

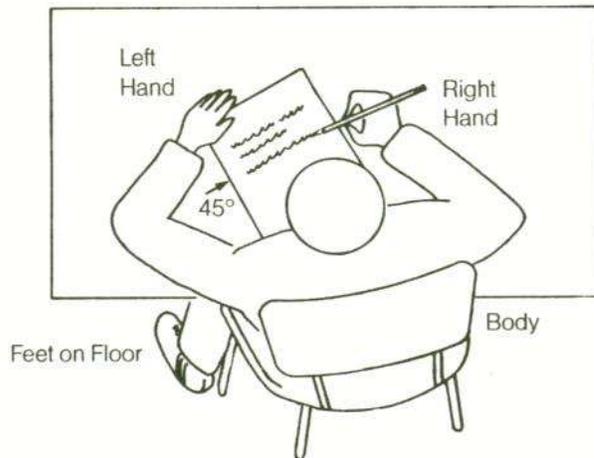
Poor Handwriting

	Common Things that Contribute to Poor Handwriting
Posture	sprawling on desk holding head up with one hand knees not under desk & aligned with paper
Pencil Grip	awkward incorrect fingers used to hold pencil
Writing on the lines	writing in the space in top margin writing along the bottom edge of the paper under last line not writing on the lines
Starting at the margins	not starting at the left margin indent too large (should only be the width of a finger)
Spacing	too much space between words – like in primary (should only be the width of the letter m)
Speed	slow – lack focus, no continuous writing slow – needs to think of letter formation while writing lack of speed means that student cannot keep up with transcribing notes from the board - constantly behind too fast - writing becomes illegible - even student cannot read own writing
Neatness	smudged, blotchy irregular letter size
Writing tools	pencil not sharpened well enough pencil lead is too hard - writing is very light & hard to read pencil lead is too soft - smudges writing tools not at hand, lost, misplaced, time wasted writing tools not at hand, lost, misplaced, time wasted

Proper Posture

Figure 9-14

Paper Position and Correct Posture for Handwriting



Note: This paper position would be reversed for left handers who write up* but maintained for left handers who hook.†

*Bottom-up position

†Book position

Proper Pencil Grip



Activities in Classroom

To increase speed & fluency:

- MMP (Mad Minute Printing) or MMC (Mad Minute Cursive) for 1 to 3 minutes - to race the clock & improve on personal best time
- record letters per minute (lpm)
- Printing Goals: gr. 3 - 40 lpm, gr. 4 – 50 lpm, gr. 5 – 60 lpm, gr. 6 – 67 lpm
- Use a variety of things to write such as:
 - "the red fox jumped over the lazy dog" - every letter once
 - "pack my box with five dozen lacquer jugs" - every letter once
 - abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyzabc.... - the alphabet
- FMTW (Five Minute Timed Writing) - mostly reflective writing on experiences or articles for the class yearbook - in both printing & cursive
- record words per minute (wpm)
- In note-taking & in Agenda - use abbreviations & symbols to develop own shorthand for speed

Handwriting Objectives

Legibility - Handwriting needs to be legible to the writer and intended reader.

Fluency - Handwriting needs to flow so the writer can record thoughts without struggle.

Printing

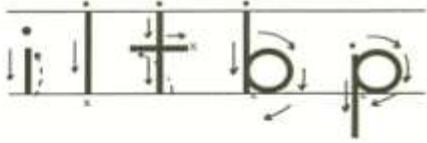
In grade 4, students are expected to print legibly and without hesitation. Some of the important things are:

- correct letter formation
- consistent size
- capital and tall letters are about twice as large as short letters
- writing is on the line
- clear lines are made with sharp pencils, neat erasures
- adequate speed in writing (about 40 to 50 letters per minute - lpm)
- proper pencil grip
- proper posture
- the head is solely supported by the neck while writing

Printed Letters

Follow the direction arrows when writing the letters & numbers.

lines



lines and humps



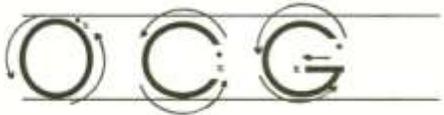
diagonal lines



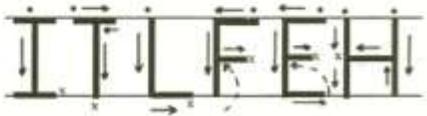
combination of strokes



circles



lines



13

diagonal lines



lines and half circles



combination of strokes



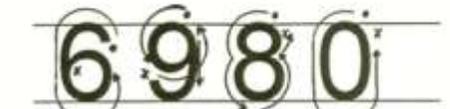
straight lines



combination of lines



curved lines



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Cursive

At the beginning of grade 4, students should know how to form cursive letters and be able to write in cursive while referring to an alphabet chart for some assistance.

By the end of October, students are expected to be able to write in cursive without needing to check an alphabet chart. Some notes will need to be written solely in cursive.

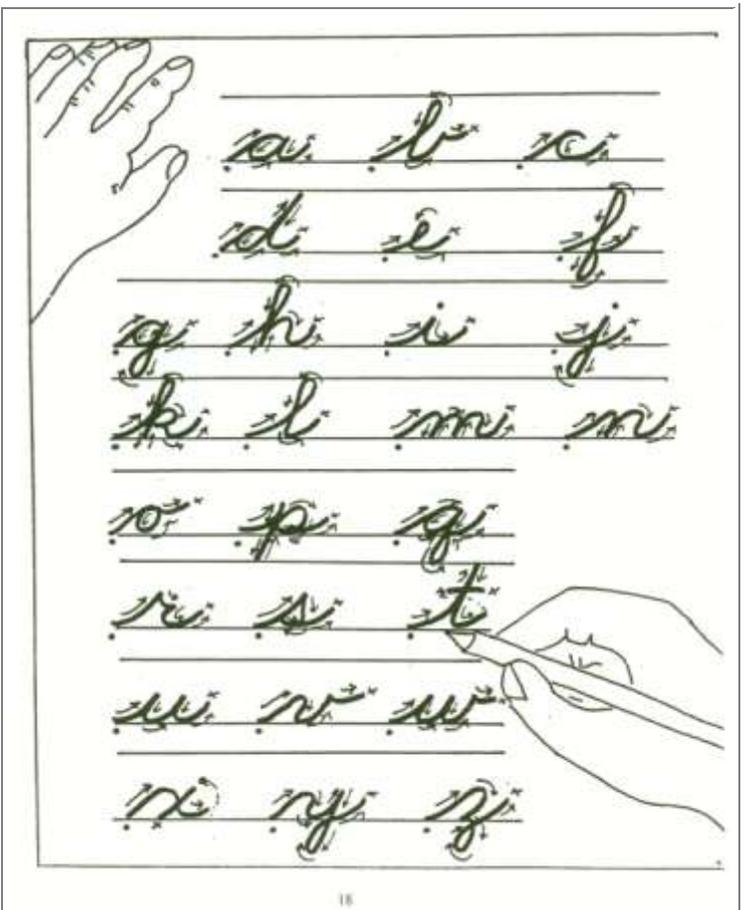
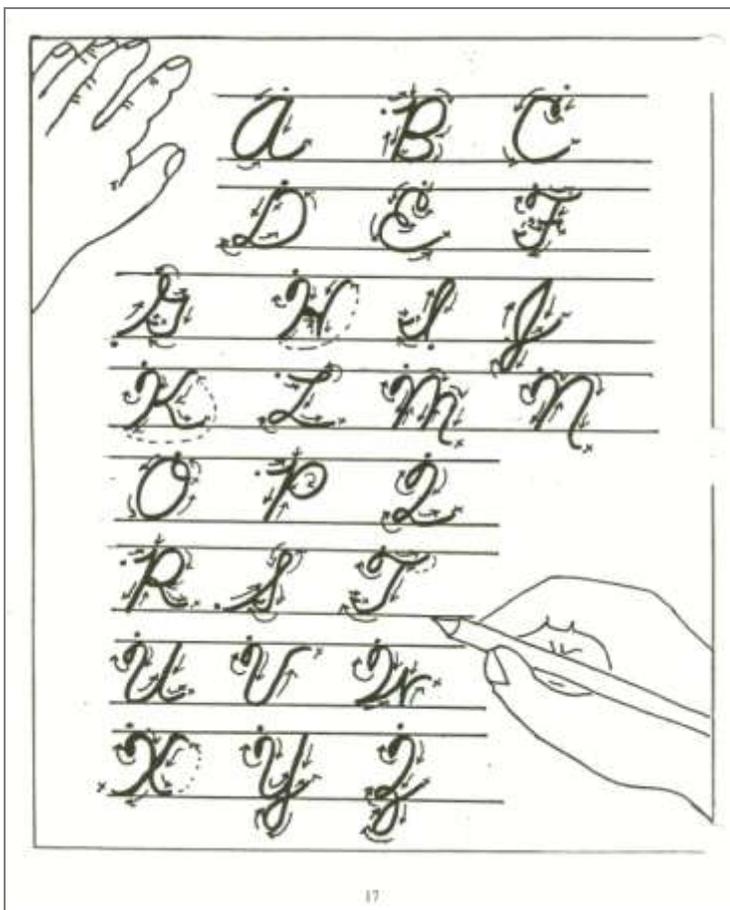
By the end of grade 4, students should be able to read their own cursive writing without hesitation and be able to read well-written cursive writing from others.

For exercises to improve cursive writing, check the following: [Handwriting For Kids](#). Some of the important objectives for cursive writing are:

- speed
- correct letter formation
- reading & writing handwriting of others
- lettering

Cursive Letters

Follow the direction arrows when writing the letters.



Keyboarding

Keyboarding is just another means of writing. In grade 4, lessons in proper keyboarding techniques will be completed. Proper fingering and posture is encouraged since these contribute to speed & fluency in writing.

There is a difference between keyboarding and word processing. The goal of keyboarding is to make the student so familiar with the keyboard that writing happens without thought being given to the location of the letters on the keyboard. If a student types less than 10 w.p.m. (words per minute), then he/she lacks familiarity with the keyboard. Even students who "hunt & peck" with 2 fingers but who know the keyboard can type at 10 wpm. There is also no need to type faster than 30 wpm, since most students cannot compose quality writing faster than that. Even adults cannot compose a page of quality writing in less than 10 minutes. The goal at this stage is not to train the student to be a "typist" of work created by others. The goal is to allow the student to use the computer as just another writing tool.

Resources & Interesting Sites

Handwriting from Print to Cursive Writing published by The York Region Board of Education, Curriculum Guideline February 1995

Italic writing <http://www.studioarts.net/calligraphy/italic/curriculum.html> - an interesting concept on how to improve learning cursive writing

RESOURCE:

<http://www.gmbservices.ca/Jr/Handwriting.htm>