



Province of the
EASTERN CAPE
EDUCATION

Handwriting Guideline Gr R - 3

FOREWORD

The Handwriting Guide has been developed for Foundation Phase teachers to manage the teaching of Handwriting for Grades R to 3. The content of this document addresses the clarity sought by teachers and their concerns expressed during the contact sessions held with the Provincial and District Officials. It addresses the following aspects:

- perceptual development (Writing readiness)
- the purpose of various stages of handwriting, letter formation, physical factors that impact on handwriting and the different writing styles

The teaching of handwriting is incorporated into the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) for Languages, in terms of the policy prescripts to ensure that the basic writing skills are taught from Grade R to 3.

It is hoped that this support material will provide the necessary clarity and guidance that teachers need to manage the teaching of Handwriting successfully and confidently.

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Dr T Reddy

CES: ECD/Foundation Phase

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THE TEACHING OF HANDWRITING

1. Handwriting

1.1 What is handwriting?

- Handwriting is a **skill** which learners cannot discover for themselves.
- Handwriting means the legible formation of letters, words and numerals. The learners must be taught how to form the letters and then practice it. It is essential that learners master the skills of handwriting, because although handwriting may be supplemented by technical aids such as the computer, it can never be replaced completely.
- Although learners will develop their own writing style in later years , it is essential that they use the correct pencil grip and are taught to form the letters , the starting point ,size, shape, direction of movement and how letters are positioned on/spaced between the lines
- Learners need to develop a script that is legible and clear, while speed is developed gradually. Handwriting should be seen as the learning and mastering of a handwriting system and the effective use of that mechanical system. At the end of the Foundation Phase all aspects such as correct letter and figure formation, size, spacing, clarity, legibility of print and script should be mastered.
- The basis of good handwriting is **repetition**.

1.2 Why should you teach handwriting?

- Learners need to write clearly and easily with increasing speed as a result of frequent practice.
- Learners who cannot finish tasks in time are often mistaken as having a problem with content.
- Like all skills handwriting needs to be taught, it cannot be acquired automatically.

1.3 What is involved in handwriting?

- In writing the spoken word has to be converted into visual images.
- Visual –motor co-ordination plays a decisive role in writing. The hand and eye must co-ordinate
- Before attempting any formal handwriting, certain development has to take place and the learner will go through different stages of development. This will enable the learner's ability to correctly see, copy and draw / write patterns and letters.

1.4 Stages of handwriting

1.4.1. Pre - writing: Writing Readiness and Emergent Writing

(THIS STAGE IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR GRADE R)

Perceptual abilities

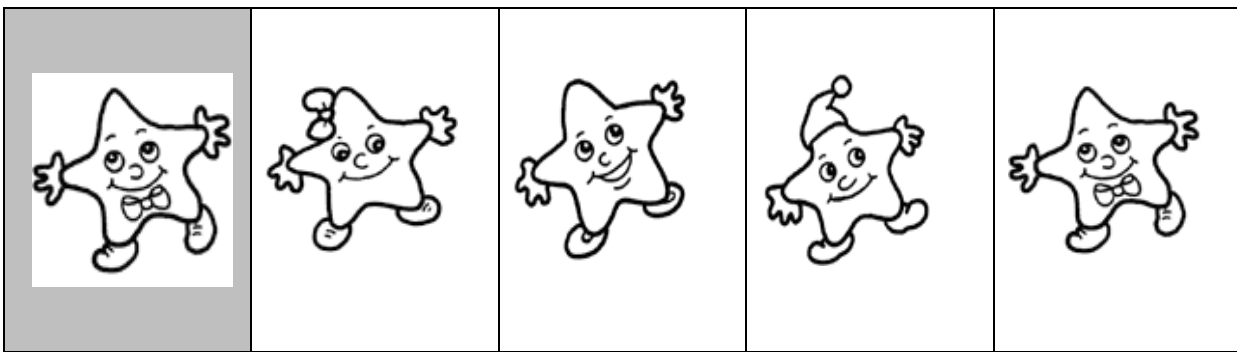
This is the ability of the brain to give meaning to information send to it by means of the five senses. The eye for example sees an object (letter), but the brain tells what it is. Visual Perception is important in writing, drawing, copying, tracing, cutting, pasting etc. During visual perception the brain interprets stimuli through the eyes.

- **Visual Discrimination**

This is the ability to see differences and similarities and to recognise the difference between for example a **b** and a **d** , **p** and **b** and **6** and **9**

EXAMPLES

Circle the picture that is exactly the same as the picture in the box



Match pictures that are the same



Circle the one that looks different

b

b

d

b

b

- **Visual Memory**

It is the ability to remember what the eyes have seen. This is when the child cannot remember how to copy the letter or drawing he has seen on the board. Young learners often find difficulty in copying from the chalkboard as their eyes need time to refocus from the board to the page in front of them and their short – term visual memory is not well developed.

EXAMPLES

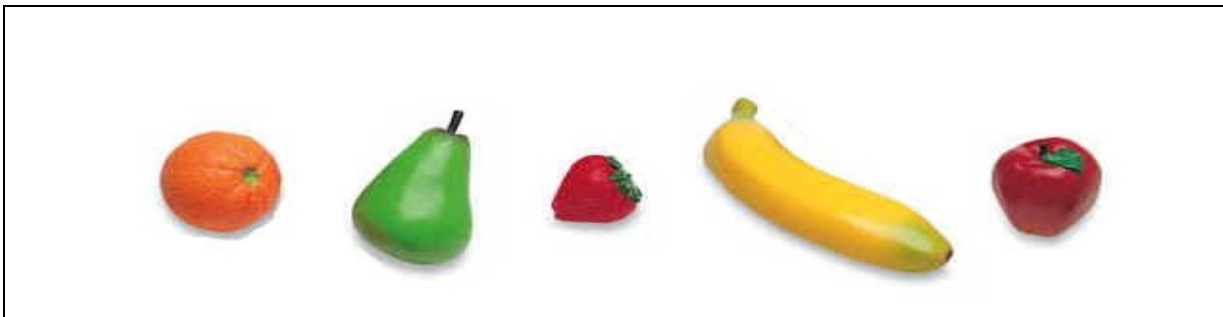
Show 4 objects and remove one

OR

Draw a shape or form on a board then close the board and learners must copy the shape

OR

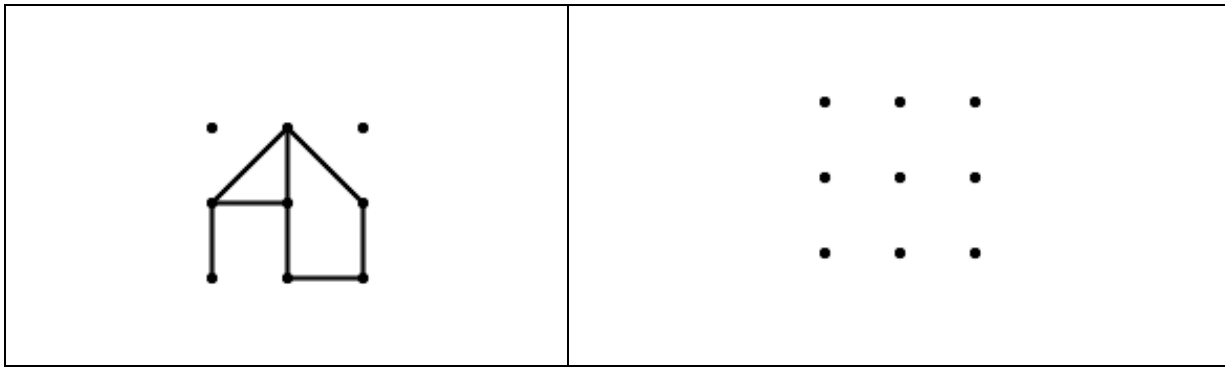
Put objects e.g. fruit on a table, close with a cloth and learners must name the fruit.



- **Visual Sequencing**

Sequencing means arranging pictures or symbols in such a way that they form a story or pattern. In Grade R the learner will be expected to be able to select, classify, and correctly place pictures in a sequence. In Grades 1,2 and 3 he will place letters in order in a word.

EXAMPLES : copy pegs, copy blocks, order of objects, re-draw a pattern



Putting pictures in a sequence



- **Visual motor co-ordination**

This enables the child to carry out movements with the body or parts of the body – all movements with the body or with parts of the body is guided by vision e. g:

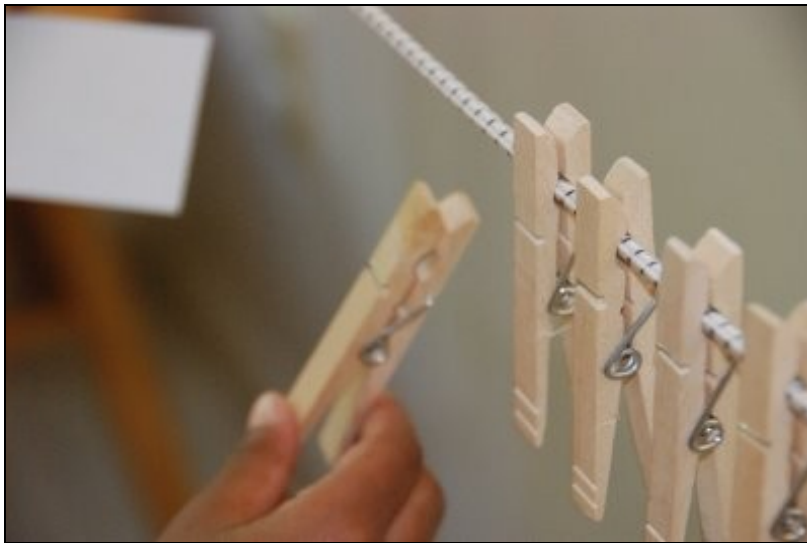
- swinging balls
- swing ball (bat & ball)
- ball games
- flip and catch beanbags
- move cars
- marble runs

Gross motor movements will develop, strengthen and stabilize shoulders and arms which allow the hands to move more effectively e.g. play catch with both hands - using balls of different sizes, swinging on playground equipment etc.

Fine motor Skills

The school beginner must have sufficient control and co-ordination of the small muscles of the body to be able to manipulate small objects and to handle writing materials. In the classroom the learner is expected to perform a number of accurate tasks with his fingers and hands. A small child needs plenty of practice to develop the small muscles of his hands so that he will not find it difficult to use a pencil or write letters and numerals. **EXAMPLES:**

- Play with pickup sticks
- Pinch clothe pegs to the side of a box, piece of cardboard or line



- Tie shoe laces / buttons / zips / hooks etc
- Screw and unscrew small lids, nuts and bolts
- Clay model – roll small balls of clay between fingertips, knead, poke, roll the play dough or clay



Threading

Threading is done around meat and vegetable containers, or around paper. First draw a picture on the paper and then the learners can thread around it.

Noodles, straws, corks, seeds, buttons, shredded polystyrene (packaging material) or beads can be threaded on wool, string, gut, etc.



Drawing

By drawing, the young child gives expression to his or her thoughts. Drawing is also a precursor and pre-skill to writing. The teacher's role in this regard is to attend to the correct pencil grip.



Cutting and tearing paper



Tearing and cutting paper develops visual motor perception, increases the ability to control finger muscles and enhances the learner's awareness of shape and size.

- **Other readiness activities are:**

Body Image

This is the awareness of one's body of how the body functions, where top and where below is.

Dominance

Dominance is the preference of use of one particular hand, or side of the body.

Through observation the teacher can gain information as to the child's dominance, but the teacher must first find out if the child's dominance has been established- in other words, whether he has a definite hand, eye or foot preference

Hand dominance

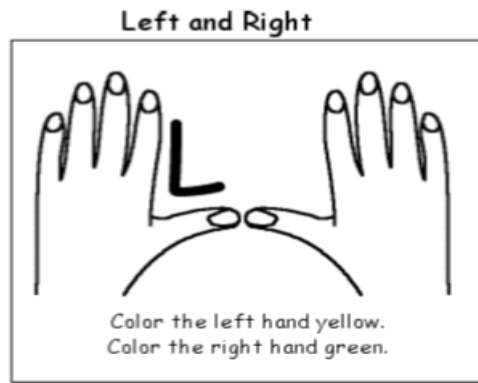
Which hand does he use to:

- throw a ball?
- write with a pencil/crayon?
- eat with a spoon?
- brush his teeth or comb his hair?

In all these instances the child will use his dominant hand



**Learning
Left and Right**




When you put your fingers together and make your thumbs touch, your left hand makes an "L" shape


Eye dominance:

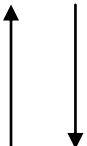
Use a cardboard roll of a wax paper or aluminium foil dispenser. Ask the child to hold the roll in both hands and to peep through

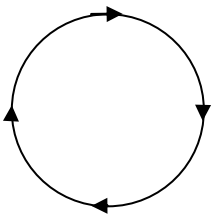
Eye movement: Left to right eye movement e.g. tracing left to right

Children sit on a carpet and do movements with their eyes while saying a rhyme

Look to the right 

Look to the left 

Look up. Look down 

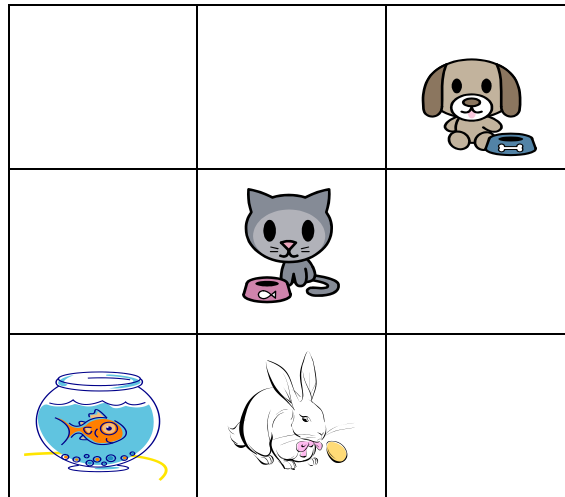
Look all around 

REPEAT

- **Position in space**

The relationship of an object to the observer constitutes its position in space. Children with special orientation problems do not understand the space around them. They cannot distinguish between left and right, top and bottom, in front of, up, down etc. These terminologies and concepts are important aspects of writing.

EXAMPLE



Ask Questions:

- Which animal can you see in the top row?
- Which animal is in the middle row?
- Which animals are in the bottom row?
- Which animal is below the cat?

You can also ask questions such as ‘top right or bottom left ‘

There are many other perceptual skills, but they do not all relate to the skill of handwriting.

The importance of the perceptual development of the child for handwriting highlights the necessity to have stages which result in the child eventually being able to produce clear, neat, accurate, print and cursive writing

1.4.2 Early writing:

Pre-writing patterns – free finger movement

- free finger movement
- pencil / crayon grip
- large paper
- crayons and other writing material can be used
- Paper can be folded to create “lines

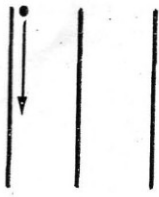
1.4.3 Standard writing patterns – set sequences

- Directional strokes → vertical and horizontal strokes
- Diagonal strokes

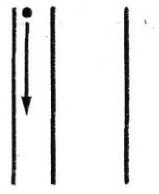


- Ascending / descending strokes
- Curves with uprights – clockwise and anticlockwise movements. Practice the following:

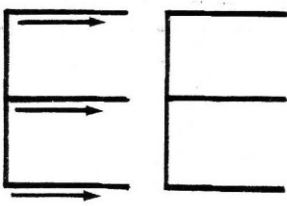
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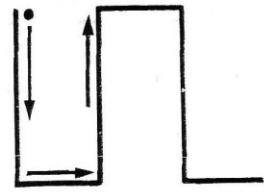
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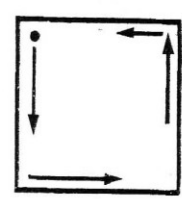
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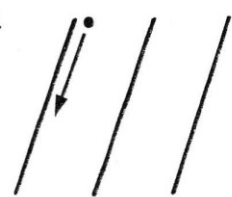
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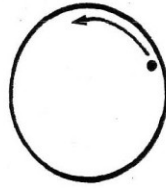
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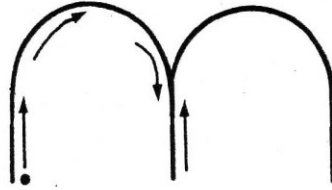
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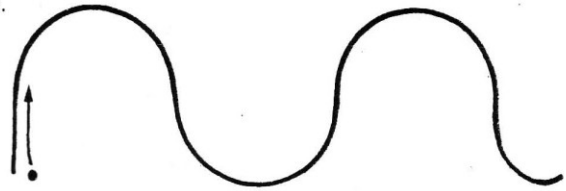
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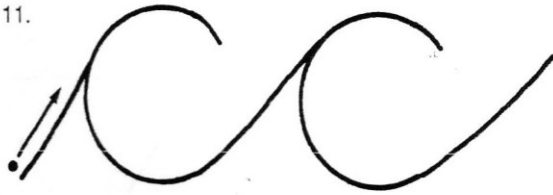
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10.



11.



12.



1.4.3 Early formal writing: Letter formation – letters of the alphabet

- When introducing a letter give practice in a concrete way first e.g. tracing the letter in the sand, walking the outline, writing in the air or ‘write’ on a classmate’s back.
- The letter should be related to its sound as well as the direction of writing each time it is formed. e.g. “l” for “leg” (start at the top, down and stop)
- Use a variety of words and pictures to reinforce the sound and letter.
- Lowercase is introduced first, then capital letters.

2. What must you observe?

- Learners sit straight with feet flat on the ground
- Starting point (left to right)

2.1 Physical factors

Furniture

- The size of the desk and chair has a direct influence on the learner’s writing position and must be suitable.
- The height of the chair should allow the child to sit with both heels flat on the floor. The height of the table should allow the child to rest both forearms on the table without raising the shoulders.
- The chest should be free of contact with the edge of the table. Incorrect furniture size can affect the posture, which in return can cause arm, shoulder and backache.



2.2 Posture

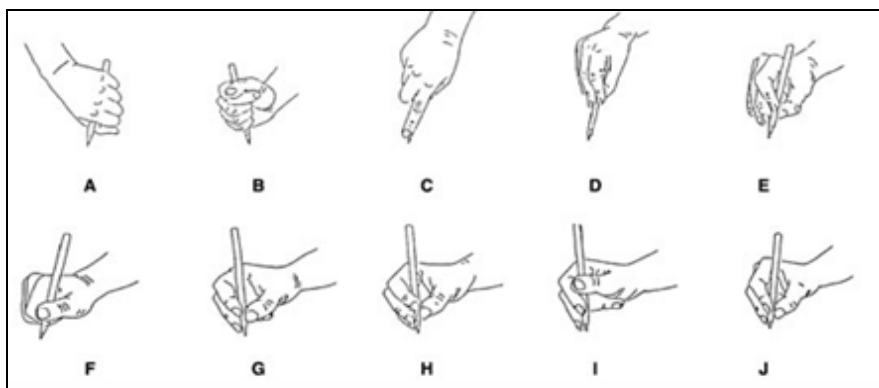
- Correct writing posture is of the greatest importance as it affects the quality of the writing.
- The learner should sit in a natural manner, directly in front of the writing surface. The shoulders must be level.
- The correct distance between eye and paper should be 30cm i.e. the length of one ruler. The right forearm (for right-handers) must lie on the surface almost to the elbow.
- For a left-handed learner the entire left forearm must lie on the writing surface and the left hand must hold the paper in position.

2.3 Lighting

- Many schools have insufficient light in the classrooms to enable the learners to see clearly.
- Direct sunlight on the writing surface is also bad for the eyes and is distracting. Check the light source.
- For left-handers the light should come from the right and for right-handers from the left. Move the learner's desk out of the sunlight or paint pictures on the windows.

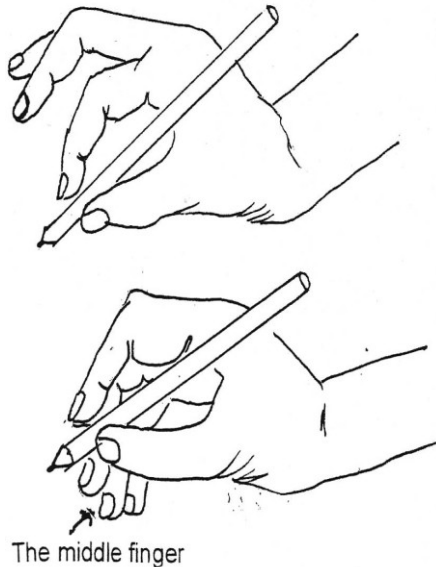
2.4 Pencil grip

- Many learners produce poor handwriting because they have not been taught how to hold a pencil correctly. Once poor grip has been learned, it is very difficult to rectify. If the pencil is gripped too tightly, the learners have difficulty in producing rhythmic smooth writing. Crooking of the forefinger is often a sign that the pencil is being held too tightly. The cure is to make the pupil hold the pencil with the thumb and middle finger and merely rest the forefinger on the pencil.



2.5 Right-handed learner

- In the natural tripod grip (H) the pencil is held lightly between thumb and forefinger, about 3 cm from the point, with the middle finger providing extra support.
- The pencil (or pen) should rest on the end joint of the middle finger. The other two fingers rest lightly on the paper along with the side of the hand. It is important that the pencil hold is so light and relaxed that the pencil can be pulled out of the grip easily.
- The pencil should point along the line of the forearm to the right of the shoulder at an angle of 45 degrees (approximately) to the writing line and rest in the soft hollow between the thumb and index finger



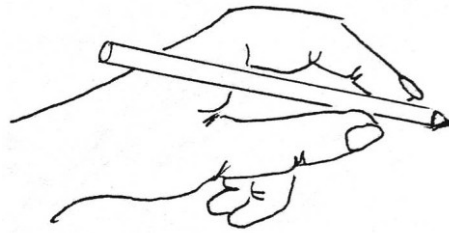
- The edge of the hand and the little finger should be in light contact with the paper as they move across the page.
- When writing on the desk, imagine a clock face and point the tip of the pencil towards the 10 to 11 o' clock



2.6 Left-handed learner

- In the past, some learners had been discouraged to use their left hand for writing. This perception had changed and today a significant number of learners write with their left hands.
- In Grade R, the learner should be observed carefully, to find out the dominant hand for fine-motor skills.

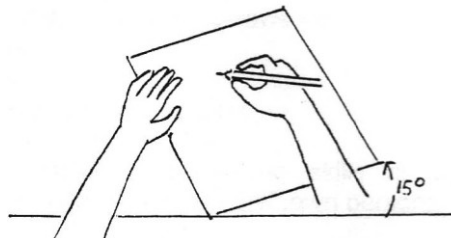
- Left-handed writers have different needs and special provision needs to be made for them.



- Left-handed learners should be taught an efficient and comfortable hand position and pencil grip from the beginning.
- Never force a child to write with his right hand.
- The child should sit on the left side of a right-hander.
- Hold the pencil in the left hand in the conventional way between the thumb and first finger, resting on the middle finger. The rules regarding pencil grip and position of paper apply in reverse to the left-handed child.
- Grip the pencil a little further up from the point (about 4cm)
- Use the right hand to steady the right side of the paper above the writing.
- The position of the pencil should point towards 1 o' clock



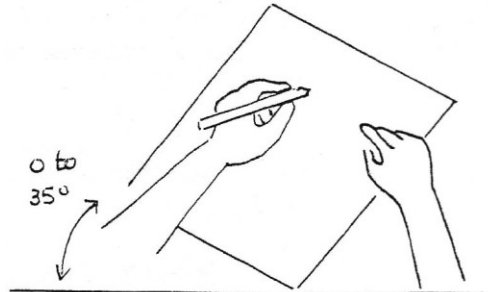
2.7 Position of paper for the left -handed child



- The paper of the book should be placed either level with the edge of the table or slanting slightly upwards at an angle of about 15 degrees

- The paper should be held so that the upper left-hand corner of the paper is to the left of the learner's midline.

2.8 The position of the paper for the left-handed child



- Left-handed learners should be taught from the beginning to tilt their paper in a clockwise direction, the bottom corner a little to the left of the middle of the body up to 35 degrees.
- The greater the angle, the less efficient the writing
- The right hand should be used to steady the paper on the right above the writing.

3 What Learning and teaching materials do you need to teach handwriting?

Materials

In Grade 1 children begin by writing on blank paper using wax crayons. In time they progress to writing on 17mm lines using pencils for formal handwriting lessons, although many schools prefer to continue using blank jotters for other written work even in Grade 2. By Grade 3 children make the transition to using 8.5mm lined books. The exact time for these transitions will depend on the level of the children and the school's policy.

Balls (different sizes) Sand trays Paint Brushes Rounded edged preschool scissors Play dough Threads Beads Skipping ropes Newsprint Chalk and Chalkboard	Unlined exercise books Lined exercise books HB pencils Pencil crayons 5cm long pencils Rulers Erasers Alphabet chart Number frieze Writing strips Thick wax crayons
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4. When do you teach handwriting?

The CAPS document makes provision for the systematic teaching of the skills of handwriting, in short periods in the various grade levels, for approximately 15 minutes per day.

Pre-writing or emergent writing programme

Before starting to teach formal handwriting in Grade 1, children should follow a pre-writing programme to develop visual discrimination, gross and fine motor and hand-eye coordination, body image etc. They need to be taught the correct pencil grip, how to form the letters, the starting point, size, shape, direction of movement and how the letters are positioned on/ spaced between the lines. The correct sitting position is also important. Young children often find difficulty in copying from the board as their eyes need time to refocus from the board to the page in front of them and their short-term visual memory may not be well developed. It helps to give children writing strips containing a row of letters for the children to copy during Handwriting.

Transition to a joined script or cursive writing

By the end of Grade 1 children should be able to form all the lower and upper case letters correctly and fluently and copy sentences correctly from the board or from sentence strips. In Grade 2 children develop greater speed in writing print script and it is in this grade that most schools will begin teaching a joined script or cursive writing. Whilst the choice in regard to the handwriting script remains with a school/province children should be taught to write a form of joined script or cursive writing by the end of Grade 3. Most children make the transition to this script during the first half of Grade 3.

DAILY TEACHER ACTIVITIES DURING LITERACY TIME IN THE CAPS HOME LANGUAGE DOCUMENT STIPULATES:

	Handwriting	Minutes		
		GR 1	Gr 2	Gr 3
		15 minutes per day for 4 days =1hour	15 minutes per day for 3 days =45 minutes	15 minutes per day for 3 days = 45 minutes

THE OVERVIEW OF THE CAPS HOME LANGUAGE DOCUMENT STATE PROGRESSION IN HANDWRITING AS FOLLOWS :

The learner in Grade R :

- Develops small muscle skills through finger play (e.g. play dough, screwing nuts onto bolts)
- Develops fine motor control using scissors to cut out bold outlined pictures, shapes etc
- Develops eye-hand co-ordination by playing eg catching and throwing, drawing and painting

- Traces simple outlines of pictures, patterns and letters in own name where the correct starting point and direction arrows are included on all letters
- Forms letters using finger painting, paint brushes, wax crayons etc starting at the right point and following the correct direction
- Copies patterns, words and letters (using the correct starting point and direction when forming letters)
- Uses a range of writing tools (e.g. paintbrushes, wax crayons)



The learner in Grade 1:

- Practises holding and manipulating crayons and pencils
- Develops directionality: left to right; and top to bottom
- Develops hand-eye co-ordination by drawing patterns and tracing
- Copies and writes own name, short words and sentences
- Begins to write using drawings and copies letters, numbers, words and simple sentences
- Forms **lower and upper case** letters correctly and fluently
- Forms **numerals** correctly
- Copies and writes short sentences correctly with correct spacing
- Holds pencil and crayon correctly

The learner in Grade 2 should be able to do the following :

Maintenance of the print script

- Uses handwriting tools effectively e.g. pencil, eraser, ruler
- Aligns writing on 17 mm ruled lines
- Forms upper and lower case letters correctly
- Writes words with correct spacing between letters and words
- Writes in print script all capitals and lower case letters
- Copies and writes one paragraph of between 3 – 4 lines from a printed text
- Copies and writes different formats of writing (short invitations e.g. birthday; messages; lists etc)
- Uses print script in all forms of written recording

Transition to a joined script or cursive writing

- Copies and writes writing patterns in the joined script or cursive writing
- Copies and writes all lower case letters and commonly used capital letters in the joined script or cursive writing
- Copies, writes and reads short words in joined script or cursive writing
- Copies and writes short sentences in joined script or cursive writing.

The learner in Grade 2 should be able to do the following :

Transition to a joined script or cursive writing

- Uses handwriting tools effectively e.g. pencil, eraser, ruler
- Writes a sentence legibly and correctly in both the print script and the joined script or cursive writing
- Forms all lower and upper-case letters in joined script or cursive writing
- Writes short words in the joined script or cursive writing
- Transcribes words and sentences correctly in the joined script or cursive writing
- Makes transition to the joined script or cursive writing in all written recording (ie the date, own name; and own written texts)
- Copies written text from the board, textbooks, work cards etc. correctly
- Writes neatly and legibly with confidence and speed in a joined script or cursive writing
- Experiments with using a pen for writing



5. What writing style must we choose?

- The whole school must agree on what style of handwriting must be used and there must be consistency across the grades
- Explain to the learners that they may see different scripts.
- If there is a programme that is adopted by the district the school must follow it.

6. What good handwriting habits do should be developed?

Both the educator and the learner should develop good habits. The rules must apply to both, e.g. if you write anyhow learners will also write anyhow. Children imitate the teacher and therefore the work of the teacher on the chalkboard must at all times be an example of correct, neat and legible work.

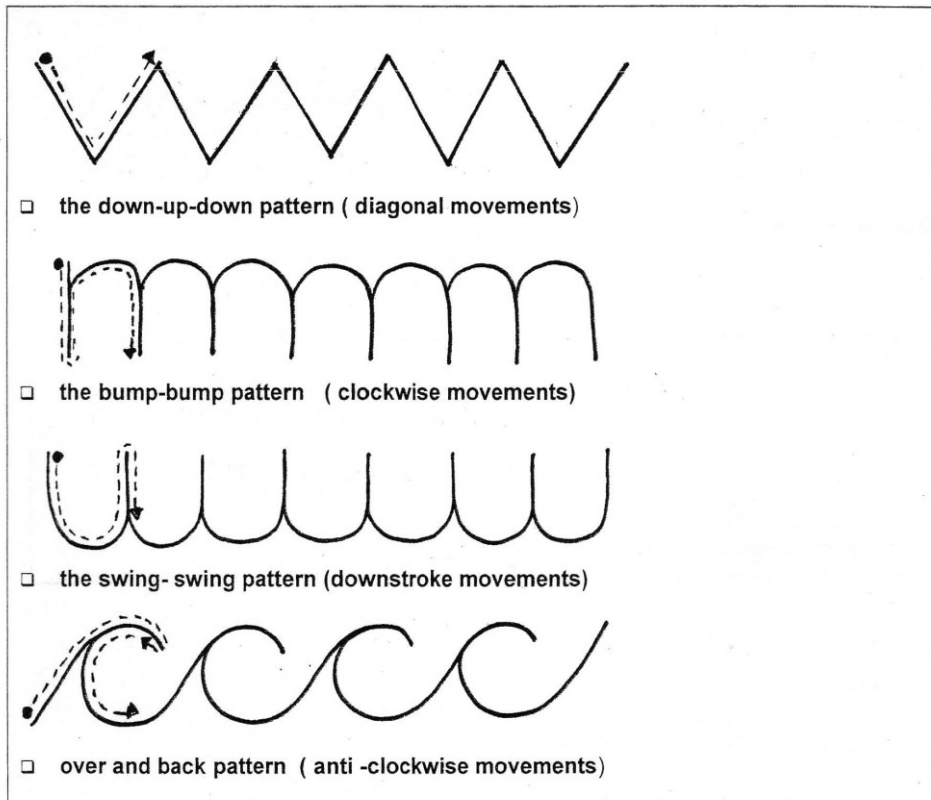
- **Be aware of your letter formation and spacing.**
- **Train yourself to write correctly in book covers, name tags, on the board and on teaching and learning aids**
- **Use erasers sparingly**
- **Use books correctly: clean hands and positioning of the book must be part of everyday activities until they happen involuntarily.**
- **Correct posture and difference in left and right dominance should be considered. NO LEARNER'S DOMINANCE MUST BE CHANGED**

7. What must you teach?

7.1 Writing patterns

- On every occasion, suitable rhythmic pattern exercises must precede the formation of letters and figures. These patterns can be done with any of the above- mentioned media. The following skills are being developed:
 - left to right orientation
 - strokes related to letter formation.
- Patterns should be done in a rhythmic manner.
- Young children are not always aware that **writing starts from the top left corner** and finishes at the bottom right. Teachers have to check this when learners move on to patterns and letter formation and will have to remind learners constantly about this.
- The writing patterns relate to the stroke- related families in the alphabet. Learners should practice the basic patterns on which all lower case letters are based. The following rules are important:
 - the starting and ending points
 - the patterns must be even
 - the movements must be flowing





7.2 Letter shapes

- Well formed letters and letter combinations focus on starting point and direction
- Make use of the sense of touch by letting learners trace patterns, letters and figures with the index and middle finger on:
 - wool glued to cards
 - letters made from felt or Velcro (a rough material)
 - letters made from sandpaper or letters made from glue and sand
 - practise the correct movements before attempting the letter on paper
 - writing in sand kept in a shoe-box lid
 - writing on the chalk-board with chalk
 - making hand movements for the letter with imaginary pencils in the air
- Learners need to hear the formation of the letter :

(qala apha, ujikeleze, unyuke, ujikele, uhle, uze ezantsi, uphele apha)

c: say - around and stop

a: say - around, up and down

d: say – around, up to the top and down

g: say – around, up, down to the bottom and around

q: say – around, up, down to the bottom and curve

o: say – around and up around

r: say – down, up, around and stop

n: say – down and up, around, down and stop

m: say – down and up, around, down and up, around, down and stop

h: say – down from the top, up, around and down

b: say – down from the top, up and around

p: say – down to the bottom and up, around and stop

i: say – down, lift and dot

t: say – down from the top, curve, lift and cross

j: say – down to the bottom, around, lift and dot

f: say – around at the top, down, lift and cross

k: say – down from the top and lift, back across and down across

x: say – down across, lift back across

u: say – up and around , up and down.

y: say – down, around and up, down to the bottom and around

l: say – down to the top and stop

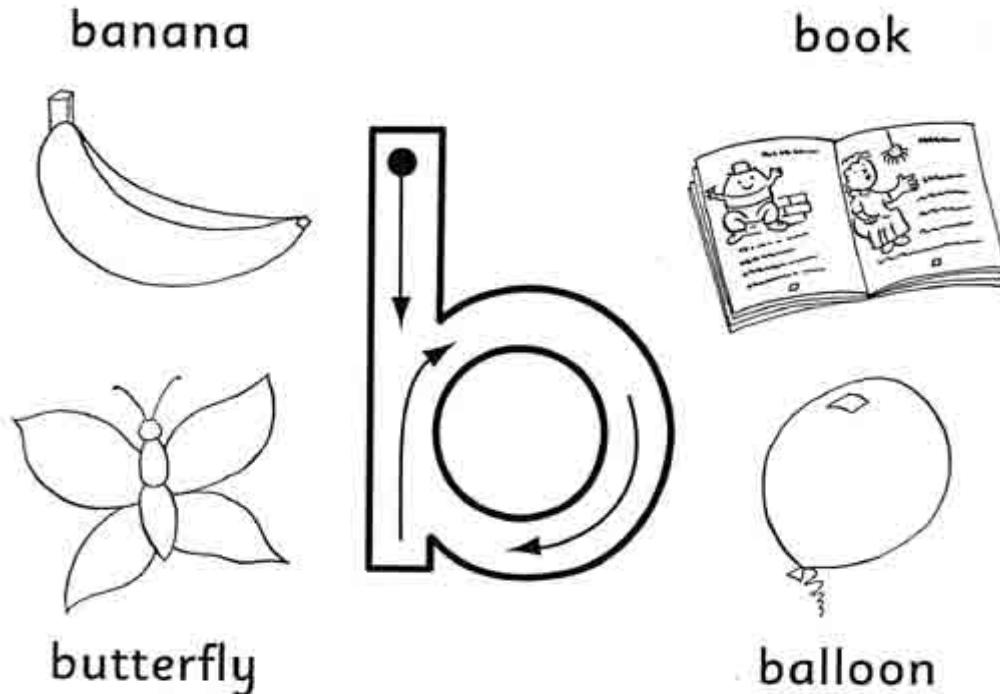
v: say – down across and up across

w: say – down across and up across, down across and up across

z: say – over, back and across and over again

e: say – up across, around and stop

s: say – around and forward around.



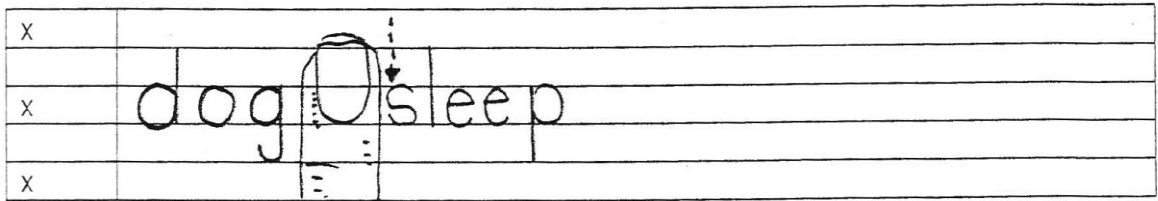
7.3 Letter formation

- Learners should be able to begin to form letters with some control over the size and shape and orientation of the letters. The correct hand movement needs to be established. Wall charts showing letters formation are very useful.

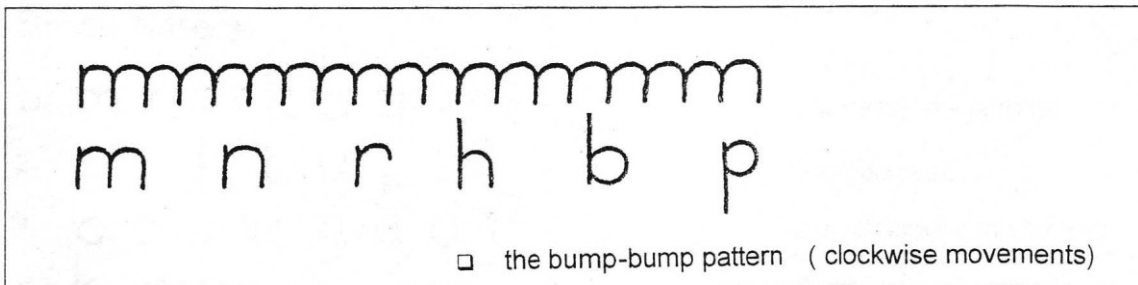
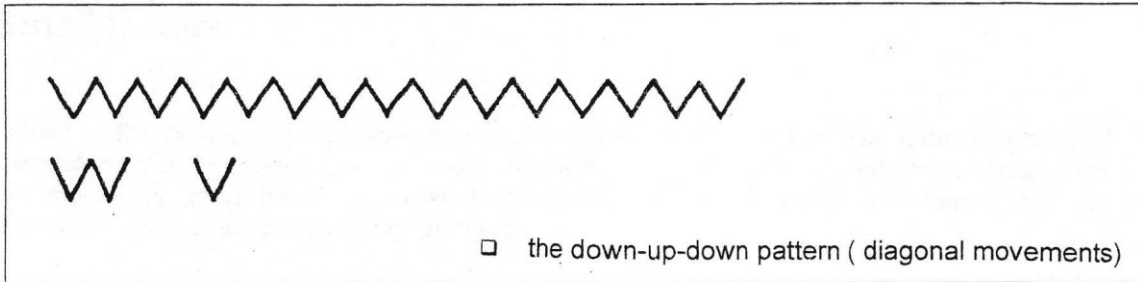
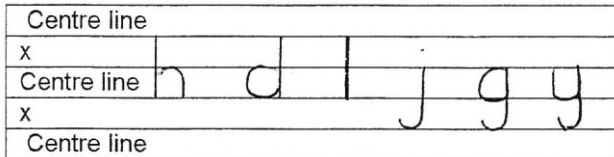
7.4 Small letters

Letters of the alphabet are grouped into stroke/pattern related families. The letters start with the easiest movements, then the clockwise, then the down-stroke movements, the anti-clockwise and finish with the diagonal movements and direction changes.

- Some letters have **heads** like the **h, d** or **l**
- Some letters have **tails** like the **j, g** or **y**.
- These lines up or lines down are written into the open spaces between the bodylines.



- The line in which the body of small print letters is written is called a centre line. When writing, there should only be one space left open between the centre lines.



u i l t y j

□ the swing- swing pattern (downstroke movements)

c o a e s d f g q

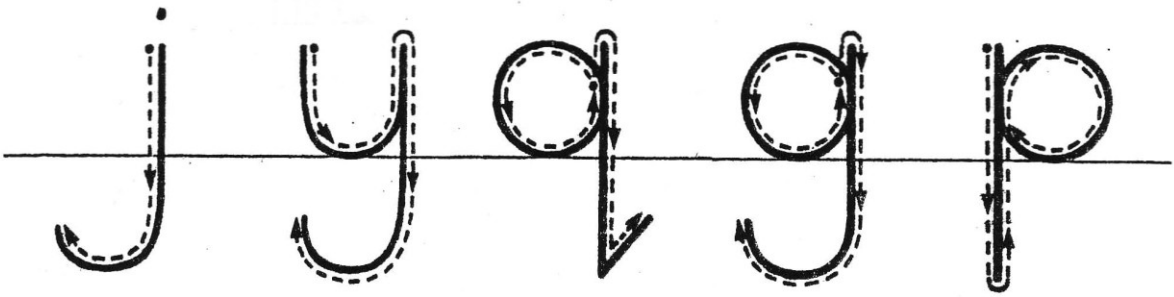
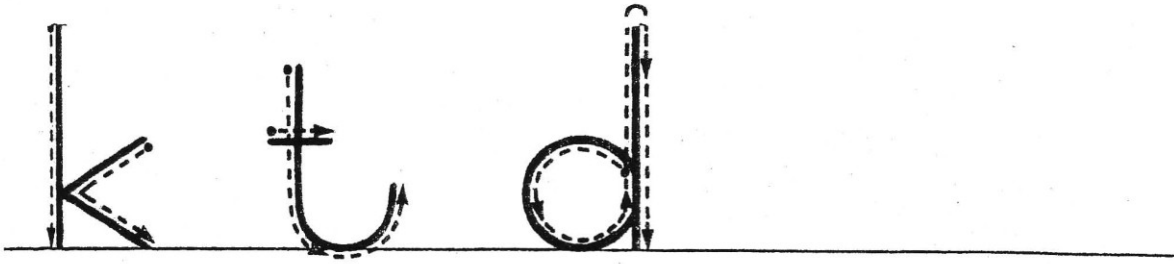
□ over and back pattern (anticlockwise movements)

i r n m u

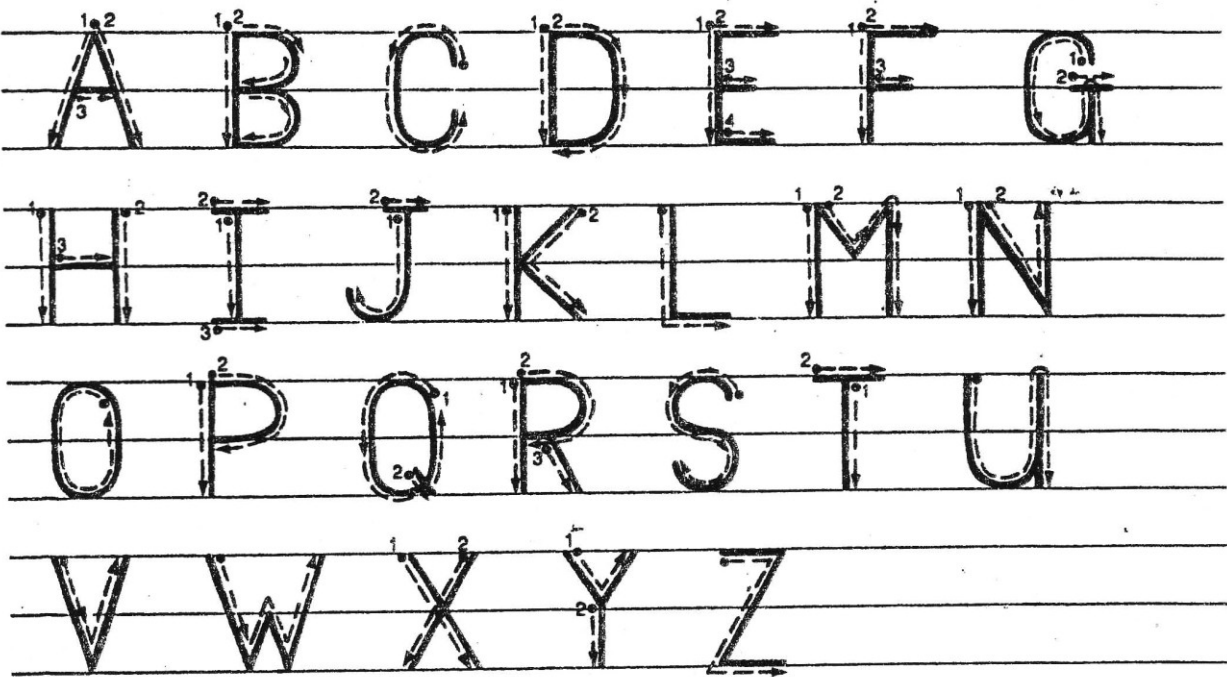
c o a e s

v w x z

l h b f



Print script capital letters

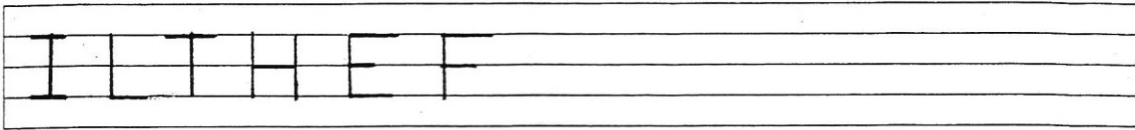


7.5 Capital letters

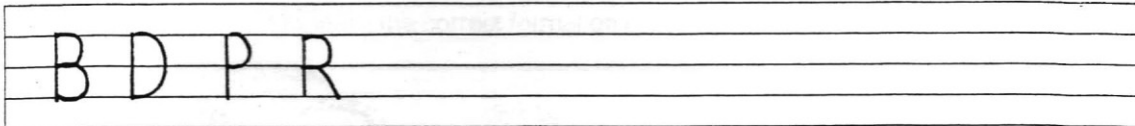
- Capital letters should be taught once the small letters have been taught. Unlike the script lower case letters, the capital letters are not based on patterns but are grouped according to their similarities or stroke-related families.
- Capital letters in print script are all double space letters and the small print letters are single-spaced. Spacing is often neglected in the teaching of handwriting. Learners from Grade 1 to Grade 3 write with letters touching the bottom and top lines, even though the width of the lines may differ.
- Learners should be made aware of the correct starting point and the initial direction of movement
- The size of the letter should be stressed. Learners should be taught to judge and compare letters irrespective of the position on the page.
- Teach the correct spacing between letters and rows of letters. Teach the learners to fill the lines of writing and to fill all pages right from the beginning

7.6 Capital letter families

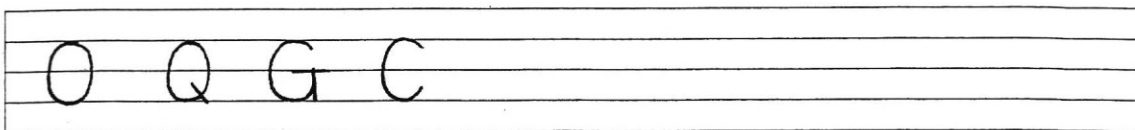
1. Mainly straight lines or right angled



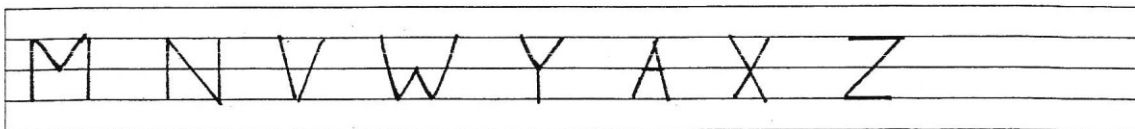
2. Straight lines and curves clockwise



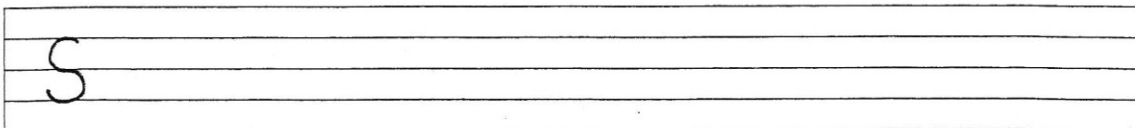
3. clockwise movements or mostly curves



4. Straight and slanting lines or diagonals



5. Directional changers



7.7 Also important are the following:

- Correct use of punctuation marks and mathematical symbols
- Correct use of capital letters in functional writing
- Correct use of margin and rulers
- Correct setting out and finishing of work
- Dating of work

7.8 Cursive Writing

Cursive Writing script does not appear in story books that learners read. It is a means to assist learners to write fluently and faster. The following are examples of cursive writing:

7.8.1 Cursive patterns and lower case letters □

Capital letters are taught in sequence. They should be taught with the matching lower case letter, but should not be joined

a b c d e f
g h i j k l
m n o p q
r s t u v w
x y z A B
C D E F G H
I J K L M N
O P Q R S
T U V W X

7.8.2 Combinations of lower case letters

x	ie	vi	bi	
x	uu	ui	uu	bu
x	huit	ug		
x	ee	be	ve	re
x	oe	vo	bo	ol
x	ok	fo	so	os
x	aa	ba	va	
x	rg	rk		

7.8.3 Capital letters and small letters

1	w	W	w	W	
2	y	Y	w	W	
3	n	N	m	M	
4	a	A	o	O	
5	h	H	k	K	
6	b	B	r	R	p
7	i	I	j	J	
8	t	T	f	F	
9	l	L	d	D	
10	o	O	q	Q	
11	s	S	c	C	
12	z	Z	g	G	

8. Natalia (Nelson) Script

In some schools you will find learners who re-located from other Provinces e.g. Kwa-Zulu Natal where they were exposed to a different type of handwriting script. **The following is just to inform teachers about the Natalia or Nelson Script.**

8.1 Letter Formation:

- Pupils should be able to begin to form letters with some control over the size, shape and orientation of letters or lines of writing. Correct hand movement needs to be established for a firm foundation to letter formation and as preparation for joining.
- Wall charts showing correct letter formation would be very useful

8.2 Letter families

- The alphabet is grouped into stroke-related letter families. Letters in each group may be taught together and in the sequence presented. They start with the easiest movement, the down strokes, and finish with the most difficult group, diagonals and direction and finish with the most difficult group, the diagonals and direction changes.
- As with the letters, slight variations in the formation of numbers may occur and should be tolerated if they are legible and functional. Emphasize **starting point** and **direction**.

a A a	j J j	s S s
b B b	k K k	t T t
c C c	l L l	u U u
d D d	m M m	v V v
e E e	n N n	w W w
f F f	o O o	x X x
g G g	p P p	y Y y
h H h	q Q q	z Z z
i I i	r R r	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

8.3 Joins

It must be remembered that the joins of cursive writing are no longer applicable e.g. *oa*

With Natalia script this would be *oa* i.e. separate letters.

The process which replaces cursive joins follows the general pattern described below:

th

- separate letters

th

- gradually less space between letters; and

th

- letters touch, but this still involves a pencil lift.

- Some Learners could develop individual joins and may require assistance to facilitate speed. This means that a flexible approach essential.
- There are few joins that develop spontaneously from one letter stroke to the next.

The following are natural joins *ti* or *tu* and *fu*

Specific joins may evolve with a particular language and not in another.

- The starting point of all letters remains constant, even when joining. This facilitates a flowing style.
- Spacing between letters within a word should be regular and result in written work which is easy to read.
- It may be better for learners to be taught joining in Grade 2 leaving Grade 1 for the consolidation of the formation. However some Grade 1 learners will automatically join letters and should be allowed to do so.
- Legibility and fluency: Once the basic skills are established the continuing progress in joining by observing different features affecting neatness, and developing a fluent hand should be monitored and encouraged.
- Presentation: The use well-formed yet individual and flowing handwriting for particular purposes should be developed as a life skill.

8.4 Practical Points to consider

- The order in which letters are taught is not prescribed. This will be determined by the language used in the school.
 - Specific formation is taught initially, but learners will adapt this as speed and individual style develops. It is very important that children can form individual letters correctly before they attempt to join them. Letters formed incorrectly become bad habits which are difficult to break.

Emphasize starting point and direction. The suggested joins allow for schools and children to develop their own style

9. The School's Handwriting Programme

A Handwriting programme should be flexible allowing schools to adapt according to their individual preferences and philosophies, whilst keeping the progression through the various stages. CAPS Policy Statements should be followed

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Grovè and Hauptfleisch: Threshold: A School Readiness Programme

Pictures - GROW Learning Company George

Pictures taken at Adelaide Pre-Primary School by Mrs Pretorius

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