
Tips on Teaching *Cursive*

- Remember legibility is what counts. It doesn't have to be *pretty*. If you can, please practice writing with both hands so that you can demonstrate to both left-handed and right-handed children how the letters are made.
- With the exception of the dots over the i's and j's and the crossings of the t and x, all letters should be made with one continuous stroke leading into the next letter.
- When a word starts with the small letters *a, c, d, g, i, j, k, l, m, n, o, p, q, u, v,* and *w*, these letters should begin with an upstroke (). However, it is not crucial that they do. If a child argues that it takes too much time, there isn't any need to argue with him. Most Americans do leave off the beginning upstroke even though their parents have taught them not to. What is essential is that the letters are legible.
- Make sure that your children keep a consistent slant to their letters.
- If you have special lined paper for children to use, it is a definite help.
- If you don't have special lined paper, you can use regular lined paper and have your children practice using their rulers and putting in light pencil lines to divide every other line. They will write only on the lines that are divided with the light pencil line. Lines without a light pencil line dividing it will provide sufficient space so that the writing will not appear as crowded together.

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- Tracing letters and tracing words and even tracing sentences may be of great help to some children who may be having difficulty in writing the letters or in having the proper *slant* or size.
 - Having children trace letters, words, or phrases that are written on your dry erase board may help lock the letters into the “big muscle” memory.
 - Make sure your children leave ample space between words. The space should be no more than the amount of space that it would take to write the letter n. The space after a period should be no more than equal to two n’s.
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To demonstrate the need for spacing
you can run words together like this:

To demonstrate the need for spacing you can
run words together like this.

To demonstrate the need for spacing
consistently, you can space words
together like this:

To demonstrate the need
for consistent spacing, you can write
something like this

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- Remember that there are many acceptable styles of writing *cursive*
- What is important is that every letter is correctly understood and cannot be mistaken for another letter. LEGIBILITY is what counts.

While your children are learning, we suggest that you have them try to follow our models as closely as possible.

Some common child objections involve making capital letters. For example, some children complain that their *Q* looks too much like a *2*. That should not pose any real problem. If a child's *Q* looks too much like a *2*, just have your child use the standard manuscript *Q* instead. The same type of substitutions can be made by using a *T* for a *J*, and *F* or an *F, G* for a *G*, *S* for an *S*, etc. If a child's hooks at the ends of letters make it hard to distinguish an *l* from a *v*, just eliminate the hook. If a child prefers an italic *b* to an AVKO *b*, so be it. Legibility is what counts!

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Use or have your children make their own special lined paper.