



## Dear Principal:

It's that time of year again!

The **Zaner-Bloser National Handwriting Contest** is the ideal opportunity for your teachers to celebrate the benefits of their handwriting instruction and for your students to showcase their manuscript and cursive skills.

Participating students have the chance to compete for the honor of representing your school as a grade-level winner. School grade-level winners qualify to move on to state, then national levels, competing to be named one of nine Grand National Grade-Level Champions. Each national champion receives a cash prize and a special trophy!

The contest is open to all students in grades K–8 and includes a special-needs category inspired by a talented past participant, Nicholas Maxim. Participants who enter in this category must have a cognitive, intellectual, physical, and/or developmental disability. See the official rules for submission requirements.

This packet includes everything you need to get started:

- Contest Rules and Award Information
- School and Student Information Form
- Keys to Legibility for Manuscript
- Keys to Legibility for Cursive
- Official Entry Forms
  - Manuscript Grades K–2
  - Cursive Grades 3–4
  - Cursive Grades 5–8
  - Nicholas Maxim Special Needs K–8

Go to [zaner-bloser.com/hwcontest](http://zaner-bloser.com/hwcontest) for further downloadable resources. In addition to the contest entry forms, you'll find a Family Letter to send home with information about the contest and a Certificate of Participation you can print for each student.

Get social with us! Follow our social channels and make sure to tag us throughout the contest. We'd love to hear how your contest preparation is going. You could be featured on our page!

**Facebook:** @ZanerBloser • **Twitter:** @ZanerBloser • **Instagram:** @ZanerBloserInc

We look forward to seeing your students' handwriting among this year's contest entries! Best of luck, and thank you for recognizing the importance of handwriting for building literacy for all students.

Sincerely,

Lisa Carmona  
Zaner-Bloser President  
Highlights Education Group President

P.S. Don't forget to add the submission date to your teachers' calendars. Entries are due February 14, 2020 — because we LOVE handwriting!



# Contest Rules and Awards: General Entry

## 1. Contest Rules

The contest is open to all students in grades K–8. Winners will be selected from schools that use the **Zaner-Bloser Handwriting** program or **The Superkids Reading Program**. Participating schools should select and submit **ONLY ONE WINNER PER GRADE PER SCHOOL** for grades K–8. Entries should be sent to **Zaner-Bloser National Handwriting Contest**, PO Box 16764, Columbus, OH 43216-6764. Entries postmarked after **February 14, 2020**, will not be judged. Decisions by contest judges are final. Names, grade levels, and schools of winners may be posted on the Zaner-Bloser website and may be released to the media.

Contest void where prohibited by law. All contest entrants and Grand Champions must be residents of one of the fifty (50) United States or the District of Columbia. Employees and the immediate family members of employees of Zaner-Bloser, Inc., or its affiliates are not eligible to submit an entry, compete, or win.

## 2. How to Submit a Winning Entry

Impress upon your students the importance of legible handwriting. Give a copy of the appropriate form to each student who wishes to enter: Manuscript, grades K–2; Cursive, grades 3–4; Cursive, grades 5–8. Allow students time to practice before writing their final entry on a clean form. Remember: Handwriting should be relaxed and natural, not traced—neatness counts. Reward each student who enters the contest with a copy of the Zaner-Bloser Certificate of Participation found at [zaner-bloser.com/handwriting-contest.php](http://zaner-bloser.com/handwriting-contest.php). Submit **ONE** winning entry for each grade level to represent your school along with the completed School Information Form. A School Information Form must accompany all entries. Mail the winning entries to **Zaner-Bloser National Handwriting Contest**, PO Box 16764, Columbus, OH 43216-6764 by February 14, 2020.

## 3. Judging and Awards

All entries will be judged according to the **Zaner-Bloser Keys to Legibility—Size, Shape, Spacing, and Slant**—which can be found on the reverse side of each entry form. Every student whose entry is submitted to the judges will receive a School Grade-Level Winner Certificate. All schools with a winner will be notified by April 2020, so that presentation assemblies can be scheduled and all prizes can be awarded.

**State Grade-Level Winners**—Judges will select a Public and Private State Grade-Level (K–8) Winner for each state. There could be 18 State Grade-Level Winners for each state, one from each grade in both public and private school categories. Zaner-Bloser reserves the right not to choose a State Grade-Level Winner if the entries do not meet the legibility criteria. State Grade-Level Winners will receive a prize package for themselves and their school.

**National Grade-Level Semifinalists**—Judges will select nine National Grade-Level Semifinalists from the State Winners. Zaner-Bloser reserves the right not to choose a Semifinalist if the entries do not meet the legibility criteria. National Grade-Level Semifinalists will receive a prize package for themselves and their school.

**Grand National Grade-Level Champions**—Judges will select nine Grand National Grade-Level (K–8) Champions. Zaner-Bloser reserves the right not to choose a Grand National Grade-Level Champion if the entries do not meet the legibility criteria. Each Grand National Grade-Level Champion will be awarded a **\$500 cash prize and a large trophy**. Each teacher of a Grand National Grade-Level Champion will be awarded an **Educator Prize Package** including **Zaner-Bloser classroom materials valued at \$1,000**. Prize cannot be applied toward an existing order.



# Nicholas Maxim Award for Children With Special Needs

## Contest Rules and Awards

All Nicholas Maxim Award Contest entries must be submitted in either manuscript or cursive. Entries are judged by a team of occupational therapists and educators utilizing metrics provided by the **Zaner-Bloser Keys to Legibility rubric of Shape, Size, Spacing, and Slant**. Additional consideration is given to the challenges each special needs student who enters must face with regard to their specific cognitive, intellectual, physical, and/or developmental disability. Nicholas Maxim National Champions in each category (Manuscript and Cursive) will be selected from schools that use the **Zaner-Bloser Handwriting** program or **The Superkids Reading Program**. All decisions are final.

Student entries must be submitted in manuscript or cursive using the Nicholas Maxim Entry Form.

**Entries must include a letter providing specific information about the student's handwriting challenge. Letters should be submitted on school or district letterhead and signed by the occupational therapist, special education provider, and/or principal.**

Nicholas Maxim entries should be sent to **Zaner-Bloser National Handwriting Contest, PO Box 16764, Columbus, OH 43216-6764**. A School Information Form must accompany all entries. **Entries must be received on or before February 14, 2020**. Each of the special-needs student eligible entries will receive a Participation Certificate. From all of the eligible entries, **one National Champion in each category (Manuscript and Cursive) will be selected**. The schools of the National Champion of the Nicholas Maxim Manuscript Award winner and the National Champion of the Nicholas Maxim Cursive Award winner will be notified by April 2020, so that presentation assemblies can be scheduled and prizes can be awarded to the National Champions. National Champions in each category (Manuscript and Cursive) will receive a \$500 cash prize and a large trophy. Each school of a Nicholas Maxim Champion will receive educational materials valued at \$1,000. Names, grades, and schools of the National Champions will be posted on Zaner-Bloser's website and may be released to the media.

Contest void where prohibited by law. All contest entrants and National Champions must be residents of one of the fifty (50) United States or the District of Columbia. Employees and the immediate family members of employees of Zaner-Bloser, Inc., or its affiliates are not eligible to submit an entry, compete, or win.



# School Information Form

Use this form when submitting all of your entries. Please type or print legibly.

1. Full name of school (as you would like it to appear on the student's certificate):

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2. Street mailing address of school (UPS cannot deliver to PO boxes):

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Address

City

State

ZIP

3. Telephone number of school: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_ (   ) Private School (   ) Public School

4. Principal's first and last name: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Principal's e-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Name of current handwriting program: \_\_\_\_\_

7. How did you find out about the contest?

- (   ) Colleague    (   ) Zaner-Bloser website    (   ) Conference/Exhibit    (   ) E-mail    (   ) Mail  
 (   ) Other        (   ) Sales Representative    (   ) TV                            (   ) Social Media    (   ) Don't know

Grade	Student: First Name and Last Name	Teacher: First Name and Last Name, E-mail Address
K		
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
<b>Special Needs Award Manuscript Entry</b> (Must be accompanied by a letter verifying the student's disability status)		
★		
<b>Special Needs Award Cursive Entry</b> (Must be accompanied by a letter verifying the student's disability status)		
★		



# Zaner-Bloser National Handwriting Contest

Manuscript Entry Form

- Grade K
- Grade 1
- Grade 2

Teacher's First and Last Name

Telephone

School Name

Public/Private (circle one)

School Address

City

State

Zip

Contact E-mail

Student's Full Name (written by student)

Copy the sentence below in your best handwriting.

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

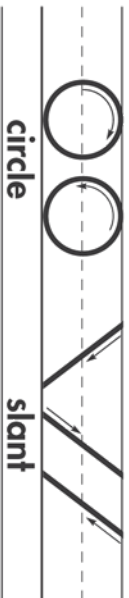
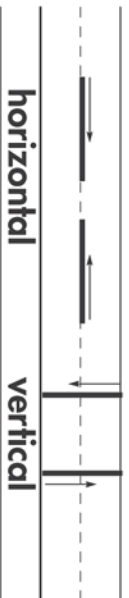
Please tell us what you like best about handwriting.

# Keys to Legibility Manuscript

Attention students: All entries will be judged according to the Keys to Legibility—Shape, Size, Spacing, and Slant.

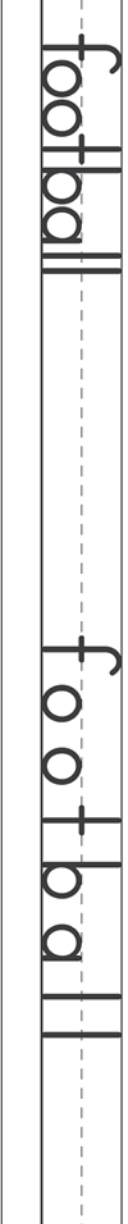


Manuscript letters are based on four kinds of lines. The shape of the letters is determined by these lines.



Letters should not be too close.

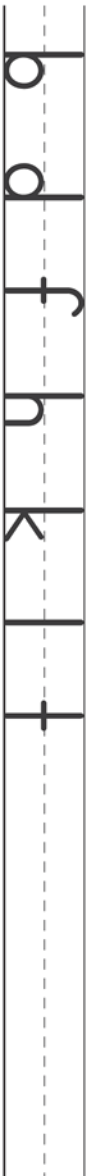
Letters should not be too far apart.



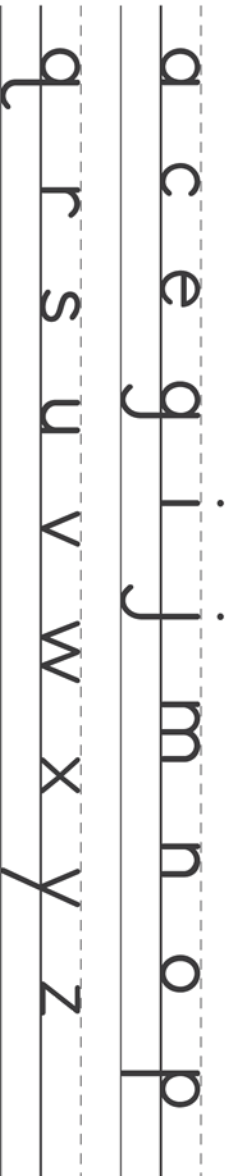
There should be a one-finger space between words. Allow enough space for two fingers between sentences.



The size is correct when all letters of the same size are even in height and rest on the baseline.



short letters

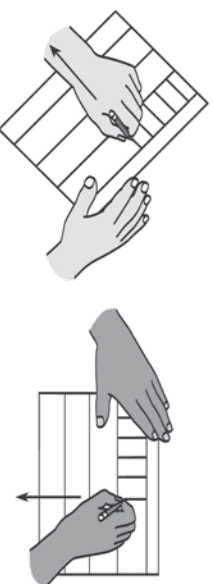


All manuscript letters are vertical in relation to the writing lines. Good vertical quality is achieved by **positioning the paper correctly, pulling the downstrokes in the proper direction, and shifting the paper as the writing line fills.**

**Paper Position**

left hand

right hand





# Zaner-Bloser National Handwriting Contest

Cursive Entry Form

Grade 3  Grade 4

Teacher's First and Last Name

Telephone

School Name

Public/Private (circle one)

School Address

City

State

Zip

Contact E-mail

Student's Full Name (written by student)

Copy the sentence below in your best handwriting.

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

Please tell us what you like best about handwriting.

# Keys to Legibility

*curative*

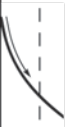
Attention students: All entries will be judged according to the Keys to Legibility—Shape, Size, Spacing, and Slant.



The cursive letters are made up of four basic strokes.



**slant**



**undercurve**



**downcurve**



**overcurve**



The size is correct when all letters of the same size are even in height and rest on the baseline.

tall letters



short letters



Spacing between letters, words, and sentences should be even. Between letters in a word there should be just enough space for a minimum-sized oval. For uniform spacing between words, the beginning stroke should start near the ending stroke of the preceding word. A slanted line (45°) drawn from the endpoint of the last stroke to the baseline should touch both words. Allow enough space for an uppercase **O** between sentences and two uppercase **O**'s for the indentation of a paragraph.



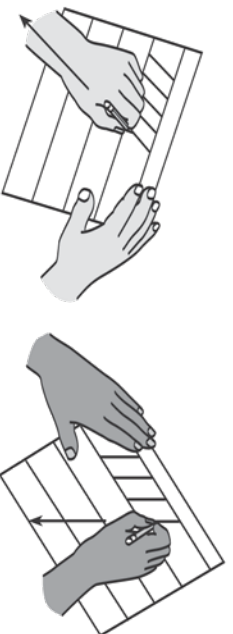
Cursive letters should have a forward slant. Correct slant is achieved by **positioning the paper correctly, pulling the downstrokes in the proper direction, and shifting the paper as the writing line fills.**



**Paper Position**

left hand

right hand





For information purposes only. Please print or type. Submit only one entry per grade.



# Zaner-Bloser National Handwriting Contest

Cursive Entry Form

- Grade 5
- Grade 6
- Grade 7
- Grade 8

Teacher's First and Last Name

Telephone

School Name

Public/Private (circle one)

School Address

City

State

Zip

Contact E-mail

Student's Full Name (written by student)

Copy the sentence below in your best handwriting.  
The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

Using your best handwriting, answer the question below in your own words.  
How does your handwriting make you a better reader and writer, and why is this important?

# Keys to Legibility

*Cursive*

**Attention students: All entries will be judged according to the Keys to Legibility—Shape, Size, Spacing, and Slant.**



The cursive letters are made up of four basic strokes.



slant



undercurve



downcurve



overcurve



The size is correct when all letters of the same size are even in height and rest on the baseline.

tall letters

*k d f h k l t*

short letters

*a c e g i j m  
n o p q r s w*

*u v x y z*

*little*



Spacing between letters, words, and sentences should be even. Between letters in a word there should be just enough space for a minimum-sized oval. For uniform spacing between words, the beginning stroke should start near the ending stroke of the preceding word. A slanted line (45°) drawn from the endpoint of the last stroke to the baseline should touch both words. Allow enough space for an uppercase **O** between sentences and two uppercase **O**'s for the indentation of a paragraph.

*is here*

*also took*



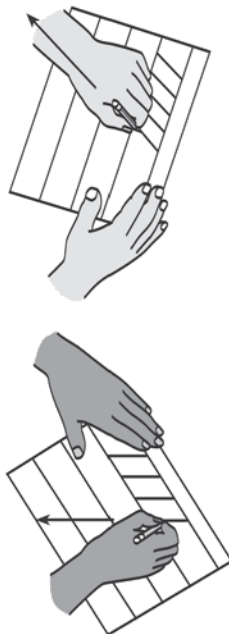
Cursive letters should have a forward slant. Correct slant is achieved by **positioning the paper correctly, pulling the downstrokes in the proper direction, and shifting the paper as the writing line fills.**

*short slant*

**Paper Position**

left hand

right hand





# Zaner-Bloser National Handwriting Contest Nicholas Maxim Award for Children With Special Needs Manuscript Entry Form

For information purposes only. Please print or type. Submit only one manuscript and one cursive entry per school.  
Entry must be accompanied by a letter signed by the occupational therapist, special education provider, and/or principal.

Teacher's First and Last Name	Telephone
School Name	Public/Private (circle one)
School Address	
City	State
	Zip
Contact E-mail	

Student's Full Name (written by student)

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Copy the sentence below in your best handwriting.  
The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

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Please tell us what you like best about handwriting.

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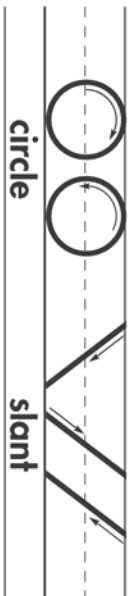
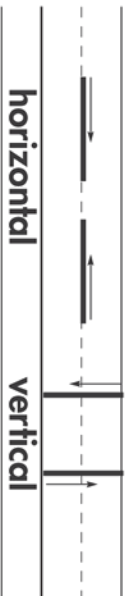
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# Keys to Legibility Manuscript

Attention students: All entries will be judged according to the Keys to Legibility—Shape, Size, Spacing, and Slant.

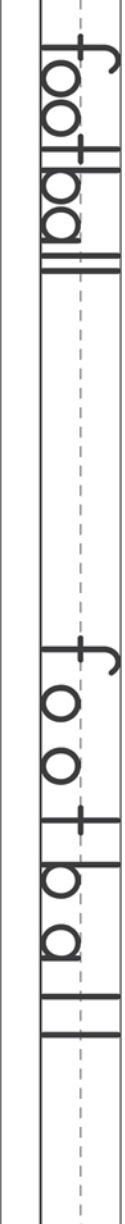


Manuscript letters are based on four kinds of lines. The shape of the letters is determined by these lines.



Letters should not be too close.

Letters should not be too far apart.



There should be a one-finger space between words. Allow enough space for two fingers between sentences.

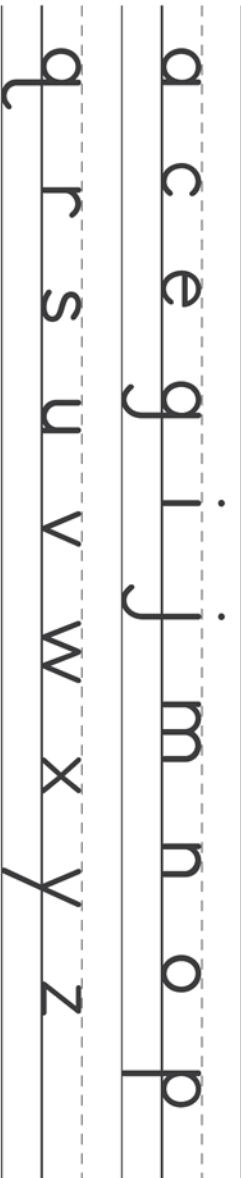


The size is correct when all letters of the same size are even in height and rest on the baseline.



tall letters

short letters

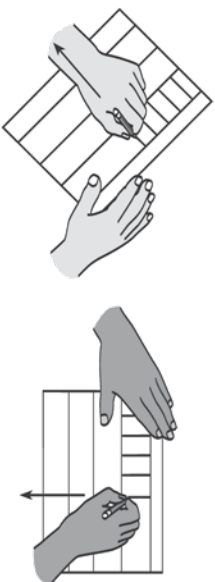


All manuscript letters are vertical in relation to the writing lines. Good vertical quality is achieved by **positioning the paper correctly, pulling the downstrokes in the proper direction, and shifting the paper as the writing line fills.**

**Paper Position**

left hand

right hand





# Zaner-Bloser National Handwriting Contest Nicholas Maxim Award for Children With Special Needs Cursive Entry Form

For information purposes only. Please print or type. Submit only one manuscript and one cursive entry per school.  
Entry must be accompanied by a letter signed by the occupational therapist, special education provider, and/or principal.

Teacher's First and Last Name	Telephone
School Name	Public/Private (circle one)
School Address	
City	State
	Zip
Contact E-mail	

Student's Full Name (written by student)

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Copy the sentence below in your best handwriting.  
The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

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Please tell us what you like best about handwriting.

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# Keys to Legibility

*Cursive*

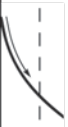
Attention students: All entries will be judged according to the Keys to Legibility—Shape, Size, Spacing, and Slant.



The cursive letters are made up of four basic strokes.



**slant**



**undercurve**



**downcurve**



**overcurve**



The size is correct when all letters of the same size are even in height and rest on the baseline.

tall letters

*bedspread*

short letters

*acquire*

*morning*

*winning*

*little*



Spacing between letters, words, and sentences should be even. Between letters in a word there should be just enough space for a minimum-sized oval. For uniform spacing between words, the beginning stroke should start near the ending stroke of the preceding word. A slanted line (45°) drawn from the endpoint of the last stroke to the baseline should touch both words. Allow enough space for an uppercase **O** between sentences and two uppercase **O**'s for the indentation of a paragraph.

*where  
also took*



Cursive letters should have a forward slant. Correct slant is achieved by **positioning the paper correctly, pulling the downstrokes in the proper direction, and shifting the paper as the writing line fills.**

*shyly shift*

**Paper Position**

left hand

right hand

