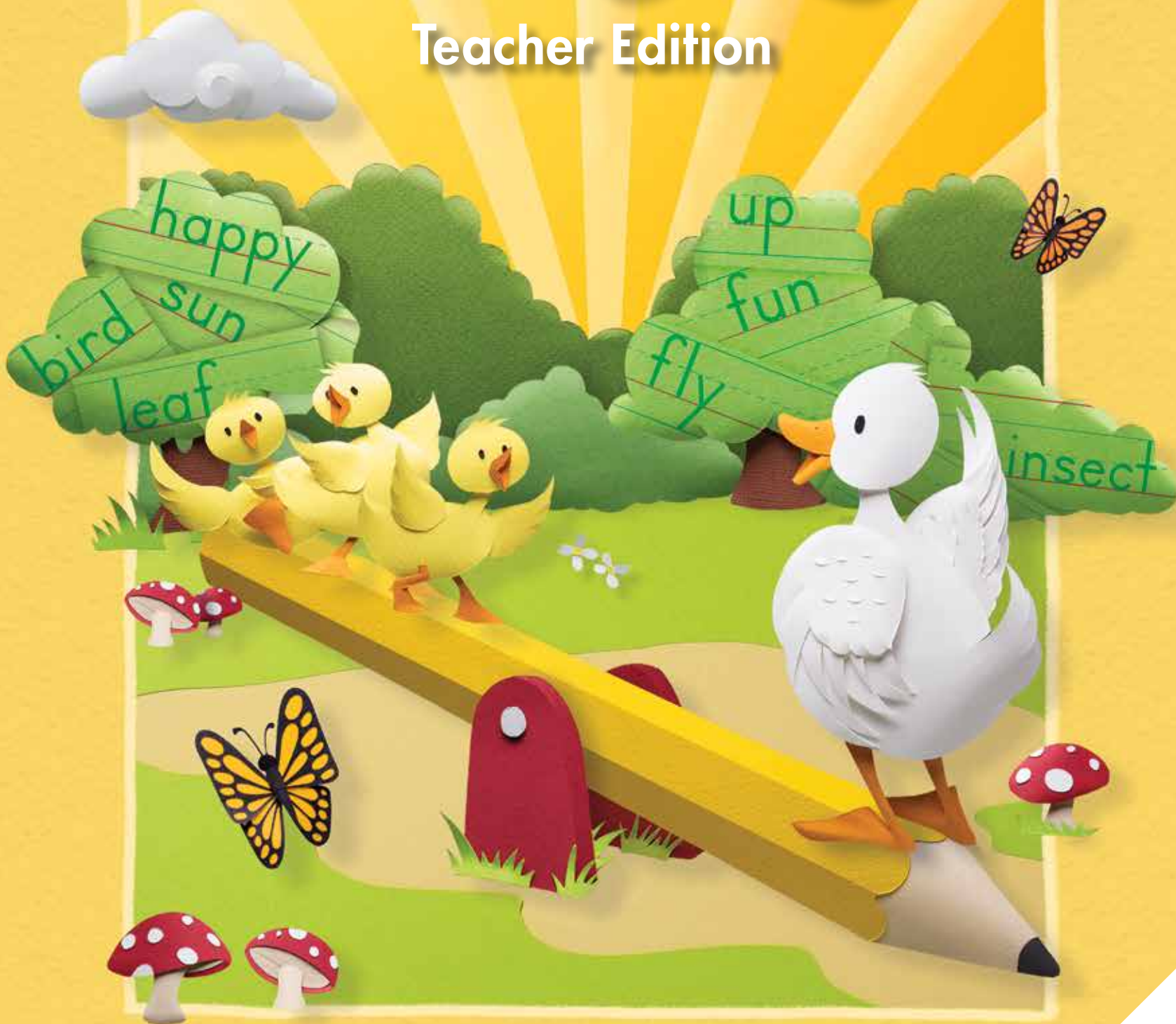


Zaner-Bloser
Handwriting

K

Teacher Edition



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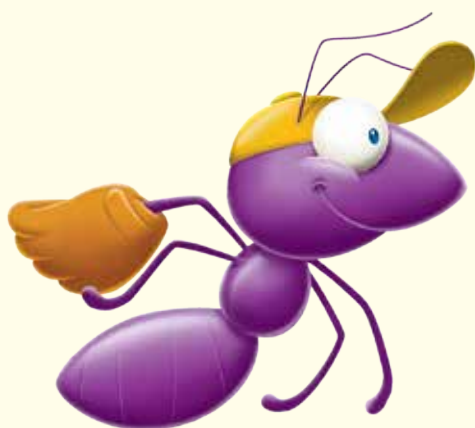


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Zaner-Bloser
Sample

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 in the Practice Masters provides a QR code students can access outside 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, such as 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.

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

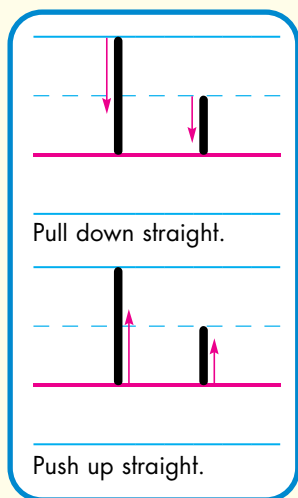


Why Zaner-Bloser?

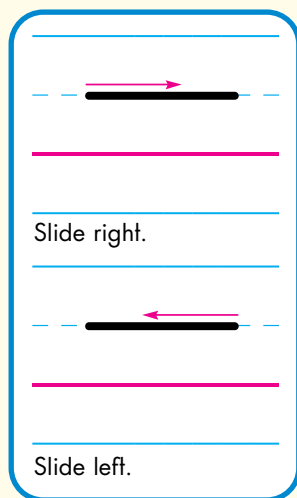
Basic Strokes Form the Foundation

Manuscript

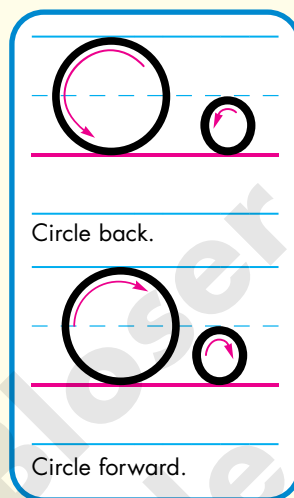
Four basic lines, or strokes, are used to form all manuscript letters and numerals—vertical, horizontal, circle, and diagonal.



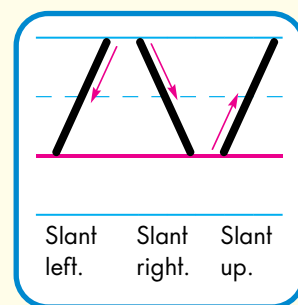
Vertical



Horizontal



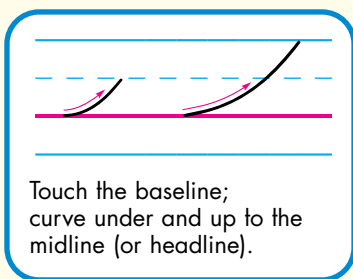
Circle



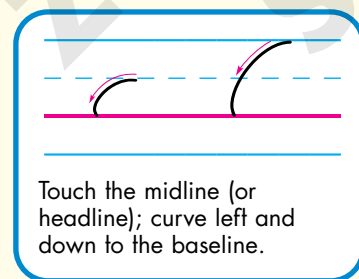
Diagonal

Cursive

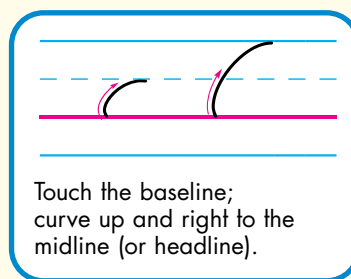
For grades 2–6, four basic strokes are used to form all cursive letters and numerals. These four strokes are undercurve, downcurve, overcurve, and diagonal.



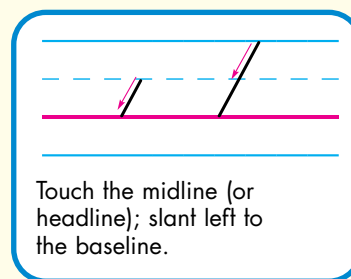
Undercurve



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, they might 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, r, 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: *G, S, Z*
- 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

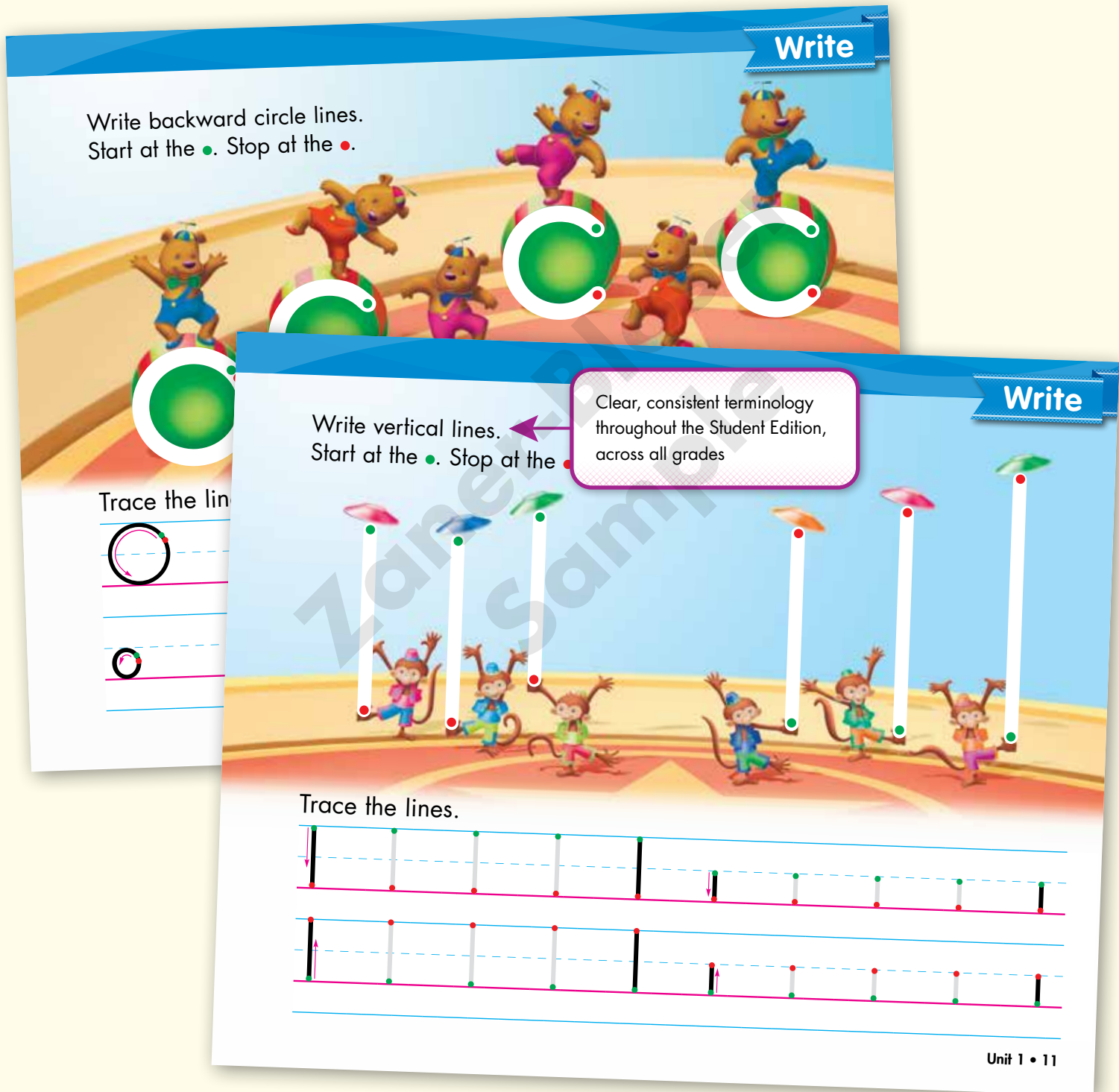
- Checkstroke-to-Undercurve
- Checkstroke-to-Downcurve
- Checkstroke-to-Overcurve



Why Zaner-Bloser?

Legibility

In kindergarten, the emphasis is placed on learning the basic strokes—vertical, horizontal, circle, and slant lines—as a foundation for legibility. The Keys to Legibility—**Shape**, **Size**, **Spacing**, and **Slant**—are modeled rather than explicitly identified.



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 short story about a time you used your super power. Include a beginning, a middle, and an ending.

Apply

Informative/Explanatory

The Weather Draw a picture about weather. Write words or sentences about your picture.

Apply

Opinion

My Favorite Book Draw a character or an event from your favorite book. Then write the title of your favorite book.

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

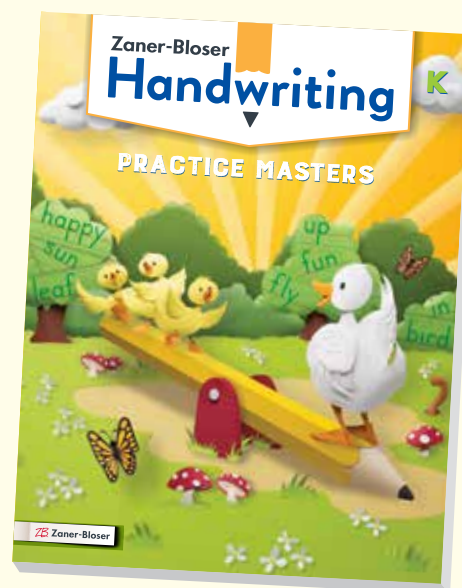
Meaningful, engaging handwriting practice and application

- 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 Zaney Games
- Professional development and more!

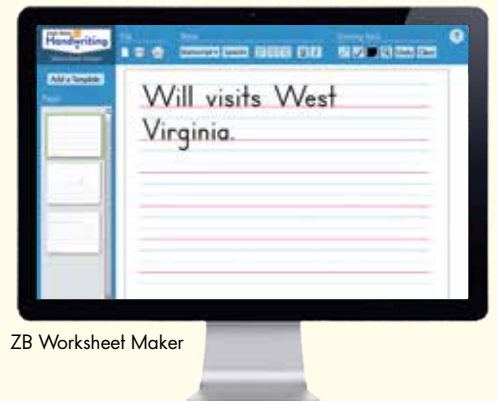


MyZBPortal.com

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!



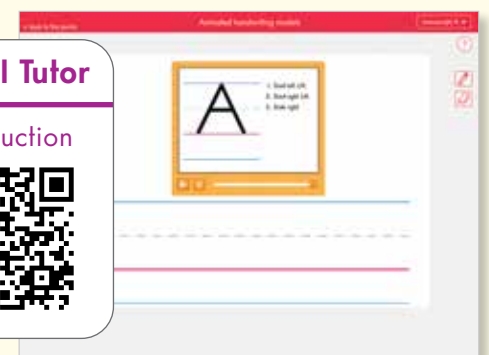
ZB Worksheet Maker



Handwriting Quest 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

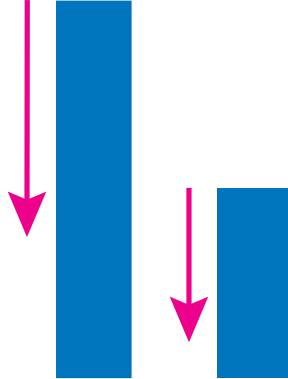
Teacher Tips

Skywriting To skywrite, hold up the index and middle fingers of the writing hand and raise the whole arm. Students should follow you in forming the featured strokes and letters at a large size in the air. Have students repeat the name of each stroke after you. You should either reverse the motion or turn your back so that it is not necessary for them to mirror your actions.

Write

Basic Strokes

Vertical Lines You use vertical lines when you write. Look at the vertical strokes below. Trace them with your finger.



Find vertical lines in the picture above. Draw this picture or one of your own.



8 • Unit 1

Objective: Practice writing vertical lines.

1. Model

Warm up with the “I Pull Down” song from MyZBPortal.com.

Tell students that vertical lines are lines that stand up straight. Ask them to stand up straight. Point out that a vertical line might be drawn from the top of their head to the bottom of their feet.

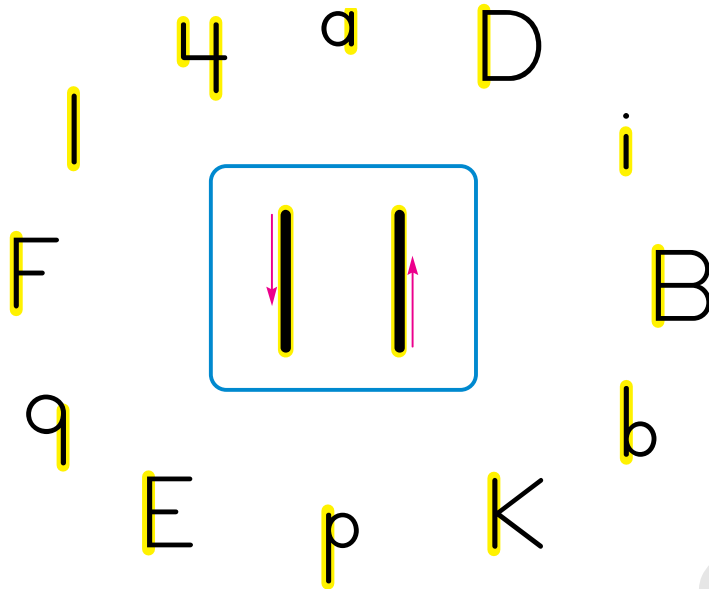
2. Practice

Help students find the blue vertical lines on the student page. Ask them to use their index finger to trace the lines from top to bottom, following the direction of the arrows.

Ask students to look at the picture of the lollipops. Help them identify the vertical lines in the picture. Have them use their index finger to trace each lollipop stick from top to bottom.

Point out the space for drawing. Direct students to draw the lollipop picture, or a picture of their own, in this space. Remind them to draw vertical lines from top to bottom.

Use your finger to trace the vertical lines in the letters and numerals.



Unit 1 • 9

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

Tell students to use their index finger to trace the vertical lines they see. Point out the pull down straight and the push up straight models in the center of the page. Encourage students to say “Pull down straight” or “Push up straight” as they trace.

3. Evaluate

Use this opportunity to informally assess students’ fine motor skills.

Multilingual Learners

Total Physical Response Look at page 9 together as a class. Review the letters and numerals that have vertical lines. Ask students to stand at their desks and pretend to be vertical lines. Ask them to raise their hands above their head and stand perfectly straight. Tell students to remember this as they draw vertical lines on their papers.

Write

Basic Strokes

Teacher Tips

Looking for Horizontal Lines

Encourage students to find examples of horizontal lines in the classroom and, wherever possible, to use their index finger to trace the lines from side to side.

Write

Basic Strokes

Horizontal Lines You use horizontal lines when you write. Look at the horizontal lines below. Trace them with your finger.



Find horizontal lines in the picture above. Draw this picture or one of your own.



12 • Unit 1

Objective: Practice writing horizontal lines.

1. Model

Warm up with the “Slide Along” song from MyZBPortal.com.

Tell students that horizontal lines are lines that go straight across. Ask them to stand up and hold their arms out straight to their sides. Point out that a horizontal line might be drawn from one hand across to the other hand.

Have students watch as you pantomime pulling thread from a spool. Ask them to guess what you are doing. Continue by pantomiming pulling plastic wrap from its box and pulling the zipper on the top of a purse while you say “Slide right.” Have students say the words as they do the actions with you.

2. Practice

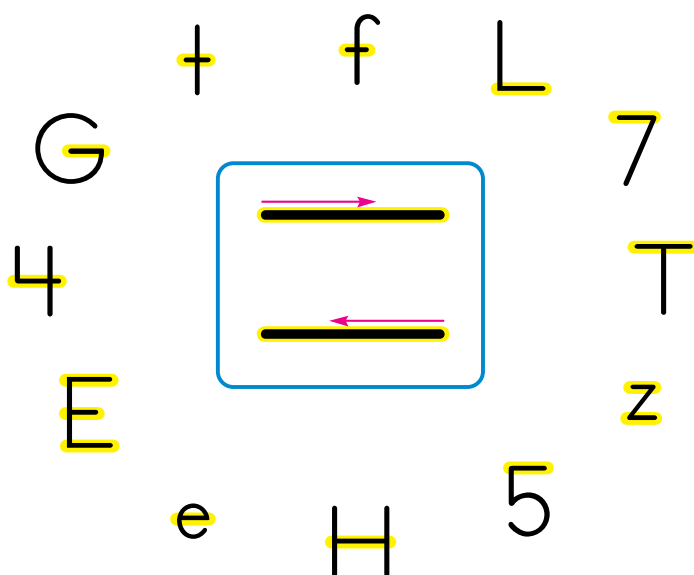
Help students find the green horizontal lines on the student page. Ask them to use their index finger to trace the lines from left to right.

Ask students to look at the picture of the ladders. Help them identify the horizontal lines in the picture. Have them use their index finger to trace each horizontal rung from left to right.

Point out the space for drawing. Direct students to draw the ladder picture, or a picture of their own, in this space. Remind them to draw horizontal lines from left to right.

Direct students to look at the letters and numerals on the next student page. Ask them to think about horizontal

Use your finger to trace the horizontal lines in the letters and numerals.



Unit 1 • 13

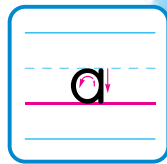
lines and tell what they see in these examples. *(There is at least one horizontal line in each.)* Tell students to use their index finger to trace the horizontal lines they see. Point out the slide right and slide left models in the center of the page. Encourage students to say “Slide right” or “Slide left” as they trace.

3. Evaluate

Use this opportunity to informally assess students’ fine motor skills.

Multilingual Learners

Native Languages Look at page 13 together as a class. Review the letters and numerals that have horizontal lines. Ask volunteers to come to the board to write letters and numerals from their native language that have horizontal lines. Remind students to pronounce these letters and numerals as they write them on the board.



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



Trace and write. ✓ Circle your best a.



Unit 2 • 43

Letter Model and Formation



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

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

Objective: Practice writing a.

1. Model

Warm up with the “Circle Song” or “I Pull Down” song from MyZBPortal.com.

Write the letter **a** on guidelines on the board as you say the letter formation, or display the Animated Letter Model at MyZBPortal.com.

Talk about the shape of lowercase **a**. Ask students to name things that look like the letter. (Example: a bean sprout)

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

2. Practice

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

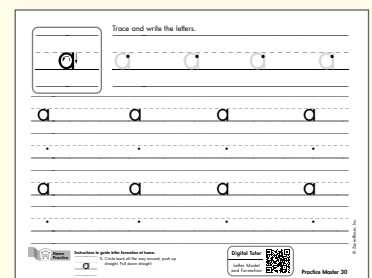
3. Evaluate

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

Use these questions to help students evaluate their writing:

- Is the circle of your **a** round?
- Does the vertical line touch the circle?

Home Practice



Practice Master 30

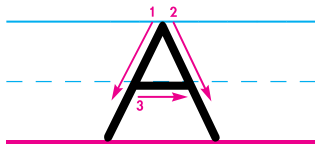
For more practice, download the Practice Master from MyZBPortal.com, or make copies using the Practice Masters booklet.

Occupational Therapist Tip

Window Decorations Ask students to decorate windows with removable plastic stickers. Placing the stickers on the glass surface will improve their fine motor dexterity. As students curve their fingers to remove the stickers, they will also improve their fine motor skills. This activity can also be done using magnets and a metal surface.

Write

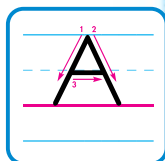
Letter Model and Formation



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

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

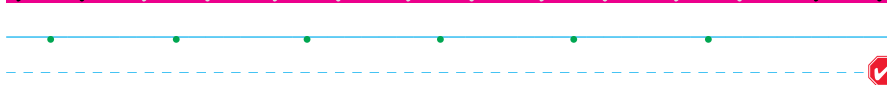
Write



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



Trace and write. Circle your best A.



44 • Unit 2

Objective: Practice writing A.

1. Model

Warm up with the “Slant Dance” or “Slide Along” song from MyZBPortal.com.

Write the letter A on guidelines on the board as you say the letter formation, or display the Animated Letter Model at MyZBPortal.com.

Talk about the shape of uppercase A. Ask students to name things that look like the letter. (Example: chopsticks)

Use skywriting to model writing A as you repeat the letter formation. Have students say the letter formation with you as they skywrite A, or use their index finger to trace the letter model at the top of the student page.

2. Practice

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

3. Evaluate

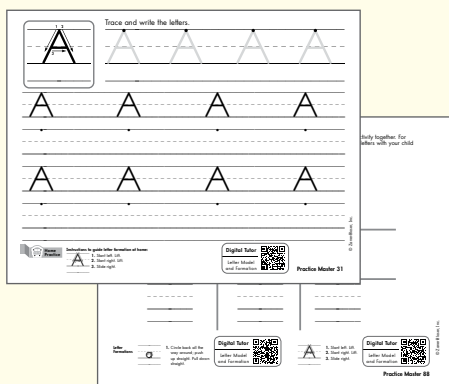
Tell students that when they come to the stop sign symbol, they should stop writing and circle their best letter.

Use these questions to help students evaluate their writing:

- Is the slide right stroke of your A on the midline?
- Do your diagonal strokes touch the headline at the same spot?



Home Practice

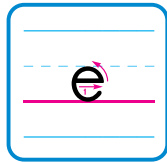


Practice Masters 31, 88

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

Multilingual Learners

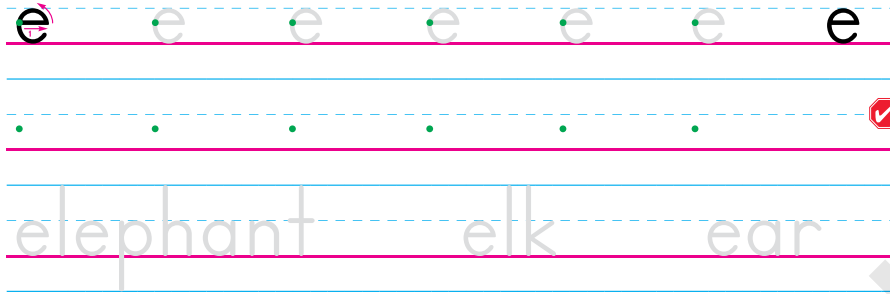
Total Physical Response Demonstrate a diagonal line on the board. Facing away from students and looking over your shoulder, stand on your left foot and lean left, saying, “I am slanting left.” Have students stand up and imitate you. Say and have them repeat “Slant left.” Reverse and repeat for *slant right*. Then say the terms several times as commands and have students slant their bodies in the direction you say.



1. Slide right.
Circle back.



Trace and write. ✓ Circle your best e.



Unit 2 • 51

Letter Model and Formation



1. Slide right. Circle back.

Visit MyZBPortal.com
for Animated Letter
Model videos.

Objective: Practice writing e.

1. Model

Warm up with the “Circle Song” or “Slide Along” song from MyZBPortal.com.

Write the letter e on guidelines on the board as you say the letter formation, or display the Animated Letter Model at MyZBPortal.com.

Talk about the shape of lowercase e. Ask students to name things that look like the letter. (Example: a partly coiled snake)

Use skywriting to model writing e as you repeat the letter formation. Have students say the letter formation with you as they skywrite e, or use their index finger to trace the letter model at the top of the student page.

2. Practice

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

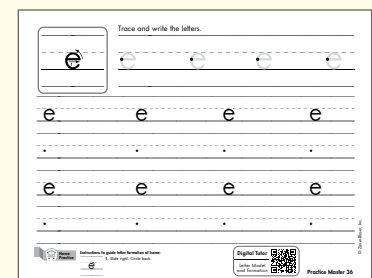
3. Evaluate

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

Use these questions to help students evaluate their writing:

- Does your e look round?
- Is your backward circle open?

Home Practice



Practice Master 36

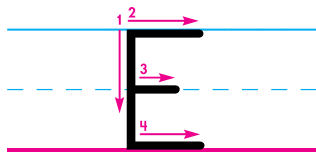
For more practice, download the Practice Master from MyZBPortal.com, or make copies using the Practice Masters booklet.

Occupational Therapist Tip

Classroom Decorations To improve fine motor precision and visual motor integration, have students make decorations for the classroom. Ask students to cut colored plastic straws into 3-inch sections. Provide each student with a long string anchored by a large bead. Have students lace the pieces of straw onto the string and tie a knot at the end of the string. Then have them hang their decorations around the classroom.

Write

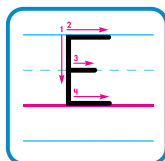
Letter Model and Formation



1. Pull down straight. Lift.
2. Slide right. Lift.
3. Slide right; stop short. Lift.
4. Slide right.

Visit MyZBPortal.com for Animated Letter Model videos.

Write



1. Pull down straight. Lift.
2. Slide right. Lift.
3. Slide right; stop short. Lift.
4. Slide right.



Trace and write. ✓ Circle your best E.



52 • Unit 2

Objective: Practice writing E.

1. Model

Warm up with the “I Pull Down” or “Slide Along” song from MyZBPortal.com.

Write the letter E on guidelines on the board as you say the letter formation, or display the Animated Letter Model at MyZBPortal.com.

Talk about the shape of uppercase E. Ask students to name things that look like the letter. (Example: the top of a pitchfork)

Use skywriting to model writing E as you repeat the letter formation. Have students say the letter formation with you as they skywrite E, or use their index finger to trace the letter model at the top of the student page.

2. Practice

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

3. Evaluate

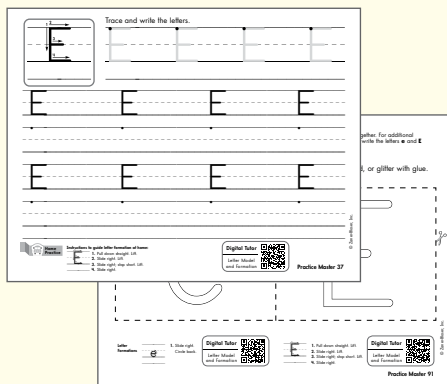
✓ **Tell** students that when they come to the stop sign symbol, they should stop writing and circle their best letter.

Use these questions to help students evaluate their writing:

- Is the vertical stroke in your E straight?
- Are your top and bottom slide right strokes about the same width?



Home Practice



Practice Masters 37, 91

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

Multilingual Learners

Providing Examples Some students might need help distinguishing the long and short sounds of the letter *e*. Draw on the board or hold up pictures of objects with short *e* in their names, such as *bed*, *bell*, *stem*; then do the same with long *e* words, such as *knee*, *bee*, *tree*. Have students think of other words with long and short *e* sounds and say them aloud for the class.

Apply

Informative/ Explanatory

Apply

Informative/Explanatory

Weather Report

Choose words to complete the sentences.
Write the sentences.



warm

cold

sunny

rainy



Today is _____.

It is _____ outside.

126 • Unit 4

Objective: Write a weather report.

1. Model

Direct students to look at the illustrations at the top of the student page. Encourage them to describe what they see. Point out the word bank between the two illustrations. Ask volunteers to tell about the information it contains.

Have other volunteers read the words on the page. Make sure students recognize that spaces have been left open for them to write their own weather words. Ask students to identify words from the word bank that describe the current weather outside.

2. Practice

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

3. Evaluate

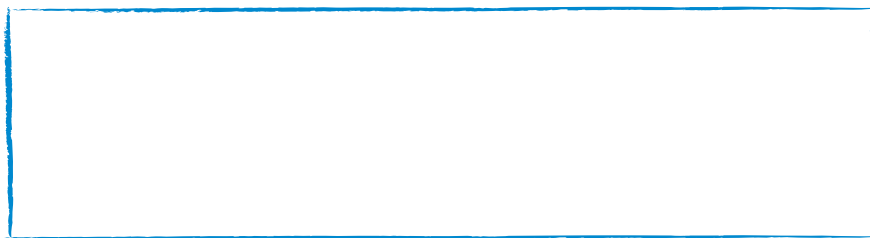
Have students choose several words they wrote on the page and evaluate their writing by comparing the size and shape of their letters with the models. Help students recognize why one word might be better than another.

Multilingual Learners

Vocabulary Building Have students play a matching game. Create two sets of illustrated word cards. On the first set, draw pictures to illustrate the weather words *warm*, *cold*, *sunny*, and *rainy*. On the second set, draw pictures of activities people might do on warm, cold, sunny, or rainy days. Tell students that a match is made when they turn over a weather picture and its corresponding activity picture.

Informative/Explanatory

The Weather Draw a picture about weather. Write words or sentences about your picture.



Four sets of handwriting practice lines, each consisting of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line.

Unit 4 • 127

Informative/Explanatory**Teacher Tips**

Review Difficult Letters For students who are still having difficulty forming letters, write the letters on guidelines on poster board or cardboard and laminate them. Students can use the letterforms as a base for making the letters with clay. Have them trace their completed letters and say the stroke descriptions aloud.

Objective: Write about the weather.

1. Model

Direct students' attention to the student page. Point out the directions and spaces for response. Then read the directions with students, making sure they understand the task.

Before students write, encourage a lively sharing of ideas about the different weather scenes they might choose to draw and write about.

2. Practice

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

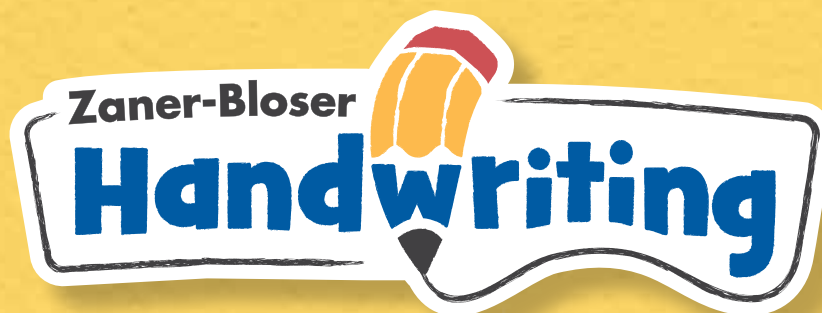
3. Evaluate

Guide students in evaluating their writing. Ask if they can read their writing easily. Encourage them to explain why or why not.

Have students share their work with their classmates.

Occupational Therapist Tip

Guessing Letters Have students trace letters on each other's backs and guess the letters. Then have students write the letters on a piece of paper. If possible, have students practice words for spelling tests in this way. This activity involves a tactile sensory component and can be helpful to students with visual perceptual difficulties.



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