



Improvement in Schools

ISHA

through

Handwriting and Art

Achieving Excellence In Handwriting

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Introduction

The relevance of teaching good handwriting is sometimes questioned in the modern age where the word processor is a valued tool. But good teaching of handwriting is just as important in these days of advanced technology as it has ever been. The need to create things of beauty will never leave the human mind and nothing will ever beat that feeling of personal triumph when we look at a completed task achieved with our own hands.

It is not necessary to judge whether the word processor or handwriting has the greatest value, because they should exist side by side, in harmony each being used appropriately.

If the programme of daily handwriting lessons in this booklet are followed systematically, letters will soon be well formed, joined and of the correct size. Each lesson is intended to last only fifteen to twenty minutes. *Doing a little and doing it often is the key.* There are many important jigsaw pieces to fit in place, such as good quality writing tools and correct body posture, but within a school, uniformity of approach to teaching handwriting and the need for teachers to have high expectations of themselves and their pupils are vital.

When taught effectively, handwriting is where children will see the biggest change and fastest improvement in their work; progress they are able to see, feel and enjoy. Good teaching of handwriting reaps rewards in a very short time span. It gives children something immediate. Self esteem and motivation levels rise, influencing children's attitudes to learning in other subjects. It also plays a part in their personal development because care, pride, concentration and perseverance are required qualities.

Good handwriting needs self discipline, skill and quality teacher input. Good handwriting gives the reader a favourable impression of the work in front of them before they read the first three words. Children must be taught to present their work in as careful and attractive a manner as possible.

The Handwriting Style

The handwriting style used in this booklet is based on a semi-cursive style. It is simplistic, but very clear, and it does not have the 'loops' or 'lead ins' which are features of more complex handwriting styles.

The style is relatively simple to teach and relatively simple to learn. However, like all handwriting styles, it is only as good as the way that it is taught.

(Handwriting style in printed form)

It is vital that teacher modelling is good, teaching language is appropriate and teachers have a clear understanding of how to structure a handwriting lesson and have effective strategies to use. These are of greater importance than the actual handwriting style itself.

(Handwriting style in joined form)

a b c d e f g h i j k l m

n o p q r s t u v w x y z

a b c d e f g h i j k l m

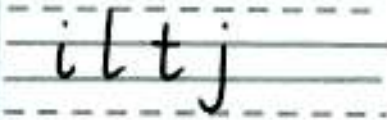
n o p q r s t u v w x y z

i l t j

Lower Case Letter Formation

Family 1. The Straight Line Family

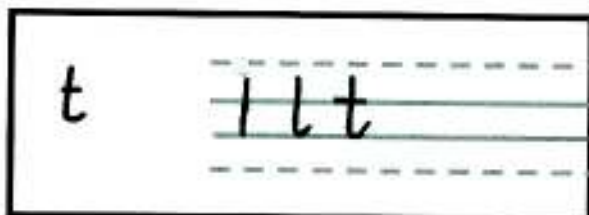
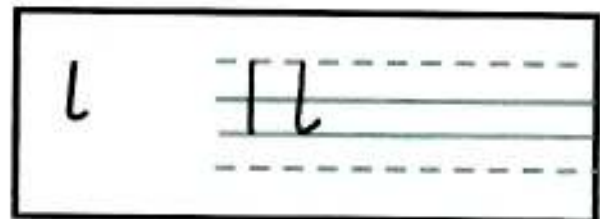
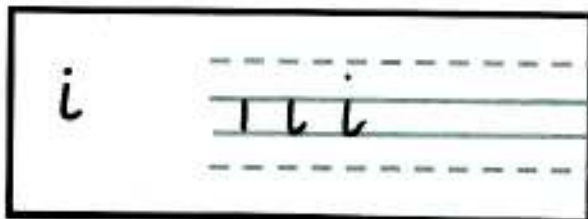
i l t j letters based on a single vertical line



i l t j

The letters *i* and *j* begin at the top solid line. The letter *l* begins at the top broken line. The tail on *j* goes down to the bottom broken line and ends with a gentle curve. The *i* and touch *l* the bottom solid line, before lifting diagonally to the right. This is the connection to the following letter.

The *t* is smaller than the *l* but taller than the *i*. It is a "three quarter sized" letter—"a Teenager t". It begins just above the top solid line. It is crossed on the top solid line, with more of the cross to the right of the down stroke. Like the *i* and *l* its joining line lifts diagonally in a North Easterly direction.



c o a d g q e

Lower Case Letter Formation

Family 2. The Coathanger Family

c o a d g q e letters based on a c shape

c o a d g q e

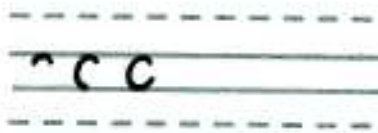
c o a d g q

These letters are oval rather than circular.

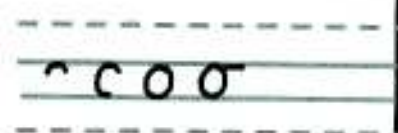
The letters begin with a "coat hanger" shape.

Begin just below the top solid line. The first movement of the writing tool is up to the line, then over and down. On reaching the bottom solid line, it is necessary to go diagonally upwards and across to the right, in order to make an oval shape.

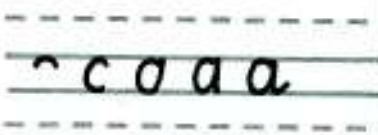
c



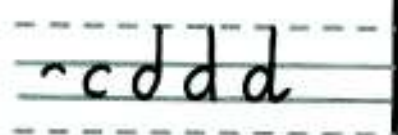
o



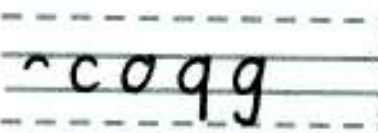
a



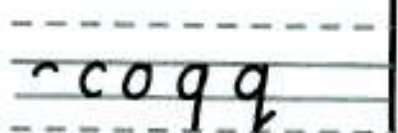
d



g



q



c o a d g q e

Lower Case Letter Formation

Family 2. The Coathanger Family

c o a d g q e letters based on a c shape

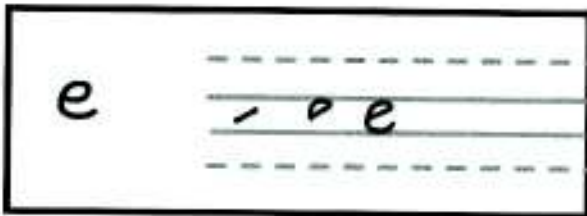


e

Letter e

Is like the distant cousin of the Coathanger family as although it is based on the c shape, it doesn't start with the hook like the other letters in this family.

Begin at the mid-point between the two solid lines and move upwards to the right, at an angle of 45 degrees.



n h m r b p k

Lower Case Letter Formation

Family 3. The Bridge Family

m n r h b k p letters that have a vertical down stroke followed by a diagonal movement to the right.

n m r

n m r

These letters begin with a vertical down stroke, followed by a vertical up stroke, then have a diagonal movement to the right, which begins mid-way between the two solid lines.

The letters n, m and r reach the top solid line.

m and n should have narrow "bridges".

n

Trnn

m

Trmm

r

Trrr

n h m r b p k

Lower Case Letter Formation

Family 3. The Bridge Family Contd..

m n r h b k p letters that have a vertical down stroke followed by a diagonal movement to the right.

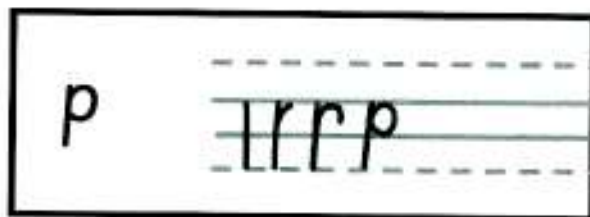
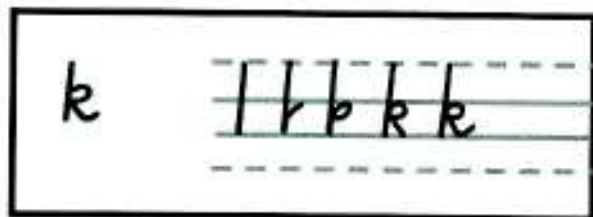
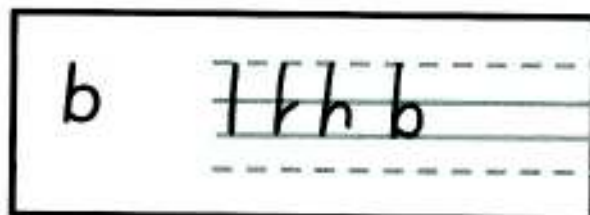
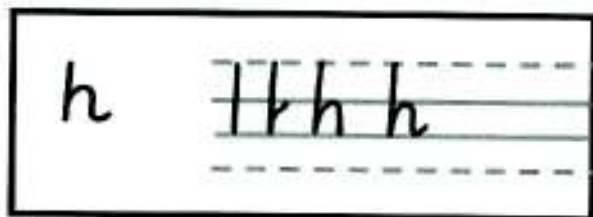
h b k p

h b k p

These letters begin with a vertical down stroke, followed by a vertical up stroke, then have a diagonal movement to the right, which begins mid-way between the two solid lines.

The letters h, b and k are tall letters so start at the top solid line. The letter k is a 'shoelace' k to enable it to join to other letters and to distinguish it from the capital K.

The letter p is a tail letter so starts at the top solid line and reaches down to the bottom broken line.

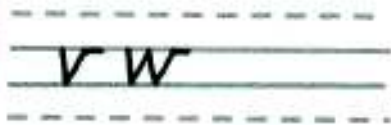


v w

Lower Case Letter Formation

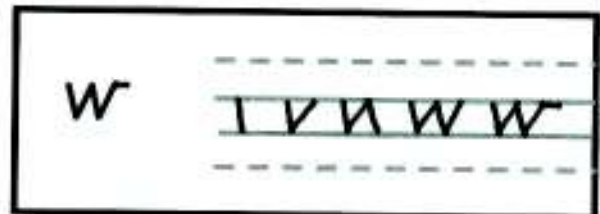
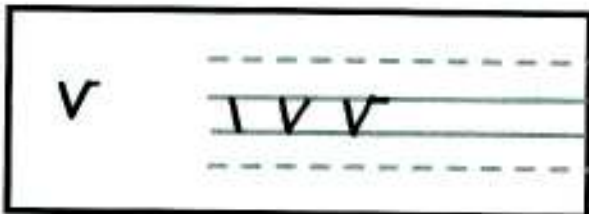
Family 4. The Zig Zag Family

v w are placed together as a pair.



v w

Both start on the top solid line, have a diagonal downward stroke and have a joining mark that sits on the top solid line.



u y

Lower Case Letter Formation

Family 5. The Smile Family

u y are placed together as a pair.

u y

u y

Both start on the top solid line, begin with a downward stroke, curve back up to the top solid line and then down to the bottom solid line. The letter y is a tail letter that extends down to the bottom broken line and ends with a gentle curve that sits on the line.

u u u u u

y y y y y

s f x z

Lower Case Letter Formation

Family 6. The Misfits!

s f x z letters that are unique and individual and do not fit with any other letter groups.

s f x z

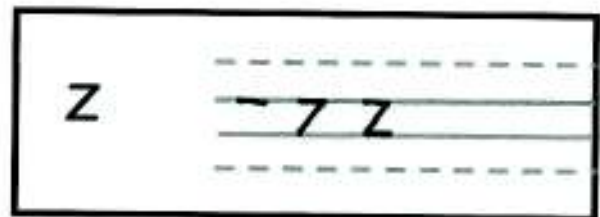
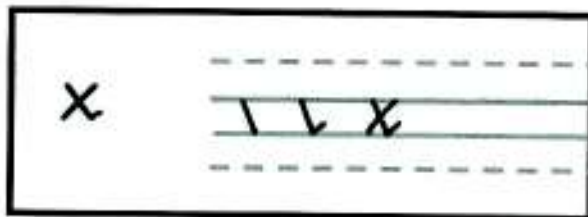
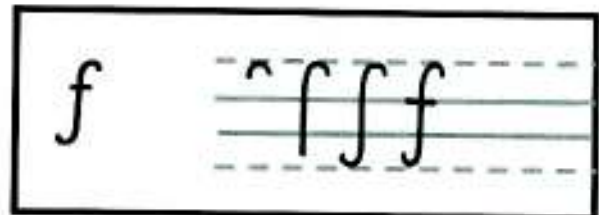
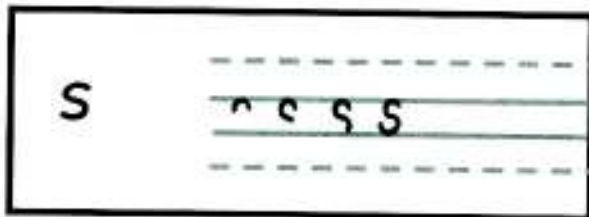
s f x z

The s and f both begin with an "up and over" movement, in the same way as the letters in the coathanger family, based on the c shape.

The f is crossed like the t, however unlike the t the cross bar on the f is the joining stroke. The cross bar sits on the top solid line. The f is both a tall and a tail letter.

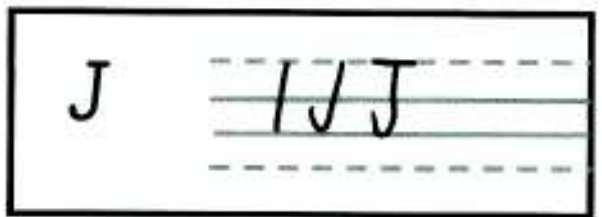
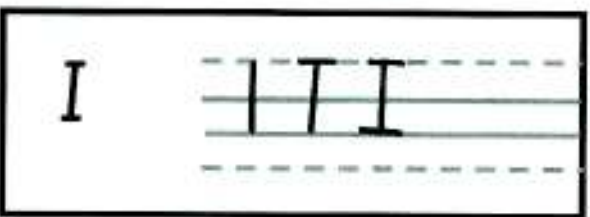
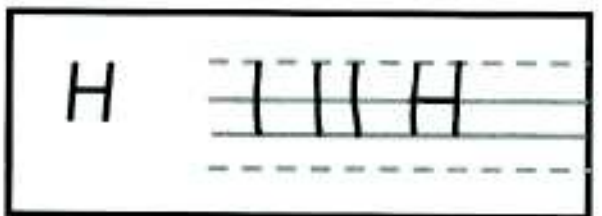
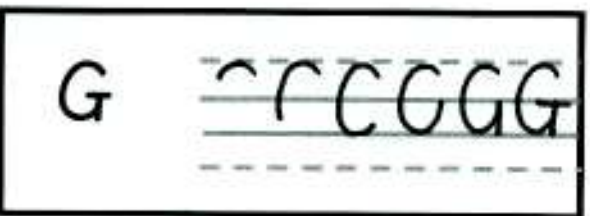
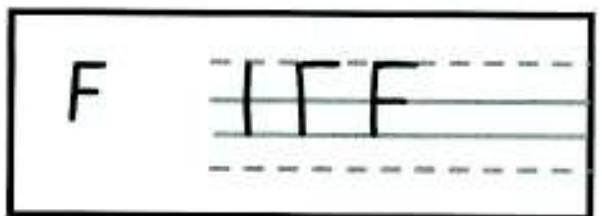
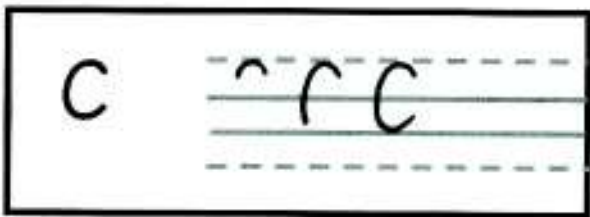
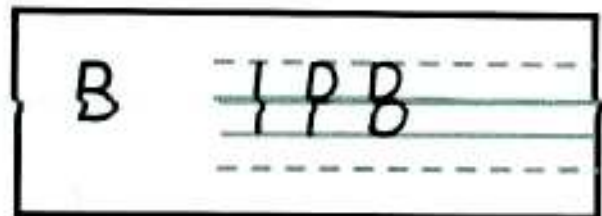
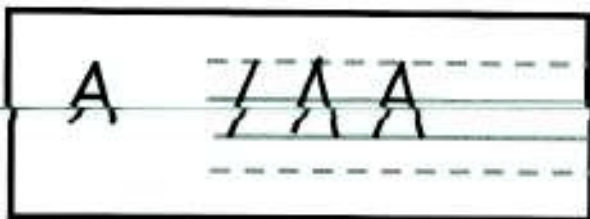
The s x and z should be the same width at the top and bottom of the letter.

The x joins on to the next letter with a diagonal joining stroke. When joining other letters should be crossed at the end of the word as with the letter t.



Upper Case Letter Formation

These should be taught as tall letters in size. They do not join on to the letter which follows.



Upper Case Letter Formation

K

IYK

L

IL

M

IMM

N

INN

O

COO

P

IP

Q

COQ

R

IPR

S

SSS

T

IT

U

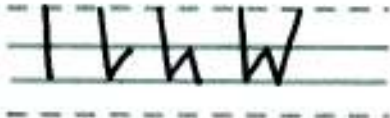
IU

V

IV

Upper Case Letter Formation

W



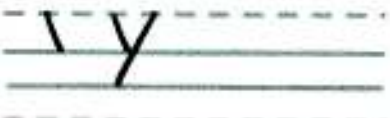
The letter 'W' is shown on a set of three horizontal lines (top dashed, middle solid, bottom dashed). The first 'W' is a solid outline. The second 'W' is formed by three strokes: a vertical line down from the top line to the middle line, a diagonal line down from the middle line to the bottom line, and another diagonal line up from the bottom line to the middle line.

X



The letter 'X' is shown on a set of three horizontal lines (top dashed, middle solid, bottom dashed). The first 'X' is a solid outline. The second 'X' is formed by two strokes: a diagonal line down from the top line to the bottom line, and another diagonal line up from the bottom line to the top line.

Y



The letter 'Y' is shown on a set of three horizontal lines (top dashed, middle solid, bottom dashed). The first 'Y' is a solid outline. The second 'Y' is formed by two strokes: a diagonal line down from the top line to the middle line, and another diagonal line down from the top line to the bottom line.

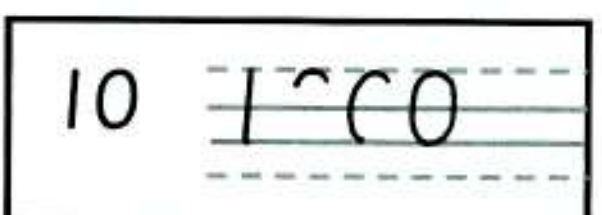
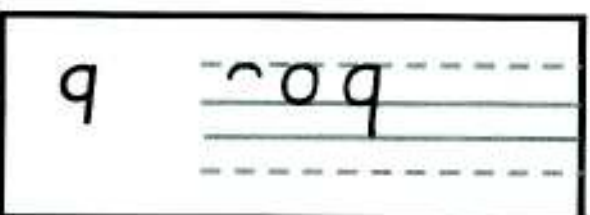
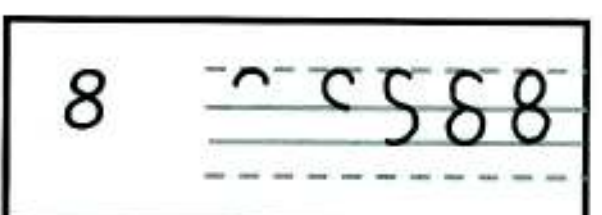
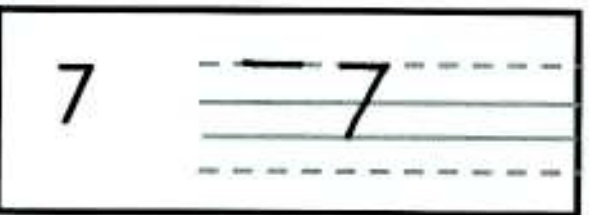
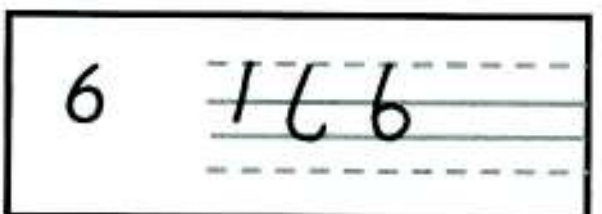
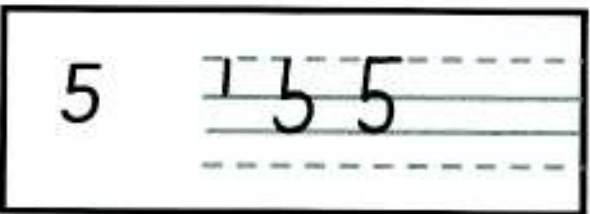
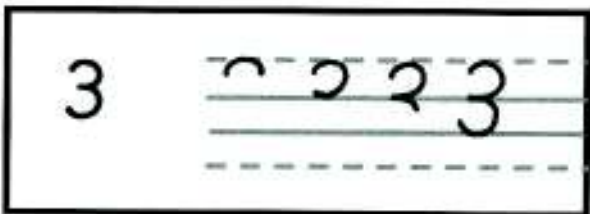
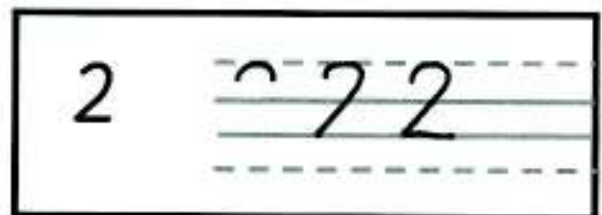
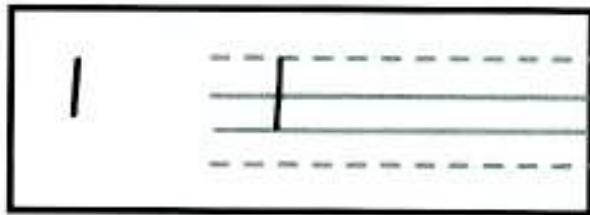
Z



The letter 'Z' is shown on a set of three horizontal lines (top dashed, middle solid, bottom dashed). The first 'Z' is a solid outline. The second 'Z' is formed by three strokes: a horizontal line from left to right at the top line, a diagonal line down from the top line to the bottom line, and a horizontal line from right to left at the bottom line.

Number Formation

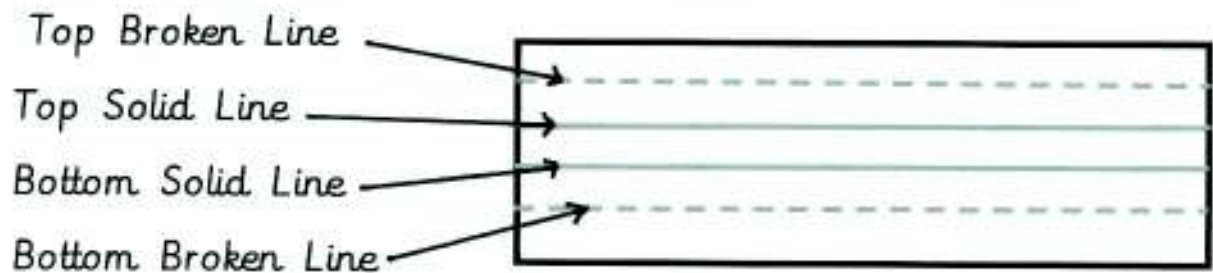
Numbers can be drawn using the lineguides in a very similar way to letters. All numbers should be regarded as the same size as tall letters, therefore they start on the top broken line and sit on the bottom solid line. The lineguide gives structure to their formation within.



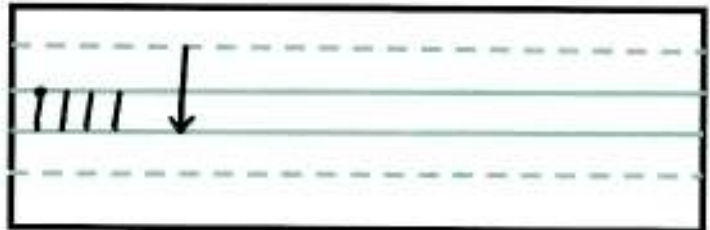
Language

Suggested language to use when describing letters.

Consistency of language is very important when teaching handwriting to ensure children begin to assimilate patterns and shapes and link letters together that look similar to each other. It is also important to remain consistent across the school when describing where letters sit on the lines so children don't receive mixed messages or become confused.



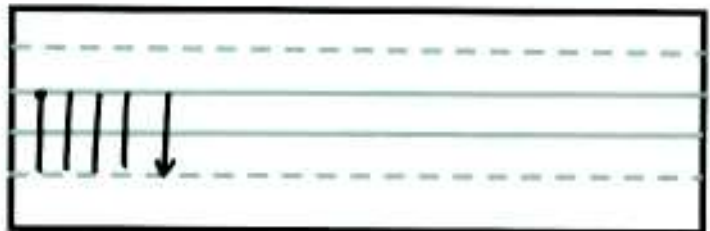
Short Lines



Tall Lines



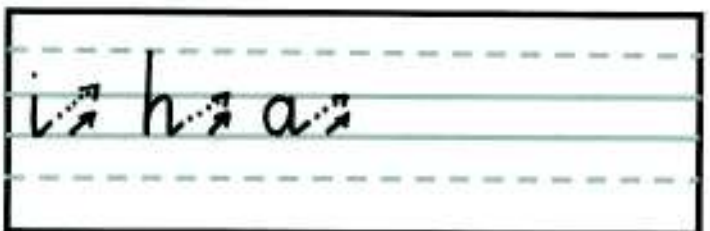
Tail Lines



North-east Joining Line

or

Diagonal joining stroke



Language

Narrow bridges

n h m n

Letters with triangles

d b u

Joins with triangles

l i c h d a

Coat hanger hooks

^ ^ c s ^ ^ f

Egg shapes in the coat hanger letters

c o a d g g

Shoe lace k

k

Language

Small letters

e i u x z r

Tall letters

d k l

Tail letters

j p g y

Narrow letters

n b p

Letters with sharp
points

v w

Narrow curved tails

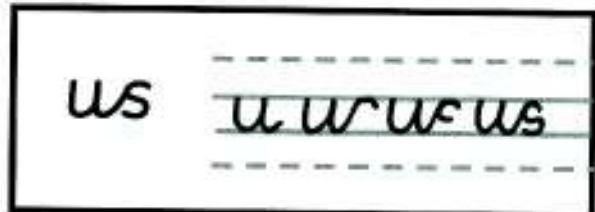
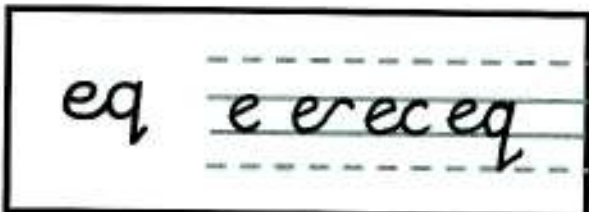
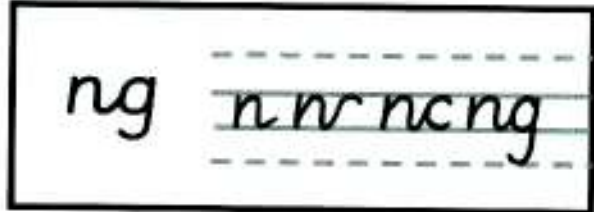
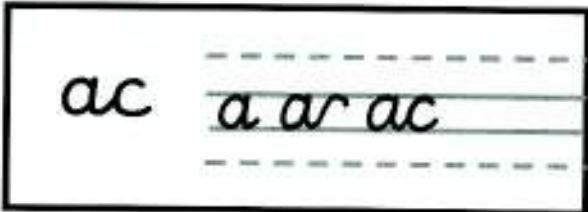
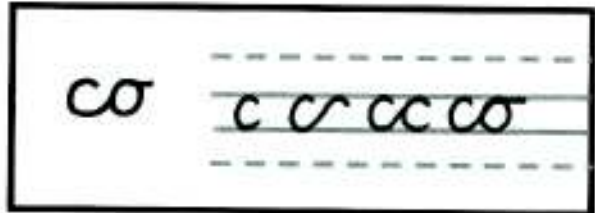
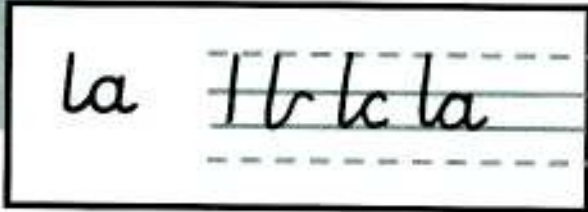
j p g y

Joins

Joining pairs of letters

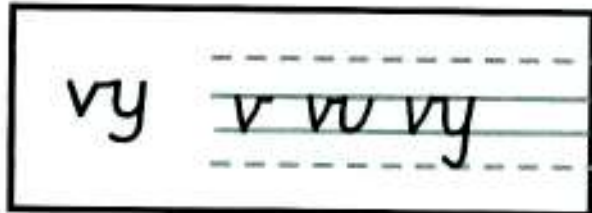
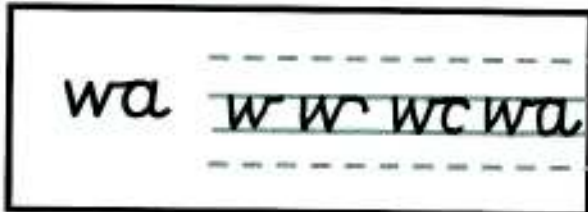
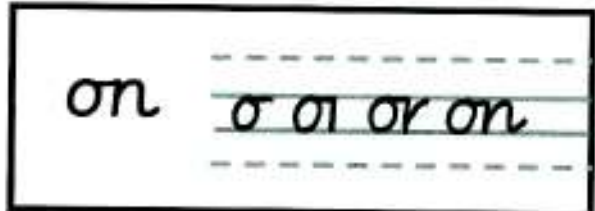
Up, over, stop, reverse.

The following are examples of joins which follow the 'up over stop reverse route.'



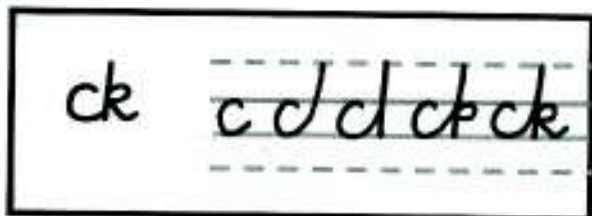
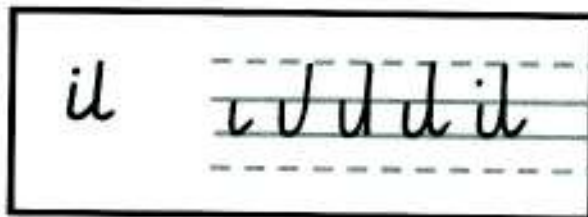
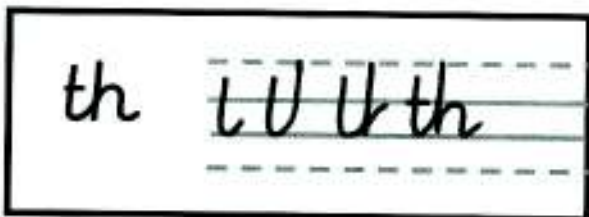
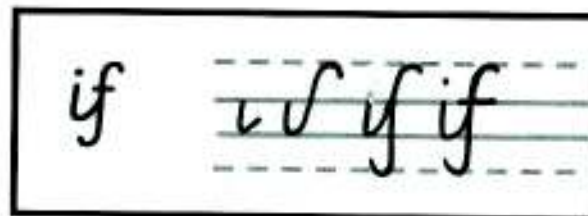
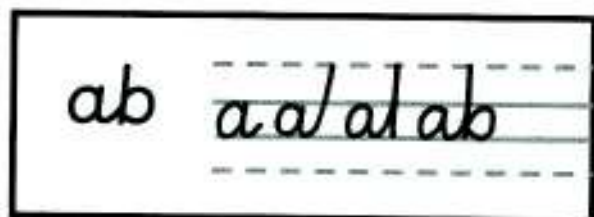
Join across the top

The following are examples where letters join across on the top solid line.



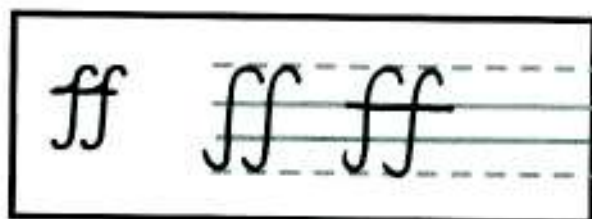
Joining pairs of letters

These letters are joined from the preceding letter with a diagonal joining stroke which straightens up at the top solid line then pushes straight up to the top broken line before coming straight back down tracing the line just made.



Double ff

When joining two letter f's together—for efficiency and speed use a "double cross". Draw the two tall strokes of the f next to each other and then cross together with one horizontal cross bar which sits exactly on the top solid line.



Joins

Joining pairs of letters

These letters are joined from the preceding letter with a diagonal joining stroke, straightening up to push to the top solid line before coming straight back down, tracing the line just made.

em e e e e e e e m

kn k k k k k k n

ip i i i i i i p

ar a a a a a a r

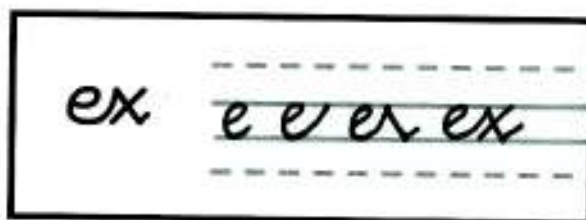
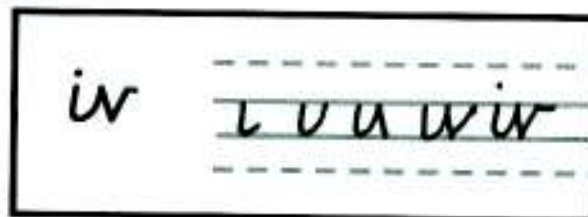
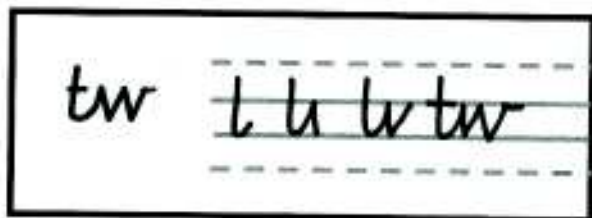
lu l l l l l l u

ky k k k k k k y

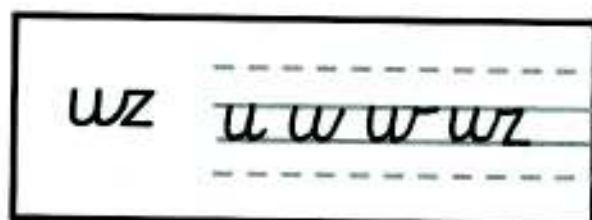
Joins

Joining pairs of letters

These letters are joined from the preceding letter at the top solid line before going diagonally down to the right.



The letter z is joined from the preceding letter at the top solid line before going straight across the top solid line to start the formation of the letter z.



Joining pairs of letters

No Join

All of the tail letters are break letters. They do not join on to the next letter.

g j y q do not join onto the next letter.

go go

ji ji

ye ye

qu qu

Joining pairs of letters

b p s

With the letters b p s a whole school decision is required. The school need to decide whether or not to join from these letters. They are different to the other letters in that the joining stroke does not form a natural part of the letter therefore is only used when joining in the middle of a word.

Option 1 : No join

br bi be

pa pi pe

st se si

br bi be

pa pi pe

st se si

Option 2 : Joined

br bi be

pa pi pe

st se si

br bi be

pa pi pe

st se si

In the lessons on letter joins, there are examples for each letter on how to join from the preceding letter.

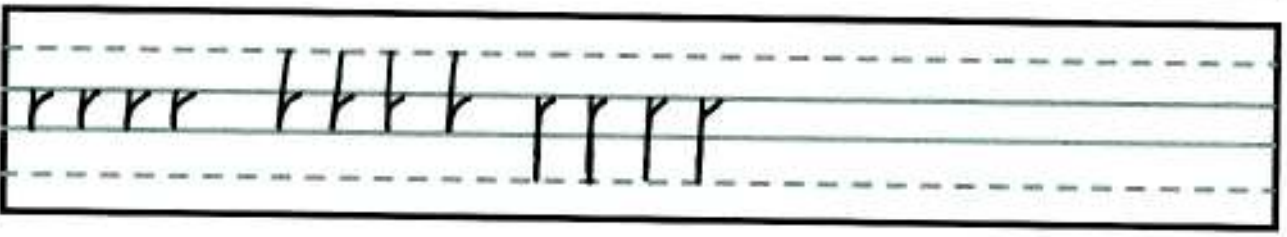
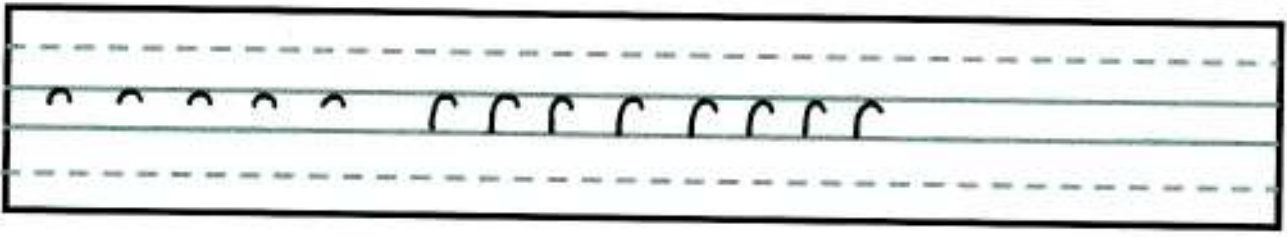
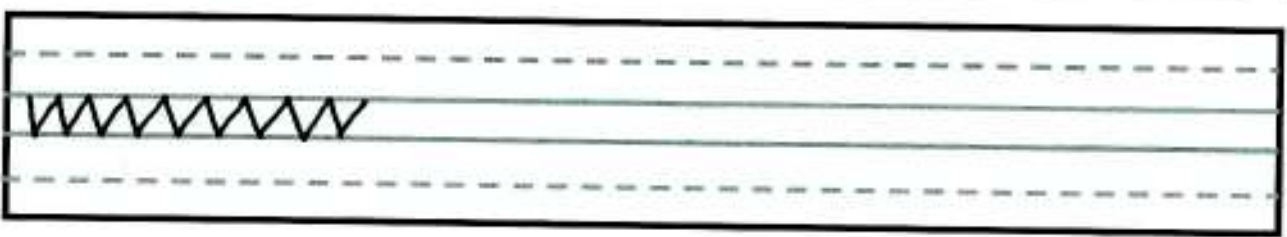
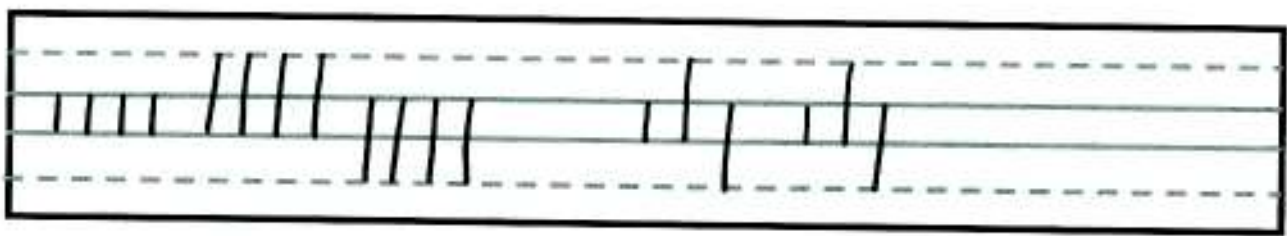
The joins examples include just two letters. Following the intensive programme of lessons, three letter joins could be practiced in a weekly handwriting lesson.

Key Stage 1

Programme of Lessons

Warm Up Examples.

Below are line guide exercises to ensure children fully understand the correct size of small letters, tall letters and tail letters. They are exercises that can be used regularly as a warm up to a handwriting lesson. The three straight lines are referred to as short, tall and tail lines.



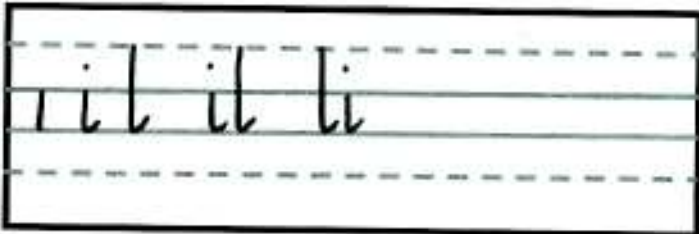
Key Stage 1

Programme of Lessons

Lessons on Individual letters.

Below are line guide exercises to ensure children fully understand the correct size of small letters, tall letters and tail letters. They are exercises that can be used regularly as a warm up to a handwriting lesson. The three straight lines are referred to as small, tall and tail lines.

1 | i l il li



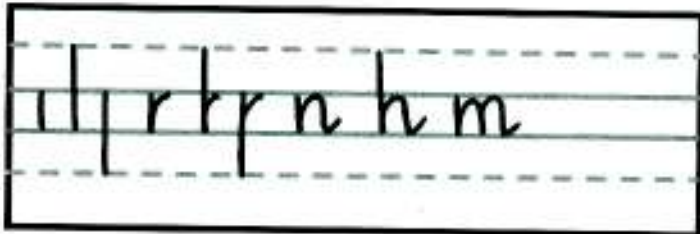
2 | j ij li



3 | l il t it lt

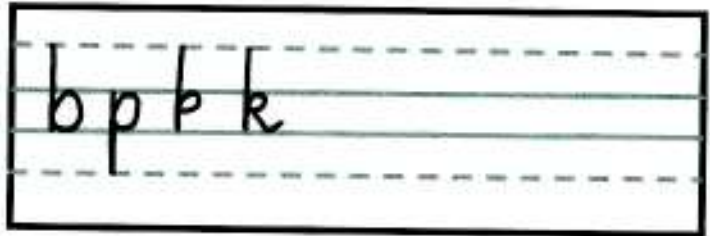


4 r k p n h m

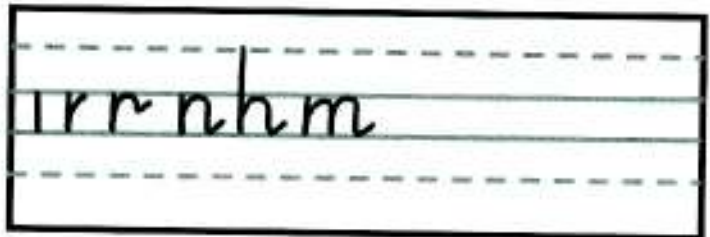


Lessons on Individual letters continued.

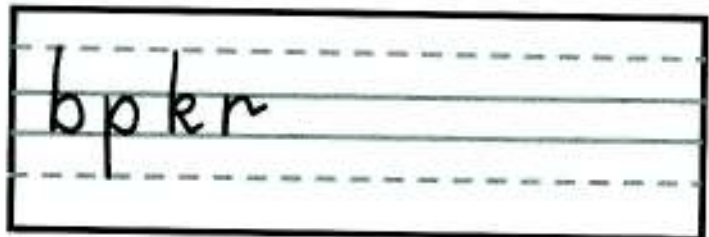
5 b p k



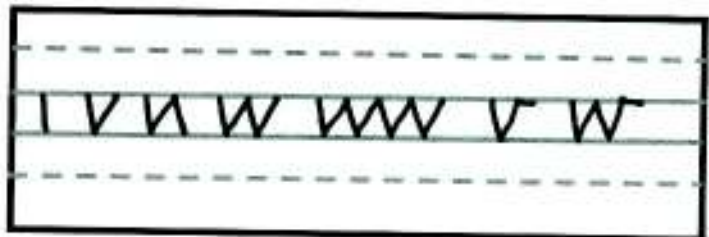
6 r r n h m reinforcement



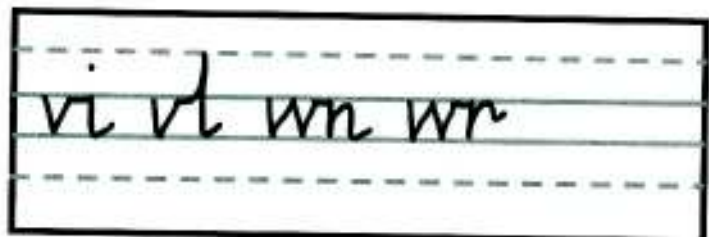
7 b p k r reinforcement



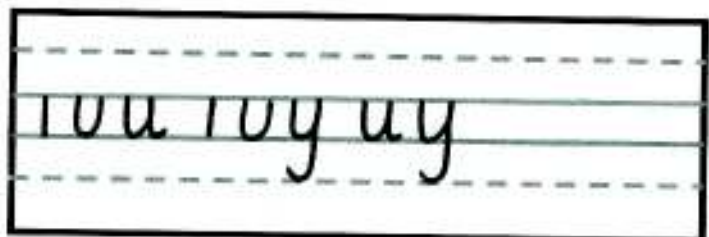
8 v v w w



9 vi vt wn wr

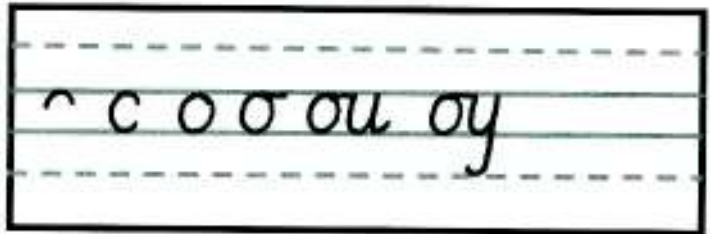


10 vu uy

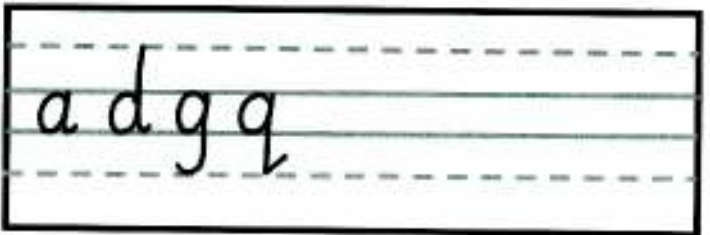


Lessons on Individual letters continued.

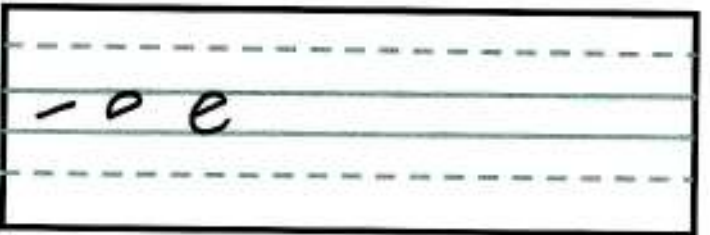
11 ^ c o ou oy



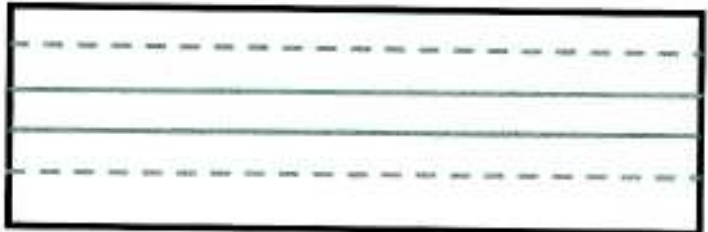
12 a d g q



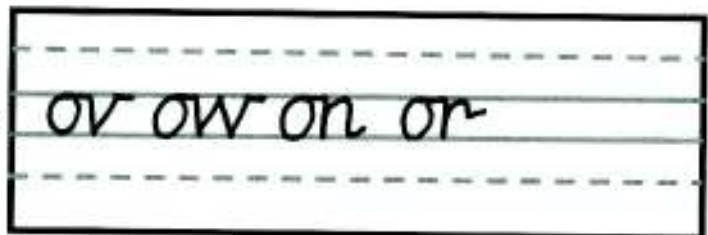
13 - o e



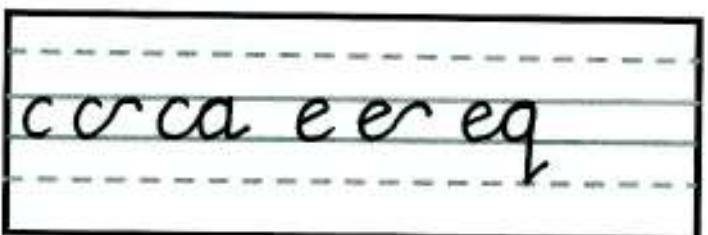
14 Reinforcement of c family.



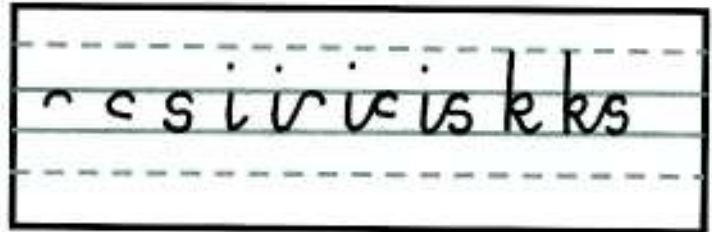
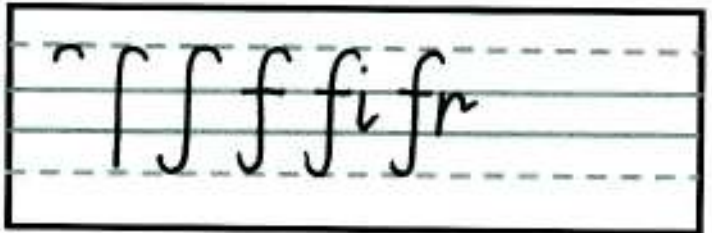
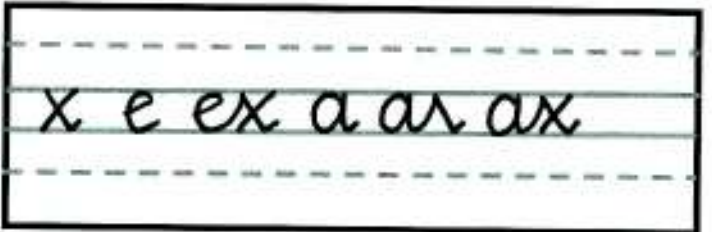
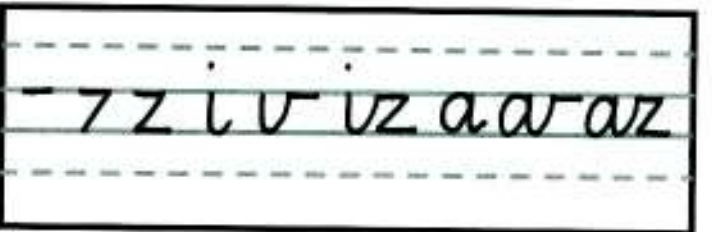
15 ov ow on or



16 cca e eeq



Lessons on Individual letters continued.

17 *^ s i r i s k k s*18 *^ f f f i f r*19 *x e e x a a x*20 *z i i z a a z*

Upper Case Letters

1 PBRDU

IPBRDU

2 LEFMA

LEFMA

3 TIJHKN

TIJHKN

4 CGOQS

CGOQS

5 XVWYZ

XVWYZ

6 Reinforcement of all capital letters.

Suggested Lessons On Joining Letters

In the lessons on letter joins, there are examples for each letter, on how to join from the preceding letter. The joins include just two letters. After working through the intensive programme of lessons, three letter joins could be practiced in the weekly handwriting lesson.

1 al ab ia va

al ab ia va

2 ib ob lp mp

ib ob lp mp

3 ck cy nc oc

ck cy nc oc

4 de dr da nd

de dr da nd

5 em ke ej oj

em ke ej oj

Suggested Lessons On Joining Letters Contd

6 fo fa uf of

fo fa uf of

7 ng dg iq oq

ng dg iq oq

8 ht ha wh th

ht ha wh th

9 ki mi cl wl

ki mi cl wl

10 ky kn ok rk

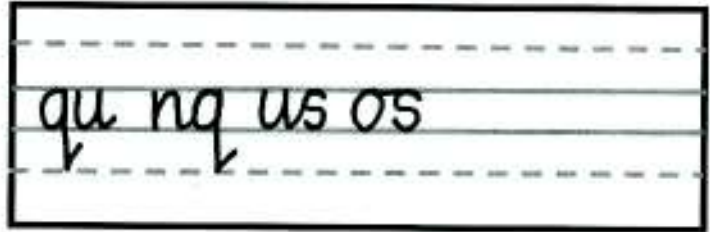
ky kn ok rk

11 wm am ny en

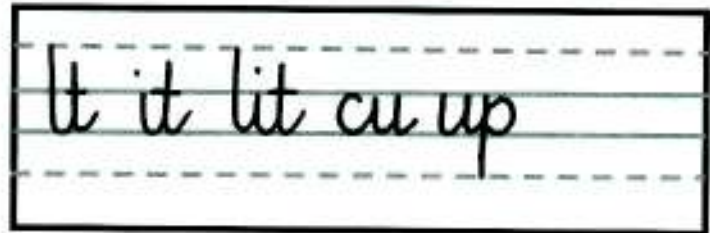
wm am ny en

Suggested Lessons On Joining Letters Contd

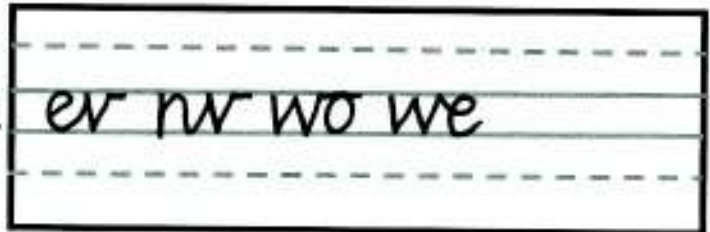
12 qu nq us os



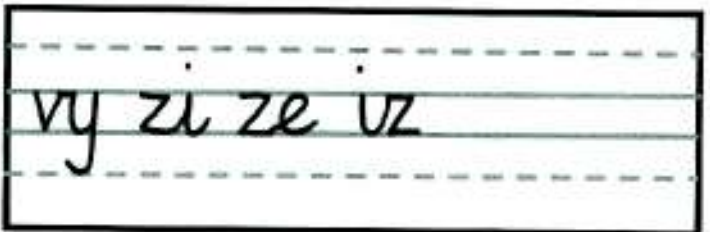
13 lt it lit cu up



14 er nr wo we



15 vy zi ze iz

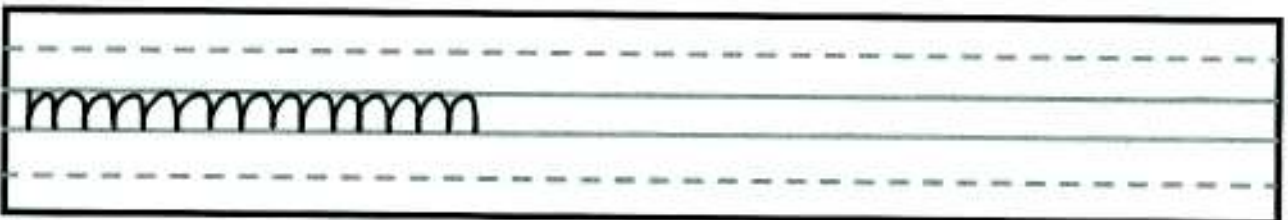
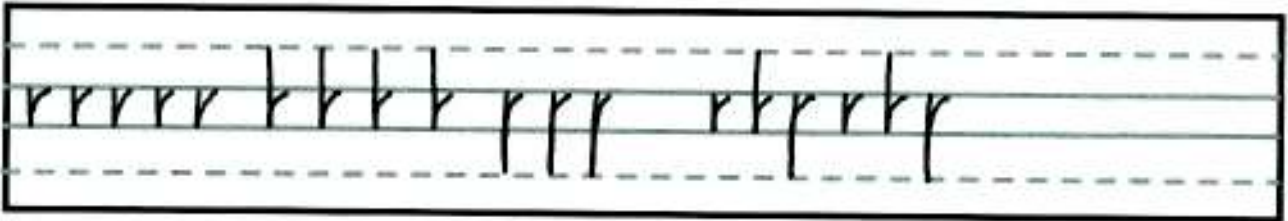
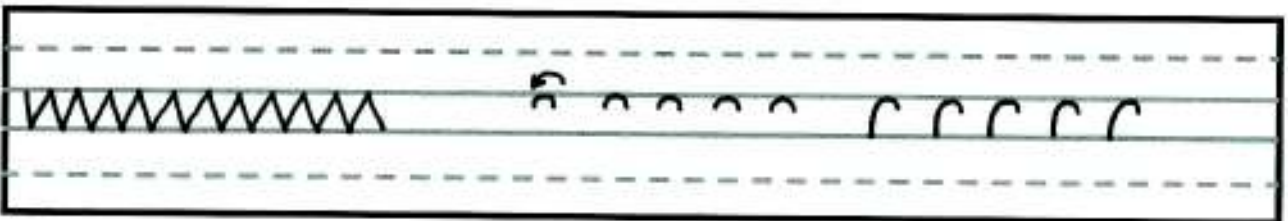
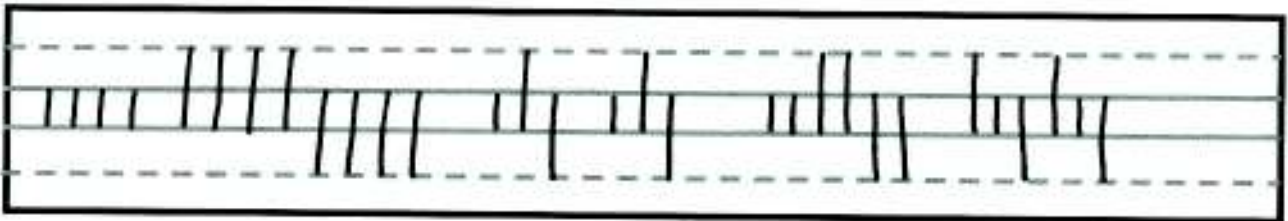


Key Stage 2

Programme of Lessons

Warm Up Examples.

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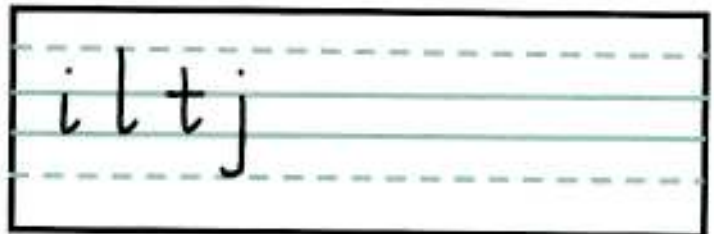
Key Stage 2

Programme of Lessons

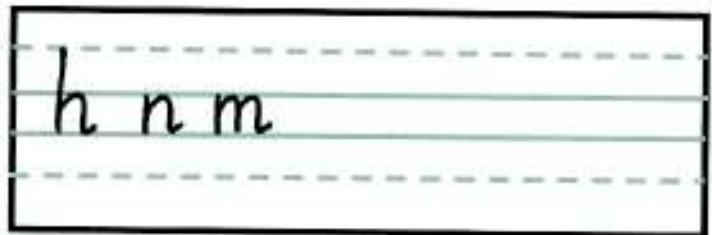
Lessons on Individual letters.

Below are line guide exercises to ensure children fully understand the correct size of small letters, tall letters and tail letters. They are exercises that can be used regularly as a warm up to a handwriting lesson. The three straight lines are referred to as small, tall and tail lines.

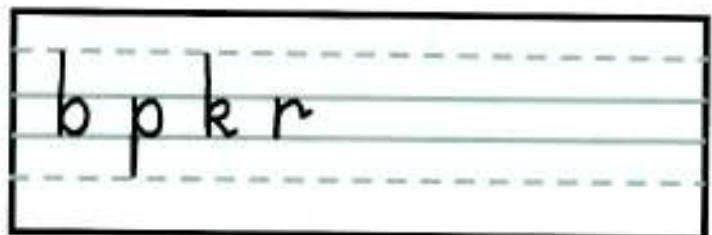
1 i l t j



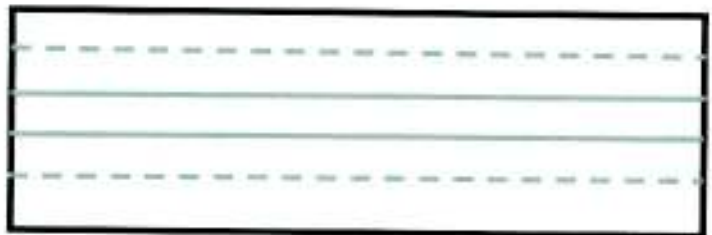
2 h n m



3 b p k r



4 Reinforcement of above



Lessons on Individual letters continued.

5 r c o a d

r c o a d

6 g q e l e

g q e l e

7 v w u y

v w u y

8 s f x z

s f x z

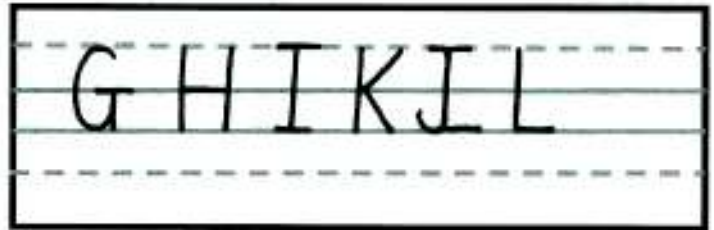
9 Reinforcement

10 ABCDEF

A B C D E F

Lessons on Individual letters continued.

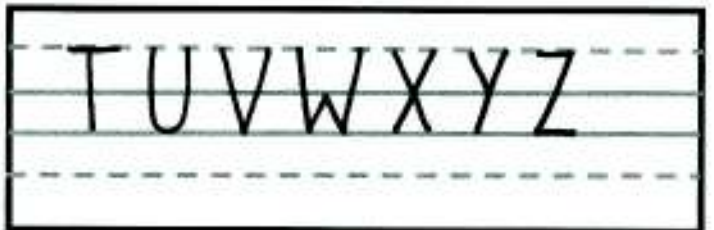
11 GHIKJL



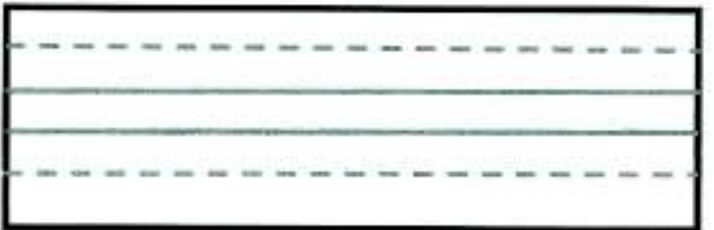
12 MNOPQRS



13 TUVWXYZ



14 Reinforcement of capital letters.



Suggested Lessons On Joining Letters

In the lessons on letter joins, there are examples for each letter, on how to join from the preceding letter. The joins include just two letters. After working through the intensive programme of lessons, three letter joins could be practiced in the weekly handwriting lesson.

1 ac aw da oa
ib ob

ac aw da oa ib ob

2 ck cy ec vc du
dg

ck cy ec vc du dg

3 en ef me te fr
fo

en ef me te fr fo

4 if af ng og hs
hu

if af ng og hs hu

5 lh ch ib ip ki
vi

lh ch ib ip ki vi

Suggested Lessons On Joining Letters Contd

6 ej nj ky kl mk
ok

ej nj ky kl mk ok

7 ll lw cl al mb
mp

ll lw cl al mb mp

8 om im mf ms
ng nt

om im mf ms ng nt

9 un wn or od
vo ho

un wn or od vo ho

10 op rp qu nq
oq rl

op rp qu nq oq rl

11 rs vr tr vs fs
ns

rs vr tr vs fs ns

Suggested Lessons On Joining Letters Contd

12 tl ty ut ot ug
uz

tl ty ut ot ug uz

13 du fu va ve
ov iv

du fu va ve ov iv

14 wg we ow ew
ex ix

wg we ow ew ex ix

15 xh xe vy cy
oz ez

xh xe vy cy oz ez