

Zaner-Bloser  
**Handwriting**



Teacher Edition



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## Handwriting: A Foundational Skill for Literacy Development

In an increasingly digital learning landscape, **handwriting remains a foundational skill for literacy development**. The act of handwriting supports the brains of developing readers. As students practice forming letters, they learn to recognize these letters when they read. And when students develop strong handwriting skills, they are better equipped to express and share their ideas.

The **short-term outcomes** of the *Zaner-Bloser Handwriting* method include enabling efficient, legible, and automatic written communication. As students learn the craft of handwriting, they build the skills to self-evaluate. Students see their handwriting skills improve over time, and their confidence grows.

**Long-term outcomes** include building community, curiosity, and confidence in learning. Students can extend their handwriting expertise to other content areas, such as taking notes in classes. Automatic handwriting skills give students more opportunities to share their thoughts and ideas and form connections to communities of learners.

In both the short- and long-term, the *Zaner-Bloser Handwriting* method emphasizes engagement, efficiency, legibility, and automaticity.

- **Engagement** invites students to participate in multiple learning opportunities as they develop their handwriting skills. Lessons have interactive elements, such as “Stop and Check” prompts that help students self-review, and creative grade-appropriate activities that provide independent handwriting practice. In addition, the Digital Tutor feature provides a QR code students can access outside of the classroom. These and other features help students stay motivated and take charge of their own learning.
- **Efficiency** helps students develop the skills to accurately and automatically use script to write by hand. The curriculum provides scaffolding and direct, explicit instruction for an efficient learning process. Letters are grouped by formation characteristics to accelerate learning acquisition. The practice of forming different letters strengthens muscle memory.
- **Legibility** ensures handwriting is easy to read and appropriate to the task at hand. The curriculum’s Keys to Legibility™ help teachers deliver consistent instruction and evaluate progress. Students can use the Keys to self-correct and receive specific, targeted feedback. When students’ handwriting becomes more legible, they are better able to share their writing with others.
- **Automaticity** enables students to generate script with ease. To build automaticity, the curriculum uses strategies such as spaced practice, which distributes multiple sessions over long time periods, and interleaving, which combines acquired skills with new skills. These strategies are based in cognitive science and proven to improve retention. They support other learning processes, like spelling and executive function. As students pay less attention to the physical practice of writing, they can focus on the thoughts and ideas they want to express.

The full *Zaner-Bloser Handwriting* foundations paper, with references, is available at [zaner-bloser.com](http://zaner-bloser.com)



**ZB** Zaner-Bloser

# INSPIRING aha MOMENTS

At Zaner-Bloser, we create tools for educators that help elementary students become more joyful, creative learners and communicators.

We support teachers' efforts to inspire "aha" moments—moments of discovery, accomplishment, pride, surprise, delight—that reward students and enable them to unlock the power of learning.

Let's work together to create classroom environments where **community**, **curiosity**, and **confidence** thrive!

"Aha" moments are empowering, enlightening, and self-reinforcing! Our resources encourage students' short-term gains and promote long-term, positive outcomes.

[zaner-bloser.com](https://zaner-bloser.com)

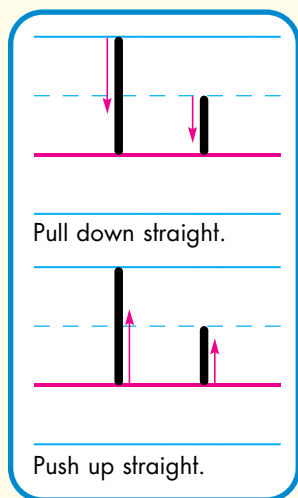


# Why Zaner-Bloser?

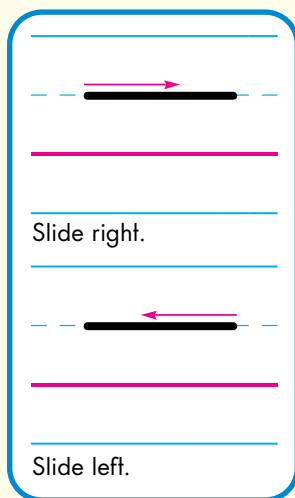
## Basic Strokes Form the Foundation

### Manuscript

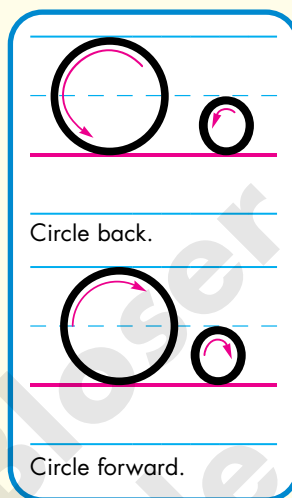
Four basic lines, or strokes, are used to form all manuscript letters and numerals—vertical, horizontal, circle, and diagonal.



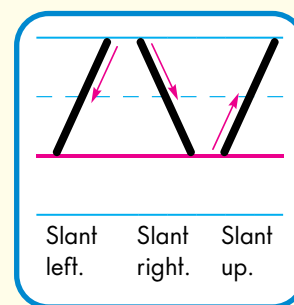
**Vertical**



**Horizontal**



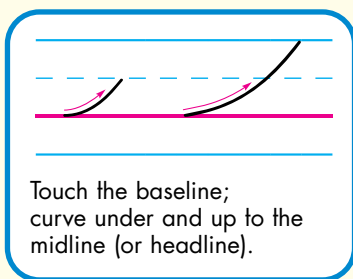
**Circle**



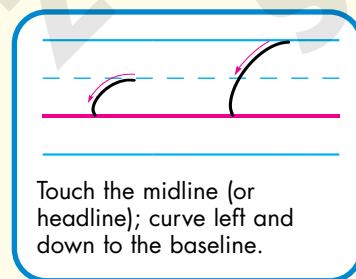
**Diagonal**

### Cursive

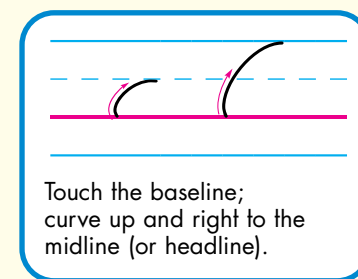
For grades 2–6, four basic strokes are used to form all cursive letters and numerals. These four strokes are undercurve, downcurve, overcurve, and diagonal.



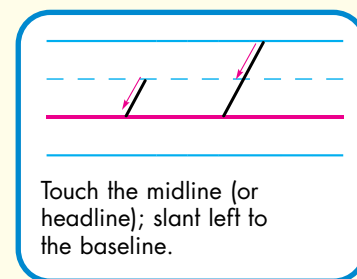
**Undercurve**



**Downcurve**



**Overcurve**



**Diagonal**



## Groupings, Patterns, and Progress

For both manuscript and cursive handwriting, Zaner-Bloser presents the letters of the alphabet in groups. Each group shares common strokes, formation patterns, and visual attributes. When a child sees an individual letter, such as manuscript **a**, and attempts to write it, he or she may look at the letter and try to copy its shape. In many cases, this practice results in self-invented and inefficient methods for writing letters, such as starting the letter at the baseline instead of the midline or using a forward circle line instead of a backward circle line. By presenting **a** with other letters that contain backward circle lines, such as **o** and **d**, children are able to see patterns and learn to write letters correctly and efficiently.

### Manuscript Groupings

Manuscript groupings are based on the strokes used to form the lowercase letter form (these are the letters most frequently used) of each lowercase/uppercase letter pair.

- Vertical and horizontal strokes: **l, i, t (L, I, T)**
- Forward circle and backward circle strokes: **o, a, d, c, e, f, g, j, q, u, s, b, p, r, n, m, h (O, A, D, C, E, F, G, J, Q, U, S, B, P, R, N, M, H)**
- Diagonal strokes: **v, y, w, x, k, z (V, Y, W, X, K, Z)**

### Cursive Groupings

In grades 2–6, cursive groupings are based on the initial stroke used to form each letter.

#### Lowercase

- Undercurve letters: *i, t, u, w, e, l, b, h, f, k, r, s, j, p*
- Downcurve letters: *a, d, g, o, c, q*
- Overcurve letters: *n, m, y, v, x, z*

#### Uppercase

- Downcurve letters: *A, O, D, C, E*
- Curve forward letters: *N, M, H, K, U, Y, J, V, W, X*
- Overcurve letters: *L, F, Q*
- Doublecurve letters: *T, F*
- Undercurve-Loop letters: *B, S, L*
- Undercurve-Diagonal letters: *P, R, B*

### Joinings Groupings

The nine cursive joinings are named by the ending stroke of the first letter to the beginning stroke of the next letter. The joinings are organized in three groups.

#### Undercurve

- Undercurve-to-Undercurve
- Undercurve-to-Downcurve
- Undercurve-to-Overcurve

#### Overcurve

- Overcurve-to-Undercurve
- Overcurve-to-Downcurve
- Overcurve-to-Overcurve

#### Checkstroke

- Checkstroke-to-Undercurve
- Checkstroke-to-Downcurve
- Checkstroke-to-Overcurve



# Why Zaner-Bloser?

## Legibility

**Shape, Size, Spacing, and Slant**—Four Keys to Legibility™—are the basis of Zaner-Bloser's unique instructional system. The Keys form an assessment rubric for teachers and students (see page 111 of this book). The Keys appear in the Student Edition to help students self-evaluate their handwriting. Self-evaluation is a key component in building confidence and helping students take ownership of their learning.

### Evaluate

#### Keys to Legibility



Make your writing easy to read.  
Look at the shape of your letters.

vertical

Write the words. Pull down.

parrot

Write the words. Slide.

tiger

10 • Unit 1

### Evaluate

#### Keys to Legibility

Make your writing easy to read.  
Look at the size of your letters.

##### Tall Letters

Tall letters touch the headline.

A b C

##### Short Letters

Short letters touch the midline.

a e o

Clear, consistent terminology throughout the Student Edition, across all grades

y j g

Write the words. Make sure your tall letters touch the headline.

hamster

rabbit

frog

cat

salamander

goldfish

12 • Unit 1



Grade 2M Student Edition pages

## Cross-Curricular Connections


In Unit 4, students have multiple opportunities to demonstrate their growing abilities. Exercises challenge students to use their handwriting skills in meaningful contexts, across disciplines, and in different types of writing styles.

When these opportunities are presented, critical thinkers and advancing writers are encouraged to apply!



**Apply**

Write a story about what you like to do when the weather is warm. Be sure to leave space for margins.



**Apply**

Write a list of ways to help at home. Be sure to leave space for margins.

Ways to Help at Home

**Apply**

Write your favorite color. Then give reasons that color is best. Include a concluding sentence. Remember to leave space for margins.

My favorite color is

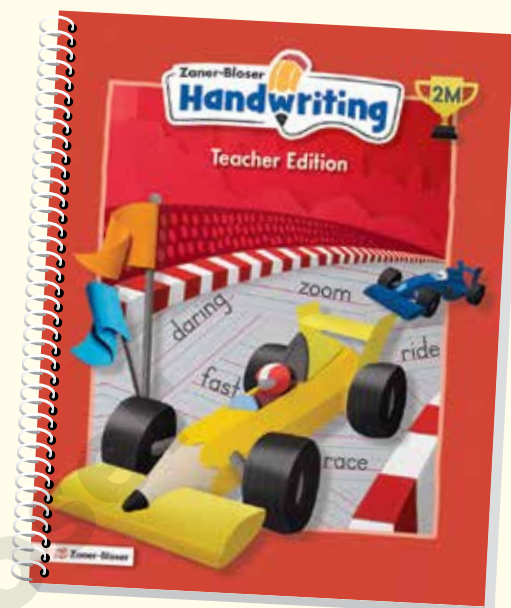
# Program Components

## Your Components at a Glance

### Teacher Edition

Everything you need to teach students to write legibly and fluently in as little as 15 minutes per day

- Research-based instruction
- Simple, three-step lessons
- Additional resources, including multimodal activities to differentiate instruction, teaching tips, and authentic handwriting opportunities



### Student Edition

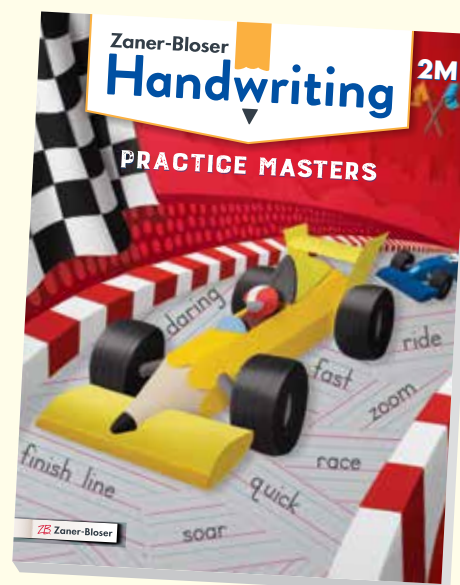
Meaningful, engaging handwriting practice and application

- Developmentally appropriate content
- Colorful, fun activities
- Opportunities for self-evaluation

### Practice Masters

Opportunities to strengthen students' handwriting skills and involve families

- Reproducible practice pages for students
- Practice writing letters, words, and sentences
- Can be used in small groups, centers, or for homework





# Program Components

## MyZBPortal.com

The free digital tools at MyZBPortal.com engage students and support teachers in handwriting instruction. They are designed for whole-class or small-group instruction and can be used with any interactive whiteboard or projector. Access materials easily—everything you need is organized by lesson!

- Animated Letter and Numeral Models
- Teacher Edition eBook
- Printable Home Practice pages
- Corrective Strategies
- Short instructional videos
- Matching with Zaner games
- Professional development and more!

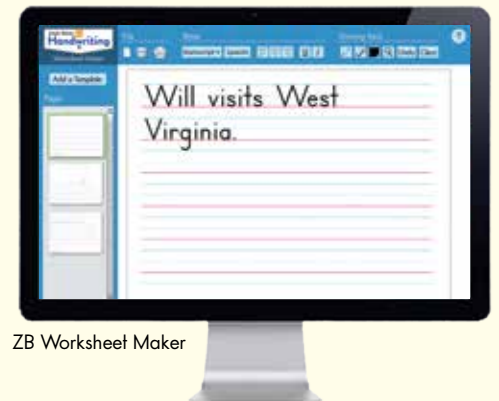


MyZBPortal.com

**ZB Worksheet Maker** ZB Worksheet Maker allows teachers to create documents using Zaner-Bloser's manuscript and cursive alphabets. ZB Worksheet Maker provides grade-specific templates for a variety of documents and includes Spanish characters.

Templates include

- How-To Organizer
- Cause-and-Effect Chain
- Story Map
- Friendly Letter
- And more!



ZB Worksheet Maker

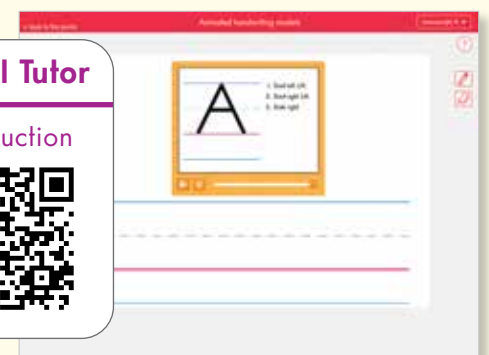


Handwriting Quest

**Handwriting Quest** The Handwriting Quest is a student-facing, interactive experience that encourages proper writing technique. Students can digitally trace letters and numbers and then progress to freewriting. Using a touchscreen device, students can receive feedback on letter formation and apply the Keys to Legibility tools to assess growth.

## Digital Tutor

### Introduction



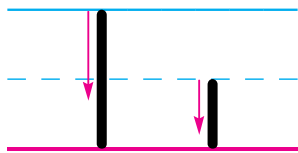
Animated Letter Model

**Digital Tutor** QR codes throughout the Practice Masters link to Animated Letter Models and how-to videos. Simply scan with a mobile device to watch.

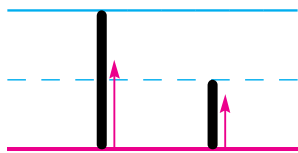
# Write

## Basic Strokes

### Basic Stroke Models and Formations



Pull down straight.

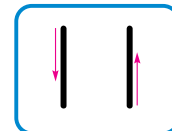


Push up straight.

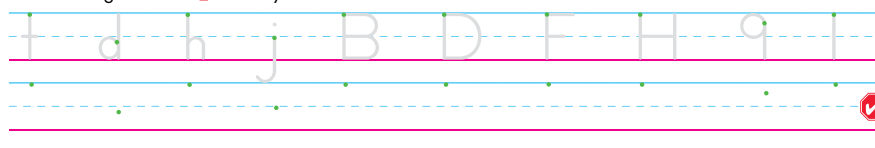
# Write

## Basic Strokes

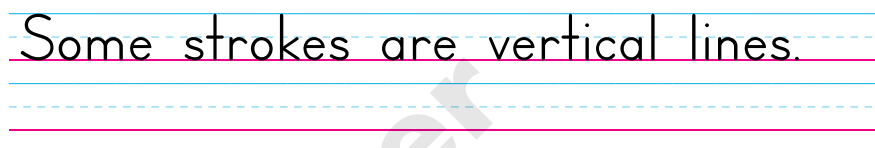
**Vertical Lines** Some letters and numerals have lines that are straight up and down. Trace the straight up and down lines in these letters and numerals.



Trace and write these letters and numerals that have vertical lines. Start at the green dot. ✓ Circle your best vertical line.



Write the sentence.



6 • Unit 1

**Objective:** Practice writing vertical lines.

### 1. Model

**Direct** students to look at the letters and numerals on the student page. Ask them to think about vertical lines and describe what they see in these examples. (*There is at least one vertical line in each.*)

**Draw** two vertical lines with two starting points (one at the top and one at the bottom) on guidelines on the board. Model forming vertical lines in the air as you say the stroke formations. Have students repeat your words and skywrite the lines.

### 2. Practice

**Ask** students to complete the student page at a literacy center, during independent work time, or for homework.

### 3. Evaluate

✓ **Tell** students that when they come to the stop sign symbol, they should stop writing and circle their best vertical line.

**Use** these questions to help students evaluate their writing:

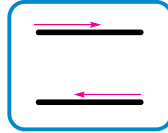
- Does each vertical line begin at the green dot?
- Did you pull down straight or push up straight to make your letters and numerals with vertical strokes?

## Occupational Therapist Tip

**Everyday Tasks** Simple everyday tasks can help improve hand strength, which is important for all fine motor tasks. For example, have one student use a spray bottle to water plants. Have another student use clothespins to hang class artwork on a string. Have a third student use a spray bottle to wash the board with water. Choose three students each week to complete these tasks; rotate the assignments to give all students the chance to do each one.

## Basic Strokes

**Horizontal Lines** Some letters and numerals have lines that slide right or slide left. Trace the slide lines in each letter and numeral.



f t e H J G Z 5 2

Trace and write these letters and numerals that have horizontal lines. Start at the green dot. ✓ Circle your best horizontal line.



Write the sentence.

Some strokes are horizontal lines.

Unit 1 • 7

## Basic Strokes

### Basic Stroke Models and Formations



Slide right.



Slide left.

**Objective:** Practice writing horizontal lines.

### 1. Model

**Direct** students to look at the letters and numerals on the student page. Ask them to think about horizontal lines and describe what they see in these examples. (*There is at least one horizontal line in each.*)

**Draw** two horizontal lines with two starting points (one on the left and one on the right) on guidelines on the board. Model forming horizontal lines in the air as you say the stroke formations. Have students repeat your words and skywrite the lines.

### 2. Practice

**Ask** students to complete the student page at a literacy center, during independent work time, or for homework.

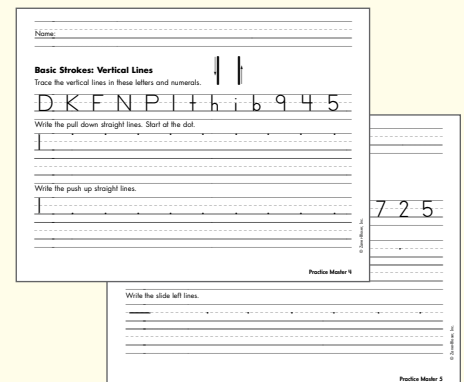
### 3. Evaluate

✓ **Tell** students that when they come to the stop sign symbol, they should stop writing and circle their best horizontal line.

Use these questions to help students evaluate their writing:

- Did you slide right or slide left to make your letters and numerals with horizontal strokes?
- Are your vertical lines straight up and down? Are your horizontal lines straight across?

## Home Practice



### Practice Masters 4-5

For more practice, download the Practice Masters from MyZBPortal.com, or make copies using the Practice Masters booklet.

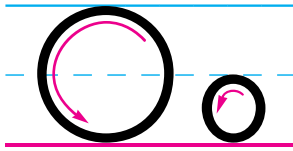
## Multilingual Learners

**Stroke Description Vocabulary** Remind students that vertical lines are up and down lines. Write *vertical = straight-up-and-down* on the board and then stand at your desk with your arms straight over your head. Ask a student to come to the board and draw lines that look like your position. Have students repeat the word *vertical* and then practice writing vertical lines on lined paper.

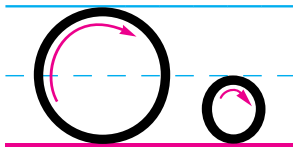
# Write

## Basic Strokes

### Basic Stroke Models and Formations



Circle back.

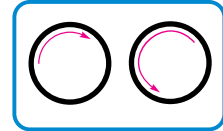


Circle forward.

# Write

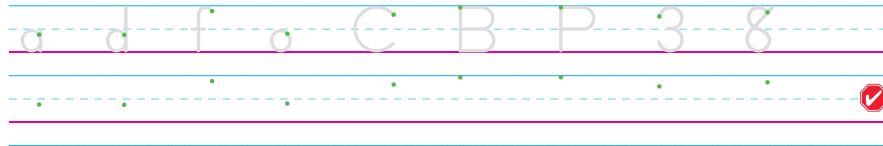
## Basic Strokes

**Circle Lines** Some letters and numerals have forward circle or backward circle lines. Trace the circle or part of the circle in each letter and numeral.



c e g C O b p 2 3

Trace and write these letters and numerals that have circle lines. Start at the green dot. ✓ Circle your best circle line.



Write the sentence.

Some strokes are circle lines.

8 • Unit 1

**Objective:** Practice forward circle lines and backward circle lines.

### 1. Model

**Direct** students to look at the letters and numerals on the student page. Ask them to think about circle lines and describe what they see in these examples. *(There is a curved or circle line in each.)*

**Draw** two circle lines with two starting points (one at the one o'clock position and one at the nine o'clock position) on guidelines on the board. Model forming circle lines in the air as you say the stroke formations. Have students repeat your words and skywrite the lines.

### 2. Practice

**Ask** students to complete the student page at a literacy center, during independent work time, or for homework.

### 3. Evaluate

✓ **Tell** students that when they come to the stop sign symbol, they should stop writing and circle their best circle line.

**Use** these questions to help students evaluate their writing:

- Does each letter or numeral begin at the green dot?
- Do your short circle lines touch the midline and the baseline?
- Do your tall circle lines touch the headline and the baseline?
- Are your circle lines round?

## Occupational Therapist Tip

**Alphabet Stencils** Clear and neat handwriting is dependent on smooth fine motor control. To assist with improving fine motor control, have students use alphabet stencils to trace letters as they write their spelling words.



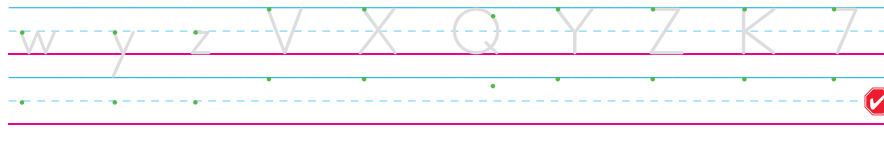
## Basic Strokes

**Diagonal Lines** Some letters and numerals have lines that slant left or slant right. Trace the diagonal lines in each letter and numeral.



x z k v W Q A X 7

Trace and write these letters and numerals that have diagonal lines. Start at the green dot. ✓ Circle your best diagonal line.



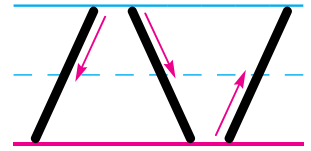
Write the sentence.

Some strokes are diagonal lines.

Unit 1 • 9

## Basic Strokes

## Basic Stroke Models and Formations



Slant  
left.

Slant  
right.

Slant  
up.

**Objective:** Practice writing diagonal lines.

## 1. Model

**Direct** students to look at the letters and numerals on the student page. Ask them to think about diagonal lines and describe what they see in these examples. (*There is at least one diagonal line in each.*)

**Draw** three diagonal lines (one that slants left, one that slants right, and one that slants up) on guidelines on the board. Model forming diagonal lines in the air as you say the stroke formations. Have students repeat your words and skywrite the lines.

## 2. Practice

**Ask** students to complete the student page at a literacy center, during independent work time, or for homework.

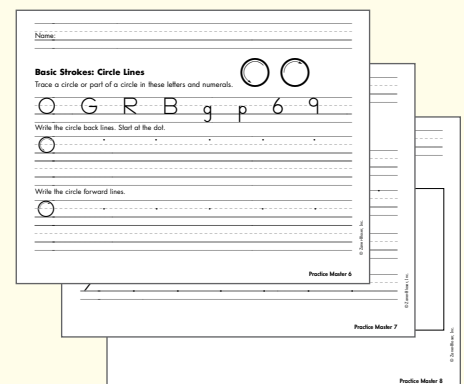
## 3. Evaluate

✓ **Tell** students that when they come to the stop sign symbol, they should stop writing and circle their best diagonal line.

**Use** these questions to help students evaluate their writing:

- Does each letter or numeral begin at the green dot?
- Do your short diagonal lines touch the midline and the baseline?
- Do your tall diagonal lines touch the headline and the baseline?
- Are your diagonal lines straight?

## Home Practice




## Practice Masters 6–8

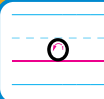
For more practice, download the Practice Masters from MyZBPortal.com, or make copies using the Practice Masters booklet.

## Multilingual Learners


**Making Connections** Draw a picture of a playground slide on the board. Explain that the slide makes a diagonal line, just like the one students use to make letters with diagonal lines. Then draw a diagonal line on the board. Say, “This line is diagonal.” Write some letters on the board that have no diagonal lines and others that have diagonal lines. Ask volunteers to come to the board and circle the letters that have diagonal lines.

**Write**

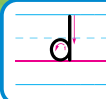




1. Circle back all the way around.



1. Circle back all the way around; push up straight. Pull down straight.



1. Circle back all the way around; push up straight. Pull down straight.

Trace and write. ✓ Circle your best o, a, and d.

**o** o o o o o o o o o o

**a** a a a a a a a a a a

**d** d d d d d d d d d d

Unit 3 • 27

**Objective:** Practice writing o, a, and d.

## 1. Model

**Write** the letters o, a, and d on guidelines on the board as you say the letter formations, or display the Animated Letter Models at [MyZBPortal.com](http://MyZBPortal.com).

**Talk** about the shape of lowercase o, a, and d. Ask students to name things that look like these letters. (Examples: The o looks like a circle. You can see circles in the letters a and d. Lowercase d looks like an upside-down p.)


**Use** skywriting to model writing o, a, and d as you repeat the letter formations. Have students say the letter formations with you as they skywrite the letters or use their index finger to trace the letter models at the top of the student page.

## 2. Practice


**Ask** students to complete the student pages at a literacy center, during independent work time, or for homework.

**Write**


### Letter Models and Formations



1. Circle back all the way around.



1. Circle back all the way around; push up straight. Pull down straight.



1. Circle back all the way around; push up straight. Pull down straight.

Visit **MyZBPortal.com**  
for Animated Letter  
Model videos.

## Occupational Therapist Tip

**b and d** To help students remember which direction lowercase letters b and d face, have them make the “thumbs up” sign with both hands, palms and fingers facing toward the body. This should spell “bed” without the e in the middle. The left hand makes a b, and the right hand makes a d. Students can use this as a visual strategy to develop directionality.

# Write

Write the words that name landforms.

desert bay island

ocean mountain valley

plain dune canyon

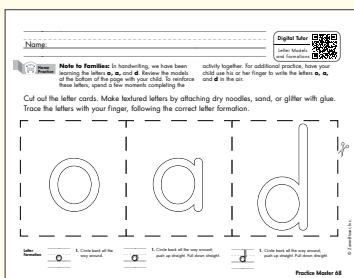
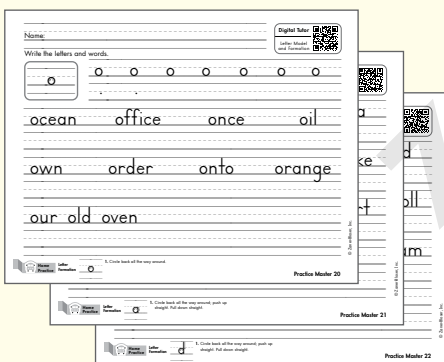
Write a sentence about a landform you have seen.

**Spacing** Circle two words with good spacing between them.

28 • Unit 3



## Home Practice



### Practice Masters 20–22, 68

For more practice, download the Practice Masters from MyZBPortal.com, or make copies using the Practice Masters booklet.

## 3. Evaluate

**Tell** students that when they come to the stop sign symbol, they should stop writing and circle their best letter.

Use these questions to help students evaluate their writing:

- Is your **o** round? Does your **o** rest on the baseline?
- Does the pull down straight stroke in your **a** touch the circle?
- Is your **a** written between the midline and the baseline?
- Is the backward circle in your **d** round? Is your pull down straight line straight?

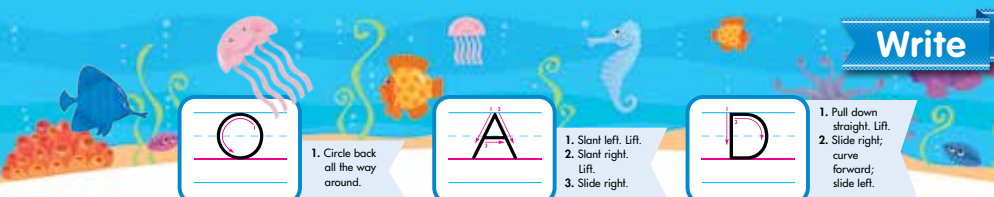
Each letter should have the correct spacing. Ask,


- Do you have the correct amount of spacing between the letters in your words?
- Do you have the correct amount of spacing between the words in your sentences?

## Multilingual Learners


**Native Languages** Encourage students to name landforms in their native country. Ask volunteers to write on the board the words for these landforms in their native language. If possible, translate the words into English and write the English translations on the board. Say both names for each term and compare the two words. Try to come up with words using the letters *o*, *a*, and *d*.

**Write**






1. Circle back all the way around.

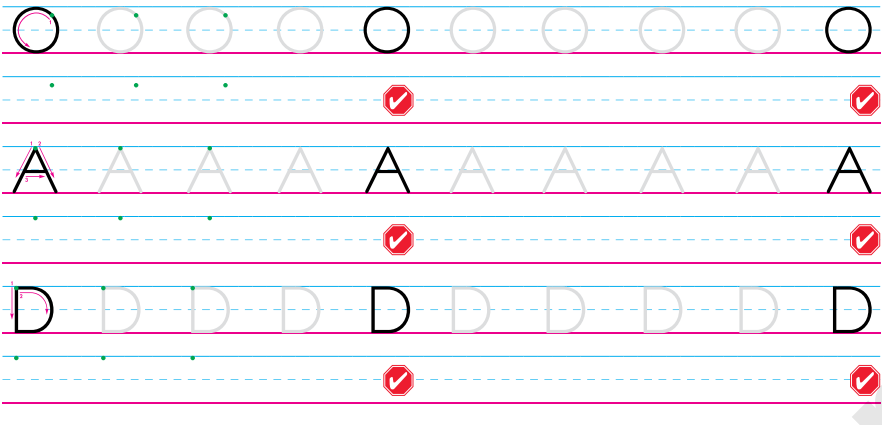


1. Slant left. Lift.  
2. Slant right. Lift.  
3. Slide right.



1. Pull down straight. Lift.  
2. Slide right; curve forward; slide left.

Trace and write. ✓ Circle your best O, A, and D.



Unit 3 • 29

**Objective:** Practice writing O, A, and D.

## 1. Model

**Write** the letters O, A, and D on guidelines on the board as you say the letter formations, or display the Animated Letter Models at [MyZBPortal.com](http://MyZBPortal.com).

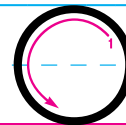
**Talk** about the shape of uppercase O, A, and D. Ask students to name things that look like these letters. (Examples: The O is a large circle. The A looks like a triangle with two sides extended. The D resembles an O with a flattened left side.)

**Use** skywriting to model writing O, A, and D as you repeat the letter formations. Have students say the letter formations with you as they skywrite the letters or use their index finger to trace the letter models at the top of the student page.

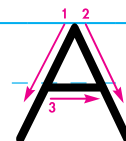
## 2. Practice

**Ask** students to complete the student pages at a literacy center, during independent work time, or for homework.

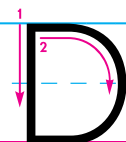
## Letter Models and Formations



1. Circle back all the way around.



1. Slant left. Lift.
2. Slant right. Lift.
3. Slide right.



1. Pull down straight. Lift.
2. Slide right; curve forward; slide left.

Visit [MyZBPortal.com](http://MyZBPortal.com) for Animated Letter Model videos.

## Occupational Therapist Tip

**Specific Feedback** Make sure to give students feedback about their letters in terms they can understand. For example: "That A needs a sharper point." "Try making your O rounder." "Make sure your D is not floating." Also praise students by putting a star above letters or words that are formed and sized correctly.



# Write

Write the sentences about landforms.

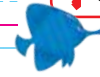
Oceans cover part of Earth.

A continent is huge.

Deserts are dry places.

Write a sentence about the continent you live on.

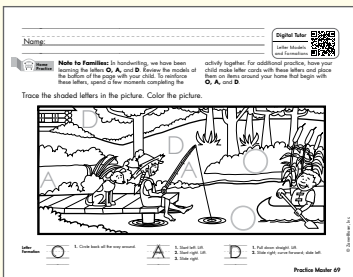
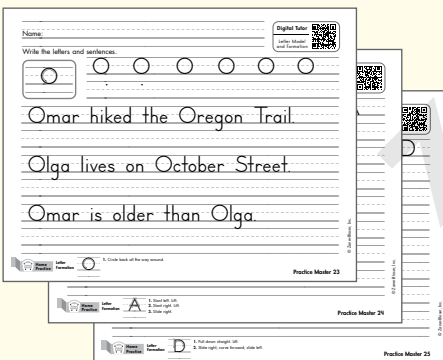
**Slant** Circle a letter that is straight up and down.



30 • Unit 3



## Home Practice



### Practice Masters 23–25, 69

For more practice, download the Practice Masters from MyZBPortal.com, or make copies using the Practice Masters booklet.

## 3. Evaluate

**Tell** students that when they come to the stop sign symbol, they should stop writing and circle their best letter.

Use these questions to help students evaluate their writing:

- Is your **O** round? Does it touch both the headline and the baseline?
- Is your **A** about the same width as the model? Is your slide right stroke on the midline?
- Is your **D** about the same width as the model? Is your curve forward stroke rounded?

**Key** Each letter should have the correct slant. Ask,

- Is your paper positioned correctly?
- Are your letters straight up and down, not leaning to either side?

## Multilingual Learners

**Graphic Organizer** Write the headings *lowercase letters* and *uppercase letters* on the board. Write the letters *l, i, t, L, I, T, o, a, d, O, A, D* to the side on the board. Ask volunteers to say which heading each letter belongs under. Ask volunteers to write the letters in the appropriate categories on the board. Have all students write the headings and letters on paper.

Ll Ii Tt Oo Aa Dd

Write the list of holidays.

Our Favorite Holidays

Indigenous Peoples' Day

Thanksgiving Day

Arbor Day Labor Day

Unit 3 • 31

**Objective:** Review Ll, Ii, Tt, Oo, Aa, and Dd.

### 1. Model

**Direct** students to look at the letters being reviewed and ask them what strokes the letters have in common. *(Most are made with vertical lines. Some have circles and curves. One letter has diagonal lines.)*


**Review** the letter formations and model any letters students have difficulty writing.

**Ask** volunteers to give verbal descriptions of the letters. Challenge the other students to identify the letters being described. Then write the letters on guidelines on the board.

### 2. Practice

**Ask** students to complete the student page at a literacy center, during independent work time, or for homework.

### 3. Evaluate

 Use these questions to help students evaluate their writing:

- Did you write with correct strokes so your letters have good shape?
- Did you write letters with good size to fit the writing space?
- Did you use correct spacing?
- Are your letters straight up and down?

## Multilingual Learners

**Native Languages** Ask students to say in their native language the words for the holidays they wrote on the student page. You might need to explain the significance of some or all of these holidays in the U.S. Ask volunteers to write the names of the holidays on the board and pronounce the words for the class. Invite volunteers to share names of holidays from their native country.

**Invitation** Write the invitation to a holiday party. Leave space for margins.



**It's a Party!**  
 Date: Labor Day  
 Time: 11:00 A.M.  
 Place: Olivia's House  
 Let's all have fun!

32 • Unit 3

**Objective:** Write an invitation using legible handwriting.

### 1. Model

**Write** several words from the student page on the board. Think aloud as you talk through the correct formation of the letters in each word.

**Ask** volunteers to evaluate the words according to the Keys to Legibility.

### 2. Practice

**Ask** students to complete the student page at a literacy center, during independent work time, or for homework.

### 3. Evaluate



**Use** these questions to help students evaluate their writing:

- Did you write with correct strokes so your letters have good shape?
- Are your letters the right size?
- Did you use proper spacing between your letters and words?
- Does your writing have uniform vertical slant?

## Occupational Therapist Tip

**Fill in the Blank** Practice forming and spelling words by playing Fill in the Blank. Provide students with two of the letters in a three-letter word. For example, write    A T on the board. Instruct students to write as many words as possible that include the letters A T at the end. To further improve endurance and hand strength, have students draw a picture of each word they come up with.

# Apply

## Handwriting in the Real World

### Teacher Tips

**Evaluating Size** Help students identify letters that are tall or short or have a descender. Hold a brief discussion comparing the size of the letters.

### Apply

#### Handwriting in the Real World

**Ideas** Before you write, think about your topic. Make a list of ideas for your story.

Here are some ideas for a story about a fox.  
Write words that tell what the fox is like and what it does.



#### Describing Words

red  
small  
quick  
daring  
smart

#### Action Words

runs  
jumps  
looks  
hides  
eats

Handwriting practice lines consisting of multiple sets of three horizontal lines (top, middle, bottom) for writing practice.

84 • Unit 4

**Objective:** Practice writing ideas using legible handwriting.

### 1. Model

**Explain** to students that writers use a variety of strategies to prepare or organize for writing. One of the first requirements for writing is choosing a topic. Once the writer has a specific writing focus, ideas and details can begin to flow.

**Direct** students to look at the illustration of the fox and the lists of describing and action words on the student page. Encourage students to explain how the words on the lists relate to the illustration.

**Instruct** students to brainstorm their own words about a fox before writing them on the lines. Then brainstorm with students animals they might like to draw and write about on the following student page. If necessary, write specific words or facts on the board or on chart paper.

### Occupational Therapist Tip

**Warm Up** Before giving a lengthy writing assignment, allow students to make sure they are physically ready for the work. For most students it is easier to complete assignments that require more attention and endurance following such physically demanding activities as recess or physical education. Physical exertion serves as a good warm-up for other tasks. If your class schedule will not permit this, consider having students jump or run in place before long assignments.



Choose an animal to write about. Draw a picture in the box. Then write words that tell what the animal is like and what it does.



Below the drawing box are ten sets of handwriting lines, each consisting of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line.



**Shape** Circle three words you wrote that have good shape.

Unit 4 • 85


## Teacher Tips

**Evaluating Shape** Challenge students to look at letters in the words on page 84 and find letters within letters. For example, *r* can be found in *n*.

## 2. Practice

**Ask** students to complete both student pages at a literacy center, during independent work time, or for homework. Tell them to use their best handwriting.

## 3. Evaluate

 Each letter should have a unique, easy-to-read shape. Ask,

- Do your letters have good shape?
- Is your writing easy to read?

## Multilingual Learners

**Making Connections** Ask students to discuss animals that are native to their country of origin. If possible, ask them to bring in photographs or pictures. Display the images in the classroom and have students label them. Also encourage students to bring in photographs or illustrations of their pets. Display these pictures as well and ask students to write the name of their pet beside its picture. (These images are referenced again in the *Multilingual Learners* activity on page 87.)

# Apply

## Handwriting in the Real World

### Teacher Tips

**Pencil Position** Many students hold their pencil too close to the point. To help them correctly position their fingers on the pencil, provide commercial pencil grips during handwriting practice. Alternatively, demonstrate how to wrap a rubber band tightly around the pencil at least an inch away from the point. Explain that the rubber band provides a guide for where to hold the pencil and keeps the fingers from slipping.

### Apply

#### Handwriting in the Real World

**Web** Write the words to complete the web.

call Grandpa

eat

study spelling

finish picture

clean up

read

Things to Do

86 • Unit 4

**Objective:** Practice completing a web using legible handwriting.

### 1. Model

**Remind** students that writers use a variety of strategies to prepare or organize ideas for writing. Explain that some helpful organizers include a web, a Venn diagram, a spider map, a compare-and-contrast chart, a story frame, a topic organizer, an outline, and note cards.

**Direct** students to look at the web on the student page. Explain that a web is a way to organize or display information in an easy-to-read form.

**Talk** about reasons for creating a *Things to Do* web. Brainstorm with students the different tasks one might include in such a web.

### Occupational Therapist Tip

**Connect-the-Dots** Students who have a hard time completing writing assignments as efficiently as their peers might have difficulties processing visual information into written work. Some students might need extra time or assistance when copying letters or sentences from the board. To improve visual motor skills, provide connect-the-dot worksheets. Remind students to keep their lines as straight as possible when connecting each dot.

Complete this web by writing things you need to do.

**Size** Circle three words you wrote that have good size.

Unit 4 • 87

## Teacher Tips

**Evaluating Size** Help students identify letters that are tall or short or have a descender. Hold a brief discussion comparing the size of the letters.

## 2. Practice

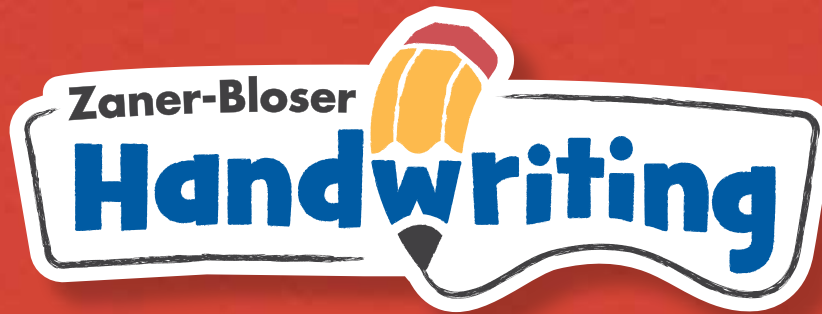
**Ask** students to complete both student pages at a literacy center, during independent work time, or for homework. Tell them to use their best handwriting.

## 3. Evaluate

- **Size** Each letter should have the correct size. Ask,
  - Do your letters have good size?
  - Do your letters touch the guidelines in the same places as the model letters?

## Multilingual Learners

**Graphic Organizer** Draw a web on the board or on large chart paper. Refer students to the pictures and photographs of animals and pets they brought to class (see the *Multilingual Learners* activity on page 85). Ask them to complete a web that describes how the animals look, sound, and feel. Have them discuss these features and ask volunteers to write describing words on the diagram.



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