the bottom corner.



4

4 starts in the starting corner.  
4 makes a little line down to the middle.  
4 walks across the dark night.  
4 jumps to the top and says, "I did it." (big line down)



5

5 starts in the starting corner.  
5 makes a little line down to the middle. It starts to rain.  
5 makes a little curve around.  
5 puts a little line on top to stop the rain.



b

b starts in the starting corner.  
b is a baby bear.  
b goes down to curl up in the corner.  
b is hibernating.



7

7 starts in the starting corner.  
7 makes a little line across the top.  
7 says, "I better slide down."



8

8 is different.  
8 doesn't like corners.  
8 starts at the top center.  
8 begins with S and then says, "I want to go home."



9

9 is so special.  
9 has its own corner.  
9 makes a little curve.  
9 goes up to the corner.  
9 makes a big line down.



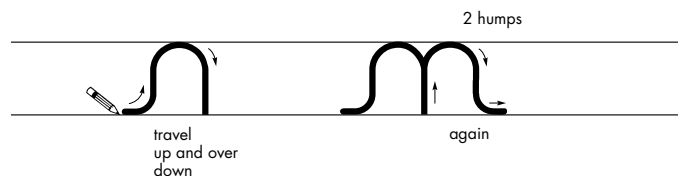
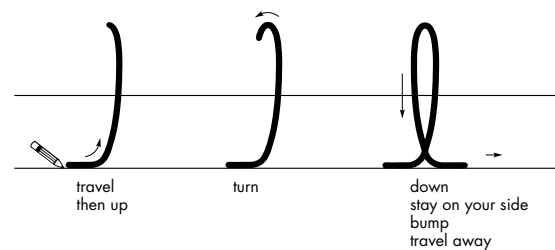
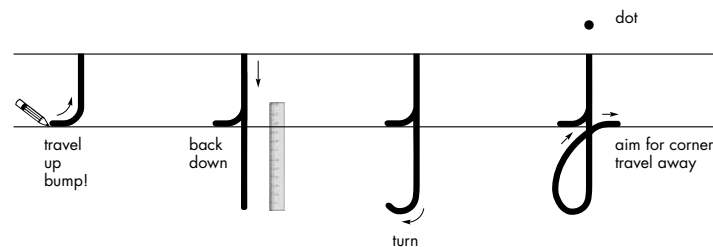
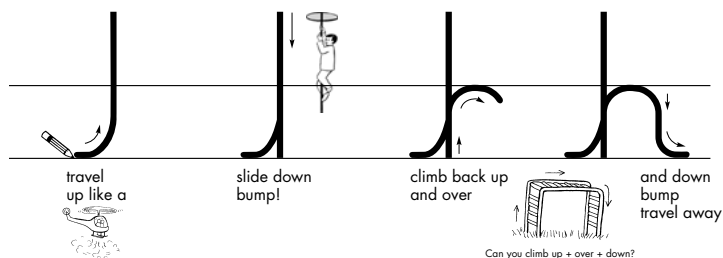
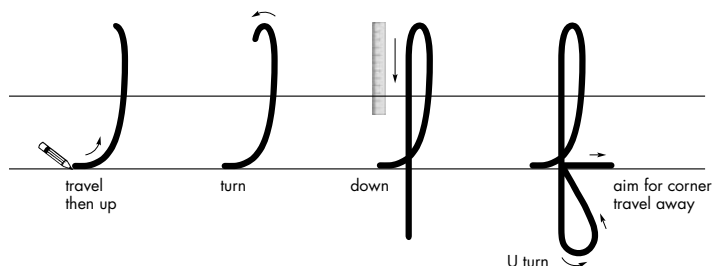
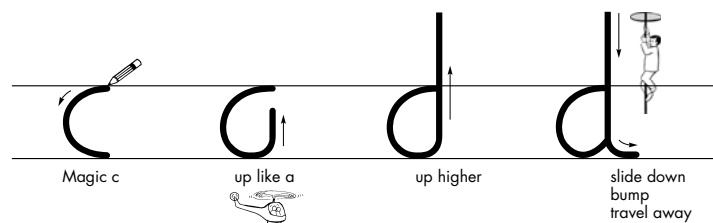
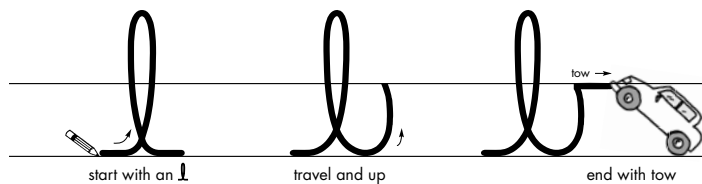
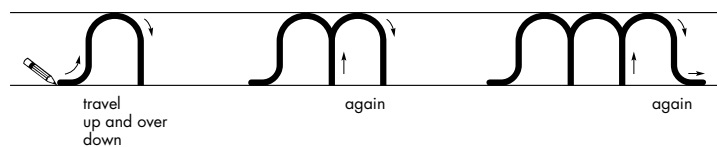
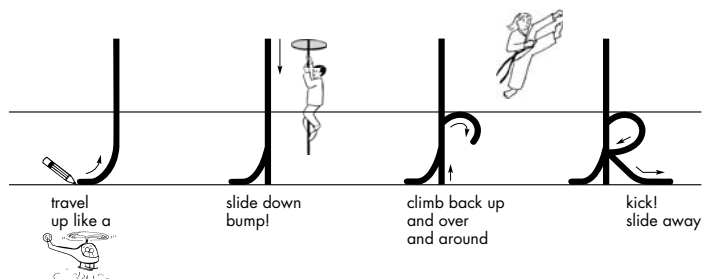
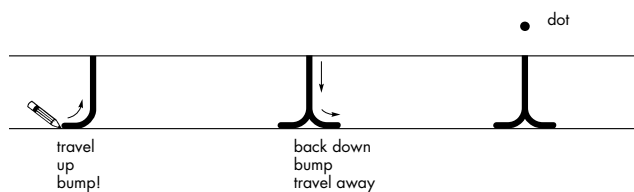
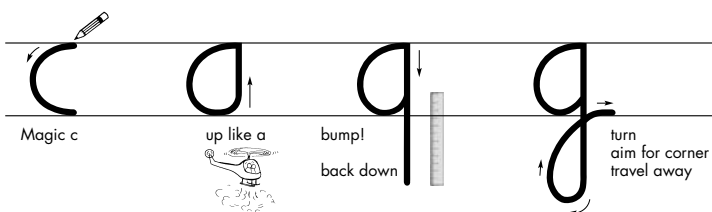
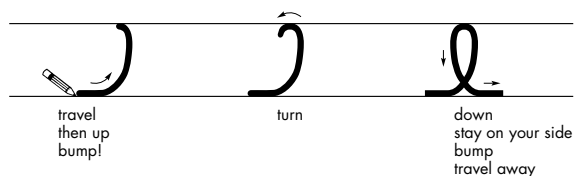
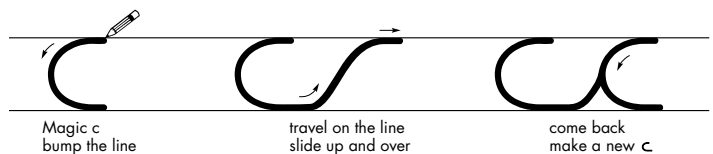
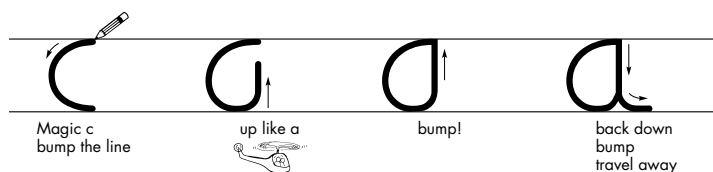
10

10 uses two places.  
1 comes first.  
0 is next.  
0 starts at the top center.  
10 is finished.

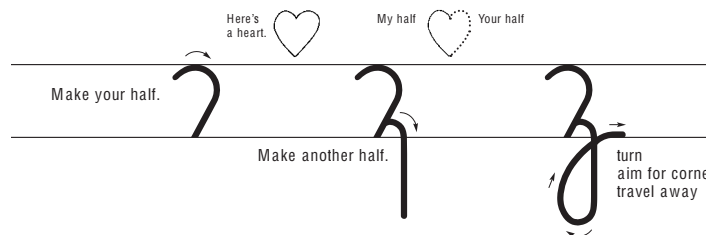
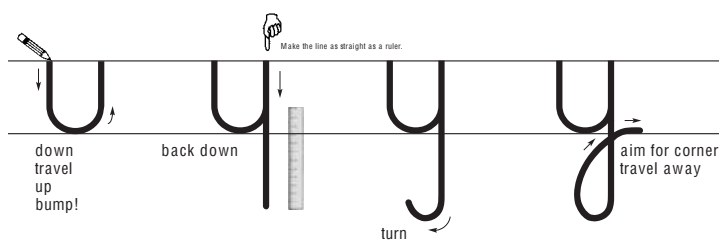
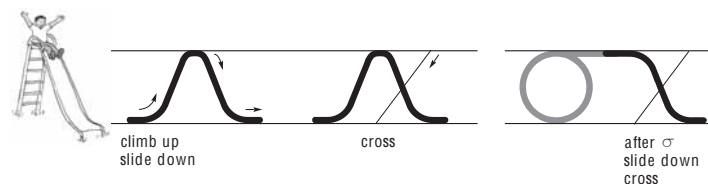
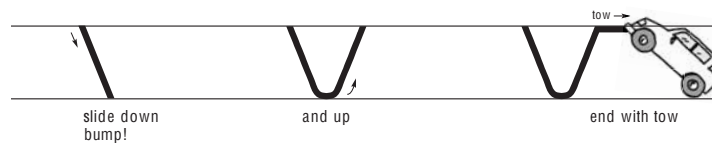
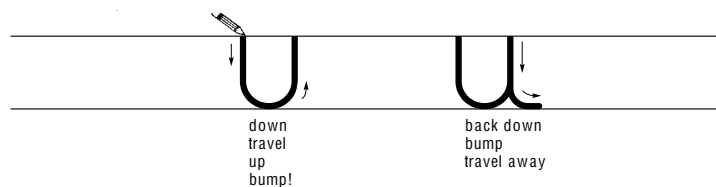
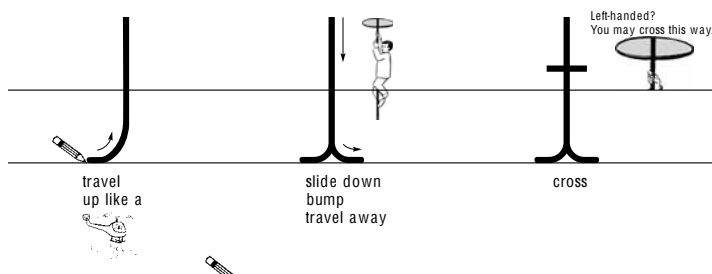
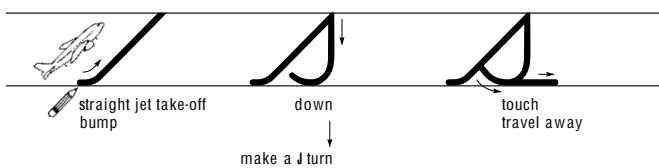
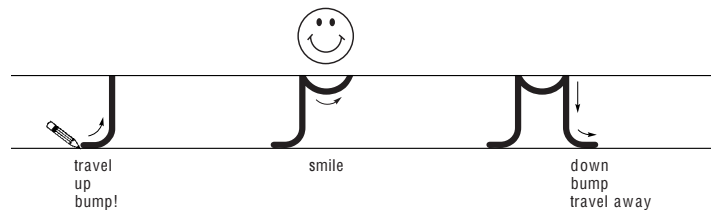
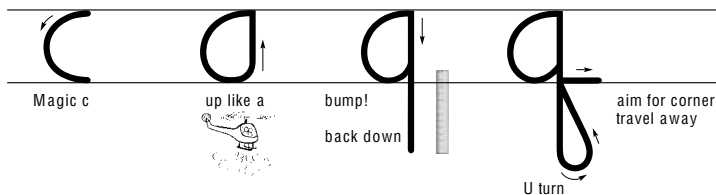
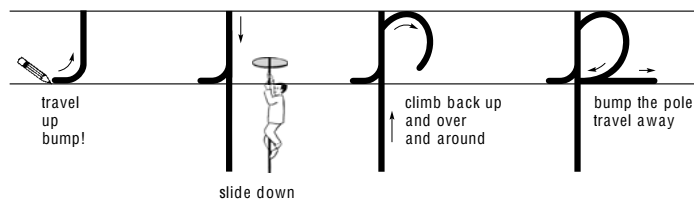
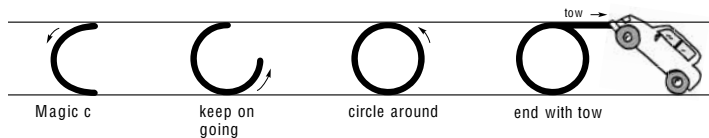


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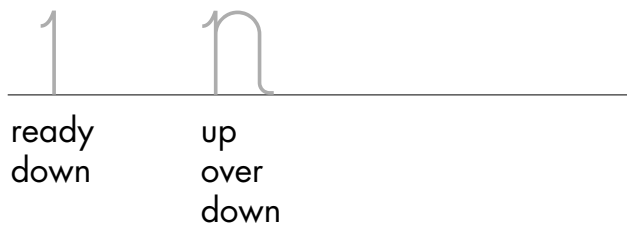
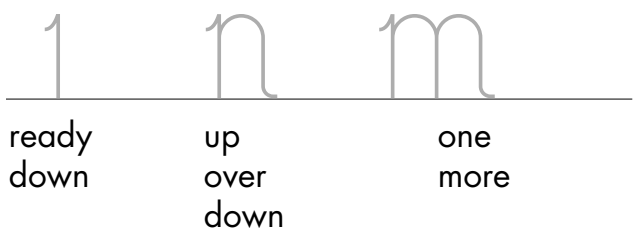
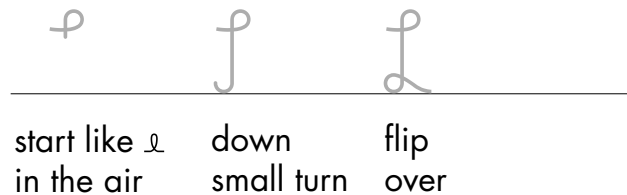
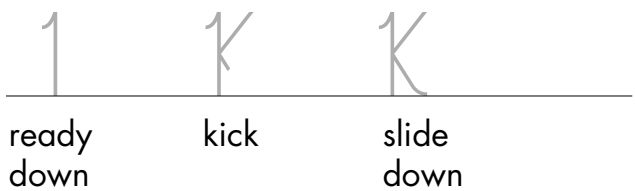
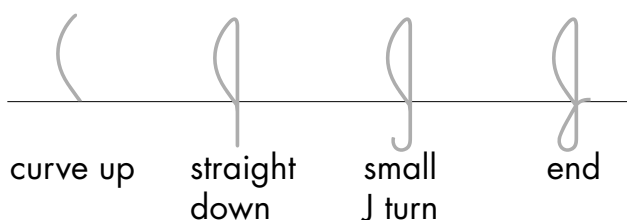
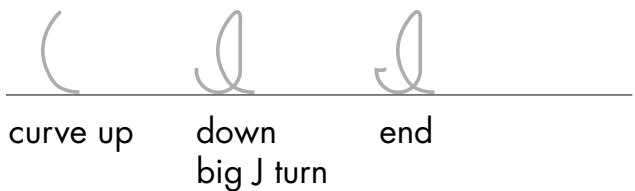
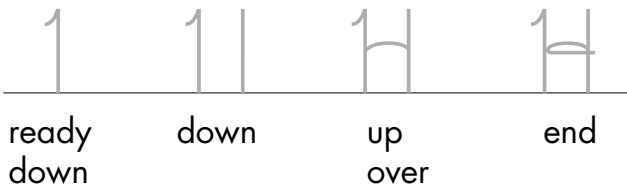
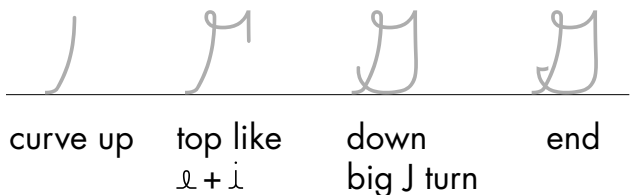
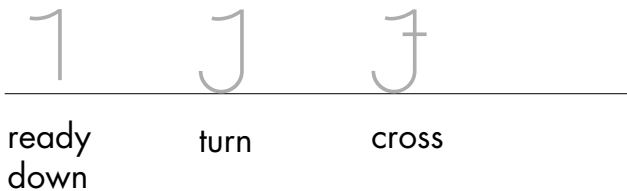
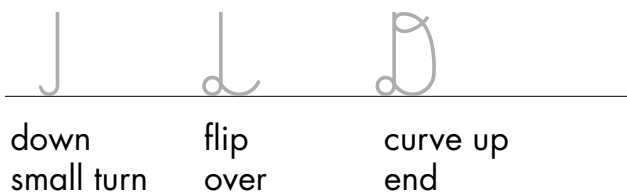
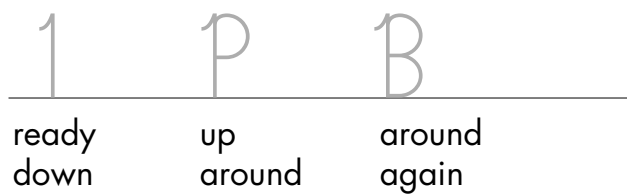
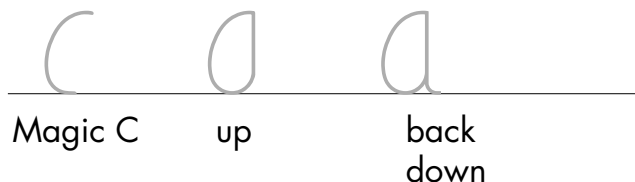
# Handwriting Without Tears®



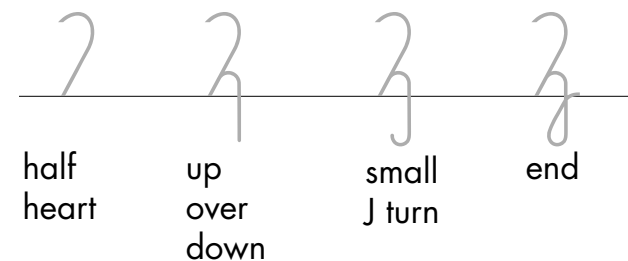
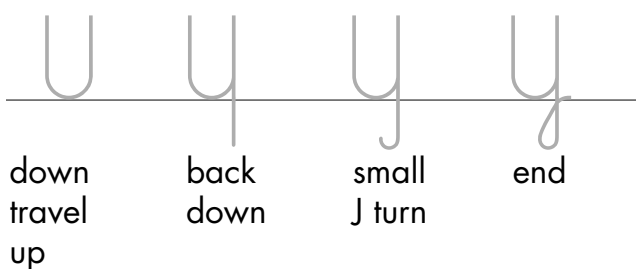
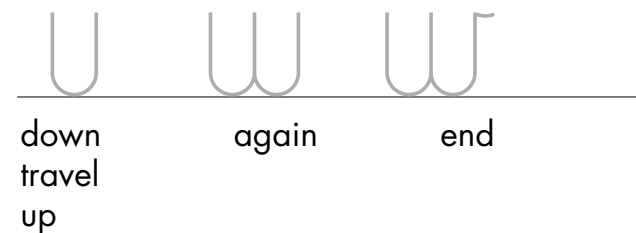
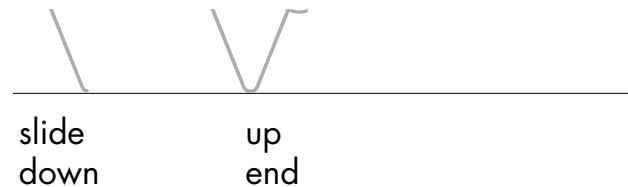
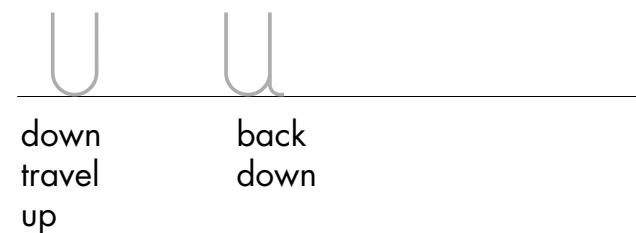
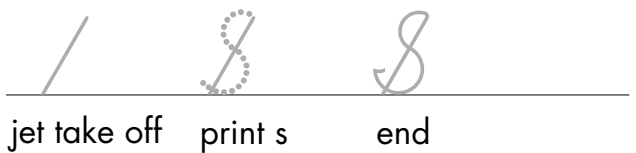
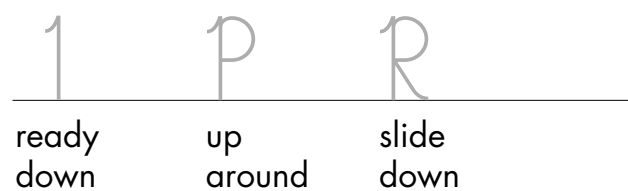
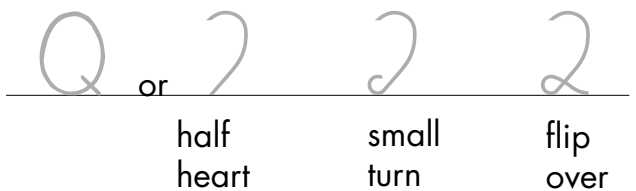
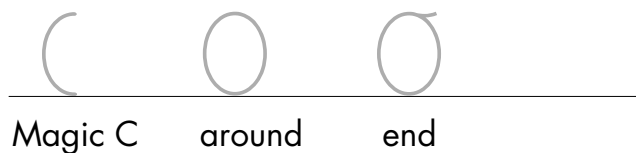
# Handwriting Without Tears®



# Handwriting Without Tears®



# Handwriting Without Tears®



# What Makes It Handwriting Without Tears®?

## Handwriting Without Tears® Kindergarten - Cursive Overview

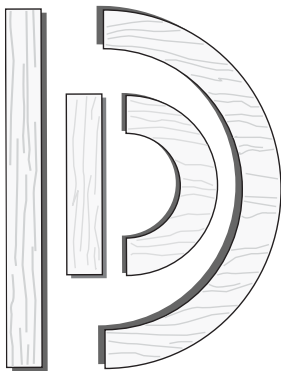
### Developmentally Based, Multisensory Teaching Strategies

The Handwriting Without Tears® (HWT) program uses teaching strategies that are multisensory and developmentally appropriate for children. Readiness activities in pre-k and kindergarten prepare children for pencil and paper activities. Using hands-on teaching strategies, teachers are able to meet the needs of each child's individual learning style.

### Teaching Readiness in Kindergarten

Develop motor skills, language skills, understanding of size and shape, and positioning skills using music and movement.

#### Wood Pieces Set for Capital Letters

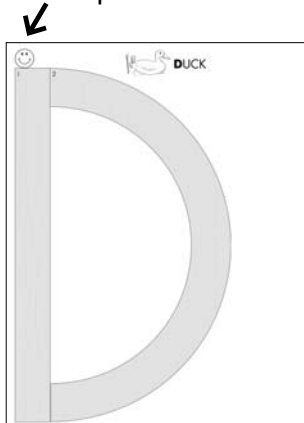


#### Moving the Wood Pieces



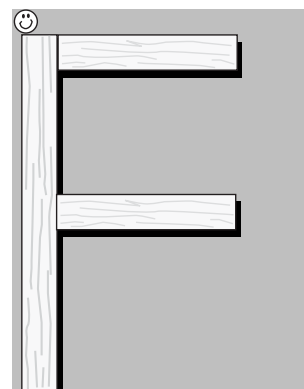
#### Capital Letter Cards

The ☺ will organize and orient the child. Numbers help children learn to place the Wood Pieces in sequence.



#### Mat

Using the Mat and teacher demonstration, children learn to form the letters independently, without reversals.



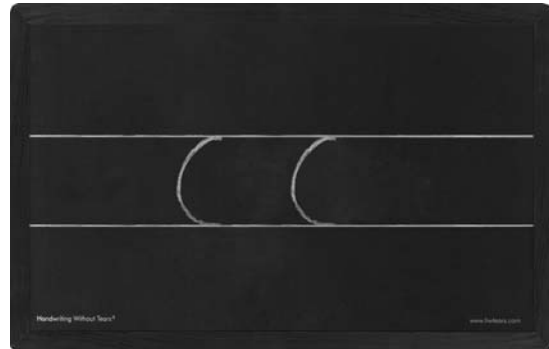
## Wet-Dry-Try • Slate • Blackboard with Double Lines

Using the unique Wet-Dry-Try method and teacher demonstration, children succeed! The Slate Chalkboard and the Blackboard with Double Lines prevent and correct reversals.

### Slate Chalkboard



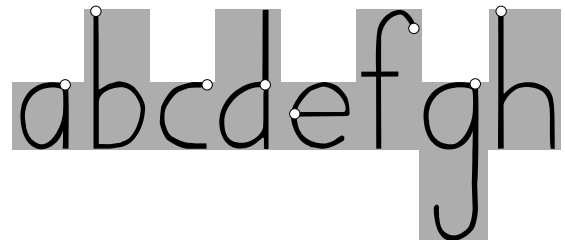
### Blackboard with Double Lines



## Why Teach CAPITALS First?

### Capital letters are easy

- All are the same height.
- All start at the top.
- All occupy the same vertical place.
- All are easy to recognize and identify (compare **A B D G P Q** with **a b d g p q**).
- They are big, bold, and familiar.

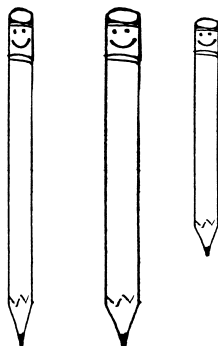


## Pencil Pointers

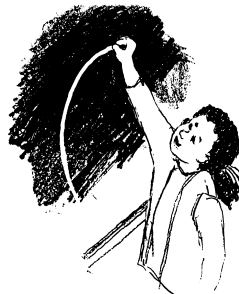
Teach children how to sit.



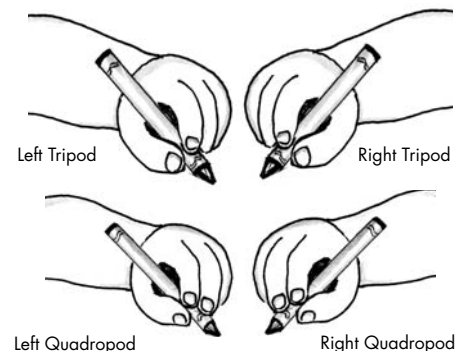
Use the appropriate size pencil.



Prepare small hands to hold a pencil.

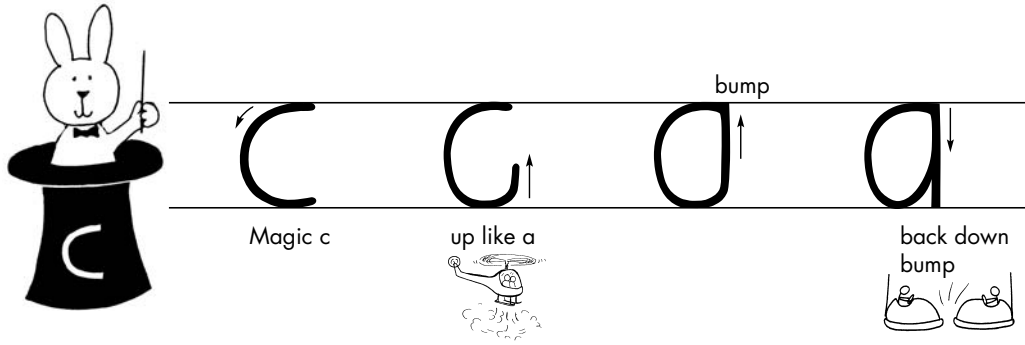


Teach pencil grip.



## Step-by-Step Directions

Huge step-by-step images show exactly how to make each part of every letter. Short, simple words describe each step.

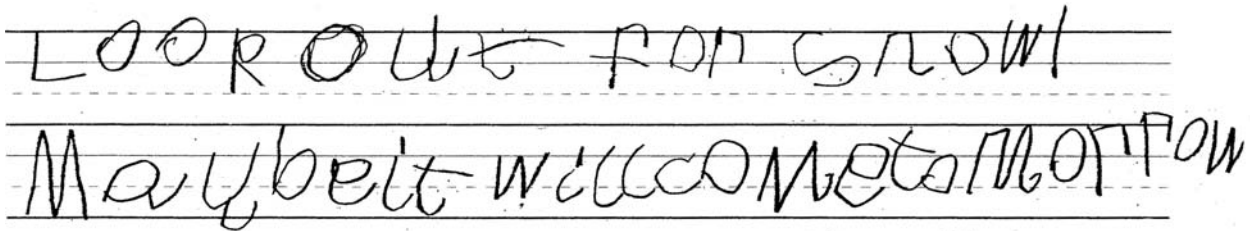


## Easy to Follow Lines

HWT uses simple double lines that are easy to follow. This prevents line confusion and promotes neatness. The double lines help children start and stop lowercase letters correctly, as well as master the size and placement of the letters on the lines.

Two lines are easier.

As shown below, many children have trouble understanding multiple lines. Giving children a blue line, a dotted line, a red line, another blue line and then asking them to start at "2 o'clock between the dotted line and the red line" is confusing for children.



## Generous Spacing

When children are learning to print, they need extra room to write. In a student workbook, there should always be very generous spaces allowed for room to complete the words and to leave a space. See the example below:

Jeff uses a forklift.

The example below (without even a finger space between words) is typical for many workbooks. Children are forced to run their words together to fit them on the line.

You can read too.  
Youcanreadtoo.

# HWT Printing Teaching Order

Grouping letters and teaching them in a specific order is essential to handwriting success. The HWT teaching order is based on children's development, where letters start, and how they are made. Letters with similar strokes are grouped together.

## Capital Teaching Order



F E D P B R N M



### Frog Jump Capitals

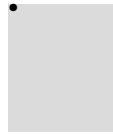
Start in the starting corner (top left) ☺.

Make a big line down.

Frog jump back to the starting corner and finish the letter.



H K L U V W X Y Z



### Starting Corner Capitals

Review these letters to ensure that children start at the top left and use the left-to-right formation habit. This follows the same order as reading: top to bottom and left to right.



C O Q G S A I T J



### Center Starters

Start at the top center.

The first group begins with a Magic C.

The second group includes the balance of the capitals.

## Lowercase Teaching Order



### Capital partners

c o s v w t

The first five letters are exactly like their capitals, just smaller. Lowercase **t** is like capital **T**, it's just crossed lower.



### Magic c group of letters

a d g

These letters begin with a Magic c stroke. Starting with **c** placed correctly helps children make and place the **d** tall and **g** descending.



### Transition group of letters

u i e l k y j

This group completes the vowels: **u i e**. Letters **u k y j** are familiar from their capital partners.



### Diver letters

p r n m h b

These letters all begin with the same basic stroke. They dive down, come back up, and swim over to form each letter.



### Final group

f q x z

Finally **f**. Letter **f** has a tricky start. Letter **q** is taught here to avoid **g - q** confusion. Letters **x** and **z** are familiar, but infrequently used so we teach them last.

## HWT Cursive

The HWT cursive style facilitates a smooth transition from print to cursive through the use of a simple, vertical style cursive. Vertical style cursive is easy to read and write. Note the difference between print and cursive using the HWT style:

### HWT Transition from Print to Cursive

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

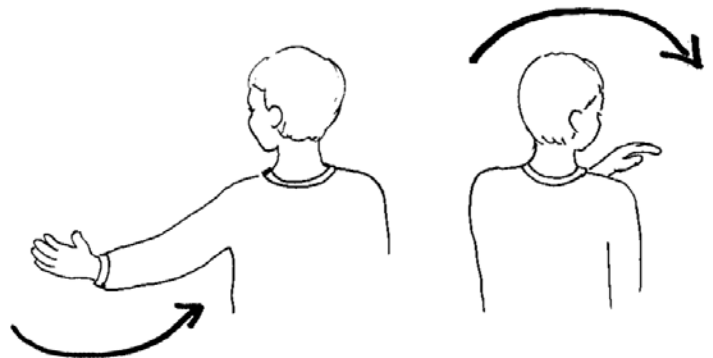
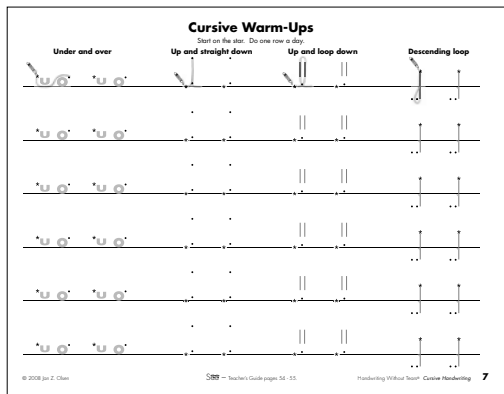
### Vertical vs. Slanted Cursive

Vertical cursive is easier to read and write.

*Slanted cursive is a difficult style to learn.*

## Cursive Connections

Cursive warm-ups: exercises to help children prepare for important strokes required in cursive.

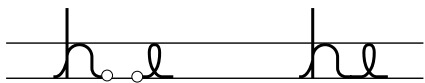


## Getting it Together

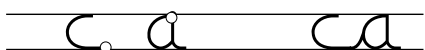
Most children have no difficulty learning the formation of cursive letters. It is the connections that make cursive a challenge because they change based on the starting and ending places of letters. The chart below shows examples of connecting letters. HWT believes there are four basic cursive connections:

### Baseline Connections after 22 letters

**Easy** - Baseline to baseline connection



**Tricky** - Baseline to high connection



### High Connections after 4 letters: σ w l v

**Easy** - High to high connection



**Tricky** - High to low connection



# HWT Cursive Teaching Order

Cursive letters are taught in groups based on similar strokes and formation. HWT adds fun ways to teach difficult cursive connections.

c a d g



The Magic c letters are familiar from printing. In both print and cursive, these letters start at the mid line with the Magic c stroke.

h t p



These letters are also familiar from printing. The **h** and **p** have been de-looped for simplicity. They all end on the base line, making it easy to connect to letters that start on the base line.

e l f



These letters use similar stroke patterns. We keep the loops because making a loop helps the pencil move in the right direction to connect to the next letter.

u y i j



Most children recognize these letters from printing. The letters **u** and **y** begin with similar strokes, and letters **i** and **j** begin with similar strokes.

k m s



These letters can be challenging, but if taught using step-by-step directions, they will not be difficult, i.e., letter **s** is taught using a jet take off.

σ w l v



These letters are called Tow Truck Letters. These four letters are the only lowercase cursive letters that do not end on the bottom line. The ending sticks out like a tow and they never bend down to pick up another letter!

m n x z q



These letters have many bumps making the letters tricky. When a Tow Truck Letter comes before **m** or **n**, use the printed style of these letters. Use letter stories to help children learn tricky Tow Truck Letters.

## Handwriting Without Tears®

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm  
Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

### D'Nealian®

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  
1 2 3 4 5 6  
7 8 9 10

### Zaner-Bloser®

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  
? ! , . " ' ,  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10