

Kids  
Handwrite™

# TEACHING *handwriting*

TO YOUNG CHILDREN

*A RESOURCE FOR TEACHERS AND PARENTS*



Overview  
of Part III  
and  
Instructions

K to Grade 3



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## Part II

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

#### INTRODUCTION ..... 1

#### Section 1 – PRE-PRINTING ACTIVITIES

1. Printing Readiness .....	2
2. Pre-Printing Activities	
a) Colouring.....	2
b) Tracing.....	3
c) Connect-the-Dots.....	3
d) Path of Movement .....	4

#### Section 2 – PRINTING PRE-REQUISITES – GEOMETRIC SHAPES

1. Skill Development .....	5
2. Introduction to Shapes .....	5
3. Shape Recognition .....	6
4. Finger Tracing .....	8
5. Connect-the-Dots.....	8
6. Four-Step Shape Drawing Exercise .....	8

#### Section 3 – LINES AND SPACING

1. Lined Paper and Line Spacing .....	10
2. The Letter Lines.....	10
3. Similes for Students .....	11
4. Worksheets .....	12
5. Blank Lined Practice Pages.....	12
6. Using Looseleaf Paper or Exercise Books .....	13
7. Letter and Word Spacing .....	13
8. Practice Opportunities.....	14

#### Section 4 – ITALIC PRINT EXEMPLARS

1. Exemplars .....	15
2. One-Page Exemplars – Printed Italics .....	15
3. Number of Strokes.....	16
4. Ductus .....	16
5. Italic Alphabet Wall Cards.....	16
6. Student Desk Strips.....	16

## Section 5 – LOWERCASE LETTER FORMATION

1. The Italic Advantage .....	17
2. Teaching Sequence .....	17
3. Lowercase Letter Recognition – Playing Cards .....	17
4. Lowercase Letter Builder .....	17
5. Single Strokes and Traceback .....	19
6. Finger Tracing – Lowercase Letters .....	19
7. Lowercase Proportions (Shape) .....	19
8. Lowercase Letter Groups .....	20
a) Group 1 – Vertical and Horizontal Lines .....	20
b) Groups 2, 3 and 4 – Curved Letters .....	20
(i) Finger Tracing the Curved Letters	
(ii) Letter Shape Practice Pages	
c) Group 5 – Diagonal Lines .....	21

## Section 6 – LOWERCASE WORKSHEETS

1. Letter Formation Worksheets .....	22
a) Kindergarten Worksheets .....	22
b) Grades 1 and 2 Worksheets .....	22
2. Letter Practice Worksheets .....	23
3. Sight Words .....	23
4. Days and Months .....	24
5. Print Animal Word Practice .....	24

## Section 7 – UPPERCASE LETTER FORMATION

1. The Italic Advantage .....	25
2. Teaching Sequence .....	25
3. Uppercase Letter Recognition – Playing Cards .....	25
4. Proportional Size of Uppercase Letters .....	26
5. Finger Tracing Uppercase Letters .....	27

## Section 8 – UPPERCASE WORKSHEETS

1. Letter Formation Worksheets .....	28
a) Kindergarten Worksheets .....	28
b) Grades 1 and 2 Worksheets .....	28
2. Letter Practice Worksheets .....	29
3. Acronyms and Initialisms .....	29
4. Print Animal Word Practice .....	29



## Section 9 – NUMBERS

1. Number Wall Cards.....	30
2. Number Recognition – Playing Cards .....	30
3. Finger Tracing – Numbers.....	30
4. Number Worksheets.....	31
a) Kindergarten Worksheets .....	31
b) Grades 1 and 2 Worksheets.....	31
5. Addition and Subtraction Worksheets .....	31

## Section 10 – CURSIVE CONNECTIONS

1. Cursive Readiness .....	32
2. Going from Printing to Cursive Writing .....	32
3. Exemplars.....	32
4. Student Desk Strips.....	33
5. Exit Strokes .....	33
6. Entrance Strokes .....	33
7. Finger Tracing – Cursive Joins .....	34
8. Letters that Do Not Connect.....	34
9. Connecting Lowercase Letters.....	34
10. Starting and Ending Positions .....	35
11. Teaching Groups and Sequence .....	36
12. Single Strokes and Traceback .....	38
13. Variation of “k” .....	38
14. Optional Join into m, n, r and x.....	38
15. The Challenge with “s”.....	39
16. Cursive Connection Practice Pages.....	39

## Section 11 – CURSIVE CONNECTION WORKSHEETS

1. Cursive Word Practice Worksheets .....	41
2. Cursive Animal Word Practice .....	42
3. Days and Months .....	42
4. Provinces and Capital Cities.....	42

## Section 12 – COMPOSITION AND LINED PAPER

1. Composition Practice and Pangram.....	43
2. Blank Practice Pages .....	43

## Section 13 – STICKERS PAGES .....

44

## Section 14 – COLOURING PAGES .....

45

## Section 15 – IMAGE ATTRIBUTION OF ARTWORK .....

45

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*Teaching Handwriting to Young Children: A Resource for Teachers and Parents* is a collaborative effort bringing theory and practice together in its design and development.

A program of research over the past decade into the development of young children's handwriting (K – Grade 3) received funding from Mitacs, Alberta Advisory Committee for Educational Studies (AACES), SSHRC (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council). This research provided the foundational theoretical underpinnings for this project, elaborated in Part I of the Resource. A Werklund School of Education Teaching and Learning Support Grant provided funding for the development of the Resource.

Parts II and III of the Resource contain the materials to help teachers and parents implement a handwriting program in the K – Grade 3 years.

Bow Valley Calligraphy Guild members have generously contributed their time, expertise, and creative talents to this project. It has indeed been a labour of love. In particular, we acknowledge: Sharon Fahey (Handwriting Project Committee lead); Renate Worthington ( Italic print and cursive script subject matter expert); Marge Worman (Elementary teacher review and feedback); Olympia Lau (Design of Covers and Part I).

Hetty Roessingh, PhD, Professor Emerita, Werklund School of Education, University of Calgary

Adrienne Waller – Content and creative development – Parts II and III

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Part II of *Teaching Handwriting to Young Children – A Resource for Teachers and Parents*.

This is an overview of Part III of the Resource distributed under the trade name “Kids Handwrite.” Explanations about italic lettering are interspersed throughout this Part to help teachers and parents with their printing and cursive writing instructional support.

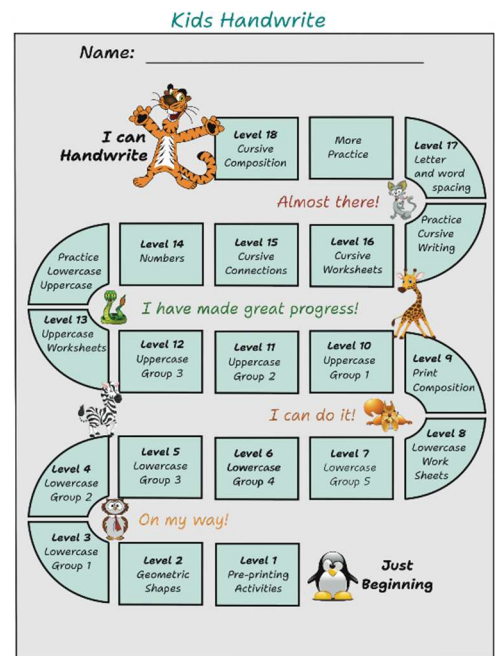
The Resource was designed to develop students' proficiency in cursive Italic handwriting by the end of Grade 3. It starts with pre-printing activities for Kindergarten students and concludes with Grade 3 students creating an original composition in cursive Italic.

Learning to handwrite is a multi-year process with defined developmental steps.

The activities and worksheets included in Part III can be broken down into 18 levels students must pass through to complete the material. These levels create a sense of progression and challenge for the students. It also allows teachers and parents to control how much information and detail is given to the students at any time.

With the Progress Map (shown on the right), teachers, parents, and students can track their progress from start to finish.

The goal is for students to handwrite (in Italic cursive) by the end of Grade 3. The Scope and Sequence in Part I sets the suggested developmental progression from pre-printing to cursive writing.



Apart from going through the 18 levels sequentially, students should be allowed to proceed at their own pace, mastering each Level before going on to the next.

Some students will remain in one or more Levels longer than others, whereas others with more advanced fine motor skills, focus, and practice time will pass through the levels more quickly.

Students will only succeed at learning to handwrite with lots of deliberate practice in the classroom and at home. Letters must be formed correctly from the start, and errors must be corrected when they occur. Students will not succeed unless parents and teachers work together to ensure they dedicate time to work on their printing and writing and enjoy doing so.

Parts II and III are available to teachers and parents as Open Educational Resources.

Suggestions for improvement can be sent to: [kidshandwrite@gmail.com](mailto:kidshandwrite@gmail.com)

## Section 1 - PRE-PRINTING ACTIVITIES

### Colouring, Tracing, Connecting Dots, and Path of Movement

#### 1. Printing Readiness

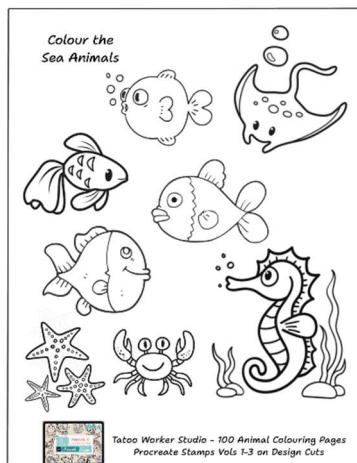
A child must be emotionally and physically ready when introduced to printing to ensure success. Although the complete assessment of a student's readiness to learn to print Italic, lowercase, and uppercase letters is beyond the scope of this Resource, the Resource includes activities to develop the skills students must have before they are introduced to printing.

#### 2. Pre-Printing Activities

The Resource includes fun and creative activities for students to practice their pre-printing skills. This section includes pages to practice:

- colouring
- tracing
- connecting the dots
- path of movement

##### a) Colouring



Colouring has many wonderful benefits for children and adults alike. Colouring improves fine motor skills, encourages focus, and nurtures creativity. Children are ready to print when they can colour within the lines with minimal deviation outside the lines and can neatly fill the area being coloured.

There are hundreds of free colouring pages available on the Internet. Colouring is both a means to an end (development of the necessary motor skills for printing) and an end (an enjoyable activity in its own right, regardless of the child's age or ability).

This section of the Resource includes three colouring pages. Free children's colouring pages are available on the Internet. There are also Alphabet-Animal Coloring Pages for all students in Section 14 of Part III.

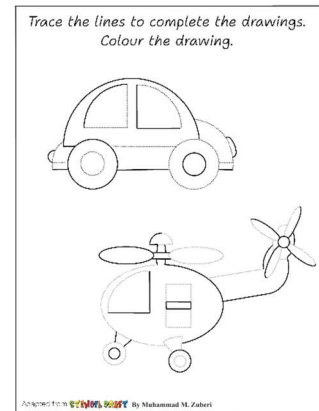
In reviewing the students' colouring, the factors for success in printing are whether the student:

- colours within the lines, with minimal deviation outside the lines; and
- completely fills the area with colour.

## b) *Tracing*

Tracing is an activity that helps children develop pre-printing skills and builds the foundation for drawing, printing, and writing letters. Tracing develops fine motor skills, concentration and focus, visual-spatial skills, creativity and drawing skills.

Advise students that once the pencil is on the paper, they must look at the destination, not the starting point or the pencil, as it moves. The pencil will end up where they look, without any conscious effort on their part.



A few tracing pages are included in the Resource to get you started. There are many tracing exercises available on the Internet for varying skill levels.

In reviewing the students' tracing, the factors for success in printing are whether the student:

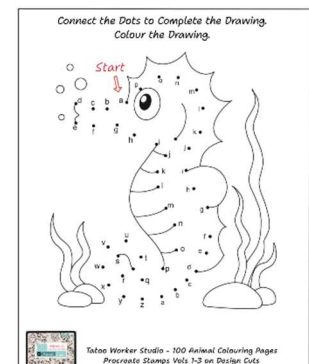
- follows the dotted lines with minimal deviation from the lines;
- starts at the beginning of the dotted line; and
- stops at the end of the end of the dotted line.

**Note:** Do not use alphabet tracing pages from any website unless they are based on Italic lettering. Most available letter tracing sheets are “ball and stick” letters which are not the **Italic** letters taught in this Resource.

## c) *Connect-the-Dots*

Connect-the-dots is a drawing that contains a sequence of numbered or lettered dots. When a line is drawn connecting the dots, the outline of an object is revealed. Connect-the-dots exercises help children learn to draw, play independently, focus, and improve hand-eye coordination.

From a printing perspective, it introduces students to moving their pencils between a defined start and end point. It is also a way to teach children numbering and lettering sequences.



Advise students that once the pencil is on the paper, they must look at the dot they are going to, not the starting dot or the pencil as it is moving. The pencil will end up where they look, without any conscious effort on their part.

In reviewing the students' ability to connect the dots, the factors for success in printing are whether the student can start and stop on each dot, with minimal overshooting or undershooting.

Countless free connect-the-dot exercises are available on the Internet for varying skill levels. A number of the connect-the-dot exercises have been included in the Resource to get you started.

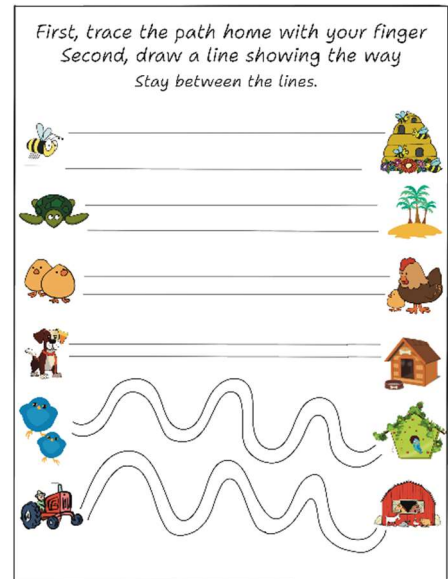
#### d) ***Path of Movement***

The paths of movement exercises demonstrate the child's ability to make fluent lines without lifting their pencil.

These exercises require whole arm movement and test the student's ability to draw a straight or wavy line from a "starting" position to a more distant "ending" position on the other side of the page.

The key to the path of movement exercises for the student to:

- focus on where the line is going and will end; and
- not look at the pencil as it is moving.



The Resource contains several "path of movement" exercises.

In reviewing the students' path of movement exercises, the factors for success for printing are whether the student:

- stays within the two lines that mark the path of movement;
- stays on the line if there is only one line that marks the path of movement;
- makes fluent lines without lifting the pencil, fluent meaning:
  - the lines are not shaky or jerky;
  - the line can be made from start to finish without stopping.

## *Section 2 – PRINTING PREREQUISITES*

### *GEOMETRIC SHAPES*

#### **1. Skill Development**

All letters have their origin in basic one-dimensional geometric shapes. Students are expected to know these shapes by the end of Kindergarten. The sequence of learning geometric shapes is:

##### **Early Kindergarten Shapes**

- vertical lines
- horizontal lines
- horizontal and vertical crossed lines
- squares
- rectangles
- circles, half-circles and ovals

##### **Mid-year Kindergarten Shapes**

- diagonal lines top left to bottom right
- diagonal lines top right to bottom left
- crossed diagonal lines
- triangles
- curls

Recognizing and drawing shapes is a multi-step process including:

- naming
- recognizing
- matching
- tracing
- copying
- drawing from memory

Recognizing and visualizing shapes precedes the ability to draw the shape.

The Resource includes several fun activities to help students recognize and draw these basic one-dimensional geometric shapes. These pre-printing shapes teach students the shapes and the stroke direction required to make each shape. All letters combine the lines and strokes of the basic geometrical shapes.

Samples of these activities are shown below. Students are ready to move on to printing when they can recognize and draw these one-dimensional geometric shapes.

#### **2. Introduction to Shapes**

The first five pages of this section introduce the student to the following ten basic geometric shapes:

- vertical and horizontal lines
- squares and rectangles
- isosceles and right-angle triangles
- diagonal and curved lines
- circles and ovals

For each shape, there is a:

- brief description
- sample (“see”)
- copy for tracing (“trace”)
- picture showing the shape
- space for drawing the shape

The students can have fun filling the empty box with multiple versions – long, short, big, small, fat, thin or multi-coloured- and they can put the shape within the shape.

With this exercise, the students will demonstrate their ability to reproduce the shapes.

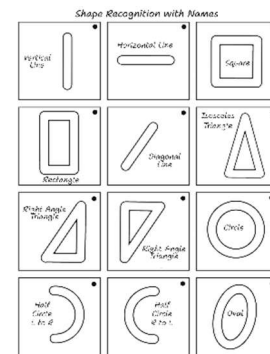
### 3. *Shape Recognition*

To help students recognize the geometric shapes, the material includes three pages of outlined versions of each basic geometric shape within squares, each page serving a different purpose. The black dot in the top right-hand corner of each square indicates which side is up.

#### a) *White shapes with names*

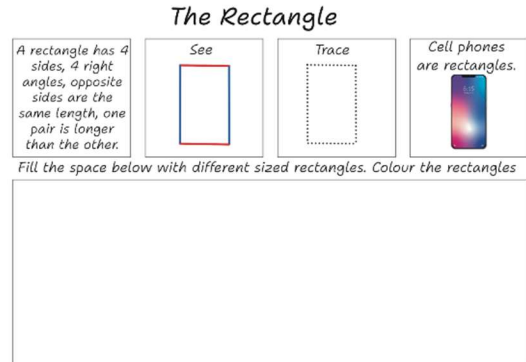
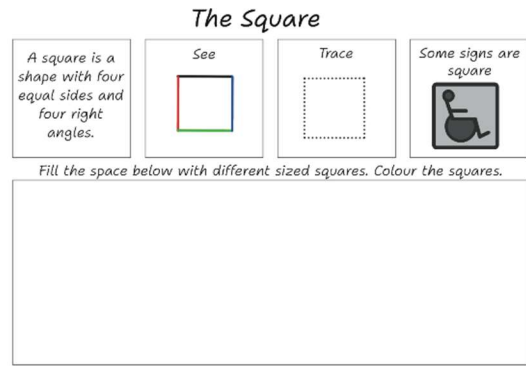
The squares on the first page contain an outline of the shape with the name of the shape. While learning the shapes, students can decorate and colour the:

- shape (the space inside the black outline)
- space inside the shape and
- space outside the shape.

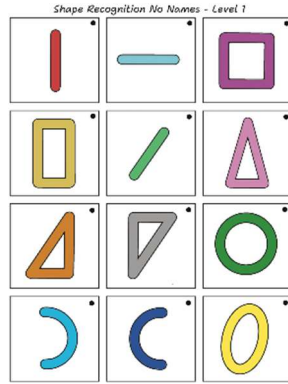


#### b) *Multi-coloured shapes – no names (Level 1)*

The squares on the second page contain the same shape outline, but each shape is a distinct colour. Print multiple copies of this page, and







- cut up the pages into the squares;
- mix up the shapes on the table;
- have the students name and sort the cut-up squares into piles by shape (with the dot at the top right-hand corner).

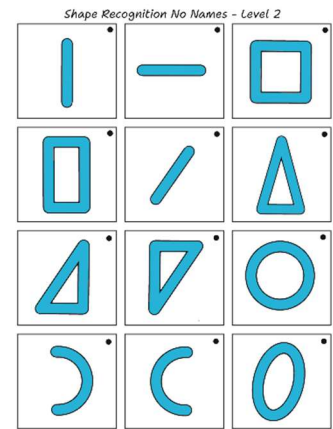
With this version of this exercise, the students have two cues to work with – the colour and the shape.

### c) *Single-coloured shapes – no names (Level 2)*

The squares on this page contain the same shape outline, but each shape is the same colour. Again, print multiple copies of this page and

- cut up the pages into the squares.
- mix up the shapes on the table.
- have the students name and sort the cut-up squares into piles by shape (with the dot at the top right-hand corner).

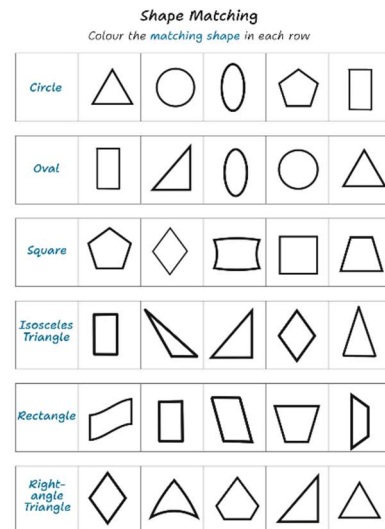
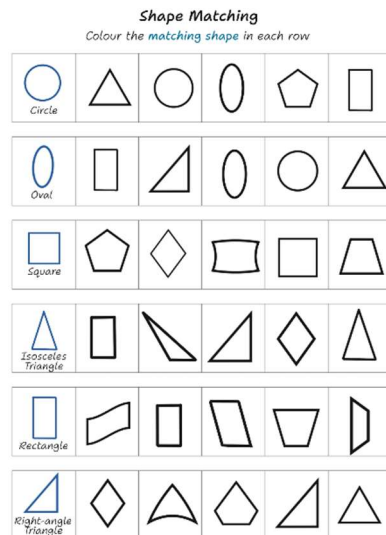
With this version of the exercise, the students only have the shape to work with to sort the squares.



### d) *Shape-Matching Exercise*

The last two pages in this series are shape-matching exercises where the students must identify the shape in a row of different shapes.

The first exercise provides the shape and name, and the second only provides the name.



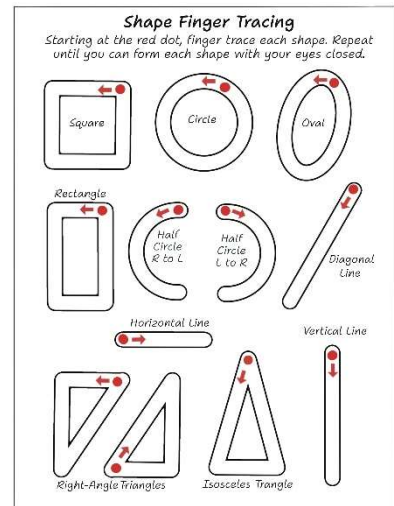
#### 4. **Finger Tracing**

Finger tracing shapes on paper, in the air, on the table or in sand (or other pliable material) is a good first step in learning shapes.

This section focuses on the geometric shapes that underlie the Italic letter forms and how they are drawn as letters.

One finger tracing page is provided. The red dots in the shapes signify the starting point, and the red arrows represent the direction the finger moves when tracing the shapes.

Finger tracing from the starting point and the direction shown will start the muscle memory needed for printing the letters based on these shapes.

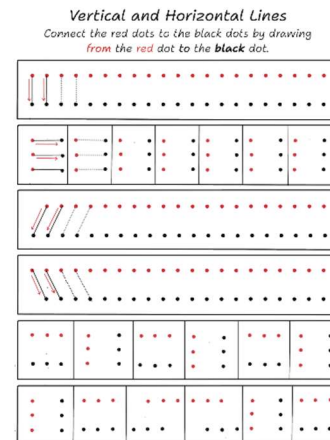


#### 5. **Connect-the-Dots**

The students draw each geometric shape by connecting the dots on these pages. This activity requires the student to join a red dot to a black dot – starting at the red dot. This exercise allows students to practice starting and stopping at specific locations, a necessary skill for printing.

There are six connect-the-dot pages for students to create:

- vertical, horizontal and diagonal lines
- squares, rectangles and triangles
- crossed and connected diagonal lines
- half-circles
- arcade curls
- garland curls



#### 6. **Four-Step Shape Drawing Exercise**

These pages provide activities for students to progress in drawing geometric shapes by:

- drawing the lines within an outline of each shape,
- tracing the lines that form the shape,
- drawing the shapes by looking at a reference, and
- drawing the shapes from memory.

The geometric shapes on these pages correspond to the strokes used in print and cursive Italic writing. They include:

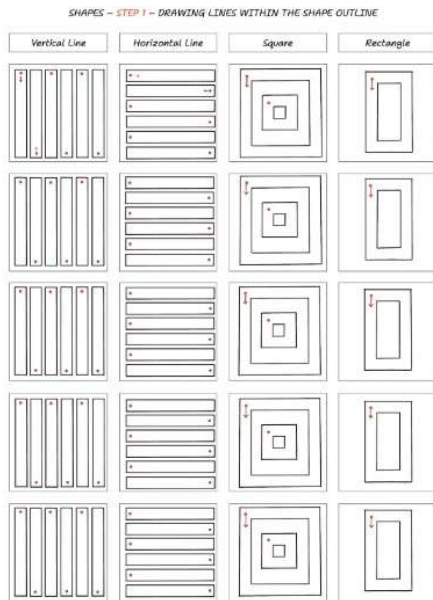
- vertical and horizontal lines
- squares and rectangles
- diagonal lines - left to right and right to left
- capital a shape and the v shape
- diagonal cross (x shape)
- circles and ovals
- half-circles (right to left and left to right)
- arcade curls
- garland curls

One set has 1.5-inch (38 mm) squares for the younger students, and the second set has 1-inch (25 mm) squares for the older students.

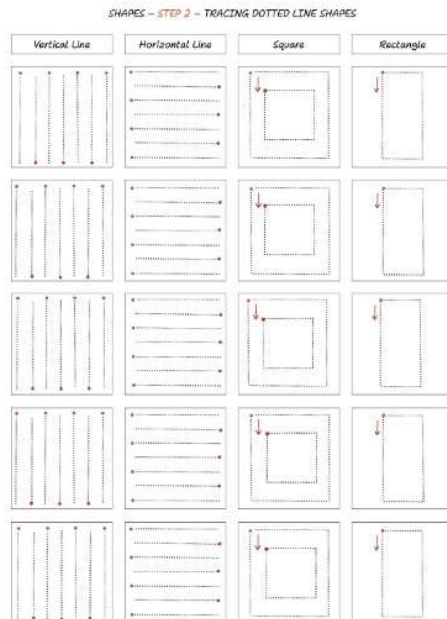
Use these practice pages to prepare students to print the lowercase and uppercase letters and as warm-up exercises before a print or cursive writing lesson.

Below are the first two pages of a set of 1.5-inch (38 mm) square practice pages.

#### Step 1 - Path within an Outline



#### Step 2 - Tracing



## Section 3 – LINES AND SPACING

### 1. Lined Paper and Line Spacing

The following line spacings are suggested in the literature:

- **Kindergarten** students – can practice without lines.
- **Grade 1** students - use  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch or 20 mm lined paper with a faint mid-horizontal line and a skip space. The mid-line sets the height of the body of the lowercase letters and guides the connecting lines forming the uppercase letters.
- **Grade 2** students start with the Grade 1 paper, and by the end of the year should print and write on  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch or 10 mm lined paper without a mid-line or skip line.
- **Grade 3** students start with the Grade 2 paper, and by mid to end of the year, should write on  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch or 7 mm lined paper with no guidelines.

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
Line Spacing	<b><math>\frac{3}{4}</math> inch</b> (20 mm) gradually reducing to <b><math>\frac{3}{8}</math> inch</b> (10 mm)	<b><math>\frac{3}{8}</math> inch</b> (10 mm)	<b><math>\frac{3}{8}</math> inch</b> (10 mm), gradually reducing to <b><math>\frac{1}{4}</math> inch</b> (7 mm)
Mid-Guideline Waist Line	Yes	Students can start with a mid-guideline but end the year without them.	No
Skip Space below Baseline	Yes		No

### 2. The Letter Lines

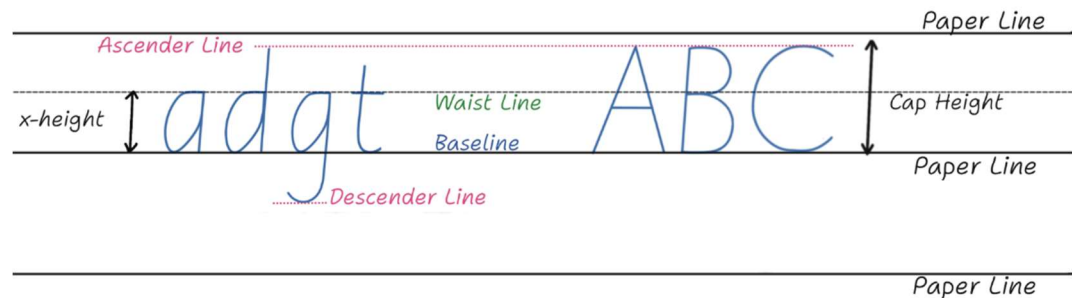
To properly print and write lowercase and uppercase letters, the following terms must be understood and conveyed to the students in a way they can understand.

Term	Meaning
<b>Ascender:</b>	The ascender is the part of the letter that extends above the x-height. The ascender is $\frac{4}{5}$ ths of the x-height.
<b>Ascender Line:</b>	The imaginary horizontal line where the ascenders on lowercase letters stop and the uppercase letters stop.  All ascenders, except the “ <b>t</b> ,” are the same height and all stop at the ascender line. The “ <b>t</b> ” is half as tall as the other ascenders.
<b>Baseline:</b>	The baseline is where the body of all lowercase and uppercase letters sit. If the student is not using lined paper, the baseline would also be an imaginary line.

Term	Meaning
<b>Branching Line:</b>	An imaginary line where the curved part of the lowercase letter leaves or joins the stem. The lowercase letters branch in the centre of the x-height.
<b>Cap Height:</b>	The height of the uppercase letters (the space between the baseline and the ascender line).
<b>Descender:</b>	The descender is the part of lowercase letters that extends below the baseline. The descender is 4/5ths of the x-height.
<b>Descender Line:</b>	The imaginary horizontal line where the descenders on lowercase letters stop.
<b>Waist Line:</b>	The imaginary horizontal line where the body of the lowercase letters stops. This line defines the x-height of the lowercase letters and is the middle of the uppercase letters.
<b>x-height:</b>	The x-height is the height of the lowercase letters without any ascenders and descenders (the space between the baseline and the waistline).

The above lines are shown in the diagram below.

With the Baseline and Waist Line visible, these lines are:



### 3. *Similes for Students*

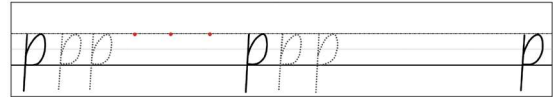
The lines for letters can be compared to objects familiar to children.

- One option is to compare the lines to a house, with the baseline being the main floor, the waist line being the kitchen countertops, the ascender line being the upstairs, and the descender line being the basement.
- A second option is to compare the lines to the outside, with the baseline being the grass, the waist line being the bushes, the ascender line being the trees, and the descender line being the tree roots.

There are likely other similes that will convey the meaning of these lines to young students.

#### 4. Worksheets

The Lowercase and Uppercase Worksheets in the Resource (Sections 5, 6 and 7) have  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch (20 mm) line spacing with a visible Waist Line and a Skip Space.



The Word Practice sheets in the Resource (Section 8) have  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch (10 mm) with a visible Waist Line and a Skip Space.



#### 5. Blank Lined Practice Pages

Blank-lined practice pages for Grades 1, 2 and 3 are included in Section 12 of the Resource and are as follows (the images are not to scale):

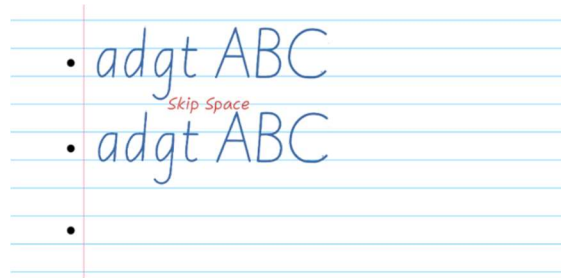
	Grade 1	
Line Spacing between Baselines	<b><math>\frac{3}{4}</math> inch (20 mm),</b> gradually reducing to <b><math>\frac{3}{8}</math> inch (10 mm)</b>	
Waist Line	Yes	
Skip Base below Baseline	Yes	

	Grade 2	
Line Spacing between Baselines	<b><math>\frac{3}{8}</math> inch (10 mm)</b>	
Waist Line	Students can start with an x-height line and skip space but end the year without them	
Skip Base below Baseline		

	Grade 3	
Line Spacing between Baselines	<b><math>\frac{3}{8}</math> inch (10 mm),</b> gradually reducing to <b><math>\frac{1}{4}</math> inch (7 mm)</b>	
Waist Line	No	
Skip Base below Baseline	No	

## 6. *Using Looseleaf Paper or Exercise Books*

Commercially available looseleaf paper and exercise books can be adapted to create a “Skip Space” for Grade 1 and early Grade 2 students by having them put a dot between the lines that will serve Baseline and the Waist Line. The Skip Space allows the students room to print their ascenders and descenders without having them run into each other.



## 7. *Letter and Word Spacing*

The spacing between letters, between words and between lines is key to legible handwriting, and it is never too early to learn. Students should be taught and practice proper spacing between letters, words and lines from the beginning and throughout their handwriting journey. Like proper letter forms, consistency and even spacing only come from practice.

### a) *Letter Spacing*

Generally speaking, less space between letters is better than more because the eye sees groups of letters when reading. Letters are spaced close together (but not too tight) but not spaced equally apart. The spacing depends on the shape of the letters next to each other. The goal is for the letters to appear evenly spaced, even though they are not.



Think of the spaces between the letters as containers of different shapes, that hold the same amount of “water”.

Spaces are optically equal, and for this to happen:

- two straight letters are the furthest apart – the turquoise space in the above image;
- a straight and curved letter together are closer to each other – the green space in the above image; and
- two curved letters beside each other are the closest – the pink space in the above image.

The spacing of **c, r, s, w, w**, and **x** and the right side of **k** are the same as two curved letters.

More attention must be paid to the spacing between printed letters than cursive letters since the joins are natural spacers. For the same reason, one must watch the spacing between letters involving a pen lift (before **f** and **x** and after **g, j, q, r** and **y**) to avoid a gap in the word.

**b) Word Spacing**

The spacing between words is a function of the letters' size and width.

The space between words should be the width of the student's lowercase letter "n".

Although suggested by some, students should avoid using their fingers to measure the space between words as that action interrupts the writing process.

**c) Interlinear Spacing (Line Spacing)**

Line spacing is correct when the descenders from the line above do not clash and get tangled in the ascenders in the writing line.

**d) Importance of Consistent and Even Spacing**

Apart from the above rules for letter spacing, there is no rule or guideline for the distance between letters and words. It is all about what looks good and is readable.

It is essential, however, for the spacing between the types of letter shapes and between the words to be consistent throughout the handwritten text. The spacing should not vary from word to word, sentence to sentence or between paragraphs.

**8. Practice Opportunities**

Every Worksheet in the Resource will allow students to practice their letter spacing, starting with the individual letter practice pages.



## Section 4 – ITALIC PRINT EXEMPLARS

### 1. Exemplars

An exemplar is a set of lowercase and uppercase letters used to learn a particular handwriting style, such as the Italic script.

Model lowercase and uppercase letters are necessary as a starting point. Although students will develop a handwriting style that is unique and natural for them, they must master the basic shapes, the number of strokes, specific stroke directions, and sequences used in the Exemplars to develop legible and fluent Italic print and cursive writing.

The exemplars presented in this Resource are a basic monoline version of an Italic script designed for children's print and cursive writing. With practice, students will develop legible and fluent print and cursive writing using this model.

### 2. One-Page Exemplars – Printed Italic

There are four one-page exemplars for printed Italic included in the material:

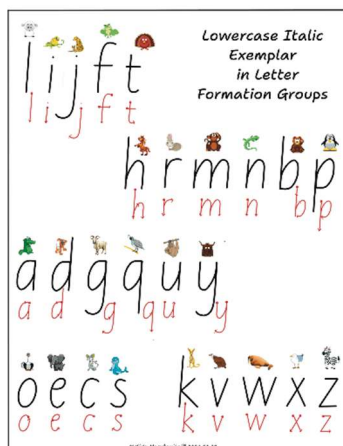
Alphabetical Lowercase Exemplar



Alphabetical Uppercase Exemplar



Lowercase Exemplar by Group



Uppercase Exemplar by Group



### 3. *Number of Strokes*

All lowercase letters, except *f*, *k*, *t* and *x*, are printed with a single stroke – no pen lifts. The dots above the *i* and *j* are not strokes. Mastering printing lowercase letters using one stroke makes transitioning to cursive writing less difficult.

Conversely, most uppercase Italic letters require multiple strokes, but depending on one's preference, up to ten uppercase letters can be made in one stroke.

### 4. *Ductus*

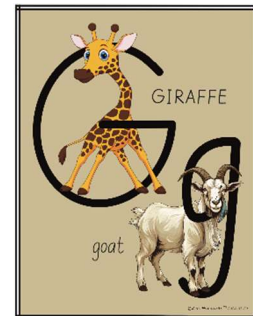
The ductus is the number, sequence and direction of strokes that create a letterform. The ductus for writing Italic lowercase and uppercase letters is shown throughout the material as red dots and red arrows. The red dots indicate where the stroke starts, and the arrows indicate the direction of the stroke. On the Exemplars, the ductus for each letter is in red underneath the letters. On some letters, a black dot indicates where the stroke reverses direction.

Students must be taught the correct starting point, the number of strokes, the direction of each stroke and the traceback stroke associated with each Italic lowercase and uppercase letter. The ductus is the same for both print and cursive lowercase letters.

### 5. *Italic Alphabet Wall Cards*

There are twenty-six wall cards, one for each letter of the alphabet. Each card shows the print version of the uppercase and lowercase Italic letters with animal illustrations.

These cards can be printed and posted in the classroom for easy reference.



### 6. *Student Desk Strips*

There are two Italic print desk strips in the Resource. One 8 ½ by 11 page contains two Desk Strips, each with different illustrations. The page is designed to be cut lengthwise to create two strips for distribution to the students.

Desk Strip 1:



Desk Strip 2:



## Section 5 – LOWERCASE LETTER FORMATION

### 1. The Italic Advantage

The advantage of the Italic script is that the printed and cursive versions use the same letter shapes. Adding simple and natural connections between the lowercase letters is all there is to transition from printing to cursive writing.

Students must be taught and practice the basic lowercase Italic letter shapes correctly from day one to benefit from learning the Italic script.

### 2. Teaching Sequence

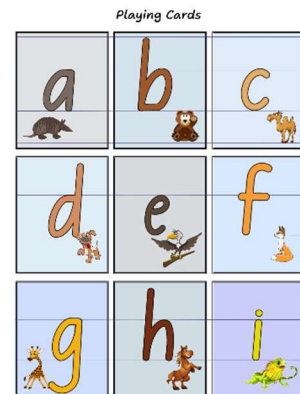
Lowercase letters are taught by letter formation groups or family groups rather than in alphabetical order. The formation groups used in this Resource are based on their common shape and are as follows:

Group	Letters	Shape
Group 1	<i>l i j f t</i>	Vertical line
Group 2	<i>h r n m b p</i>	The b-Shape/n-Shape
Group 3	<i>a d g q u y</i>	The a-Shape/u-Shape
Group 4	<i>o e c s</i>	o-shape/oval
Group 5	<i>k v w x z</i>	Diagonal lines

### 3. Lowercase Letter Recognition – Playing Cards

The first step is the ability to recognize and name the lowercase letters. Students can recognize and name letters by picking them from an array of printed, plastic, foam or magnetic letters.

The Resource includes three lowercase “playing cards” pages to help students identify and name the lowercase letters. These pages are intended to be printed and the cards cut-out. The pages can be printed on cardstock or printed on paper and laminated.



### 4. Lowercase Letter Builder

Before anyone can print, they must visualize what they are printing. As with any drawing, the first step is to break the object into its basic shapes, which is the purpose of the Lowercase Letter Builder. The Lowercase Letter Builder includes:

- one page of coloured letter shapes; and
- five Letter Builder Guide Sheets.

The students start by building the lowercase letters on the Guide Sheets. Once students know the lowercase letters, they can practice making them without the Guide Sheets.

### The Lowercase Letter Shapes

To the right is the page of the lowercase letter shapes with enough shapes to build each letter, one at a time (other than **o**, **c**, **e** and **s**). Print this page on cardstock and cut out each of the letter shapes.

Each student doing the activity should have at least two sets of these shapes (other than **o**, **c**, **e** and **s**). This will allow the students to build more than one letter at a time, allowing them to see the similarities and differences between them.

The letters **o**, **c**, **e** and **s** show that these four letters are drawn in the same oval framework.

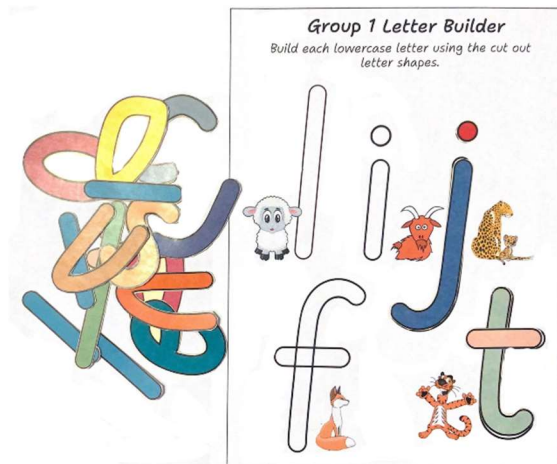
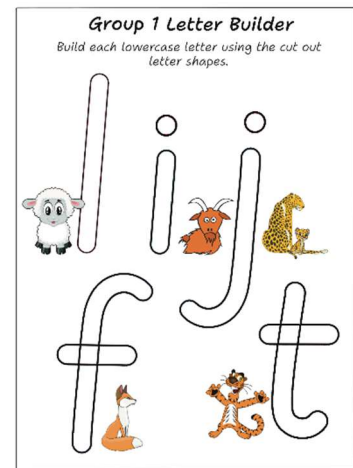


### The Letter Builder Guide Sheets

The lowercase letters are organized on the Guide Sheets by letter “formation” group rather than in alphabetical order.

The students find each letter part from the pile and match it to the lowercase letter on the guide sheets provided. With practice, they can build the lowercase letters without the guide sheet.

Below is a photo of the cut-out letter shapes and a copy of the guide sheet for Group 1 showing the construction of the “j” and “t.”



## 5. *Single Strokes and Traceback*

Unlike ball and stick printing, there is no pencil lift between drawing the body of the letter and its stem, ascender or descender.

With one-stroke letters, the students must master tracing back on the same line to complete these lowercase letters. No loops or double lines can appear on italic stems, descenders or ascenders. The traceback length depends on the letter. Students need to practice tracing back (up and down) on a drawn line to have letters without any loops or double lines.

Whenever students print their lowercase letters, they must watch their return (either up or down the stem, ascender or descender) to ensure they trace over the previous line and do not create a double line.

## 6. *Finger Tracing – Lowercase Letters*

Finger tracing shapes on paper, in the air, or on the table in sand (or other pliable material) is a great way to learn lowercase italic letters. Learning the letters is reinforced when the students name each letter aloud while finger tracing.

There is a finger tracing page for each lowercase Formation Group. Here is a copy of the finger tracing page for Lowercase Group 2.

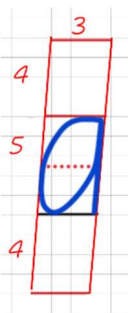
The red dots signify the starting point, and the red arrows represent the movement direction when printing the letter based on these shapes.

The black dot and arrow represent the return direction (traceback) needed to complete the letterform.

Students should be able to trace each letter without the guide sheets before they start printing the letters.



## 7. *Lowercase Proportions (Shape)*



The body of Italic lowercase letters fits within a rectangle.

The top line is where the ascenders stop (except for “t”, which is shorter), the middle two lines define the bottom (Baseline) and top (Waist Line) of the body of the lowercase letter (the x-Height), and the bottom line is where the descenders stop.

The proportion of the body of the lowercase letters in the Resource (the part without any ascenders or descenders) is 3:5, meaning the width of the

lowercase letter body is 3/5<sup>th</sup> as wide as it is high. Three lowercase letters are, however, narrower (*i*, *j*, and *l*), and two are wider (*m* and *w*).

The ascenders and descenders in the Resource are 4/5<sup>ths</sup> the height of the body of the letter (x-height), except the letter “*t*” which is shorter than the other ascenders.

- ascenders reach up and touch the invisible ascender line;
- ascenders do not touch the baseline of the line above;
- descenders reach down and touch the invisible descender line; and
- descenders do not touch the Waist Line of the line below.

The grids on the exercises mentioned below and the height of the lowercase letters (either with or without ascenders and descenders) depict the geometric shape of the letters (width and height) and have nothing to do with how the letters would appear on lined paper.

## 8. *Lowercase Letter Groups*

### a) *Group 1 – Vertical and Horizontal Lines*

The Group 1 letters are *i, f, l, j* and *t*. Once students can:

- recognize these letters by sight;
- finger trace the letters; and
- draw horizontal, vertical and curved lines

they are ready to start printing these letters using the Lowercase Worksheets.

### b) *Groups 2, 3 and 4 – Curved letters*

The Group 2, 3 and 4 letters are:

Group 2	<i>h r n m b p</i>	The b-Shape/n-Shape
Group 3	<i>a d g q u y</i>	The a-Shape/u-Shape
Group 4	<i>o e c s</i>	o-shape/oval

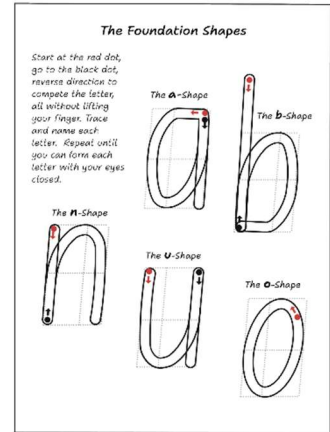
The secret to learning the Italic lowercase letters is mastering the ***b***, ***n***, ***a***, ***u***, and ***o*** shapes. These shapes, however, are not intuitive, and specific instruction and practice are needed. Students must practice the:

- ***b***-Shape and ***n***-Shape before doing the **Group 2** worksheets;
- the ***a***-Shape and ***u***-Shape before doing the **Group 3** worksheets; and
- the ***o***-Shape before doing the **Group 4** worksheets.

### (i) *Finger Tracing the Curved Letters*

Finger tracing shapes on paper is a great way to learn the basic lowercase italic letter shapes. This sheet contains an outline of the lowercase foundation shapes.

The red dots signify the starting point, and the red arrows represent the direction to trace. The black dots and arrows represent the traceback along the stem to continue the shape. These shapes are made in one stroke. No lifting of the finger (or pencil).



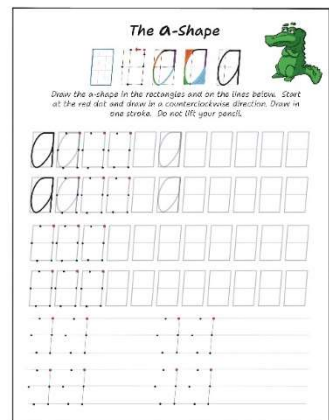
### (ii) *Letter Shape Practice Pages*

The foundation shapes in the Italic lowercase letters are the:

- b-Shape** – found in **b** and **p**
- n-Shape** – found in **n**, **m**, **h** and **r**
- a-Shape** – found in **a**, **d**, **g** and **q**
- u-Shape** – found in **u** and **y**
- o-Shape** – defines the shape of **c**, **e**, **o** and **s**

The Resource includes activity pages for each foundation shape which:

- provide a visual of the line segments and the triangle shapes created within the rectangle when the foundation shape is drawn correctly;
- have rows with rectangles and lines to practice drawing the foundation shapes.



Students are ready to start printing these letters using the lowercase worksheets when they:

- recognize these letters by sight,
- finger trace the letters; and
- draw the **a**, **b**, **n**, **u** and **o** shapes,

### c) *Group 5 – Diagonal Lines*

The Group 5 letters are **k**, **v**, **w**, **x** and **z**. Students are ready to print these letters once they can:

- recognize these letters by sight,
- finger trace the letters; and
- draw diagonal lines in every direction.



## Section 6 – LOWERCASE WORKSHEETS

### 1. Letter Formation Worksheets

There are two sets of lowercase Letter Formation worksheets, one for Kindergarten and the other for Grade 1. The Grade 1 worksheets can be used as a refresher at the beginning of Grade 2. These worksheets are organized by letter formation groups. There are two lowercase letters on each page. The letter pairs and their corresponding letter groups are as follows:





Group 1*	i	j	Group 3	a	d	Group 5*	l	k
	f	t		g	q		v	w
Group 2	h	r	Group 4	u	y		x	z
	m	n		c	s	*Group 1 letter "l" is with Group 5 letter "k".		
	b	p		e	o			





#### a) Kindergarten Worksheets

There are 13 Lowercase Worksheets for Kindergarten students. Each Worksheet contains two lowercase letters and:

- a place at the top for the students to print their names and the date;
- a sample of each lowercase letter in black;
- the ductus for each lowercase letter in red;
- an outline of the letter for the students to colour; and
- a blank space below the samples for the students to practice drawing the letters.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_














#### b) Grades 1 and 2 Worksheets

There are 13 lowercase worksheets for Grade 1 and Grade 2 students.

Each Worksheet has the same information as the Kindergarten Worksheets, but two sections are below the samples instead of the blank space. These sections contain the model letter to copy, dotted letters to trace and space to practice printing the letters.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

aaa . . . aaa a

\_\_\_\_\_ a

ddd . . . ddd d

\_\_\_\_\_ d



## 2. Letter Practice Worksheets

There are 13 lowercase letter practice pages for the Grade 1 and 2 students. Each practice page contains two lowercase letters. At this stage, the students should focus on:

- letter shape
- keeping the body of the lowercase letters within the x-Height (on the Baseline and at the Waist Line;
- stopping their ascenders at the invisible Ascender Line; and
- stopping their descenders at the invisible Descender Line.

Each practice page contains the same details as the Kindergarten worksheets and Grade 1 and 2 worksheets but has:

- one row below the samples for the students to practice printing one lowercase letter; and
- a second row below the samples for the students to practice printing the second lowercase letter.

Each row has two sample letters, four to trace and space to print their letters. There are five additional rows for the students to practice these lowercase letters.



## 3. Sight Words

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Page: 1

**SIGHT WORDS WORKSHEET**

Copy the sample words at least two or three times in the space below each word.

and	are	at
be	but	by
call	can	come
day	do	down
each	end	even

Sight words are words students should recognize and understand when they see them without having to decode them or sound them out.

Five pages of fifteen sight words each are provided for the students to copy. There are three words sight words for each letter of the alphabet for a total of seventy five words.

The space below each word allows the student to practice printing the word two or three times.

#### 4. Days and Months

Although mundane, there are two pages with the days of the week and months of the year for printing practice purposes.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Page 7

Days and Months

Sunday	Monday
Tuesday	Wednesday
Thursday	Friday
Saturday	
January	February

#### 5. Print Animal Word Practice

Printed Animal Words - m, n, o Page 5

mallard
monkey
newt
norway rat
ostrich
owl

More interesting are the nine pages of animal names for students to practice their printing.

Above each row, the animal's name and picture are displayed. The name is repeated on the row for students to trace to reinforce the correct letter shape and spacing.

The student then prints the animal's name as many times as there is space in the row below each sample word.

## Section 7 - UPPERCASE LETTER FORMATION

### 1. The Italic Advantage

The advantage of the Italic script is that the printed and cursive uppercase letters are the same. Also, uppercase letters do not join to the Italic cursive lowercase letters, so there is nothing more to learn when transitioning to cursive writing.

The uppercase Italic letters come from the Roman capitals that are recognizable by most people, even children. Commercially available foam, plastic or magnetic uppercase letters tend to be all the same width and, as such, do not help students recognize the different widths of the Italic uppercase letters.

### 2. Teaching Sequence

Uppercase letters can be taught by letter formation or by width.

If taught by letter **formation**, the teaching sequence would be as follows:

Group	Letters	Formation
Group 1	<b><i>E F H I J L T U</i></b>	Vertical and Horizontal Lines
Group 2	<b><i>B C D G O P Q S</i></b>	Circles and Half-Circles
Group 4	<b><i>A K M N R V W X Y Z</i></b>	Diagonal lines

If taught by **width**, the teaching sequence would be as follows:

Group	Letters
Narrowest	<b><i>I J</i></b>
Narrow	<b><i>B E F K L P R S</i></b>
Medium	<b><i>A H N T U V X Y Z</i></b>
Round and Wide	<b><i>C D G Q</i></b>
Wider and Widest	<b><i>M W</i></b>

### 3. Uppercase Letter Recognition – Playing Cards

The first step is the ability to recognize and name the uppercase letters. Students can recognize and name letters by picking them from an array of printed, plastic, foam or magnetic letters.

The Resource includes three uppercase “playing cards” pages to help students identify and name the uppercase letters. These pages are intended to be printed and the cards cut-out. The pages can be printed on cardstock or printed on paper and laminated.



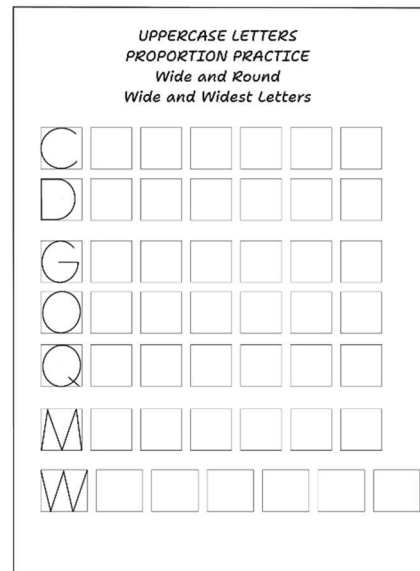
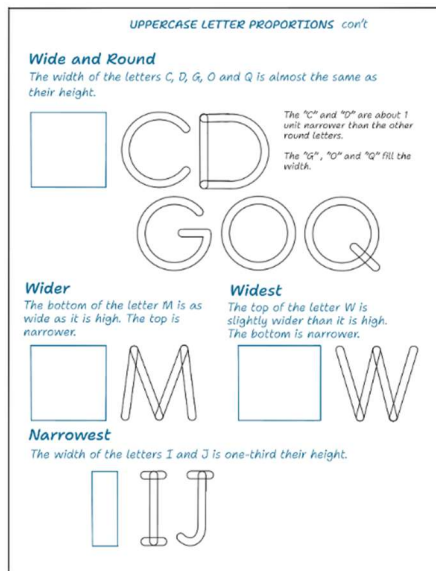
These cards can be used with the lowercase playing cards to have students match the lowercase and uppercase letters.

#### 4. Proportional Size of Uppercase Letter

All Italic uppercase letters fit into either a square or a rectangle. All uppercase letters are the same height but have different widths.

Width	Description
Narrowest	The width of the narrowest letters ( <i>I</i> and <i>J</i> ) is <b>one-third</b> their height.
Narrow	The width of the narrow letters ( <i>B E F K L P R S</i> ) is <b>one-half</b> their height.
Medium	The width of the medium letters ( <i>A H N T U V X Y Z</i> ) is <b>two-thirds</b> their height.
Wide and Round	The wide and round letters ( <i>C, D, G, O, Q</i> ) are generally as <b>wide</b> as they are <b>high</b> , with the <i>C</i> and <i>D</i> being slightly narrower than the <i>G, O</i> and <i>Q</i> , which are the full width.
Wider	The bottom of the letter ( <i>M</i> ) is as wide as it is high, but the top of the <i>M</i> is narrower than the bottom.
Widest	The top of the letter ( <i>W</i> ) is slightly wider than its height. The bottom of the <i>W</i> is narrower than the top.

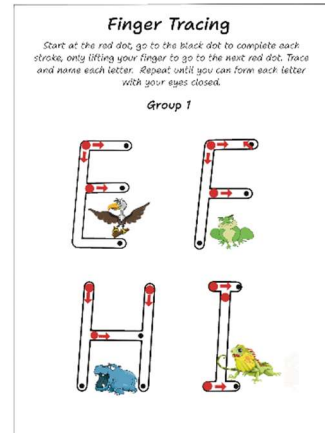
Two pages in the Resource explain and demonstrate the proportions of the uppercase letters, and there are three pages for students to draw the uppercase letters in their shape containers. Two of these pages are below.



## 5. *Finger Tracing –Uppercase Letters*

Finger tracing shapes on paper, in the air, or on the table in sand (or other pliable material) is a terrific way to learn uppercase italic letters. Learning is reinforced when the students name each letter aloud while finger tracing. There are two sets of these pages, one by letter formation group and the other in alphabetical order.

The red dots signify the starting point, the red arrows represent the direction when printing the letter, and the black dots indicate the end of the stroke. There is no traceback when printing the uppercase letters.



- The multiple-stroke letters are A, B, D, E, F, H, I, J, K, M, N, P, Q, R, T, X and Y.
- The single-stroke letters are C, G, L, O, S, U, V, W and Z.

## Section 8 – UPPERCASE WORKSHEETS

### 1. Letter Formation Worksheets

There are two sets of uppercase Letter Formation worksheets, one for Kindergarten and the other for Grade 1. The Grade 1 worksheets can be used as a refresher at the beginning of Grade 2. These worksheets are organized by letter formation groups. There are two uppercase letters on each page. The letter pairs and their corresponding letter groups are as follows:



Vertical and Horizontal Lines	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	Circles and Half Circles	<b>B</b>	<b>P</b>	Diagonal Lines	<b>A</b>	<b>V</b>
	<b>H</b>	<b>L</b>		<b>C</b>	<b>G</b>		<b>K</b>	<b>R</b>
	<b>I</b>	<b>J</b>		<b>O</b>	<b>Q</b>		<b>M</b>	<b>W</b>
	<b>T</b>	<b>U</b>		<b>D</b>	<b>S</b>		<b>N</b>	<b>Z</b>
							<b>X</b>	<b>Y</b>

#### a) Kindergarten Worksheets

There are 13 Uppercase Worksheets for Kindergarten students. Each Worksheet contains two uppercase letters and:



- a place at the top for the students to print their names and the date;
- a sample of each uppercase letter in black;
- the ductus for each uppercase letter in red;
- an outline of the letter for the students to colour; and
- a blank space below the samples for the students to practice drawing the letters.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

 **B B**  **B**

EAT Colour Me BEAR

\_\_\_\_\_

 **P P**  **P**

PENGUIN Colour Me PARROT



\_\_\_\_\_

#### b) Grades 1 and 2 Worksheets

There are 13 uppercase worksheets for Grade 1 and Grade 2 students.

Each Worksheet has the same information as the Kindergarten Worksheets, but two sections are below the samples instead of the blank space. These sections contain the model letter to copy, dotted letters to trace and space to practice printing the letters.



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

 **B B**  **B**

EAT Colour Me BEAR

BBB BBB B

B B

 **P P**  **P**

PENGUIN Colour Me PARROT

PPP PPP P

P P

## 2. Letter Practice Worksheets

There are 13 uppercase letter practice pages for the Grade 1 and 2 students. Each practice page contains two uppercase letters and has:

- one row below the samples for the students to practice printing one uppercase letter; and
- a second row below the samples for the students to practice printing the second uppercase letter.

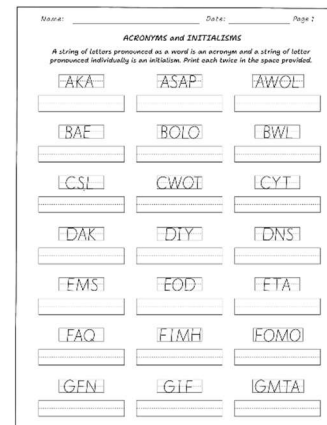


Each row has two sample letters, four to trace and space to print their letters. There are five additional rows for the students to practice these uppercase letters.

## 3. Acronyms and Initialisms

A string of letters pronounced as a word is an acronym, and a string of letters pronounced individually is an initialism. Acronyms and initialisms are great for practicing uppercase letters. Four pages of acronyms and initialisms are provided for each student to copy.

Three acronyms/initialisms for each alphabet letter provide 78 uppercase letter combinations. The space below each acronym/initialism allows the students to practice printing these words two or three times.



To extend this exercise to lowercase letters, a blank worksheet is included. This worksheet provides a space to write out the acronyms/initialisms and a longer area for the student to print out the meaning of the acronym/initialism. A list of the acronyms/initialisms and their meanings is included in the material. The students can also make up their own words to match the letters in whatever acronym/initialism they choose.

## 4. Print Animal Word Practice



There are nine pages of animal names for students to practice their uppercase letters.

Above each row, the animal's name and picture are displayed. The name is repeated on the row for students to trace to reinforce the correct letter shape and spacing.

The student then prints the animal's name in the row below each sample word.

## Section 9 – NUMBERS

### 1. Number Wall Cards

There are ten wall cards for the numbers zero to nine.

Each card shows the print version of the number, the printed word of the number and one dice or two die corresponding to the number shown.

These cards can be printed and posted in the classroom for easy reference.



### 2. Number Recognition – Playing Cards



The first step is recognizing and naming the nine one-digit numbers one and nine. Students can recognize and name the numbers by picking them from an array of printed, plastic, foam or magnetic numbers.

The Resource includes one page of number “playing cards” pages to help students identify and name these numbers. This page is intended to be printed and the cards cut-out. The pages can be printed on cardstock or printed on paper and laminated.

### 3. Finger Tracing – Numbers

Finger tracing shapes on paper, in the air, or on the table in sand (or other pliable material) is a great way to learn numbers. Learning numbers is reinforced when the students name each aloud while finger tracing.

There are two finger tracing pages for the ten one-digit numbers.

The red dots signify the starting point, and the red arrows represent the movement direction when printing the number. The black dot represents the endpoint.

Students should be able to trace each number without the guide sheets before printing the numbers.





## 4. Number Worksheets

### a) Kindergarten Worksheets

There are Number Worksheets for Kindergarten students. Each Worksheet contains two numbers and:

- a place at the top for the students to print their names and the date;
- a sample of each number in black;
- the ductus for each number in red;
- an outline of the number for the students to colour; and
- a blank space below the samples for the students to practice drawing the letters.

### b) Grades 1 and 2 Worksheets

There are Number Worksheets for Grade 1 and Grade 2 students.

Each Worksheet has the same information as the Kindergarten Worksheets, but two lined sections are below the samples instead of the blank space. These sections contain the model number to copy, dotted numbers to trace and space to practice printing the numbers.

## 5. Addition and Subtraction Worksheets

Two pages of adding and subtracting have been included in the Resource to practice their numbers.

## Section 10 – CURSIVE CONNECTIONS

### 1. *Cursive Readiness*

Students are ready to learn cursive Italic when they can:

- form the letter shapes correctly and consistently;
- maintain a consistent slant of their letters (vertical or with a slight slant to the right); and
- maintain correct spacing between letters and words.

### 2. *Going from Printing to Cursive Writing*

Printed Italic lowercase letters become cursive letters by adding connecting strokes, where required, between the letters. Not all Italic letters need to connect. This allows for pen lifts between certain letters to move the hand across the paper.

In addition to the pen lifts built in with certain lowercase letters, students can lift their pen after 4 or 5 letters. This allows the hand to be moved and makes it easier to maintain consistency when writing long multi-syllabic words.

Lowercase and uppercase cursive Italic letters are written with a slight slant to the right.

### 3. *Exemplars*

Exemplars showing the cursive joins, as well as the entrance and exit strokes, are included in the material.

Students do not have to go through the interim stage of learning to add “exit” and “entrance” strokes to create their cursive letters. The exit strokes at the end of the letters will come naturally as students gain proficiency in joining letters. The entrance strokes in the first letter in a word may appear naturally but are unnecessary. The exit and entrance strokes are explained below.



#### 4. Student Desk Strips

There are two Italic cursive desk strips in the Resource. One 8 ½ by 11 page contains two Desk Strips, each with different illustrations. The page is designed to be cut lengthwise to create two strips for distribution to the students.



#### 5. Exit Strokes (Serifs)

In cursive Italic, an exit stroke (serif) is a short stroke attached to a letter before a pen lift to naturally end the letter before lifting the pencil to start the next letter or the next word. The table below shows which letters have exit strokes, along with the type of serif, and which letters do not have an exit serif.

Letters	Exit Serif	Example
<i>a d h i k l</i> <i>m n o x</i>	Elbow exit	<i>a</i>
<i>b c e f g j</i> <i>p q r s t y z</i>	No exit serif	
<i>o v w</i>	Short curved line	<i>v</i>

#### 6. Entrance Strokes (Serifs)

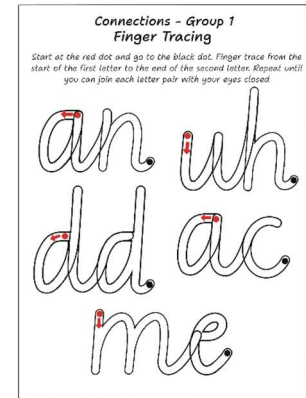
Serifs may be added to the beginning of the first lowercase letter in a word or to a letter after a pen lift. This, however, is not required. The table below shows which letters may have an entrance serif, along with the serif type, and which letters do not have an entrance serif.

Letters	Entrance Serif	Example
<i>i j p u v w y</i>	Pointed	<i>u</i>
<i>m n r x</i>	Rounded	<i>n</i>
<i>a b c d e f g</i> <i>h k l o q s t z</i>	No entrance serif	

## 7. **Finger Tracing – Cursive Joins**

Finger tracing shapes is a terrific way to learn cursive joins. Learning is reinforced when the students name each letter pair aloud while finger tracing. The five finger tracing pages are organized by connection group.

The red dots signify the starting point, the red arrows represent the direction when writing the letter, and the black dots indicate the end of the connected letter. All of the cursive joins required some traceback.



## 8. **Letters that Do Not Connect**

There is no connection into or out of the following lowercase letters:

- after the letters *g, j, q, r, x, y* and *z*;
- after the letter *f*, if the next letter is *e*; and
- before the letters *f* and *z*.

For these letters, the students will lift their pen and start the next letter as if they were printing. Students can choose not to join into or out of the letter *s*.

The cursive uppercase letters do not connect to lowercase letters. After writing an uppercase letter, the student will lift their pen to start the next letter.

## 9. **Connecting Lowercase Letters**

To connect two lowercase letters, the student must know where:

- the letter being written will end; and
- the next letter will start.

The connection is fluid and moves naturally (in a curved or horizontal line or a combination of a curved and horizontal line) from the **end** of one letter to the **start** of the next letter. The *i*'s are dotted, and the *t*'s are crossed after the words with those letters are written.

Students must be taught how to join lowercase Italic letters to avoid creating awkward links which will make their writing illegible. If the student understands and can print the lowercase letter shapes, transitioning to cursive should be relatively easy. Students must learn that:

- the ending and starting position for each letter shape determines the connection;

- letters will join directly from the end of one letter to the start of the next letter; and
- the connections must follow the shape of the letters and must not pass through them.






## 10. Starting and Ending Positions

Students do not have to memorize which letters connect to which or learn complicated rules for joining letters. Any two letters can be joined by knowing where one letter ends, and the next letter starts. Every pair of letters that end and start the same will have the same connector.






In the tables below and on the worksheets, the **end** of the previous letter is shown as a **green** dot, and the start of the next letter is shown as a **red** dot.

There are:

- the five places where letters **end**

Letters END				
Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5
at the Baseline on the right	above the Baseline on the right	at the Baseline on the left	above the Baseline on the left	at the Waist Line on the right
<i>adhik lmnu</i>	<i>cet</i>	<i>bp</i>	<i>s</i>	<i>fov w</i>
				

- the five places where letters **start**



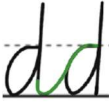


Letters START				
at the Waist Line on the left	at the Ascender on the left	at the Waist Line on the right	below the Waist Line on the Right	below the Waist Line on the left
<i>ijmnp r uvwx y</i>	<i>bhkl t</i>	<i>adg q</i>	<i>co s</i>	<i>e</i>
				




## 11. Teaching Groups and Sequence



The connections between lowercase letters are taught in the following groups:






- Group 1 – letters that end at the Baseline on the right: *a d h i k l m n u*
- Group 2 – letters that end above the Baseline, on the right: *c e t*
- Group 3 – letters that end at the Baseline at the left: *b p*
- Group 4 – letters that end above the Baseline on the left: *s*
- Group 5 – letters that end at the Waist Line on the right: *f o v* and *w*






Note: “o” is included in Group 5 even though it ends below the waist line on the right.






Group 1 Connections		
FROM letters that end	TO letters that start	
at the Baseline on the right <i>a d h i k l m n u</i>  Except for joining to “e,” these connections require a trace back over the connecting stroke to make the second letter.	at the Waist Line on the left <i>i j m n p r u v w x y</i>	
	at the Ascender Line on the left <i>b h k l t</i>	
	at the Waist Line on the right <i>a d g q</i>	
	below the Waist Line on the right <i>c o s</i>	
	below the Waist Line on the left <i>e</i>	

Group 2 Connections		
FROM letters that end	TO letters that start	
above the Baseline, on the right <i>c e t</i>  Except for joining to “e” these connections require a trace back over the connecting stroke to make the second letter.	at the Waist Line on the left <i>i j m n p r u v w x y</i>	
	at the Ascender Line on the left <i>b h k l t</i>	
	at the Waist Line on the right <i>a d g q</i>	

Group 2 Connections		
FROM letters that end	TO letters that start	
	below the Waist Line on the right <i>c o s</i>	
	below the Waist Line on the left <i>e</i>	

Group 3 Connections		
FROM letters that end	TO letters that start	
at the Baseline at the left <i>b p</i>  This join requires a trace back over the base of the letters, and, except for joining to “e,” it also requires a trace back over the connecting stroke to make the second letter.	at the Waist Line on the left <i>i j m n p r u v w x y</i>	
	at the Ascender Line on the left <i>b h k l t</i>	
	at the Waist Line on the right <i>a d g q</i>	
	below the Waist Line on the right <i>c o s</i>	
	below the Waist Line on the left <i>e</i>	

Group 4 Connections		
FROM letters that end	TO letters that start	
above the Baseline on the left <i>s</i>  This join requires a trace back over the base of the letter, and, except for joining to “e,” it also requires a trace back over the connecting stroke to make the second letter.	at the Waist Line on the left <i>i j m n p r u v w x y</i>	
	at the Ascender Line on the left <i>b h k l t</i>	
	at the Waist Line on the right <i>a d g q</i>	
	below the Waist Line on the right <i>c o s</i>	
	below the Waist Line on the left <i>e</i>	

Group 5 Connections		
FROM letters that end	TO letters that start	
at the Waist Line on the right  <i>f o v w</i>  <b>Note:</b> "o" is included in Group 5 even though it ends below the waist line on the right.  Except for the first join and joining to "e," these connections require a trace back over the connecting stroke to make the second letter.	at the Waist Line on the left <i>i j m n p r u v w x y</i>	
	at the Ascender Line on the left <i>b h k l t</i>	
	at the Waist Line on the right <i>a d g q</i>	
	below the Waist Line on the right <i>c o s</i>	
	below the Waist Line on the left <i>e</i>	

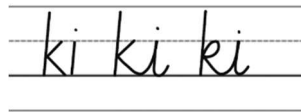
## 12. Single Strokes and Traceback

All cursive lowercase letters are made with one stroke except for *f*, *k* (the two stroke version), *t* and *x*. There is no pencil lift between drawing the body of the letter and its stem, ascender, descender and connecting stroke.

With one-stroke letters, the students must master tracing back on the same line to connect the letters. No loops or double lines should appear on italic stems, descenders, ascenders or connecting strokes. The connecting stroke must not pass through the body of the letter.

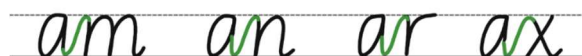
## 13. Variation of *k*

The lowercase letter "*k*," is a two-stroke printed letter. There is a one-stroke variation of the cursive "*k*" (shown below) that requires the student to trace back up the downstroke and make a loop like the "eye" in the lowercase "*e*." This variation is acceptable if the loop does not go over the Waist Line.



## 14. Optional Join into *m*, *n*, *r* and *x*

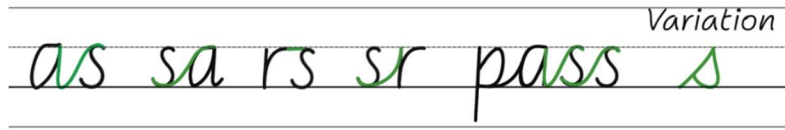
Rather than using a diagonal line to the center of the downstroke on letters *m*, *n*, and *r* and not joining to *x*, the alternate optional connection is to use the diagonal line and a small rollover into these letters. This is only an option for these four letters.





## 15. The Challenge with s

The letter “s” is a challenging cursive letter. It is the only printed letter that starts below the Waist Line on the right and ends above the Baseline on the left. Students can lift their pencil or pen before and after writing the letter “s” until they are comfortable joining the other letters.



## 16. Cursive Connection Practice Pages

As noted above, students are not required to join every letter but should not keep every letter separate, as in printing. Letters that can be connected readily and fluidly should be joined.

Five two-page Cursive Connection Worksheets correspond to the five connection groups identified above. Each Worksheet:

- identifies the connection group and the five different connections;
- provides the print version of the two letters being joined;
- identifies where the first letter ends and the second letter starts;
- shows the connection between the two letters in green; and
- provides a completed pair with the exit stroke from the second letter.

**a) Connection Group and the five connection points**

**b) Print Version of the two letters**

**c) Green Dot – end of letter. Red Dot Start of letter.**

**d) The connection between the two letters is in green.**

**e) Completed pair with exit strokes.**

Students choose letters from the “Letter End” group and each of the “Letter Start” groups.

Students practice their two-letter cursive combinations here.

Worksheet titled "Group 1 Cursive Connections" showing the connection group and the five different connections. The worksheet includes a table of letters and their connection points, a section for students to practice joining letters, and a section for students to practice writing letter pairs.

Letters END		Letters START				
at the Baseline on the right	at the Waist Line on the left	at the Ascender on the left	at the Waist Line on the right	below the Waist Line on the right	below the Waist Line on the left	
adhik	lmnu	ijmnp	rvwx	bhkl	adgq	
a n k d c e						

Exercise: Students choose letters from the “Letter End” group and each of the “Letter Start” groups and practice joining multiple letter pairs in the rows under “Your Turn...” The letter pairs must be written in one stroke from the start of the first letter to the end of the second letter without lifting the pencil or stopping.

Go to the Waist Line on the Left - ij m n p r v w x y

Join: an, Example: an an, Your Turn - write out letter pairs

Go to the Ascender Line - b h k l t

Join: uh, Example: uh uh, Your Turn - write out letter pairs

Join: hu, Example: hu hu, Your Turn - write out letter pairs

Students choose letters from the “Letter End” group and each of the “Letter Start” groups and practice joining multiple letter pairs in the rows under “Your Turn ...”

The letter pairs must be written in one stroke from the start of the first letter to the end of the second letter without lifting the pencil or stopping.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Page 2

Group 1 Cursive Connections  
1st Letter ends at the Baseline on the Right  
a d h i k l m n u

Go to Waist Line on the Right  
- a d g q

Join	Example	Your Turn - write out letter pairs
dd	dd dd	
la	la la	

Go below the Waist Line on the Right  
- c o s

Join	Example	Your Turn - write out letter pairs
ac	ac ac	
no	no no	

Go below the Waist Line on the Left  
- e

Join	Example	Your Turn - write out letter pairs
me	me me	
he	he he	

## Section 11 - CURSIVE CONNECTION WORKSHEETS

### 1. Cursive Word Practice Worksheets

As four or five letters are the optimal number to join before lifting the pen, it is best to practice with words containing that number of letters.

The Resource contains Cursive Word Practice Worksheets for each connection group. These Practice Pages have a series of words starting with each letter in the "Letters End" column and one of the letters in the "Letters Start" column. Letter pairs are omitted if they do not appear as the first two letters in a word. There is a printed and cursive version of each word. The connection taught with the Group is drawn in red in the sample cursive word.

The students must write the words two or three times in cursive Italic in the row beneath the samples. Students can either focus on the connection covered in each group and print the other letters or join all the letters in the word as shown in the sample.

If they do the former, they should start over with Group 1 once they complete all the Groups and go through the Worksheets again to practice all the connections in all of the words.

Below is a copy of the first page of the Group 1 Worksheets.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Page 1

**GROUP 1 - CURSIVE CONNECTIONS**  
Words that start with - a d h i k l m n u

#### Practice Words and Joins

The Worksheets for each Connection Group have a series of words starting with each letter in the "Letters End" column and one of the letters in the "Letters Start" column. Letter pairs are omitted if they do not appear as the first two letters in a word.

There is a printed and cursive version of each word. The connection taught with the Group is red in the sample cursive word.

**Exercise** Write two or three copies of the word in cursive Italic in the row beneath the samples. Either focus on the connection in this Group and print the other letters, or join all the letters in the word as shown in the sample.

Letters END		Letters START				
at the Baseline on the right	at the Waist Line on the left	at the Ascender on the left	at the Waist Line on the right	below the Waist Line on the right	below the Waist Line on the left	
a, d, h, i, k, l, m, n, u	i, j, m, n, p, r, u, v, w, x, y	b, h, k, l, t	a, d, g, q	c, o, s	e	
a	n	k	d	c	e	

aide aide

ajar ajar

amid amid

ante ante

apex apex

arch arch

These worksheets will introduce students to many unfamiliar words. Although the purpose is to practice cursive connections, the exercise can be expanded to include the pronunciation and meaning of these words. There are 240 words on these worksheets.

Group 1	96 words
Group 2	67 words
Group 3	19 words

Group 4	16 words
Group 5	42 words

## 2. *Cursive Animal Word Practice*

Nine pages of animal names are included for students to practice writing the names.

The animal's name and its picture are above each row. The students can:

- trace over the sample cursive word to reinforce the correct letter shape, connections and spacing; and
- write the animal's name as many times as there is space in the row below each sample word.

Names: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Page 1

*Cursive Animal Words - a, b, c*

alligator   
alligator  
armadillo   
armadillo  
bat   
bat  
bear   
bear  
cat   
cat  
camel   
camel

## 3. *Days and Months*

The Resource contains two pages for students to write the days of the week and the months of the year.

## 4. *Provinces and Capital Cities*

The material includes two pages with the names of the capital cities, provinces and territories and the year they joined Canada. These pages have cursive sample wording but could be used for printing practice as well.

When doing these pages, the students will practice their uppercase and lowercase cursive connections and their numbers.

Names: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Page 1

*CANADIAN PROVINCES, TERRITORIES AND CAPITAL CITIES AND YEAR JOINED*

Victoria	British Columbia	1871
_____	_____	_____
Edmonton	Alberta	1905
_____	_____	_____
Regina	Saskatchewan	1905
_____	_____	_____
Winnipeg	Manitoba	1870
_____	_____	_____
Toronto	Ontario	1867
_____	_____	_____



## Section 13 – STICKER PAGES

### 1. Student Sticker Sheets

The value of using stickers to motivate students is well-known. Alphabet and number stickers can be used to track a student's progress in learning the lowercase and uppercase letters and the one-digit numbers.

As the students learn each letter and number, they can be given the sticker for that letter (lowercase or uppercase) or number to glue on their sticker sheet.

To the right is the student's sticker page.

Master your Italic Letters and Numbers to collect 52 Letter-Alphabet Stamps and 9 Number Stamps

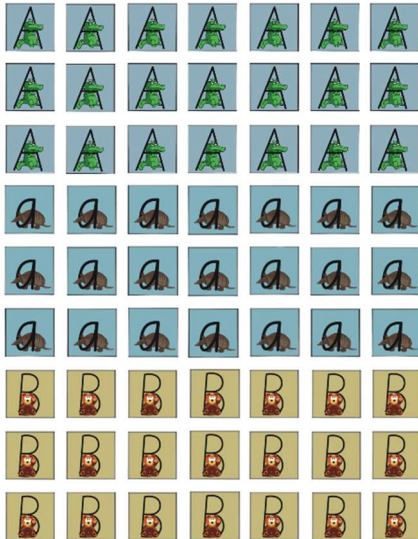
Name: \_\_\_\_\_



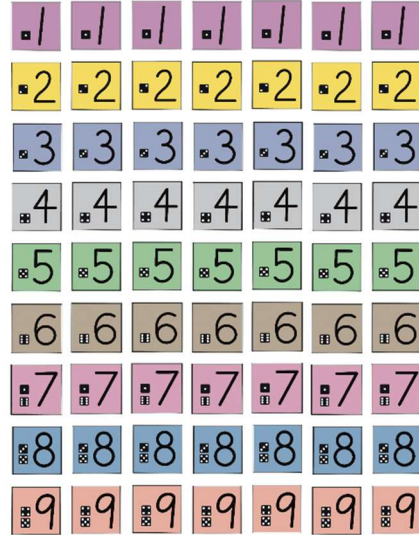
### 2. Stickers

There are seventeen sheets of colour stickers for each alphabet letter and one teacher page for the numbers 1 to 9, copies of which are below.

TEACHER SHEET - Cut up the sticker page and give the students a sticker to glue on their sticker sheet as they master their letters.



TEACHER SHEET - Cut up the sticker page and give the students a sticker to glue on their sticker sheet as they master their numbers.



## Section 14 - ALPHABET-ANIMAL COLOURING PAGES

As with any skill, learning to print and handwrite requires daily practice over an extended period. To break up the practice sessions, the material includes twenty-six alphabet letters and animal pages for the students to colour and decorate. These colouring pages can be used as an incentive to keep practicing, a reward for completing their practice session, or an activity if students finish ahead of others.

Colouring is an activity that benefits older students and adults. Colouring should improve their mood and fine motor skills, which, in turn, improves their printing and handwriting. Practicing printing and handwriting will, in turn, improve their ability to draw and colour. It is a win-win combination.



## Section 15

### IMAGE ATTRIBUTION OF ARTWORK USED IN THE RESOURCE

The images in Parts II and III were sourced from **Pixabay** (<https://pixabay.com>) and **Vecteezy** (<https://www.vecteezy.com>). The colouring pages in Section 1 are Procreate stamps from Tatoo Worker Studio, available on Design Cuts. All images are subject to their applicable copyright licenses.

Part III, Section 15 contains a list of the images and links to the images and stamps used in the Resource Material.