Read Write Inc.
Handwriting

# Handwriting Handbook

Series developed by
**Ruth Miskin**







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Dear Handwriting Teacher

**Why handwriting matters**



It's frustrating to see children who don't enjoy writing because they find putting pencil to paper hard. It's no good our saying, 'Don't worry about your handwriting, just write your ideas' because children do worry. Any writing is hard if you've not been taught to handwrite.

- Good handwriting increases children's motivation: their belief in themselves as writers is predicated on this, particularly in their first years at school.
- Writing involves many processes, so having fluent handwriting is one less thing to think about.

And – however unfairly – children and even teachers often judge a piece of legible, well-formed writing as better than one that isn't.

As it says in the Writing Framework 2025:

> "Pupils can gain great satisfaction and pleasure in learning how to write if the teaching is explicit, cumulative and engaging. As they see progress and sense growing competence, their motivation to improve increases. Gaining a new skill becomes a source of pride, in the same way as learning to play a musical instrument. It gives them freedom to express their ideas without being hampered by an uncomfortable pencil grip, poor letter formation or inaccurate spelling."

Our teaching is grounded in one important principle: We always help children 'visualise to memorise'. We use 'picture hooks' to help them build a mind picture of the letter or join **before** they write.

We ***never ask children to copy letters, joins or words***. Copying results in children writing what they think they see – often starting in the wrong place or writing an approximation of the letter or join.

Our aim is to build children's writing fluency.

Let's help all children enjoy putting pencil to paper!

Ruth Miskin

# Structure of *Read Write Inc. Handwriting*

We teach children to read and write Set 1 sounds from the start of Reception as part of their *Read Write Inc. Phonics* lessons. Children first learn to form letters while they learn to read Set 1 letter-sounds in Reception.

As soon as they can read Set 1 sounds, we teach a separate daily 10-minute handwriting lesson. These handwriting lessons are at a different time from the *Read Write Inc.* lesson. Some teachers teach handwriting first thing in the afternoon – it's a great way to settle children after lunchtime.

In *Read Write Inc.*, we teach handwriting in four stages.

## *Read Write Inc. Handwriting* – the four stages

**Stage 1** begins as soon as most children can read Set 1 sounds. We continue to teach children to form letters correctly.

**Stage 2** begins during Year 1. Children learn the relative size of letters and to form letters that will flow easily into a joined style.

**Stage 3** follows straight on. Children learn how to join letters using two basic joins – the 'bridge' join, the 'hill' join and the two variations on each.

**Stage 4** helps children develop a mature and speedy style.

Each stage ensures pupils meet the National Curriculum requirements for handwriting from Reception to Year 4.

# Handwriting essentials for all stages

## Some children haven't held a pencil before. Should I wait before teaching them correct letter formation?

No. It doesn't take long for children to develop the finger and hand strength to press a soft pencil on to the paper. Even children whose spidery letters take up a whole page at the beginning learn to use bolder strokes after a few weeks of daily practice.

## Where should children sit to write?

First, we arrange tables and chairs so all children can clearly see the board/whiteboard.

Children practise sitting comfortably at a table to write. This is much more comfortable than sitting cross-legged, hunched over a whiteboard.

We teach children that when we say 'perfect handwriting position' they quickly:

- put two feet on the floor
- push their bottom to the back of their chair
- tuck their chair under the table
- hold their pencil in a tripod grip
- place their other hand on their book or paper, so it doesn't move around.

## What should children use to write?

We suggest that children use a standard HB pencil. For some, a soft 2B pencil might help in the early stage as it requires less pressure on the page.

We teach children how to hold a pencil in a tripod grip. We check their grip at the start of every handwriting lesson – and in all other writing activities. Some children benefit from using a triangular rubber grip on their pencil.

Do make sure pencils are sharpened before handwriting lessons!

## What should children write on?

For Stage 1, children write in an unlined exercise book. This is so they can focus on correct letter formation.

For Stages 2 and 3, children write in 15mm-lined books or books with handwriting tram lines – 21mm outside lines, 6mm inside lines.

For Stage 4, children write in 8mm-lined exercise books.

We do not recommend using whiteboards to teach handwriting.

## How can I support children who are left-handed?

When children who are right-handed write, they pull their hand away from their writing. This allows them to see what they have written.

Children who are left-handed cover up their writing with their writing hand, so they are less likely to notice if they miss a space between words or make a spelling error.

This is how you can help children who are left-handed:

- Give them more space to write by placing them to the left of a child who is right-handed so their arms don't nudge each other.
- Show them how to slant their paper to the right so they can see more of their writing.
- Show them how to grip the pencil at a slightly higher point so they can see around their fingers.

# Handwriting in the *Read Write Inc. Phonics* lessons

We teach children to read letters in the order that will generate the most words for reading**: m a s d t i n p g o**, etc.

We connect the letters they read with the shape they write:

Children read *a*: a-a-a-apple; they write *a*: round the apple down the leaf.

The picture mnemonics have been primarily designed to help the children read the letters easily. The handwriting phrase supports the letter formation.

This is an important point to remember: we teach letter-sounds at the speed that children can **read** them, **not** the speed they can write them. **Do not slow down the teaching of Set 1 and 2 sounds** – even if children's letter formation is poor.

The Set 1 films on the *Ruth Miskin Training (RMT) School Portal* show you how to teach basic letter formation. These films can also be played to the class or sent home for extra practice.

## Guidance for handwriting in the *Read Write Inc. Phonics* lessons

Children follow the same handwriting routine every day for each letter they learn to read. This routine is embedded in every Speed Sounds lesson. For example:

The teacher air-writes *a*, saying: *Round the apple, down the leaf.*

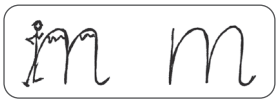
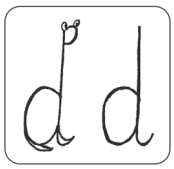
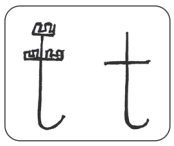
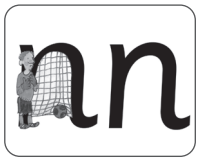
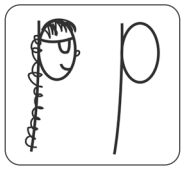
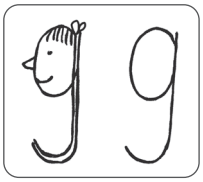
The children copy.

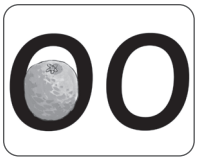
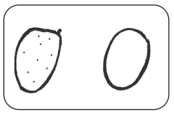
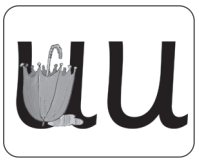
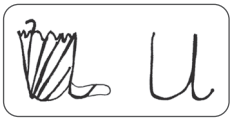
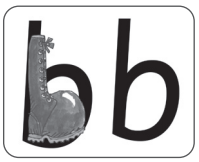
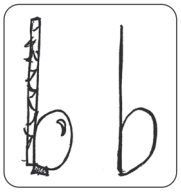
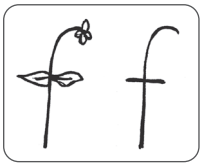
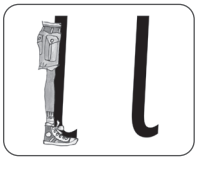
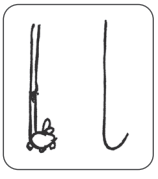
The teacher writes *a* on the board, saying: *Round the apple, down the leaf*.

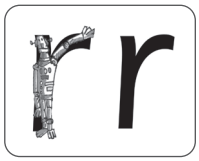
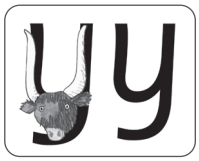
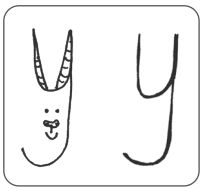
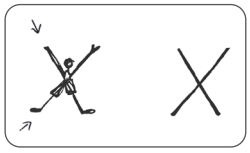
The children say the phrase as they write *a* on paper, at their tables.

These are the letter-formation phrases to use while you are teaching children to read the Speed Sound cards.

## Individual letter formation plans

| Speed Sound Card | Letter | Picture name | Phrase |
|---|---|---|---|
|  |  | mountain | Maisie, mountain, mountain |
|  |  | apple | Round the apple, down the leaf |
|  |  | snake | Slither down the snake |
|  |  | dinosaur | Round the dinosaur's bottom, up its tall neck, down to the feet |
|  |  | tower | Down the tower, across the tower |
|  |  | insect | Down the body, dot the head |
|  |  | net | Down Nobby, over his net |
|  |  | pirate | Down the plait and over the pirate's face |
|  |  | girl | Round her face, down her hair and give her a curl |

| Speed Sound Card | Letter | Picture name | Phrase |
|---|---|---|---|
|  |  | orange | All around the orange |
|  |  | caterpillar | Curl round the caterpillar |
|  |  | kangaroo | Down the kangaroo's body, tail and leg |
|  |  | umbrella | Down and under, up to the top and draw the puddle |
|  |  | boot | Down the laces to the heel, round the toe |
|  |  | flower | Down the stem and draw the leaves |
|  |  | egg | Lift off the top and scoop out the egg |
|  |  | leg | Down the long leg |
|  |  | horse | Down the head to the hooves and over its back |

| Speed Sound Card | Letter | Picture name | Phrase |
|---|---|---|---|
|  |  | robot | Down its back, then curl over its arm |
|  |  | jack-in-a-box | Down its body, curl and dot |
|  |  | vulture | Down a wing, up a wing |
|  |  | yak | Down a horn, up a horn and under its head |
|  |  | worm | Down, up,<br>down, up |
|  |  | zip | Zig-zag-zig |
|  |  | x ray | Down the arm and leg and repeat the other side |
|  |  | queen | Round her head, up past her earrings and down her hair |

# Handwriting Stage 1

We start teaching *separate* handwriting lessons as soon as children can read Set 1 sounds.

This lesson is at a different time to phonic lessons.

We now teach letters in handwriting families. Each family has a common formation.

They continue to write on plain paper.

a d g o c q

u y

b p

h n m r

e s f i

l t k j

v w x z

## Stage 1 lesson plans

### Blueprint lesson plan

Practise writing one letter a day. Repeat a letter the following day if your class need more practice.

Once children have practised writing all the letters, continue to use the same lesson plan to practise the letters that children find the most difficult.

Use the following routine for every lesson.

1. Hold up the A4 card on the picture side. Think out loud (TOL) the points on the checklist as you trace the letter shape on the picture. For example:

✓ start at the stalk

✓ go round the apple

✓ go back up to the stalk, then down

✓ curl the leaf at the bottom.

2. Write the letter on the board as you say the points on the checklist again.

3. Encourage children to say each point with you as you write the letter two more times.

### Children practise writing the letter

1. Check that the children are still sitting in the perfect handwriting position – see page 7 above.

2. Remove the picture and any letters from the board – the children must visualise the letter, not copy.

3. Ask the children to write the letter on their paper. Go round the room supporting children who need help. Don't sit with one child.

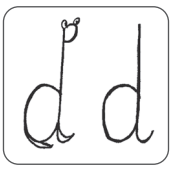
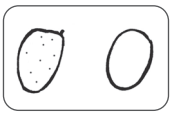
## Review the letter

1. Write the letter on the board. Make one error, choosing a common error children have made.
2. Ask the children to TTYP to find your 'two best bits'. Give examples from the checklist: 'Did I remember to start at the stalk? Did I go back up to the stalk?'
3. Choose two partners to tell you the 'two best bits'.
4. Ask children to TTYP to find 'one to fix'. Give examples from the checklist: 'Did I make the leaf too curly?'
5. Choose two partners to tell you their 'one to fix'.
6. Rewrite the letter perfectly.
7. Ask children to practise writing the letter again.
8. Ask children to underline their best letter.

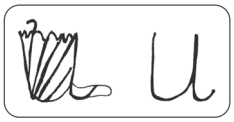
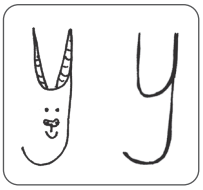
Note: Help children learn to visualise the letter as a picture and not the written checklist. Do not write the checklist on the board, though you may need a sticky note to help you remember to start with.

# Individual letter formation plans

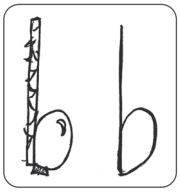
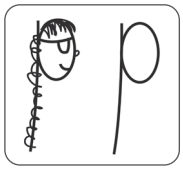
**a d g o c q**

| Letter | Handwriting Phrase | Checklist |
|---|---|---|
|  | Round the apple, down the leaf | ✓ start at the stalk<br>✓ go round the apple<br>✓ go back up to the stalk, then down<br>✓ curl the leaf at the bottom |
|  | Round the dinosaur's bottom, up its tall neck, down to the feet | ✓ go round his bottom<br>✓ up the tall neck<br>✓ down the straight line to the feet<br>✓ make a curl for the feet |
|  | Round her face, down her hair and give her a curl | ✓ start at her bobble<br>✓ go round her face<br>✓ go back to her bobble<br>✓ go down her straight hair<br>✓ draw a curl |
|  | All around the orange | ✓ start at the stalk<br>✓ go around the orange back to the stalk |
|  | Curl round the caterpillar | ✓ start at the caterpillar's head<br>✓ curl round the body |
|  | Round her head, up past her earrings and down her hair | ✓ start at the back of her crown<br>✓ go round her face<br>✓ go back up to her crown<br>✓ go down her hair<br>✓ give it a sharp flick |

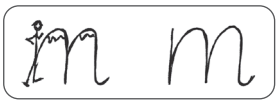
**u y**

| Letter | Handwriting Phrase | Checklist |
|---|---|---|
|  | Down and under, up to the top and draw the puddle | ✓ start at the handle<br>✓ go down the straight handle<br>✓ go underneath the umbrella and back up the other side<br>✓ go down the umbrella<br>✓ add a little curl for the puddle |
|  | Down a horn, up a horn and under its head | ✓ start at the top of the first horn<br>✓ go down the straight line for the first horn<br>✓ go underneath the horns<br>✓ draw a straight line up for the second horn<br>✓ go down and curl under its head |

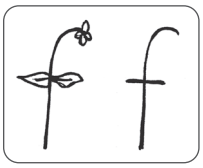
**b p**

| Letter | Handwriting Phrase | Checklist |
|---|---|---|
|  | Down the laces to the heel, round the toe | ✓ start at the top of the boot<br>✓ go straight down the boot<br>✓ go up over the toe<br>✓ back to the heel |
|  | Down the plait and over the pirate's face | ✓ start at the top of the plait<br>✓ go down the plait<br>✓ go over the face<br>✓ finish under the chin |

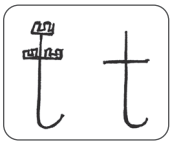
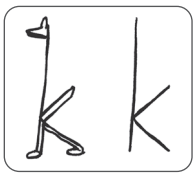
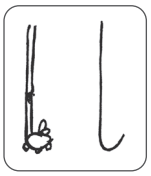
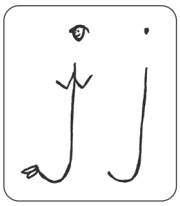
**h n m r**

| Letter | Handwriting Phrase | Checklist |
|---|---|---|
|  | Down the head to the hooves and over its back | ✓ start at the horse's head<br>✓ go down its straight neck<br>✓ go down to its feet<br>✓ go round its back<br>✓ draw a back leg<br>✓ add a little curl of dust as the horse runs away |
|  | Down Nobby, over his net | ✓ start at the top of Nobby's head<br>✓ go straight down Nobby<br>✓ go over the net<br>✓ add a curve for the grass |
|  | Maisie, mountain, mountain | ✓ start at Maisie's head<br>✓ go straight down Maisie<br>✓ go over the mountains<br>✓ check the mountains are the same height as Maisie<br>✓ add a small curl for the grass |
|  | Down its back, then curl over its arm | ✓ start at the robot's head<br>✓ go straight down its body<br>✓ go over the robot's arm |

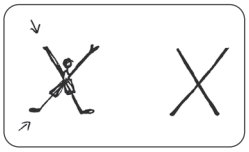
**e s f i**

| Letter | Handwriting Phrase | Checklist |
|---|---|---|
|  | Lift off the top and scoop out the egg | ✓ go up around the shell that needs to be cut off the egg<br>✓ draw underneath the egg |
|  | Slither down the snake | ✓ start at the snake's head<br>✓ curl one way<br>✓ curl the other |
|  | Down the stem and draw the leaves | ✓ start at the top of the flower<br>✓ go round and down the flower stem – then lift the pencil off the page<br>✓ draw a straight line across the leaves |
|  | Down the body, dot the head | ✓ start at the top of the insect's neck<br>✓ go down the body<br>✓ draw a tail<br>✓ add a dot for the head |

**t k l j**

| Letter | Handwriting Phrase | Checklist |
|---|---|---|
|  | Down the tower, across the tower | ✓ start at the top of the tower<br>✓ go straight down the tower<br>✓ add a curve<br>✓ make a straight line across the tower |
|  | Down the kangaroo's body, tail and leg | ✓ start at the kangaroo's head<br>✓ go down its body<br>✓ draw a tail to the body<br>✓ draw a straight back leg |
|  | Down the long leg | ✓ start at the top of his leg<br>✓ go down his long leg<br>✓ add a curl for the shoe |
|  | Down its body, curl and dot | ✓ start at the top of the jack-in-a-box's neck<br>✓ go down the long straight body<br>✓ draw a smooth curl for the legs<br>✓ add a dot for the head |

**v w x z**

| Letter | Handwriting Phrase | Checklist |
|---|---|---|
|  | Down a wing, up a wing | ✓ draw two straight lines for the wings – down, up |
|  | Down, up, down, up | ✓ draw four lines, all the same length – down, up, down, up |
|  | Down the arm and leg and repeat the other side | ✓ start at the top left<br>✓ go to the feet<br>✓ start at the bottom left<br>✓ go up to the arms |
|  | Zig-zag-zig | ✓ draw three straight lines – across, down, across |

# An introduction to Letter Village

## Year 1+ handwriting

Letter Village films are available on the Ruth Miskin Training School Portal, starting from Stage 2.

They teach children, step-by-step, how to develop joined handwriting in just ten minutes each day.

We teach children to 'visualise to memorise'. We do not ask children to copy. Copying means they haven't memorised and will likely copy what they think they see – often starting in the wrong place and writing an approximation of the letter or join.

## How do I get started?

Get going quickly by watching the Handwriting guidance films and a few lesson films with colleagues. Take part as though you are the children. You will understand and feel what it's like to learn the new writing style. You can also plan when you might pause the films to give extra support and guidance.

## What are the sponge cake layers and how can I use them?

We use an imaginary sponge cake so children can visualise where to place each letter on the line: the jam in the middle and a layer of sponge on the top and bottom. At Stage 3, children learn that 'all joins are in the jam'.

Watch the 'How to use the sponge cake' film on the Ruth Miskin Training School Portal with your children. This explains how the sponge cake layers correspond with the lines in their exercise book. Remind children of the layers at the start of each lesson. Some schools start by using handwriting tram lines to help children visualise the jam sponge.

You can choose if children write in a wide-lined handwriting book or a book with the standard 8mm width lines.

## How should children sit?

Children sit at tables for the whole of the lesson.

You will need to arrange tables and chairs so all children can clearly see the whiteboard.

Place children in partners side-by-side; they check each other's letters at key points in the lesson.

## How do I make the most of practice time?

Pause the film to:

- remind children how the sponge cake layers correspond to the lines in their books
- address any common difficulties
- give children extra time to practise.

## How do I make the most of partner check?

This symbol shows when it's time for partners to check each other's letter, join or word.



In each film, children choose their best letter or join and decide their 'two best bits and one to fix'.

Pause the film if children need more discussion time.

**When do we expect children to use their new handwriting skills in other lessons?**

When children write in other lessons, do not expect them to apply the new style straightaway. Once they have practised all the new letters and/or joins, explain that they are now ready to write the title and first sentence in their new handwriting. This makes it feel like a privilege rather than an order! Increase the number of sentences week by week.

# Handwriting Stage 2

## When do I start Stage 2?

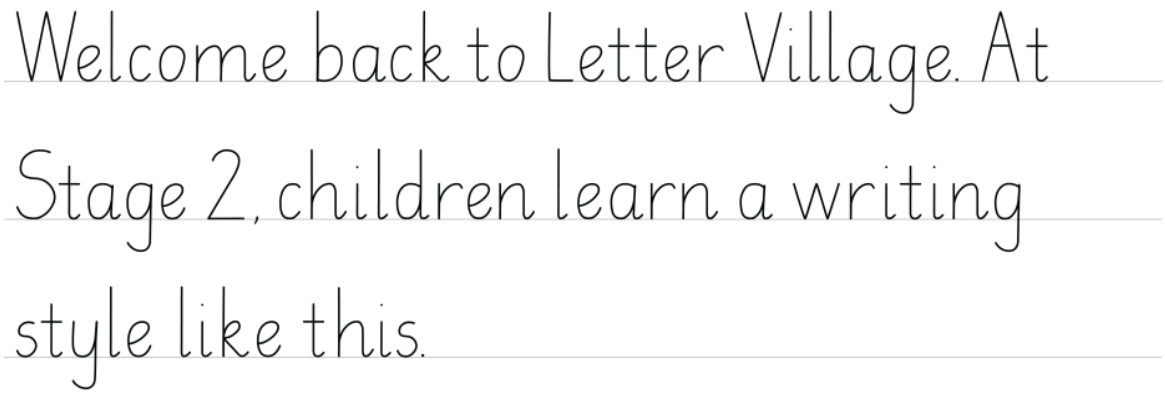
Start using the Letter Village films when the children in your Year 1 class can write with correct basic formation.

Children in Year 2 and above will also benefit from following these lessons before they begin learning to join letters.

## What do we teach at Handwriting Stage 2?

Children learn the relative size of letters and to form letters that will flow easily into a joined style.

They will learn a style that looks like this:




At Stage 2, we group letters that have a similar formation:

a d g o c q

u y

b p

h n m r

e s f i

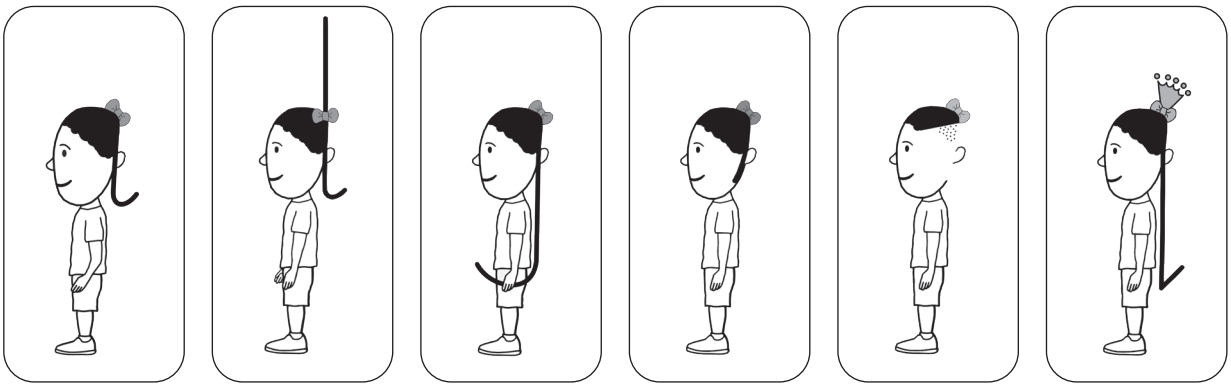
l t k j

v w x z

These new handwriting 'picture hooks' focus on each group's shared similarities.

For example, here's the first group of letters – a d g o c q.

You can see that the shape of all six sisters' heads is identical – except for their hair.



## Why don't we use Read Write Inc. Set 1 mnemonics for teaching handwriting?

When children are in Reception, we connect the letters they read with the shape they write. Children read a: a-a-a-apple; they write a: round the apple down the leaf. The mnemonics are designed to help children read quickly – with an accompanying phrase to establish correct basic formation.

By Year 1, children should be confident to read and write the letters with the correct formation. You can be confident that children no longer need the Set 1 mnemonics once they can read the letters.

## What happens in each Stage 2 lesson?

### Blueprint lesson plan

Each 10-minute film follows the same structure:

1. Introduce the story with a letter and a rap.
2. **Show** children how to write the letter.
3. Children **practise** writing the letter.
4. Children **check** their letters with their partner.
5. Repeat steps 2, 3 and 4.
6. **Review** the new letter and previous letters by asking children to practise writing words containing them.

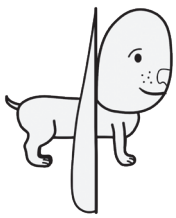
While your children are writing, support children who need extra help.

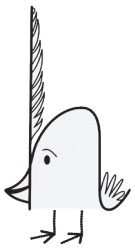
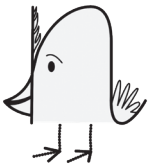
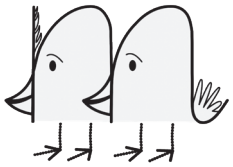
# Individual letter formation plans

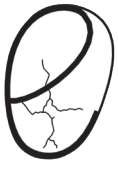
| Letter | Name | Checklist |
|---|---|---|
| a  | Annie | ✓ start at the bow on the top of her head<br>✓ over the top of her head<br>✓ curve down her face<br>✓ round her chin<br>✓ up to her ear<br>✓ up to her bow<br>✓ straight hair down<br>✓ add a curl (not too curvy) |
| d  | Dina | ✓ start at her bow on the top of her head<br>✓ over the top of her head<br>✓ curve down her face<br>✓ round her chin<br>✓ up to her ear<br>✓ up to her bow<br>✓ spiky hair – up to the top sponge and down<br>✓ add a curl (not too curvy) |
| Review: a d | | |
| g  | Gaia | ✓ start at her bow<br>✓ over her head<br>✓ curve down her face<br>✓ round her chin<br>✓ up to her ear<br>✓ up to her bow<br>✓ down her long hair to the bottom sponge<br>✓ add a round curl |
| Review: a d g | | |
| o  | Olive | ✓ start at her bow<br>✓ over her head<br>✓ curve down her face<br>✓ round her chin<br>✓ up to her ear<br>✓ and up to her bow |
| Review: d g o | | |
| c  | Cara | ✓ start at her bow<br>✓ over her head<br>✓ curve down her face<br>✓ round her chin and stop |
| Review: g o c | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| q  | Queenie | ✓ start at her crown<br>✓ over her head<br>✓ curve down her face<br>✓ round her chin<br>✓ up to her ear<br>✓ up to her crown<br>✓ down her long hair<br>✓ sharp flick |
| Review: o c q | | |

| Letter | Name | Checklist |
|---|---|---|
| u  | Uncle Umberto | ✓ start at the top of the jam<br>✓ down to the bottom<br>✓ round his chin<br>✓ up to his ear<br>✓ up to the top of his head<br>✓ back down<br>✓ add a curl on the line (not too curvy) |
| Review words: dug, dog, add | | |
| y  | Uncle Yan | ✓ start at the top of the jam<br>✓ down his face – to the bottom of the jam<br>✓ round his chin<br>✓ join the chin by his ear<br>✓ up to the top of his head<br>✓ down his very straight long hair – to the bottom sponge<br>✓ add a nice round curl |
| Review words: day, daddy, cod | | |

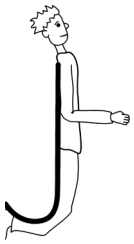
| Letter | Name | Checklist |
|---|---|---|
| b  | Bunnie B | ✓ start at the top of the sponge<br>✓ down his straight ears<br>✓ over his head<br>✓ curve down his face<br>✓ make a round chin<br>✓ join his chin to his ears |
| Review words: bad, bug, body | | |
| p  | Puppy P | ✓ start at the top of the jam<br>✓ go down her straight long ears – to the bottom of the sponge<br>✓ back up again<br>✓ over the top of her head<br>✓ curve down her face<br>✓ make a round chin<br>✓ join her chin to her ears |
| Review words: yap, puppy, good | | |

| Letter | Name | Checklist |
|---|---|---|
| h  | H hen | ✓ start at the top of the sponge<br>✓ straight down her long feather<br>back up to the top of her beak<br>✓ slope up her forehead<br>✓ curve round her head<br>✓ straight down<br>✓ add a curl for the tail feather |
| Review words: hug, hop, happy | | |
| n  | N hen | ✓ start at the top of the jam<br>✓ straight down her feather<br>✓ back up to the top of her beak<br>✓ slope up her forehead<br>✓ curve round her head<br>✓ straight down<br>✓ add a curl for the tail feather |
| Review words: and, bun, hand | | |
| m  | M hen | ✓ start at the top of the jam<br>✓ straight down their feather<br>✓ back up to the top of the beak<br>✓ slope up the forehead<br>✓ curve round her head<br>✓ straight down<br>✓ back up to the top of the beak<br>✓ slope up the forehead<br>✓ curve round her head<br>✓ straight down<br>✓ add a curl for the tail feather |
| Review words: map, mug, man | | |
| r  | R hen | ✓ start at the top of the jam<br>✓ straight down her feather<br>✓ back up to the top of her beak<br>✓ slope up her forehead<br>✓ curve round her head and stop |
| Review words: run, room, pram | | |

| Letter | Name | Checklist |
|---|---|---|
| e  | egg | ✓ start in the middle of the jam<br>✓ scoop and loop up to the top of the egg at the top of the jam<br>✓ round the egg back to the middle of the jam |
| Review words: egg, queen, deep | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| s  | snake | ✓ start at the snake's tongue at the top of the jam<br>✓ slither round the back of the egg<br>✓ slither round the front of the egg<br>✓ and round the bottom of the jam |
| Review words: sunny, soggy, dress | | |
| f  | flower | ✓ start at the flower in the middle of the top sponge<br>✓ curve gently round<br>✓ straight down the stem to the middle of the bottom sponge<br>✓ curve gently over the root<br>✓ go the leaves left to right – across the top of the jam |
| Review words: food, huff, puff | | |
| i  | insect | ✓ start at the top of the jam<br>✓ straight down its body to the bottom of the jam<br>✓ add a curl for its tail – not too sharp, not too round<br>✓ dot for the eye in the middle of the top sponge |
| Review words: flip, spin, igloo | | |

| **Letter** | **Name** | **Checklist** |
|---|---|---|
| l  | Long-legged Layla | ✓ start at the top of the sponge<br>✓ straight down her legs to the bottom of the jam<br>✓ add a curl – not too sharp, not too round |
| Review words: long, bell, smelly | | |
| t  | Top hat Taylor | ✓ start at the top of her hat in the **middle** of the top sponge<br>✓ down to the bottom of the jam<br>✓ add a curl – not too sharp, not too round<br>✓ go the rim of the hat left to right on top of the jam |
| Review words: trap, teeth, attic | | |
| k  | Kay the Clown | ✓ start at the top of the sponge for Kay's tall hat<br>✓ straight down to the bottom of the jam up to the middle of the jam<br>✓ around the hoola hoop – ***keep it in the jam***!<br>✓ make a diagonal line to the bottom of the jam<br>✓ add a curl – not too sharp, not too round |
| Review words: knock, kitten, kick | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| j  | Jumping Jay | ✓ start at the top of the jam<br>✓ straight down Jay's body to the bottom of the sponge<br>✓ add a round curl for his legs<br>✓ dot for the eye in the middle of the top sponge |
| Review words: jump, jacket, jolly | | |

| Letter | Name | Checklist |
|---|---|---|
| v  | V- Acrobat | ✓ start at the hand at the top of the jam<br>✓ diagonal line down to the feet at the bottom of the jam<br>✓ diagonal line up to the hands at the top of the jam the same both sides |
| Review words: love, have, give | | |
| w  | W- Acroba**t** | ✓ start at the hand at the top of the jam<br>✓ diagonal line down to the feet at the bottom of the jam<br>✓ diagonal line up to the hand at the top of the jam<br>✓ diagonal line down to the feet again<br>✓ diagonal line up to the hand at the top of the jam<br>✓ all lines are the same length |
| Review words: what, when, which | | |
| x  | X- Acroba**t** | ✓ start at the left hand at the top of the jam diagonal line down to the feet at the bottom of the jam<br>✓ lift your pencil<br>✓ diagonal line up to the hand at the top of the jam<br>✓ hand, feet, feet, hand |
| Review words: fox, box, extra | | |
| z  | Z- Acrobat | ✓ start at the hand at the top of the jam go across the jam to his head<br>✓ diagonal line down to his knees at the bottom of the jam<br>✓ across the bottom of the jam to his feet<br>✓ hand, head, knee, feet |
| Review words: zebra, zoo, quiz | | |

# Handwriting Stage 3

## When do I start Stage 3?

Before introducing the Stage 3 films, check children can form the letters correctly.

Use Stage 2 films to give further practice if needed.

Children in all year groups will benefit from using Stage 3 before moving onto Stage 4.

## What do we teach at Handwriting Stage 3?

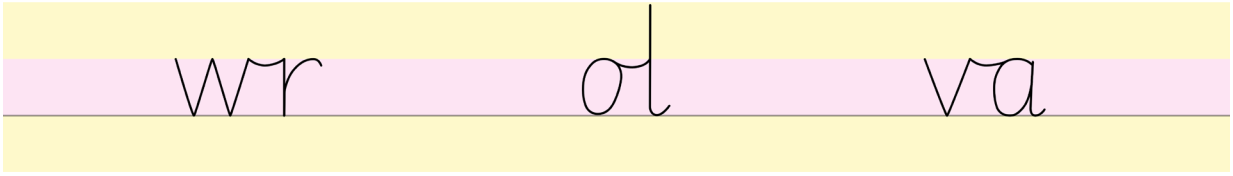
Children learn how to join letters using two basic joins: the 'hill' join and the 'bridge' join.

Each has three variations:

**Hill to jam letter** **Hill to top sponge letter** **Hill to 'sister' letter**

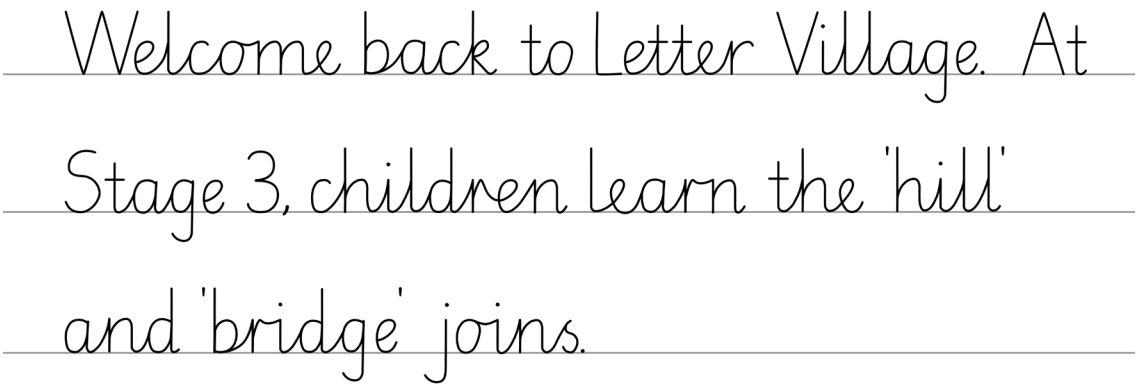


**Bridge to jam letter** **Bridge to top sponge letter** **Bridge to 'sister' letter**



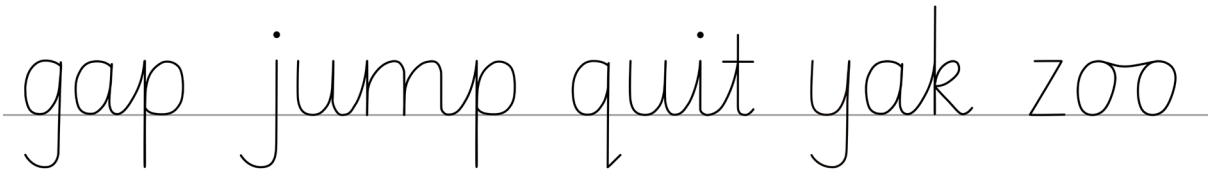
Children practise each join with specific letter combinations. Then they write words with the joins they have practised.

They will learn a style that looks like this.

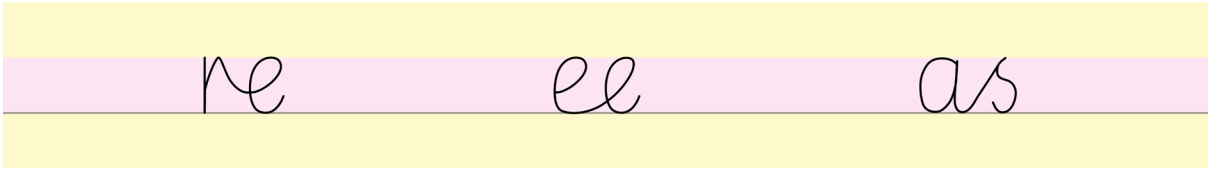


## Do all letters join?

We teach children that all letters are joined with the 'hill' or 'bridge' join with the exception of g, j, q, y and z:




We have separate lessons that show how we modify some letters to allow them to join. For example, r, e and s.




## What happens in each Stage 3 lesson?

### Blueprint lesson plan

Each 10-minute film follows the same structure:

1. **Introduce** the join with a story and a rap.

2. **Show** children how to join two letters.

3. Children **practise** writing two letters with the join.

4. Children **check** their letter joins with their partner.

We then repeat steps 2, 3 and 4.

Every fourth film is a 'celebration' lesson: children practise writing words that contain all the joins they have learnt following the same structure as films 1 to 3.

While your children join in with the films, support children who need extra help.

| Letter | to jam | to top | to 'sister' | to e | to s |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a | ar | ab | aa | ae | as |
| b | br | bb | ba | be | bs |
| c | cr | cb | ca | ce | cs |
| d | dr | db | da | de | ds |
| e | er | eb | ea | ee | es |
| f | fr | fb | fa | fe | fs |
| h | hr | hb | ha | he | hs |
| i | ir | ib | ia | ie | is |
| k | kr | kb | ka | ke | ks |
| l | lr | lb | la | le | ls |

Letters that do not join

g j q y z

| Letter | to jam | to top | to 'sister' | to e | to s |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| m | mr | mb | ma | me | ms |
| n | nr | nb | na | ne | ns |
| o | or | ob | oa | oe | os |
| p | pr | pb | pa | pe | ps |
| r | rr | rb | ra | re | rs |
| s | sr | sb | sa | se | ss |
| t | tr | tb | ta | te | ts |
| u | ur | ub | ua | ue | us |
| v | vr | vb | va | ve | vs |
| w | wr | wb | wa | we | ws |
| x | xr | xb | xa | xe | xs |