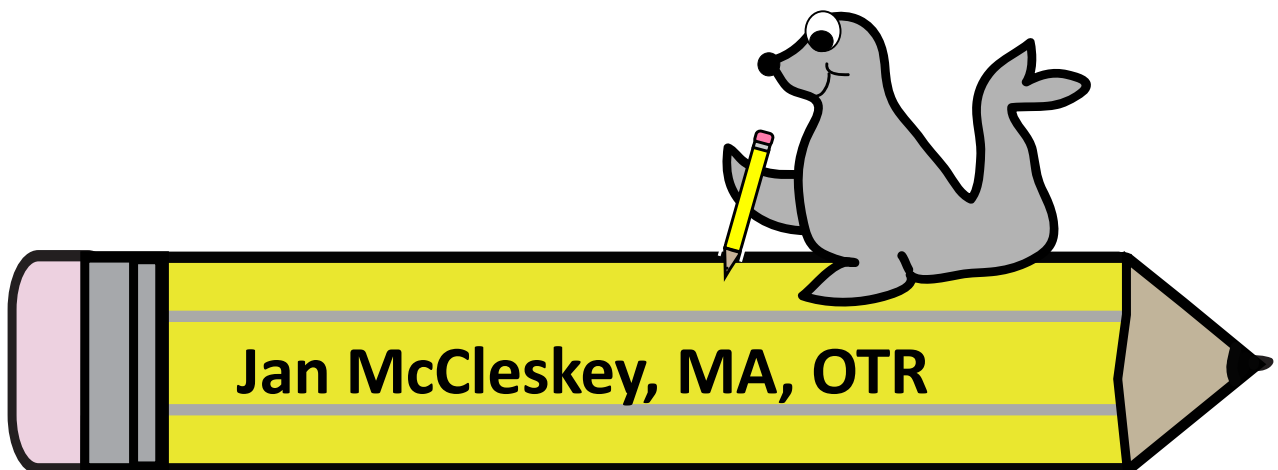


# First Strokes®

## How to Use the First Strokes PRESCHOOL PRINT PROGRAM

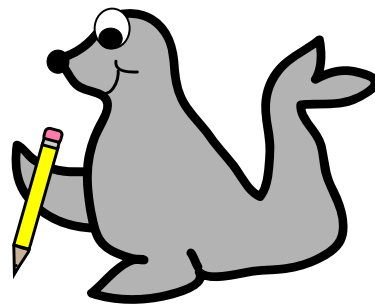


Jan McCleskey, MA, OTR

The Handwriting Clinic™/First Strokes® Products

# First Strokes®

## Introduction to First Strokes Products



The Handwriting Clinic™/First Strokes® Products  
Richardson, Texas

## Suggested First Strokes Products

### Preschoolers - ages 3/4:

First Strokes Preschool Workbooks (digital license available)  
First Strokes Instructors Manual  
First Strokes Classroom Fine Motor Kits!  
Transportation or Sea Animal Themed. Augment with hundreds of activities from Jan's store on TPT!

\* New! Build Your Own Fine Motor Therapy Kits

### Pre - K thru Beginning Kindergarten:

First Strokes Multi-sensory Handwriting Kit (one per classroom) or First Strokes Instructors Manual  
First Strokes Multi-sensory Print Upper or Lower Case Workbooks (digital license available)  
First Strokes Pencil Gymnastics Kit - one per classroom  
First Strokes Classroom Fine Motor Kits!  
Transportation or Sea Animal Themed. Augment with hundreds of activities from The Fine Motor Store on TPT!

### Middle of Kindergarten/First Grade:

First Strokes Advanced Block or Advanced Snail Tails Workbook (digital license available)  
First Strokes Instructors Manual (comes in kit, or sold separately)  
STOP Letter Reversals CD  
STOP Number Reversals CD  
First Strokes Classroom Fine Motor Kits!  
Transportation or Sea Animal Themed. Augment with hundreds of activities from Jan's store on TPT!

### 2nd/3rd Graders and above :

Print Legibility Workbook (digital license available)  
First Strokes Cursive Kit  
First Strokes Keyboarding Program – this is a one time downloadable product from [www.TeachersPayTeachers.com](http://www.TeachersPayTeachers.com).

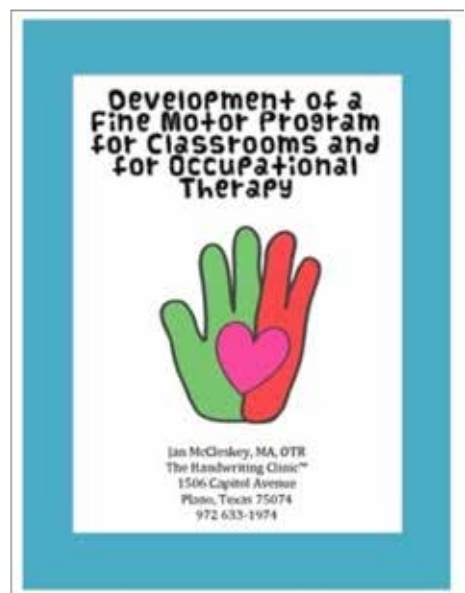
### Special Education:

The Fine Motor Store has adapted handwriting worksheets, picture/word sentences, fine and visual motor activities, eye-hand coordination activities, scissors skills programs, and many specific products for autism and special needs. \* **Download our free article: Developing a Fine Motor Program for Classroom or Therapy for training information. (Featured freebie on The Fine Motor Store on TPT)**



[www.TheHandwritingClinic.com](http://www.TheHandwritingClinic.com) has the newest First Strokes catalog online. Purchases can be made online, through purchase orders, or by calling 972 633-1974.

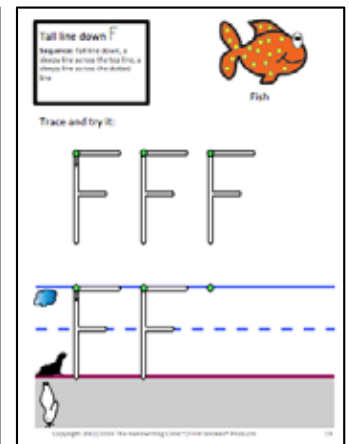
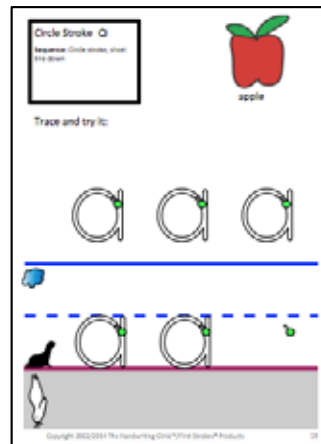
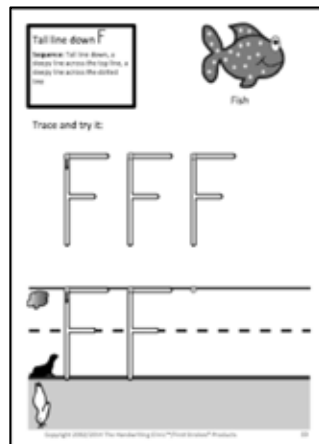
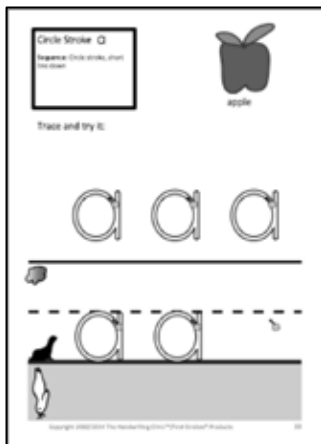
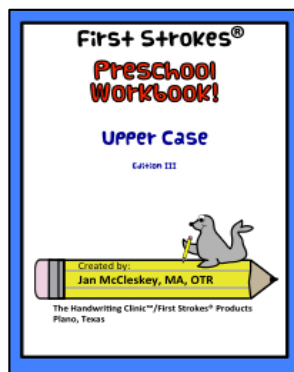
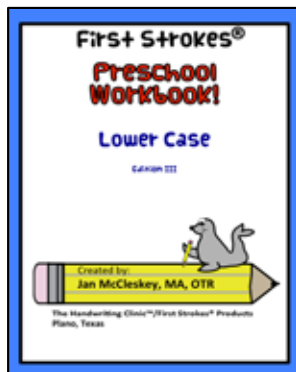
For a free fine motor program training article , with training handouts, go to [www.TeachersPayTeachers.com](http://www.TeachersPayTeachers.com) and go to The Fine Motor Store. Download the article by Jan McCleskey, MA, OTR entitled "Developing a Fine Motor Program for Classroom or Therapy".



# First Strokes PRESCHOOL Print Workbooks

## First Strokes Preschool Workbooks (age 3 - 4)

The First Strokes Preschool workbooks have a section on stroke development with tracing activities that can be used in conjunction with the Billy the Seal Storybook. Each workbook contains a section where students trace the First Strokes of the letters, and a individual letter section where students trace letters using correct sequencing skills. Prior to tracing the strokes and letters in the workbook, students should practice the letters using multi-sensory, kinesthetic teaching strategies outlined in the instructors manual. **It is recommended that users purchase either the digital license or the First Strokes instructors Manual and the Billy Learns His ABC's Storybook.**



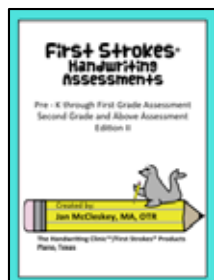
## Hard Copies

#2108-LC Pre-School Workbook Lower Case – Single Copy	\$10.00
#2108-UC Pre-School Workbook Upper Case – Single Copy	\$10.00
#2108a-LC Pre-School Workbook Lower Case – 5 Pack	\$40.00
#2108a-UC Pre-School Workbook Upper Case – 5 Pack	\$40.00

## Digital Copies

<b>Digital Bundle Download (single or classroom license)</b> – Allows printable copy of both workbooks in color. Preschool Lower and Upper Case Multisensory Workbooks, Billy the Seal Storybook, and printable review books. Perfect for one classroom or clinic. Available from The Fine Motor Store on Teachers Pay Teachers.	\$45.00
<b>Digital Bundle Download (building license for copy of workbooks)</b> – Building license for multiple uses within a school. Allows printable copy of both workbooks in color. Preschool Lower and Upper Case Multisensory Workbooks, Billy the Seal Storybook, and printable review books. Available from The Fine Motor Store on Teachers Pay Teachers.	\$150.00

# First Strokes Multi-sensory Handwriting Kit (pre-K - K)



- First Strokes Instructors Manual
- Billy Learns to Write His ABC's storybook
- First Strokes Handwriting Assessments
- Lower case workbook (2 pages per letter, 78 pages)
- Upper case workbook (2 pages per letter, 76 pages)
- This kit does not include a digital license of the workbooks. Includes 2 hard copy workbooks for single use.

#2101 First Strokes Multi-sensory Handwriting Kit :

\$90

Video at [www.TheHandwritingClinic.com](http://www.TheHandwritingClinic.com) will introduce the First Strokes Handwriting Program. Go to "video's" section.

Products in this kit can be purchased separately!

## Hard Copies

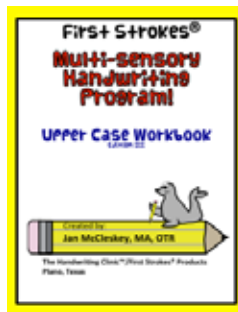
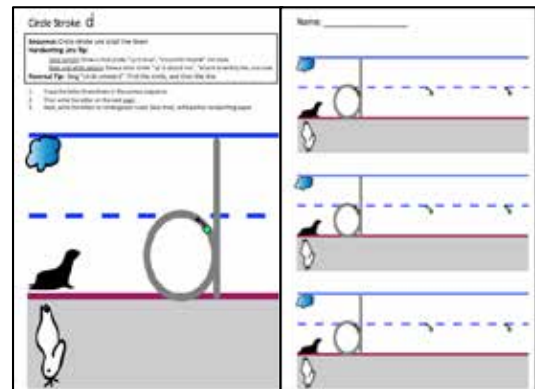
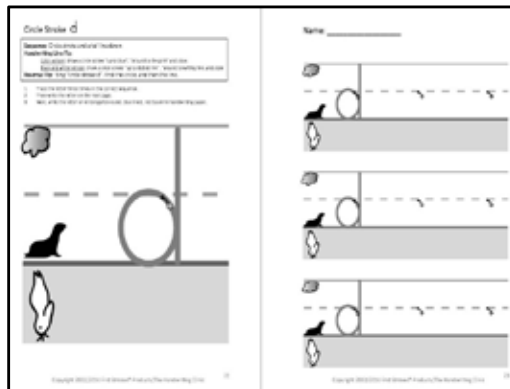
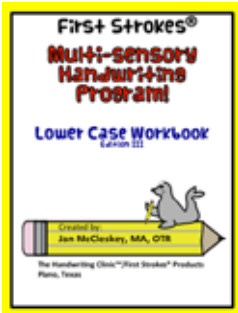
#2103-LC Multi-Sensory Handwriting Student Workbook Lower Case – Single Copy	\$12.00
#2103-UC Multi-Sensory Handwriting Student Workbook Upper Case – Single Copy	\$12.00
#2103a-LC Multi-Sensory Handwriting Student Workbook Lower Case – 5 Pack	\$50.00
#2103a-UC Multi-Sensory Handwriting Student Workbook Upper Case – 5 Pack	\$50.00
#2101 First Strokes Handwriting Kit (hard copies of upper/lower case workbooks, assessment, Instructors Manual, Billy Learns His ABC's storybook).	\$90

## Digital Copies

<b>Digital Bundle Download (single or classroom license)</b> – Allows printable copy of both workbooks in color. Lower and Upper Case Multisensory Workbooks, printable extra practice worksheets for homework/generalization skills, rubric, test sheets, Brain Breaks for Reversal Strategies (PowerPoint), Billy the Seal Storybook, First Strokes Assessment and Instructors Manual, and printable review books. Perfect for one classroom or clinic. Available from The Fine Motor Store on Teachers Pay Teachers. Available from The Fine Motor Store on Teachers Pay Teachers.	\$90.00
<b>Digital Bundle Download (building license for copy of workbooks)</b> – Building license for sharable files within a school. Allows printable copy of both workbooks in color. Lower and Upper Case Multisensory Workbooks, printable extra practice worksheets for homework/generalization skills, rubric, test sheets, Brain Breaks for Reversal Strategies (PowerPoint), Billy the Seal Storybook, First Strokes Assessment and Instructors Manual, and printable review books. Perfect for multiple uses within a building. Available from The Fine Motor Store on Teachers Pay Teachers.	\$200.00

These workbooks are appropriate for Pre-K – the middle of Kindergarten. It is recommended that the Advanced Print Block or Snail Tails workbooks be used from the middle of K and above.

## INDIVIDUAL PRODUCTS - IF SOLD SEPARATELY



**Multi-sensory Lower or Upper Case Print Workbooks** - Includes large letter page for tracing, and practice page with handwriting lines gradually decreasing in size, for each letter. Separate books for upper and lower case letters. Letters are categorized by their First Stroke. These are very comprehensive workbooks, and are printed in several gray scale colors to visually adapt handwriting lines for cognitive and perceptual cues. It is designed to be used with kinesthetic and multi-sensory strategies outlined in the First Strokes Instructors Manual. This workbook was developed so a student can quickly generalize to standard three-lined handwriting paper. **\*\*\* The digital license allows for color printing if desired!**

### #2104 Billy Learns to Write His ABC's Storybook

\$13.00



**Billy the Seal Learns To Write His ABC's Storybook (in color):** Children's book written to introduce the First Stroke concepts of using the First Stroke to draw letters. Billy comes home from school and is not sure that he can learn his ABC's. His mother tells Billy that it is just like when Billy learned to swim. All Billy had to learn was a few strokes, and he could dive and splash and play in the Big Lagoon. Mrs. Seahorse, Billy's teacher, teaches Billy the First Strokes so he can learn to draw his letters. Billy soon feels confident that he can learn to draw all the letters of the alphabet.

### #2113 6 Chapter Book/Instructors Manual (updated!)

\$35.00

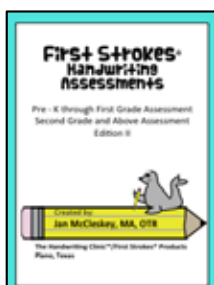


#### Instructors Manual:

Includes pre-handwriting and handwriting development, First Strokes concepts, procedures for student workbook and multi-sensory instruction, grasp development information, multi-sensory teaching techniques, handwriting errors and remedial strategies. The manual also describes how to use the First Strokes program, and has the procedures for the First Strokes Assessment. This instructors manual goes with either the preschool workbooks, the multi-sensory workbooks for pre-k - Kindergarten and the Advanced Print Workbooks.

### #2114 First Strokes Handwriting Assessment (updated!)

\$10.00



#### First Strokes Handwriting Assessment and Assistive Technology Supplement:

Handwriting Assessment package includes the pre-K - 1st grade assessment, and the 2nd grade and above assessment. Assistive Technology Supplement, Individual Student Log for Teachers, Grasp Development Log for Teachers **(These assessments come free in digital form with purchase of a digital license or with the One Hour to Legibility CD)**. A hard copy of these assessments is included in the First Strokes Multi-sensory Handwriting Kit.



# First Strokes Advanced Print Workbooks

## First Strokes Advanced Print Workbook – BLOCK PRINT

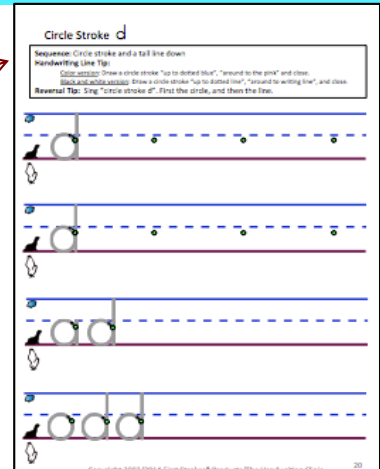
**Sequence:** Circle stroke and a tall line down  
**Handwriting Line Tip:**

Color version: Draw a circle stroke “up to dotted blue”, “around to the pink” and close.

Black and white version: Draw a circle stroke “up to dotted line”, “around to writing line”, and close.

**Reversal Tip:** Sing “circle stroke d”. First the circle, and then the line.

INCLUDES: Upper AND Lower Case Practice Pages!



## First Strokes Advanced Print Workbook – SNAIL TAILS

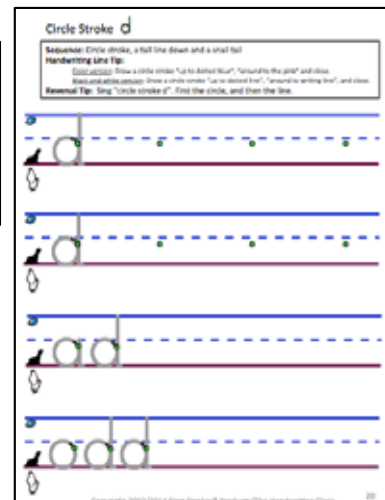
**Sequence:** Circle stroke and a tall line down and a snail tail  
**Handwriting Line Tip:**

Color version: Draw a circle stroke “up to dotted blue”, “around to the pink” and close.

Black and white version: Draw a circle stroke “up to dotted line”, “around to writing line”, and close.

**Reversal Tip:** Sing “circle stroke d”. First the circle, and then the line.

INCLUDES: Upper AND Lower Case Practice Pages!



The First Strokes Snail Tails Program was designed to teach adapted handwriting for students who struggle with legibility of standard D’Nealian style writing. By making the letters vertical, rather than slanted, students with weak visual motor skills have success with the First Strokes Snail Tails Program. Letters are still grouped by their “First Stroke” in our Snail Tails Program.

**The First Strokes Advanced Block Print Workbooks** and the **First Strokes Advanced Snail Tails Workbooks** were developed to help students generalize handwriting to smaller ruled paper. Teachers and therapists can choose which workbook, depending on the style of handwriting used in a student’s school program. Letters are categorized by their “First Stroke”. Cognitive cues are given for each letter using the First Stroke terminology. If a student can achieve drawing the first stroke of a letter correctly, then sequencing of the remainder of the letter formation is usually correct. Handwriting legibility tips, and reversal strategies are also presented for each letter. The Advanced Print Block or Snail Tails workbooks are developmentally appropriate from the middle of Kindergarten and above. It is recommended that the instructor purchase a copy of the **First Strokes Multi-sensory Instructors Manual** (see previous page).

## Hard Copies

#2110 First Strokes Advanced Print Block Workbook – Single Copy	\$13.00
#2110a First Strokes Advanced Print Block Workbook – 5 Pack	\$60.00
#2109 First Strokes Advanced Print Snail Tails Workbook – Single Copy	\$13.00
#2109a First Strokes Advanced Print Snail Tails Workbook – 5 Pack	\$60.00

## Digital Copies

### Digital bundles available for either block style or snail tails style

<b>Digital Bundle Download (single or classroom license)</b> – Allows printable copy of both workbooks in color. Lower and Upper Case Multisensory Workbooks, printable extra practice worksheets for homework/generalization skills, rubric, test sheets, Brain Breaks for Reversal Strategies (PowerPoint), Billy the Seal Storybook, First Strokes Assessment and Instructors Manual, and printable review books. Perfect for one classroom or clinic. Available from The Fine Motor Store on Teachers Pay Teachers. Available from The Fine Motor Store on Teachers Pay Teachers.	<b>\$80.00</b>
<b>Digital Bundle Download (building license for copy of workbooks)</b> – Building license for sharable files within a school. Lower and Upper Case Advanced Print Workbooks, printable extra practice worksheets for homework/generalization skills, rubric, test sheets, Brain Breaks for Reversal Strategies (PowerPoint), Billy the Seal Storybook, First Strokes Assessment and Instructors Manual, and printable review books. The digital file allows printing in color. Perfect for multiple uses within a building. Available from The Fine Motor Store on Teachers Pay Teachers.	<b>\$200.00</b>

## STOP! Letter Reversals Program



STOP Letter Reversals Program! A very comprehensive, multi-sensory and kinesthetic program that focuses on visual memory skills through cognitive cues, multi-sensory learning, and gross motor, visual memory games/activities. The program consists of printable worksheets and activities. This program works on a student achieving automaticity and visual memory so that a student no longer has to cognitively think about the letters as they write. This program is a MOTORIC program, working with students on motoric strategies paired with cognitive cues. This is a good strategy to get students remembering the strategies, and implementing the strategies when they write. 103 pages, very comprehensive and works on the following letters: **d b g j e z p s q**

The program includes: flashcards, worksheets, review strategies, visual memory games, lotto games and playdoh mat templates

This product is now only available in The Fine Motor Store on <a href="http://www.TeachersPayTeachers.com">www.TeachersPayTeachers.com</a>	<b>\$10.00</b>
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### b and d Reversals Techniques

Extra technique for b and d reversals

This product is now available in The Fine Motor Store on <a href="http://www.TeachersPayTeachers.com">www.TeachersPayTeachers.com</a>	<b>\$3.00</b>
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## STOP! Number Reversals Program



STOP Number Reversals Program! A very comprehensive, multi-sensory and kinesthetic program that focuses on visual memory skills through cognitive cues, wipe off practice sheets (place in sheet protectors) and fun large motor activities. Works on getting automaticity of the cognitive cues provided in the program. Worksheets are reproducible, and can be printed and used with classrooms or therapy students.

Large Motor Games \* Cognitive Cues \* Kinesthetic Visual Memory Practice Activities \* FUN Worksheets \* Playdough Mats \* Reversal Cue Cards \* Pencil Covers \* Centers Activities (jell-o tracing, play dough mats, worksheets)

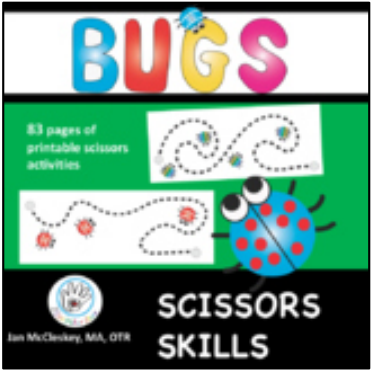
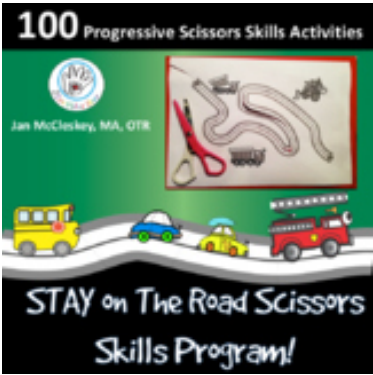
This product is now only available in The Fine Motor Store on <a href="http://www.TeachersPayTeachers.com">www.TeachersPayTeachers.com</a>	<b>\$9.00</b>
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# BUILD YOUR OWN FINE MOTOR THERAPY KIT:

These are just some of the 190 + products on [www.TeachersPayTeachers.com](http://www.TeachersPayTeachers.com). Go to **The Fine Motor Store**. "Follow" Jan for freebies, and new product announcements!

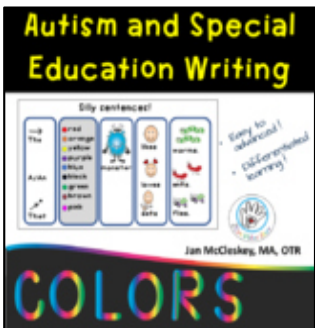
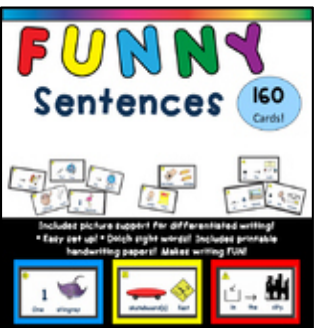
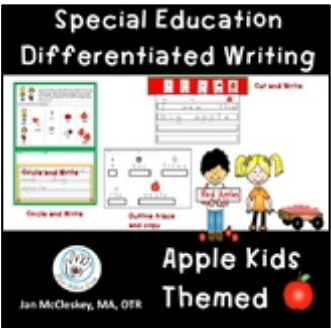
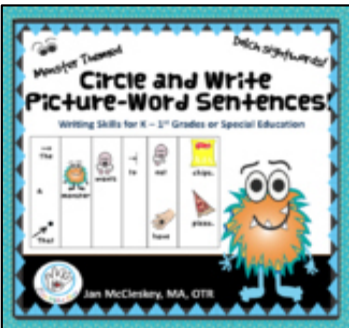
## Scissors Labs



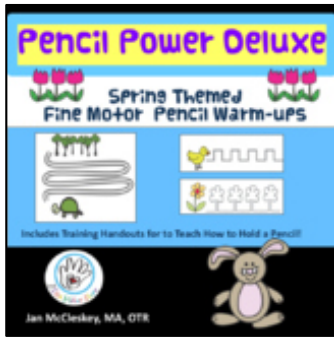
## Fine Motor Kits



## Writing Labs

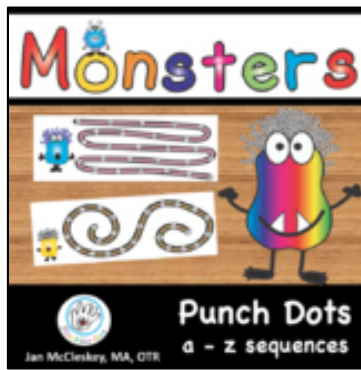


# Pencil Labs/Eye Hand Coordination Labs



Scissors labs \* Tongs labs \* Handwriting \*  
 Keyboarding \* Stop Number and Letter Reversals  
 programs \* Visual Motor Activities \* Pencil Control  
 Labs \* Differentiated Writing Labs for Special  
 Education plus much more!

## Punch Dots

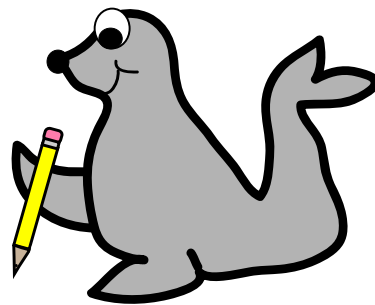


## Handwriting



# First Strokes®

## Concepts of the First Strokes Print Program



**The Handwriting Clinic™/First Strokes® Products  
Richardson, Texas**

## CHAPTER I

### CONCEPTS

#### The Program

The First Strokes Multi-sensory Handwriting Print Program was developed for use by students at The Handwriting Clinic to learn print. This program is also marketed for therapists and teachers to provide remedial intervention for students who struggle with handwriting. Employing techniques outlined in this manual, the program can easily be adapted by therapists and teachers for use in individual therapy, small group or classroom settings. The concept of is to teach a child to recognize the First Stroke in drawing each letter. Instead of learning letters alphabetically, the letters are grouped for learning within categories of the first stroke. By first reading the Billy the Seal Story, and then using the handwriting workbook, students will learn to print and then generalize their print to other handwriting paper. The foundation of the program is the concept of using multi-sensory, kinesthetic techniques, for teaching handwriting.

#### Billy the Seal

Billy the Seal introduces the concept of learning the First Stroke of a letter through the narrated story on the CD, or the printed storybook. The CD also contains a tutorial for the First Strokes. In the storybook, Billy comes home from his first day of school, and tells his mother that he is not sure he can learn to draw all the letters of the alphabet. Through his teacher, Mrs. Seahorse, Billy learns to employ the concepts of using the “First Strokes” when drawing letters. Billy soon feels confident in learning to draw all the letters of the alphabet. Children also learn to write in the handwriting spaces using the theme. The Billy Learns His ABC’s booklet is included with the digital download, or can be purchased separately.

#### Groups

The letters of the alphabet are categorized by their “First Stroke”. For example, the first 17 letters of the lower case alphabet have either a circle stroke, short line down or tall line down as the “first stroke”. These three strokes should be taught first. Other strokes can be learned as the child progresses through the program. By using cognitive strategies for drawing the letters by the first stroke, the child begins to categorize letters based on how the letter is initially formed. When a child just learns to visually copy letters, the child may have difficulty sequencing letters. By first learning the letters in a multi-sensory manner, the child has the optimal foundation for learning the correct sequence for drawing the letter. This will also help children who frequently reverse or transpose letters. **Letter groups are listed in the reference section at the back of this manual.**

#### Block or Snail Tails Style:

First Strokes offers workbooks for preschool through kindergarten in block style handwriting. Instructors can choose Block or Snail Tails style for advanced print for the end of kindergarten or beginning of first grade. Snail Tails style is vertical, not slanted, as many children with weak visual motor skills have trouble with slant.

# First Strokes Handwriting Spaces

Billy the Seal, from the First Strokes® storybook Billy Learns to Write His ABC's, is the theme of the handwriting spaces. Picture cues are used in the workbook since most children are just learning to read. In the workbook, each letter is identified at the top of the page as a:

“cloud topper/tall letter”



“land lover”(like Billy the Seal)



“sinker/diver” (like Mr. Waldorf,  
the swim coach in the storybook)



The handwriting terminology used within the program is as follows:

Top blue line



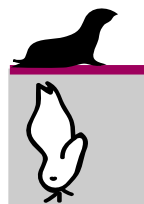
← Top space

Dotted blue line



← Bottom space

Pink writing line



← Below space (where Mr. Waldorf dives in the big ocean)

In order to generalize to handwriting paper, a student must learn to write within the spaces. The spaces are named the “top space”, the “bottom space” and the “below space”. The child must learn to imagine the “below space”, and that is why it is shaded gray in the program. A child can also visualize the “below space” as being “below the water where Mr. Waldorf swims”. Mr. Waldorf is the walrus in the storybook, Billy Learns to Write His ABC's. The instructor can tell the child to think about the deep ocean where Mr. Waldorf lives when writing sinking or diving letters. Mr. Waldorf can swim and dive in the big, deep ocean.



The First Strokes workbooks are designed to teach print using multi-sensory techniques.. The student should not immediately start using the workbooks without first learning the letter using kinesthetic or multi-sensory modalities.

**Procedures for Using Workbook (PRESCHOOLERS):**

**Terminology** – The instructor should use the simple, consistent terminology outlined in the description of the sequence for each letter. Ex. “d” is a “circle stroke and a tall line down”. See the reference section at the end of this manual for the reference sheets for terminology.

**Learn the “First Strokes®”** outlined in the storybook “Billy Learns His ABC’s”

**Modules-** The digital download files include introductory letter practice sheets for each module.

**Multisensory Letter Activities** – For preschoolers, this program has large letter pages that are printable.





# Multi-sensory Activities with the large letter pages:

Be creative. There are many uses for this file. For teachers and therapists who work with young learners, or students with special needs – these files create many FUN activities. Below are some examples:

Playdoh - print and use for a template for letters.



Paint – print and use for a template to paint letters

Punch – print and have students use as a template to punch out letters with a golf tee



Q-tip/paint – print and use as a template to dot the letters



Repeated practice – Use this file with students with special needs. I give the student 5 different colored crayons and have the student trace the letters repeatedly in the correct sequence, to give motoric practice of letters.



Craft – use tweezers or tongs to glue macaroni, tissue paper, beans, etc on the letter.



Sponge stick/paint



Bingo marker template (Bingo dot markers available at [www.DiscountSchoolSupply.com](http://www.DiscountSchoolSupply.com))

Letter of the day introduction – put on the door and have students trace with their fingers

Powerpoint/smartboard practice – put the files up on a projector and have the students stand up and “air write” the letters in the correct sequence and the instructor puts the files up on the screen. This is an EXCELLENT way to work on sequencing letters motorically and in a multi-sensory way. The simple visual cues should help students learn to sequence the letters – particularly if the students practice writing the letters in the “first stroke” categories or groups.

**Large motor learning:** Trace strokes and letters at a marker board or at posters to get the sequencing of the letters.



Students with special needs usually need to trace at a marker board, or at posters.

**Medium motor learning** - Student should be able to write the letter large, before progressing to small motor activities. In a classroom, a teacher could do this as a group, or as a supervised center time activity. Examples of medium motor activities: (These are described in the training manual/



Shaving cream



Use pink and blue highlighters to make giant sized handwriting lines or letter boxes on paper. Instructor draws the strokes or letters of the week, on the paper. Student can use Q-tips/ear swabs dipped in Colorations® Liquid Watercolor paint (available at [www.discountschoolsupply.com](http://www.discountschoolsupply.com)) to trace or copy the letters. If instructor writes the letter in orange or yellow crayon, and uses dark paint, the waxy crayon shows through.



Use a golf tee to punch out the letter in the correct sequence. (Place typing paper with handwriting lines over a mouse pad, craft foam or a foam backed kitchen mat.)

**Medium motor learning** - Student should be able to write the letter in large sized, 3 inch handwriting lines, before doing small motor activities. In a classroom, a teacher could do this as a group, or as a supervised center time activity. Examples of medium motor activities:

- Shaving cream (draw the lines)

- Use pink and blue highlighters to make giant sized handwriting lines on paper.

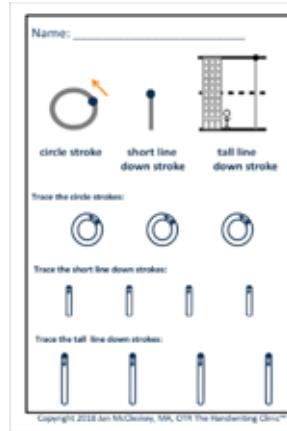
Student can use Q-tips/ear swabs dipped in Colorations® Liquid Watercolor paint (available at [www.discountschoolsupply.com](http://www.discountschoolsupply.com)) to trace or copy the letters. Another fun “paint” is to pour one teaspoon of dry powdered drink mix like Koolaid (no sugar) into a cup and add 5 drops water. Student can use Q-tips/ear swabs to write the letters.

- Use pink and blue highlighters to make 3 – 4 inch handwriting lines on paper. Student can use a golf tee to punch out the letter in the correct sequence. (Place typing paper with handwriting lines over a mouse pad, craft foam or a foam backed kitchen mat.)

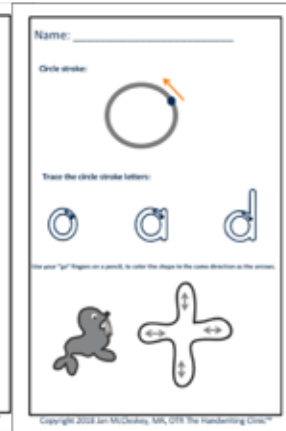
# Small Motor Activities for students:

## Printable modules to introduce strokes and groups of letters:

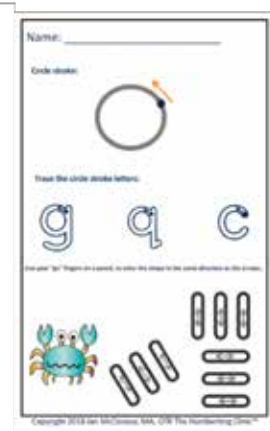
Modules are printable from the Learning Modules File. The modules could be weekly modules for a classroom. The exact order of the modules and a chart, is discussed later in this manual. Students will learn the strokes first. Then for each group of letters, there is an introduction page within the modules. Below is the introduction to a circle stroke, short line down, and a tall line down. Then module 2 – circle stroke o a d. Next is module 3 – circle stroke g q c.



Module 1

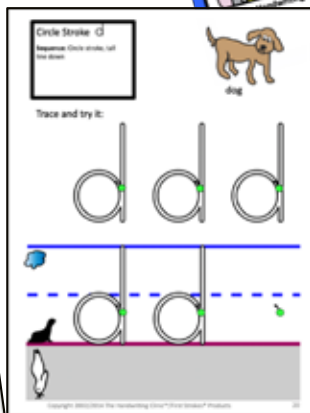
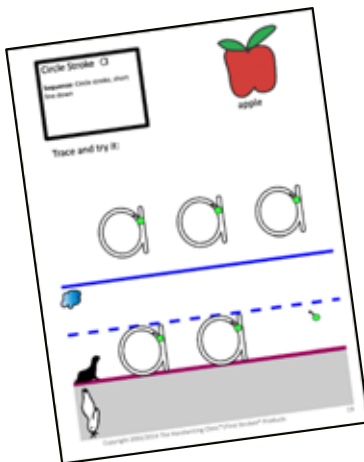
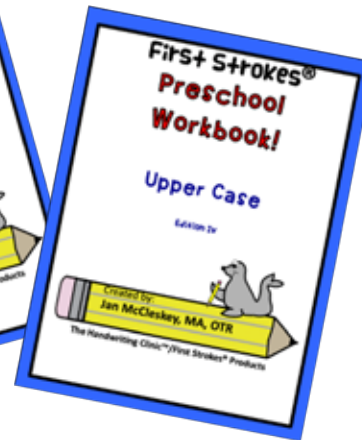
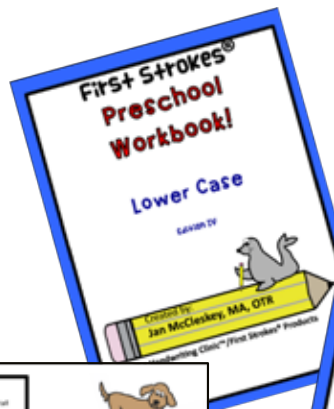


Module 2

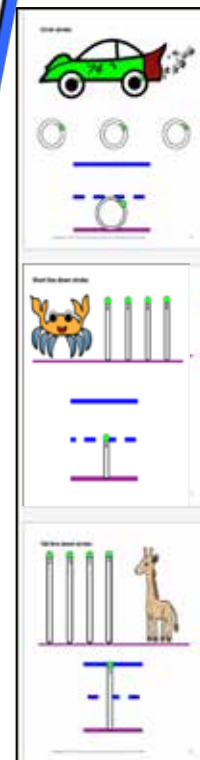


Module 3

## First Strokes Workbooks: Upper or Lower Case



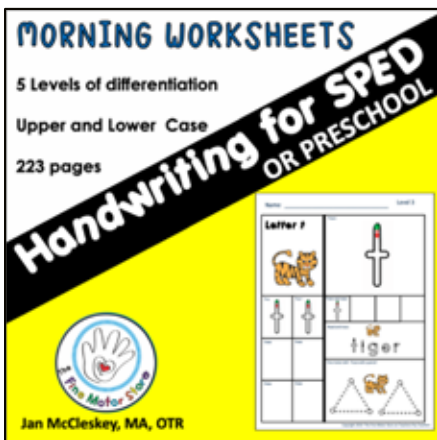
Teach the circle stroke, short line down and tall line down strokes. Here are the workbook pages.



Letter pages – letters are grouped by their “First Stroke”

## Activities for students:

The First Strokes Preschool Handwriting Program includes a file called **Morning Worksheets**, with 5 different levels of differentiation for lower case letters, and 3 levels of differentiation for upper case letters. This can be used for more work, with different levels, within the modules. Levels can be differentiated for students individual progress.



## Lower Case – 5 levels

<p>Level 1</p> <p>Letter t</p>	<p>Level 2</p> <p>Letter t</p>	<p>Level 3</p> <p>Letter t</p>	<p>Level 1 – Trace with crayon 5 times</p> <p>Level 2 – Trace and copy with pencil</p> <p>Level 3 – Trace and copy and fine motor activity</p> <p>Level 4 – Trace and copy letters and high frequency words</p> <p>Level 5 – Trace and copy sentence with picture/word support</p>
<p>Level 4</p> <p>Letter t</p>	<p>Level 5</p> <p>Letter t</p>		

## Upper Case – 3 levels

<p>Level 1</p> <p>Letter Z</p>	<p>Level 2</p> <p>Letter Z</p>	<p>Level 3</p> <p>Letter Z</p>	<p>Level 1 – Trace with crayon 5 times</p> <p>Level 2 – Trace and copy with pencil</p> <p>Level 3 – Trace and copy and fine motor activity</p>
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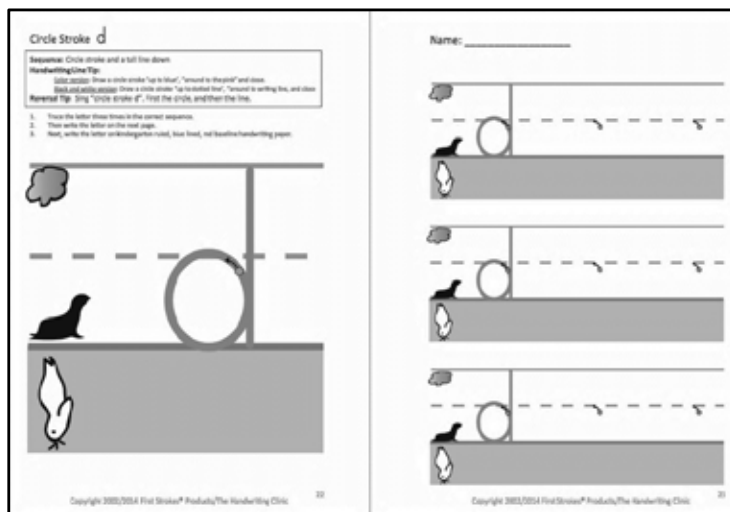


OTHER WORKBOOKS WITHIN THE FIRST STROKES PROGRAM:

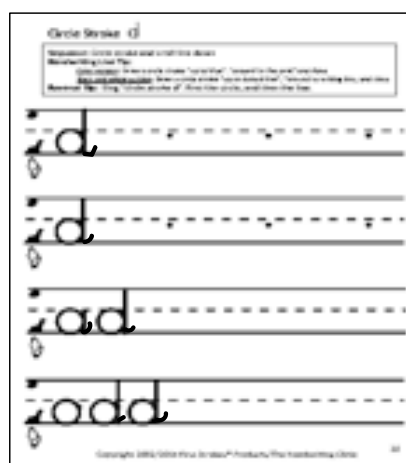
**Advancing through other First Strokes Programs (not included):**

First Strokes® has several levels of workbooks.

The **First Strokes® Multisensory Workbooks** (lower or upper case) are for students in the latter part of their preschool years, or kindergarteners. The workbooks have a chapter on the “first strokes”, followed by letter pages grouped by their first stroke. All workbooks include a large letter page for tracing, and a practice page for practicing letters. Letters are categorized by their first stroke.



The **First Strokes® Advanced Workbooks** (lower or upper case) are for students who are in late kindergarten through first grade. The workbooks have a chapter on the “first strokes”, followed by letter pages grouped by their first stroke. There are two types of workbooks available:



**First Strokes® Advanced Block Print Workbooks**

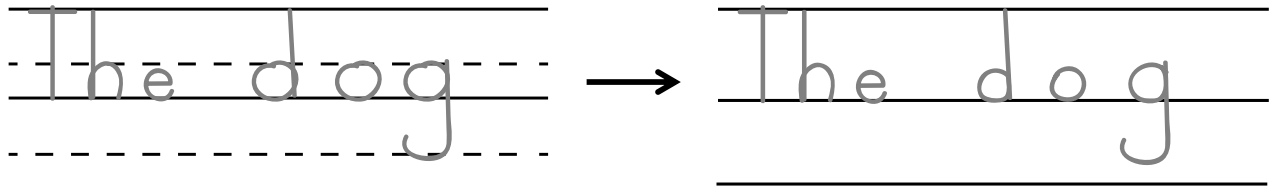
**First Strokes® Advanced Snail Tails Workbooks**

The First Stroke Advance Print Snail Tails workbook is designed to teach a “vertical style” handwriting with “tails” and is very appropriate for students who struggle with D’Nealian handwriting. This is a good therapeutic handwriting program to use for students who need help with handwriting and are in classrooms that are being taught D’Nealian handwriting.

## Progressing from kindergarten paper, to first grade paper to regular notebook paper.

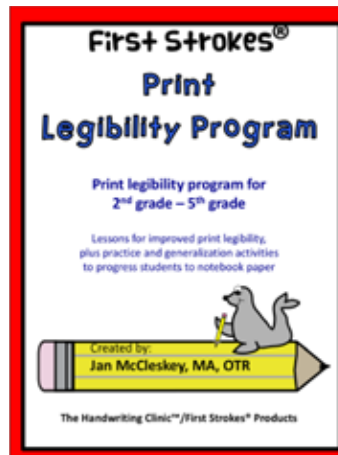
When working on each letter in the workbooks, it is recommended that the student progress to standard blue lined, pink base-lined paper. There are various sized available for K – 1<sup>st</sup> grade. After a student practices each letter large motor, medium motor and small motor (workbook), the student needs to practice the letter on handwriting paper. Generally, the Zaner-Bloser™ kindergarten paper is appropriate for pre-k through the beginning of Kindergarten. However, the Zaner-Bloser™ kindergarten paper is quite large, so it is important to progress Kindergarteners towards the first grade sized paper. See the Tips and Activities section at the back of this document, to see fun generalization activities with sentence building.

Generalizing handwriting to notebook paper usually begins around second grade. To teach a child to use notebook paper, First Strokes® sells adaptive- ruled notebook paper that teaches consistency of size and height of letter formation. First Strokes(R) sells the One Hour to Legibility Workbook with activities to train students to eventually have legible print on notebook paper.



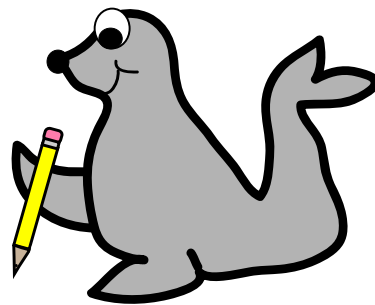
*Progressing from adaptive ruled notebook paper to notebook paper.*

To use the adaptive-ruled notebook paper, the child is instructed to write the “tall letters” touching the top line, and the “sinking letters” below the writing line. The most important concept to teach is that all letters should touch the writing line. By reducing the size of the letters, and having the letters touch the writing line, even poor handwriting looks more legible. The technique is for the student to have a consistent height at the “top” of the letters, where the **First Strokes® Print Legibility Workbook** body of the letter is consistently 1/3 space. This gives older students more practice on using this paper and progressing to notebook paper with a consistent sizing of letters. This program helps mature handwriting to a more refined size.



# First Strokes®

## Age Level Developmental Fine Motor and Handwriting Skills



The Handwriting Clinic™/First Strokes® Products  
Richardson, Texas

## AGE LEVEL DEVELOPMENTAL PRE-HANDWRITING SKILLS

### Forearm and Wrist Stability/Grasp Development in the Mature Hand

To understand the development of fine motor skills needed for handwriting, it is important to first understand the final goal of achieving a mature, manipulative grasp on a writing instrument. The basis for a mature, manipulative grasp is forearm stability and wrist stabilization. Wrist stability emerges developmentally around age 4 during coloring, and with refinement and consistency around age 5. Before age 5, if a child colors a large area on a coloring sheet, the student usually uses the whole hand with the wrist in the air to provide faster movement.

The position of the hand should be below the writing line with the wrist stabilized on the paper. Left-handed children can hold the pencil with a hook pattern and have a manipulative grasp, even though ideally they should place their hands below the writing line. Right-handed children will not have as manipulative of a grasp if the hand is placed in a hook pattern to the side or above the writing line. When using a wrist hook, a right-handed child writes towards the palm of the hand, making finger excursion difficult. A left-handed child would be able to demonstrate good finger excursion since the child would be writing away from the palm.



*Example of a hook grip in a right-handed child.*



*Improved placement of hand below the writing line.*

## Functional Grasp on a Pencil:

The optimal grasp pattern for good manipulative skills has good separation between the two sides of the hand. Movement of the pencil requires the ability to isolate and grade individual finger and thumb movements (Case-Smith 1995). Separation between the two sides of the hand for manipulative skills occurs around age four. Mary Benbow describes a grasp on a pencil using three components, radial manipulation, ulnar stabilization and finger excursion or “translation”, (Benbow, M., 1990). These skills are reported to be associated with kinesthetic and tactile input (Benbow 1995). The child learns to use the thumb, index and third fingers within a tripod grasp, to manipulate objects (radial manipulation). Ulnar stabilization is the ability to stabilize the hand with the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> fingers, while the thumb, index and third fingers manipulate objects. Finger excursion while using a writing instrument occurs around age 5 – 6, if a child uses a tripod grasp pattern. It involves moving the thumb, index and third fingers as a group to move forwards and backwards. Finger excursion is important to fluidity, and speed, and allows a child to write with less fatigue. The characteristics of a functional grasp pattern as described by Benbow (1990, 1995) could appear as follows:



*An example of a functional grasp on a pencil.*

- **4th, 5th fingers tucked in palm (ulnar stabilization)**
- **Pencil should rest on the lateral (radial) edge of the knuckle**
- **Wrist slightly elevated to 30 degrees**
- **Prehension between index and thumb with support from medial edge of 3rd finger**
- **Rounding of the thumb web space**
- **Wrist stability**
- **Forearm stability**

## Developmental Characteristics of Grasp Patterns

Fine motor skills are as important for Kindergarten readiness as learning to say the ABC's. By understanding the development of grasp patterns, preschool teachers, parents and Kindergarten teachers can prepare a child for writing. The developmental characteristics of grasp development are as follows:

- Forearm/wrist stability - developmentally comes about age 4 during coloring, with refinement around age 5.
- Tripod grasp - the child experiments with many grasp patterns prior to age 4. By age 3.5 to 4, instructors should be encouraging a tripod grasp on a pencil for all students. This is the window of opportunity where a child develops a kinesthetic awareness of a grasp on a pencil through practicing coloring and writing. Learning a correct grasp later is much more difficult than learning a correct grasp in the first place.
- Radial manipulation/ulnar stabilization – begins to develop around age 4 1/2, and becomes more refined around age 5 to 5 1/2. Manipulative grasp continues to develop, with additional increase in coordination for several years as finger excursion matures. This is why cursive handwriting is not appropriate until a child has had time to develop coordination within a manipulative grasp (not before age 7, even in a precocious child)
- Finger excursion – may begin around age 5, but refines at age 6 or 7 with coordination. Some children do not develop good finger excursion if they have a non-manipulative grasp.

***The First Strokes® Pencil Gymnastics Kit is available to teach the above skills, and has an instructors manual that specifically addresses specific, common grip pattern errors.***

### Reasons Why Poor Grasp Patterns Develop:

As a child develops hand coordination, the intrinsic musculature in the hand strengthens. Children who enjoy drawing and coloring tend to develop strength in the hands and have good stability when holding a pencil. On the other hand, if a three or four year old child enjoys coloring and is precocious in drawing letters, the child may be developing a poor grasp pattern that becomes habit. Many gifted children who enter Kindergarten writing their letters, already have practiced poor sequencing skills when drawing letters and also have developed poor grasp patterns. The reason for the development of a poor grasp pattern is often due to the child enjoying writing and coloring at an early age before the hand develops the coordination and proprioceptive awareness of a manipulative grasp. Other children who have little interest in fine motor skills, often are delayed in grasp development. Schneck (1991) found that children with immature grasping patterns and poor handwriting had decreased kinesthetic awareness. Radial manipulation/ulnar stabilization with a writing instrument begins to develop during the 4<sup>th</sup> year. To hold a writing instrument, young children resort to stabilizing the pencil in many ways. If a child closes the web space tight and uses a lateral grasp pattern, more stability is given to the pencil. The child, who uses the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> finger to help with prehension, achieves more stability with using the pencil. Squeezing the pencil with a variety of tight grasp patterns gives more stability. Unfortunately, stability does not produce fluidity. When radial



manipulation and ulnar stabilization develop, a child is more able to stabilize the pencil due to better coordination. This is the window of opportunity where a child should learn a manipulative grasp. A young child can first be taught a tripod grasp, and then as development occurs, a child can learn to manipulate the pencil within the tripod grasp using radial manipulation and ulnar stabilization. For children with delayed fine motor skills, it is important to provide opportunities to develop radial manipulation/ulnar stabilization with manipulatives, so that the child develops better coordination with a writing instrument. Mary Benbow (1990) first designed a progression of sensory activities for children to develop better kinesthetic awareness while doing manipulatives that encourage radial manipulation and ulnar stabilization. The First Strokes program encourages a baseline of being able to demonstrate radial manipulation and ulnar stabilization through grasp development, prior to writing letters within writing lines. For students that do not demonstrate adequate manipulative grasp development, the First Strokes program recommends having the child go through the Pencil Gymnastics Workbook..

Fifty years ago, children entered Kindergarten with some basic readiness skills, but there was not a significant emphasis on providing extensive readiness for Kindergarten. The Kindergarten curriculum was more developmental and provided a rich environment for students to develop fine motor skills. In current times when the Kindergarten curriculum is more advanced and academic, fine motor skills need more emphasis during the preschool years, and preschool teachers and parents should gently guide a child to not develop bad habits. Children do need exposure to coloring, drawing and using writing tools, but early exposure to using writing tools imparts the responsibility of understanding fine motor development. Young children should be encouraged to draw and color using a tripod grasp. If a child tends to hold the thumb in a lateral grasp, the child should learn to use prehension with the tip of the thumb. If a child uses a tripod grasp, this grasp will gradually become more manipulative as radial manipulation/ulnar stabilization develops. Later, the child should then develop good finger excursion.

There are more reasons why children develop non-manipulative grasp patterns. Some children seek the proprioceptive feeling of stability by squeezing the pencil too hard. The child who has some hypotonia will usually compensate for weakness by using a more stabilizing grasp pattern. Children with hypermobile joints tend to use more stabilizing grasp patterns. Stability through hyperextension of the thumb interphalangeal joint with locked extension should always be evaluated, and worked on through intervention. Stability with non-manipulative or poor-manipulative grasp patterns may help a young child hold a pencil to achieve the desired outcome of drawing or coloring. However, early stability may produce a habitual non-manipulative grasp pattern, even when the child develops more mature coordination skills. The First Strokes® Pencil Gymnastic kits address specific treatment interventions.

**For a free fine motor program training article , with training handouts, go to [www.TeachersPayTeachers.com](http://www.TeachersPayTeachers.com) and go to The Fine Motor Store. Download the article by Jan McCleskey, MA, OTR entitled “Developing a Fine Motor Program for Classroom or Therapy”.**

## Pre-Handwriting/Fine Motor/Visual Motor General Development

In order to assess fine motor development and readiness skills for Kindergarten, it is important to understand the complex integration of fine motor skills with visual motor and visual perceptual tasks. Copying, tracing and drawing all are fine motor tasks, but incorporate visual motor skills as well. Only with careful evaluation using separate testing tools, can one begin to understand why there may be delays in development. The First Strokes program has both fine motor and visual motor items on the First Strokes Handwriting Assessments. The visual motor and fine motor portions of the test are not to be definitive and standardized, but to possibly give information to the teacher or therapist that the student may need further evaluation. Likewise, the list below is included to give a general outline of pre-handwriting skills. It is not meant to be comprehensive, standardized or used diagnostically. But, information on this list will give the teacher or therapist some functional knowledge of development.

### 3.0 – 3.11 years

- Begins to show hand dominance, but hand switching continues
- Often begins to hold pencil with tripod grasp, but static posture (thumb and index, 3<sup>rd</sup> finger)
- Imitates a cross
- Traces a square
- Copies a circle (3.0 years)
- Traces a diamond with corners rounded (3.5 years)

### 4.0 – 4.11 years

- Cuts with scissors, on lines (forward, curved)
- Copies a cross (4.0 years)
- Imitates an “x”
- Copies square (4.6 years)
- Colors pictures, approximating coloring within the lines – but still has difficulty
- Uses dominant hand
- Begins to have some manipulative skills within a tripod grasp on a writing instrument
- Begins to have an open web space on a tripod grasp
- Cuts curved lines
- Uses shoulder movement (abduction/adduction) to turn scissors

### 5.0 – 5.11 years

- Preferred hand used more consistent
- Tripod grasp becomes more dynamic, more manipulative
- Cuts out circle
- Copies triangle (5-5)
- Traces letters
- Begins to copy first name
- Draws a man – 6 parts
- Uses wrist movement (extension/flexion) to turn scissors.
- Years
- Copies diamond

The above information was substantiated from being cross-referenced in most instances, from the following tests: Erhardt, R.(1982) Erhardt Developmental Prehension Assessment, Ramsco Publishing Company, Laurel, Maryland; Brigance, A, (1978) Brigance Inventory of Early Development, Curriculum Associates, North Billerica, MA; Denver Developmental Screening Test; Beery, K. E. 1982a. Revised administration, scoring, and teaching manual for the Developmental Test of Visual-Motor Integration. Cleveland, OH: Modern Curriculum Press; Beery, K. E. 1982b. The Developmental Test of Visual-Motor Integration. Cleveland, OH: Modern Curriculum Press; Beery, K. E. 1989c. The Developmental Test of Visual-Motor Integration (Rev. ed.). Cleveland, OH: Modern Curriculum Press.

## **Preschool Handwriting Skills Development**

Preschoolers typically learn to color, paint, draw, cut with scissors, and develop fine motor readiness skills for Kindergarten. Developing coordination with manipulatives such as blocks, stringing beads, cutting with scissors, buttoning, zipping, or using tweezers and tongs is important in the preschool years. For pre-handwriting skills, preschoolers begin to integrate visual motor concepts to draw shapes and lines within pictures. Preschoolers can learn to draw basic shapes such as circles and vertical and horizontal lines. They learn to trace without major deviation from the lines. Fine motor coordination develops to where they can begin to visually copy letters and shapes.

## **Kindergarten Handwriting Skills Development**

Many children already know how to write their letters before Kindergarten. While parents and preschool teachers mean well, often times the result is that the child learned to write before they were developmentally ready. There are varying debates on when to teach handwriting. Beery (1982, 1989) advocates that it not be taught before a child can draw an “x” on the Developmental Test of Visual Motor Integration. Benbow (1990) proposed that a “kinesthetic approach” is best when the hand is motorically ready and biomechanically prepared to hold a pencil. Unfortunately, if handwriting is taught strictly on a visual basis, young children may have developed their own way of sequencing the copying of letters and practiced writing letters incorrectly many times before they attend Kindergarten. Additionally, there is such an emphasis on readiness skills that a child has often had several years experience with drawing with crayons, markers, and pencils. During these formative years of grasp development, precocious writers often practice writing using a poor grasp pattern on a pencil. On the other end of the spectrum, is the child who has not had much experience in developing pre-handwriting skills because they simply do not like to draw, color, or write. Most children are primed and ready for writing in Kindergarten. Using a multi-sensory approach to teaching handwriting, all children can benefit from handwriting instruction and most will excel. For the student who struggles with any component of handwriting, it is important that the teacher recognizes the problem early on and provides quick intervention. A teacher should keep a checklist for each child, consisting of each letter the child has learned, and an individual log of sequencing problems. Using the First Strokes Teacher Handwriting Log included in the Pre-K – First Grade Assessment, a teacher can quickly identify areas to target with students before they become habit.

## **First Grade Handwriting Skills Development**

The grasp that a student uses in first grade is usually the grasp that a student will use as an adult. A student will refine handwriting to smaller, more mature handwriting over the next six years with increasing coordination, but the grasp pattern generally remains the same. Students can learn to correct their grasp patterns at any age level. However, it is optimal to correct grasp development by the beginning of first grade so that a student does not practice the wrong grasp during the time that writing becomes the major method of completing academic work. Re-teaching of grasp patterns and working on grasp development should be done throughout first grade so that a child’s fine motor skills mature during this important year where writing becomes a fast and functional means of completing assignments.

First graders continue to cognitively think about how to draw letters, while integrating writing into all the other concepts taught in first grade. They are writing for spelling tests, journals, worksheet completion, and forming sentences. By the end of first grade, they are writing paragraphs. Students are required to write on handwriting paper, on photocopied worksheets, and a variety of lined papers. Most first graders have generalized writing within handwriting lines from handwriting paper, to almost any type of handwriting lines. Many students struggle with all the variety of handwriting lines that are integrated into their academic work. Therefore it is important to teach children to generalize handwriting within blue-lined, pink baselined paper (pink writing line, blue middle divider and top line). Teachers can help by integrating teaching of the different handwriting lines into each type of paper that a student completes.

### **Second/Third Grade Skills Development**

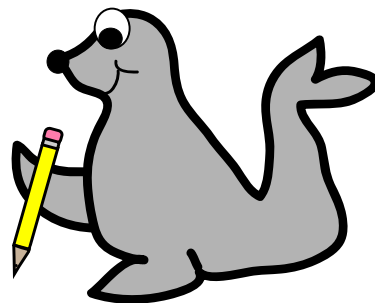
By second grade, students begin to generalize handwriting to notebook paper. This is a skill that usually needs to be taught. Second graders are usually comfortable with handwriting, and have generalized print handwriting to where they are not cognitively thinking about how to draw letters. Second graders are more at ease with creative writing and spelling, and can concentrate on writing development rather than letter formation. Writing is still typically large, taking up most of the space on regular notebook paper. As a student approaches third grade, writing begins to decrease in size. Second grade is the perfect time to teach a child to decrease the size of the letters when writing. This will allow them an increased ability to complete worksheets, and will make their handwriting more legible when using notebook paper.

In second or third grade, it is standard practice to introduce cursive handwriting. Students have increase fine motor skills at this age, and are developmentally ready for the fluid motions in cursive handwriting. It is not good practice to introduce cursive handwriting before second grade, because children generally have not developed the necessary visual motor and fine motor readiness skills before that time. While some children can learn cursive earlier, most children are not ready. Children who struggle with print handwriting usually can do better in cursive. They are more ready for handwriting in general by the time they learn cursive, and certainly more ready than when they learned print. For students who learned print with poor sequencing skills, cursive handwriting, if taught on a multi-sensory basis, can lead to more functional handwriting. Grasp development, if not previously taught, can be reintroduced as a child learns cursive. Since a child reverts back to cognitively thinking about how to draw each letter, the child is again at an optimal time for working on grasp development.

# First Strokes®

## Multi-sensory Techniques for Handwriting Practice

Large Motor  
Medium Motor  
Small Motor



The Handwriting Clinic™/First Strokes® Products  
Richardson, Texas

## MULTI-SENSORY TEACHING TECHNIQUES - FUN TECHNIQUES

### Large Motor/Kinesthetic Learning

The best part of handwriting is the fun involved in learning to draw the letters. Most students readily accept the multi-sensory activities with focused attention and mastery. Students as young as three, can learn the First Strokes (circle stroke, short line down, etc.) and trace them with a foam noodle or other type of “alphabet writer”. Developing an early pattern of drawing top to bottom and counter-clockwise circles will usually prevent problems with sequencing as a child learns to print. The posters in the above example are made with poster board and black paper. A green circle is glued on the “starting point” for each letter.

The First Stroke can be taught by reading the storybook, *Billy Learns to Write His ABC's*. Mrs. Seahorse, Billy's teacher, teaches him the First Stroke of the letters. The children can listen to the book, and then stand up and practice the strokes in the air. A good large motor activity is to have the children clap their hands together, and then imitate the strokes in the air, with hands together. This helps the child integrate the sequence of the letter bilaterally. The First Strokes CD has a narrated storybook and printable worksheets to also work on the First Stroke. Next, the students should practice the First Stroke through medium motor activities – within approximately three inch handwriting lines made by using pink and blue highlighters. Medium motor activities are suggested in the next section.



Once the First Strokes are mastered, the student can begin to integrate the First Strokes into writing letters. The student should be able to draw the letter in the air with eyes closed with the correct sequence before doing smaller motor learning.



***Student uses an "alphabet writer" to draw the sequence of the letter in the air with eyes closed***



Below are some fun, large motor activities that can be incorporated into teaching the First Strokes or the individual letters:

<p>“Hands Out! Clap Together!”</p>	<p>Student claps hands together, and then writes the letters in the air with hands together. Teacher or therapist demonstrates letter while the student imitates the strokes.</p>
<p>Giant Handwriting Poster</p>	<p>Student traces the First Strokes (circle stroke, short line down, tall line down, leaning line, sleepy line) on giant wall posters.</p> 
<p>Giant Handwriting Lines</p>	<p>Student traces the First Strokes or individual letters on giant handwriting posters. Handwriting posters can be made with foam board or poster board, and blue and pink masking tape.</p> 
<p>Other Large Motor Activities</p>	<p>Student practices drawing the First Stroke or the individual letters with a flashlight, sword (alphabet writer), cut off piece of a foam swimming noodle. Students with exceptional needs may need to trace letters large letters drawn on the board versus copy letters or write from memory.</p>

### Medium Motor/Kinesthetic Learning

After large motor learning, a student should do “medium motor learning”. While large motor learning is primarily kinesthetic learning, medium motor learning is predominantly tactile learning. For students above age 4.5, all medium motor learning should be within giant sized handwriting lines. Drawing in shaving cream, sand, or tracing sand letter cards are examples of medium motor learning. Medium motor learning should be fun, and designed to maintain the student’s interest in practicing drawing the letters.

Three important things should be emphasized during medium motor learning. Students should practice sequencing the letter correctly within the giant handwriting lines. Students should “touchpoint” the writing lines. Medium motor activities work best when handwriting lines used – as it give the student a guide for how to sequence letters. Students should form the letters without “handwriting errors” (see chapter on handwriting errors)

Below are some fun, “medium motor” techniques.

1. Instructor writes handwriting lines on a window using Crayola® Window Markers. Student uses a dry erase marker to practice writing the letter of the day.



2. Student uses a corn cob holder (1 prong removed), to punch out the letter of the day within handwriting lines. A foam backed, pressure sensitive mat kitchen mat is used for the punch mat. Mats can be purchased at department stores and cut into 6 sections. Craft foam or styrofoam work well too.



3. Student draws the letter of the day in shaving cream (they draw the handwriting lines).



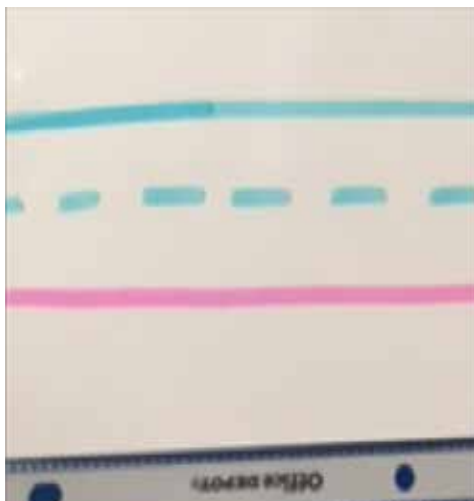
4. Student uses a q-tip dipped in Colorations Liquid Watercolor Paint (available only from [www.discountschoolsupply.com](http://www.discountschoolsupply.com)), and practices the letter of the day within handwriting lines that were drawn with pink/blue highlighters.



5. Student practices writing the letter of the day in a mixture of ½ sand/ ½ salt in a baking tin. Put white paper underneath with handwriting lines pre-drawn. Sand is pre-colored with food coloring or Colorations Liquid Watercolor (see above).



6. Giant handwriting lines are drawn on cardstock and placed inside a sheet protector. Student uses a dry erase marker to practice the letter of the day. The markers will wipe off with a tissue. This is a very easy set-up for medium motor practice for classrooms.



## Small Motor Learning

After a student has progressed from large through medium motor learning, the student is ready to work in the First Strokes® workbooks. Small motor practice is important, to refine the fine motor skills involved in writing. However, the progression should be for pre-k and kindergarten students to spend 70 percent of learning in large and medium motor activities, and 30 percent in the workbook or generalization activities to handwriting paper. First graders need to spend about 50 percent of learning in large and medium motor activities, and 50 percent in workbook or generalization activities. Any time a student has reversals, or sequences letters incorrectly, the student should go back to large or medium motor learning. Ultimately, the student should progress from the workbook to handwriting paper after each letter group and letter, before progressing to the next letter.












### Letter Group Review (see two classroom activities on next two pages!)

After each letter group is introduced, an instructor needs to review the letters within the group. It is recommended that the instructor “sing” the first stroke. Ex. Sing “circle stroke o”, “circle stroke a”, “circle stroke d”, “circle stroke g”, “circle stroke q”, and “circle stroke c”. This will reinforce correct patterning and sequencing of the letters and help with visual memory. Fun games can be played in a classroom:

1. When standing in line, the students can practice clapping their hands together, and then writing the letters in the air.
2. The teacher could pass out foam swimming noodles – cut in 10 inch sticks. The students could use the sticks to practice writing the letters in the air within the letter group.
3. The teacher could pull up handwriting/letter apps on a screen or Smart board, and play the letters in a group versus alphabetically. As the app is playing , the students can write the letters in the air. “Letter School” is a good app because it is highly visual, and has no verbal directions for the letters.
4. If a facility buys a digital site license, there is additional printable homework or practice sheets for each letter groups. After each letter group, the printable sheets have review sheets that are perfect for parents to do home practice.
5. Scribble sheets (see next page)
6. Digital versions of the program have homework practice pages for school or home practice.

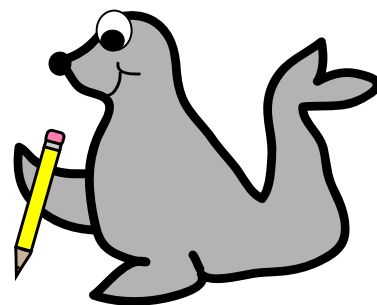
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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# First Strokes®

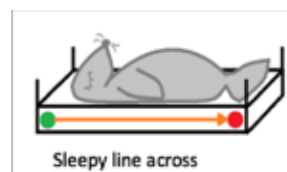
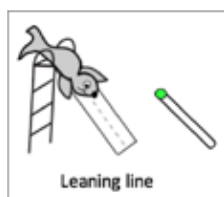
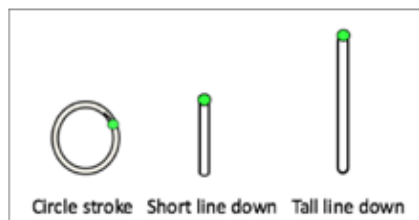
## Reference Sheets






**The Handwriting Clinic™/First Strokes® Products**  
**Richardson, Texas**

## Suggested teaching modules - BLOCK STYLE/lower case:

1. Read the Billy the Seal storybook. Teach students the strokes. Work with the students with large motor learning activities to pattern the strokes correctly (top to bottom, counter-clockwise circle strokes, left to right, etc).

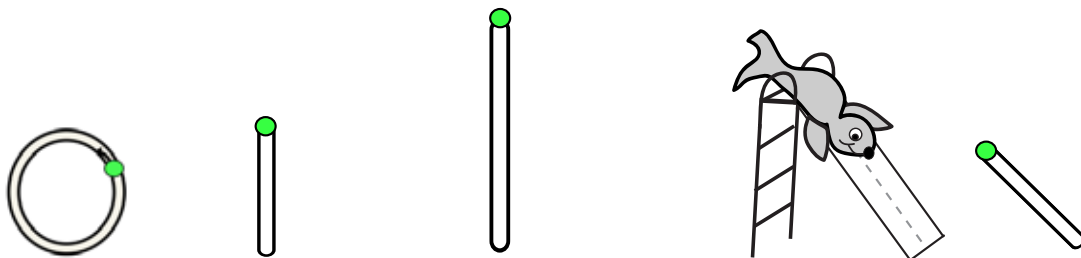


2. Work on strokes through large motor and medium motor activities. Do the stroke pages in the workbook. Practice strokes on blue lined, red/pink baseline handwriting paper (Zaner-Bloser® paper).
3. Work on the following letters through large motor, medium motor and small motor practice. Review letter groups through multi-sensory activities. Students should motorically sequence the letters in the correct pattern/letter formation.

Circle stroke letters:	o a d	
	g q c	
		* Multi-sensory review of oadgqc
Short line down letters	irnm	
	pj	
		* Multi-sensory review of irnmpj and oadgqc
Tall line down letters	lthb	
	k	
		* Multi-sensory review of lthbk, irnmpj and oadgqc
Leaning letters	v w x	
	y	
		* Multi-sensory review of vwxy, lthbk, irnmpj and oadgqc
Sleepy line letters	ez	
		* Multi-sensory review of ez, vwxy, lthbk, irnmpj and oadgqc
Candy cane letter f	 f	
Coiled sea snake s	 s	
Turn around u	 u	
		* Multi-sensory review of fsu, ez, vwxy, lthbk, irnmpj and oadgqc

\*Multi-sensory review – large motor review (write letters within group in the air), scribble sheets, wipe off sheet practice (see activities in this training module

# First Strokes Letter Groups BLOCK STYLE/lower case:



Circle stroke   Short line down   Tall line down

Leaning line

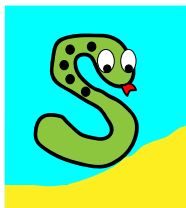


Sleepy line across

Note: There are three letters that have their own individualized stroke:



Candy cane f



Coiled "sea" snake s



Turn around u

Lower case letter groups:

circle stroke letters: o a d g q c

short line down letters: i r n m p j

tall line down letters: l t h b k

leaning line letters: v w x y

sleepy line letters: e z

candy cane f

turn around u

coiled sea snake s



## Terminology chart for the lower case letters: BLOCK STYLE

Instructor should primarily “sing” the “first stroke” such as “circle stroke a”, “circle stroke d”, rather than concentrate on all components of letter formation. Components can be shown to teach the student, but for multi-sensory work, just sing the first stroke. If a student gets the “first stroke” correct, then it is likely that the letter will be formed correctly. Singing the “first stroke” with multi-sensory practice works well when teaching young children letter formation.

### Circle Stroke Letters:

- o - “circle stroke”
- a - “circle stroke” and a “short line down”
- d - “circle stroke” and a “tall line down”
- g - “circle stroke”, “short line down”, “sinking line”, “fish hook”
- q - “circle stroke”, “short line down”, “sinking line”, “leaning line up”
- c - begins like a “circle stroke”

### Short Line Down Letters:

- i - “short line down” and a “dot” in the middle of the top space
- r - “short line down” and a “hilltop”
- n - “short line down” and a “hill”
- m - “short line down”, a “hill” and a “hill”
- p - “short line down”, “sinking line” and a “forward circle”
- j - “short line down”, “sinking line” and a “fish hook”

### Tall Line Down Letters:

- l - “tall line down”
- t - “tall line down”, “sleepy line across”
- h - “tall line down”, and a “hill”
- b - “tall line down” and a “forward circle stroke”
- k - “tall line down”, “leaning line in”, and a “leaning line down”  
alternate: “tall line down, slide “in”, slide “out”

### Leaning Line Letters:

- v - “leaning line down”, “leaning line up”
- w - “leaning line down”, “leaning line up”, “leaning line down”, “leaning line up”
- x - “leaning line down”, “backwards leaning line”
- y - “leaning line down”, “backwards leaning line - SINKING below the writing line”

### “Sleepy Line Across” Letters:

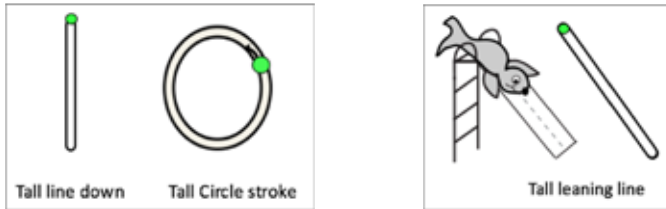
- e - “sleepy line across” and begin a “circle stroke”
- z - “sleepy line across”, “backwards leaning line” and a “sleepy line across”

### 3 letters have their own First Stroke:




- Candy Cane “f” - “candy cane stroke” and a “sleepy line across”
- Turn Around “u”: “turn around stroke” and a “short line down”
- Coiled Sea Snake “s” - starts like a “c” and coils into an “s”

## Suggested teaching modules - BLOCK STYLE/upper case:

1. Teach students the strokes. Work with the students with large motor learning activities to pattern the strokes correctly (top to bottom, counter-clockwise circle strokes, left to right, etc).



2. Work on strokes through large motor and medium motor activities. Do the stroke pages in the workbook. Practice strokes on blue lined, red/pink baselined handwriting paper (Zaner-Bloser® paper).
3. Work on the following letters through large motor, medium motor and small motor practice. Review letter groups through multi-sensory activities. Students should motorically sequence the letters in the correct pattern/letter formation.

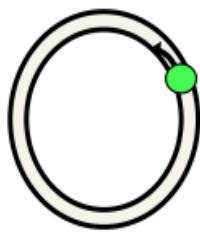
Tall line down letters	BD	
	EFHI	
	JKL	
	MN	
	PRT	
		* Multi-sensory review of BDEFHIJKLMNPRT
Tall circle stroke letters	OQCG	
		* Multi-sensory review of OQCG, BDEFHIJKLMNPRT
Tall leaning letters	V W X	
	Y A	
		* Multi-sensory review of VWXYA, OQCG, BDEFHIJKLMNPRT
Sleepy line letter Z 	Z	
coiled sea snake S 	S	
turn around U 	U	
		* Multi-sensory review of Z, S, U, VWXYA, OQCG, BDEFHIJKLMNPRT

\*Multi-sensory review – large motor review (write letters within group in the air), scribble sheets, wipe off sheet practice (see activities in this training module)

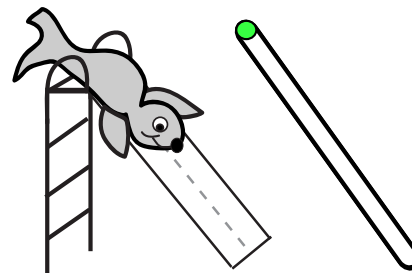
## First Strokes Terminology: BLOCK STYLE/upper case



Tall line down

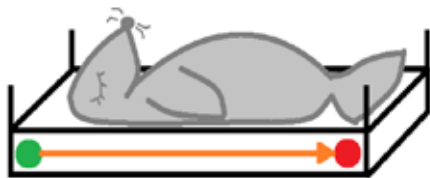


Tall Circle stroke

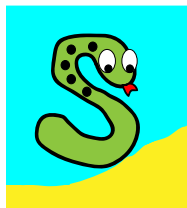


Tall leaning line

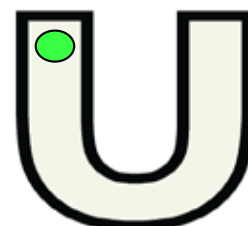
Note: There are three letters that have their own individualized stroke:



Sleepy line z



Coiled "sea" snake s



turn around u

Upper case letter groups:

tall line down letters: B D E F H I J K L M N P R T

tall circle stroke letters: O Q C G

tall leaning line letters: V W X Y A

sleepy line letter: Z

coiled sea snake S      turn around U

## **Terminology chart for the upper case letters: BLOCK STYLE**

Instructor should primarily “sing” the “first stroke” such as “tall line down B”, “tall line down D”, rather than concentrate on all components of letter formation. Components can be shown to teach the student, but for multi-sensory work, just sing the first stroke. If a student gets the “first stroke” correct, then it is likely that the letter will be formed correctly. Singing the “first stroke” with multi-sensory practice works well when teaching young children letter formation.

### **Tall Circle Stroke Letters:**

- B - Tall line down, forward turn around stroke in the top space, and another forward turn around stroke in the bottom space
- D - “Tall line down and a forward turn around stroke across the top line and the writing line
- E - Tall line down, a sleepy line across the top line, a sleepy line across the dotted line, and a sleepy line across the writing line
- F - Tall line down, a sleepy line across the top line, a sleepy line across the dotted line
- H - Tall line down, tall line down, and a sleepy line across the dotted line
- I - Tall line down and a sleepy line across the top line and the writing line
- J - Tall line down, fish hook, and then a sleepy line across the top line
- K - Tall line down, a leaning line in, and a leaning line down
- L - Tall line down and a sleepy line across the writing line
- M - Tall line down, leaning line down, leaning line up and a tall line down
- N - Tall line down, a leaning line down and a tall line up
- P - Tall line down and a forward turn around stroke in the top space
- R - Tall line down, a turn around stroke in the top space and a leaning line down
- T - Tall line down and a sleepy line across the top space

### **Tall Leaning Line Letters:**

- V - Tall leaning line down and a leaning line up
- W - Tall leaning line down, leaning line up, leaning line down and a leaning line up
- X - Tall leaning line and a backwards leaning line
- Y - Leaning line down in the top space and a short line down. Then a backwards leaning line in the top space
- A - Backwards leaning line, forward leaning line and a sleepy line across

### **Tall Circle Letters:**

- O – Tall circle stroke
- G - Starts like a tall circle stroke and then a sleepy line across the dotted line
- C - Starts like a tall circle stroke
- Q - Tall circle stroke and a small leaning line

### **Turn Around U**

- U - Tall turn around stroke

### **Coiled Sea Snake S:**

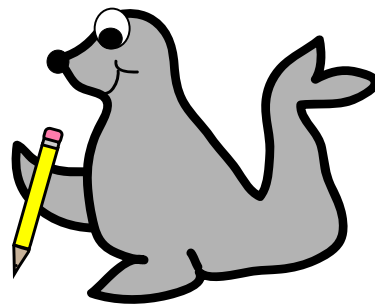
- S - Coiled sea snake S starts like a C and coils into an S

### **Sleepy Line Z:**

- Z – Sleepy line across, backwards leaning line, sleepy line across

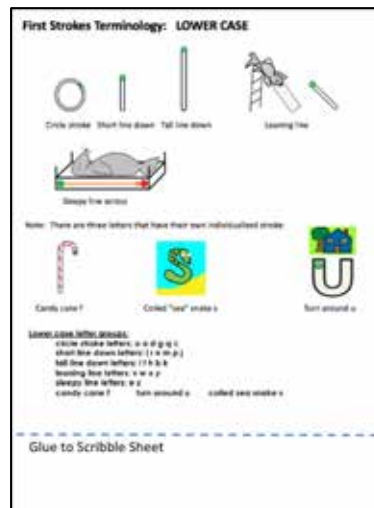
# First Strokes<sup>®</sup>

## Scribble Sheet Templates!



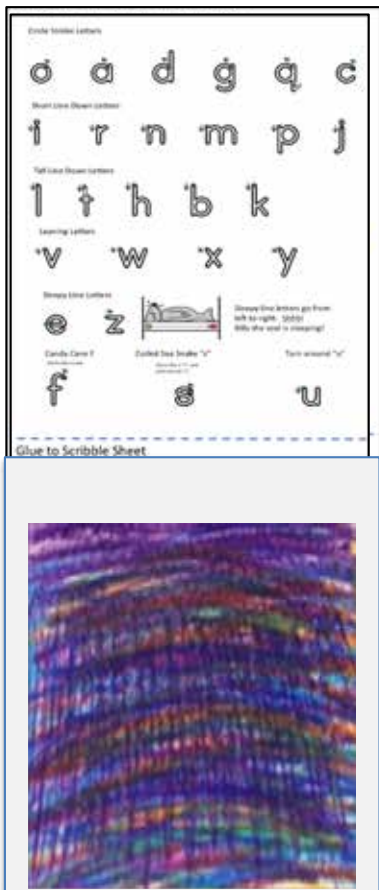
The Handwriting Clinic<sup>™</sup>/First Strokes<sup>®</sup> Products

# Scribble Sheet Directions



1.

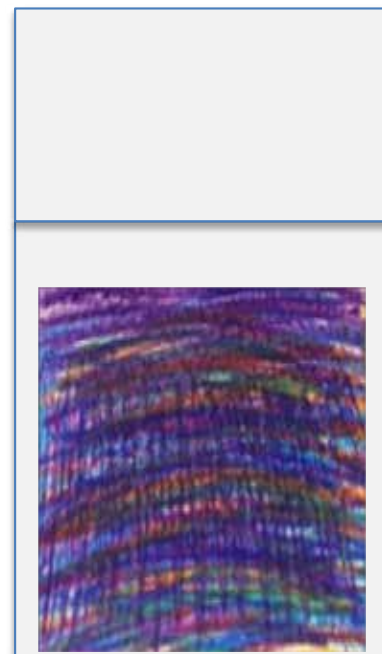
Take the printable scribble sheets. Put the lower case letter page on top of the stroke page.



2.

Glue a piece of cardstock over the bottom portions. Scribble heavily with crayons.

3. Fold top sheets in half. Call out letters within stroke groups and have students write the letters from memory. Instructor should "sing" the first stroke and the letter. Ex. "circle stroke a, circle stroke d". Letters should be written "fast" and "large" to get the motoric patterning of the letters. Students should be able to write the numbers from memory, in the correct sequence. If the letter is formed incorrectly, or the student does not remember the letter, the student can open the sheets and refer to the letter page for the correct sequence.



Circle Stroke Letters



Short Line Down Letters



Tall Line Down Letters



Leaning Letters



Sleepy Line Letters



Sleepy line letters go from left to right. Shhh!  
Billy the seal is sleeping!

Candy Cane f  
Starts like a cane



Coiled Sea Snake "s"

Starts like a "c" and coils into an "s"



Turn around "u"



---

Glue to Scribble Sheet

## First Strokes Terminology: LOWER CASE



Circle stroke



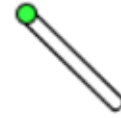
Short line down



Tall line down



Leaning line



Sleepy line across

Note: There are three letters that have their own individualized stroke:



Candy cane f



Coiled "sea" snake s



Turn around u

### Lower case letter groups:

circle stroke letters: o a d g q c

short line down letters: i r n m p j

tall line down letters: l t h b k

leaning line letters: v w x y

sleepy line letters: e z

candy cane f

turn around u

coiled sea snake s

---

Glue to Scribble Sheet (behind the lower case letter sheet)



Tall Line Down Letters≈



Tall Circle Stroke Letters



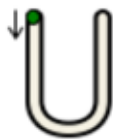
Leaning Line Letters



Coiled Sea Snake S



Turn Around U



Sleepy Line Z



Glue to Scribble Sheet

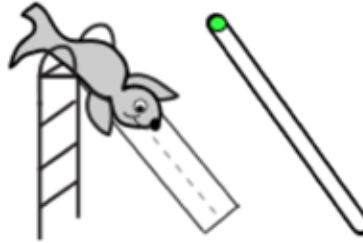
## First Strokes Terminology: UPPER CASE



Tall line down



Tall  
Circle stroke



Tall leaning line

Note: There are three letters that have their own individualized stroke:



Sleepy line z



Coiled "sea" snake s



Turn around u

### Upper case letter groups:

tall line down letters: B D E F H I J K L M N P R T

tall circle stroke letters: O Q C G

tall leaning line letters: V W X Y A

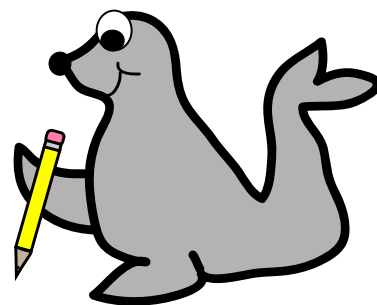
sleepy line letter: Z

turn around U      coiled sea snake S

Glue to Scribble Sheet (behind the upper case letter sheet)

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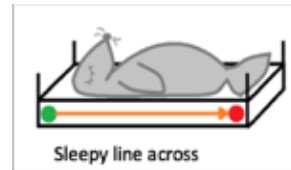
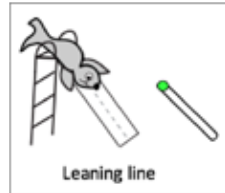
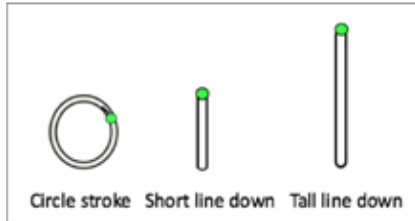
Lower case modules –  
the digital versions  
of the program have  
practice pages to  
introduce each  
module






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## Suggested teaching modules - BLOCK STYLE/lower case:

1. Read the Billy the Seal storybook. Teach students the strokes. Work with the students with large motor learning activities to pattern the strokes correctly (top to bottom, counter-clockwise circle strokes, left to right, etc).



2. Work on strokes through large motor and medium motor activities. Do the stroke pages in the workbook. Practice strokes on blue lined, red/pink baseline handwriting paper (Zaner-Bloser® paper).
3. Work on the following letters through large motor, medium motor and small motor practice. Review letter groups through multi-sensory activities. Students should motorically sequence the letters in the correct pattern/letter formation.

Circle stroke letters:	o a d	
	g q c	
		* Multi-sensory review of oadgqc
Short line down letters	irnm	
	pj	
		* Multi-sensory review of irnmpj and oadgqc
Tall line down letters	lthb	
	k	
		* Multi-sensory review of lthbk, irnmpj and oadgqc
Leaning letters	v w x	
	y	
		* Multi-sensory review of vwxy, lthbk, irnmpj and oadgqc
Sleepy line letters	ez	
		* Multi-sensory review of ez, vwxy, lthbk, irnmpj and oadgqc
Candy cane letter f	 f	
Coiled sea snake s	 s	
Turn around u	 u	
		* Multi-sensory review of fsu, ez, vwxy, lthbk, irnmpj and oadgqc

\*Multi-sensory review – large motor review (write letters within group in the air), scribble sheets, wipe off sheet practice (see activities in this training module

# Digital download files include introduction practice sheets for each stroke group.

## Circle stroke letters:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

circle stroke    short line down stroke    tall line down stroke

Trace the circle strokes:

Trace the short line down strokes:

Trace the tall line down strokes:

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Circle stroke:

Trace the circle stroke letters:

Use your "go" fingers on a pencil to color the shape to the same direction as the stroke.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Circle stroke:

Trace the circle stroke letters:

Use your "go" fingers on a pencil to color the shape to the same direction as the stroke.

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## Short line down letters:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Short line down stroke:

Trace the short line down letters:

Use your "go" fingers on a pencil to color the shape to the same direction as the stroke.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Short line down stroke:

Trace the short line down letters:

Use your "go" fingers on a pencil to trace the shape.

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## Tall line down letters:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Tall line down stroke:

Trace the tall line down letters:

Use your "go" fingers on a pencil, to trace the shape.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Tall line down stroke:

Trace the tall line down letters:

Use your "go" fingers on a pencil, to trace the shape.

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## Leaning line letters:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Leaning line stroke:

Trace the leaning line letters:

Use your "go" fingers on a pencil, to trace or color the shape.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Leaning line stroke:

Trace the leaning line letters:

Use your "go" fingers on a pencil, to trace or color the shape.

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## Sleepy line letters:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Trace the sleepy line stroke from LEFT to RIGHT 3 times.

Trace the letters from FROM LEFT to RIGHT

Use your "go" fingers on a pencil, to trace LEFT to RIGHT!

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## "Candy cane f", "coiled sea snake s", and "turn around u" letters:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Trace the "candy cane f" stroke and "candy cane f"

Candy cane "f"

Trace the "coiled sea snake s" stroke and "coiled sea snake s" letter:

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

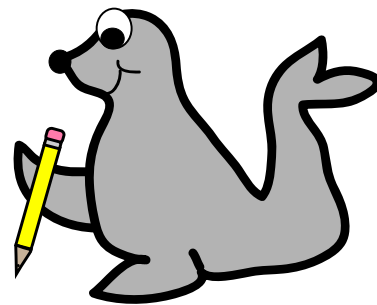
Trace the "turn around u" stroke.

Trace the "turn around u" letters.

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# First Strokes®

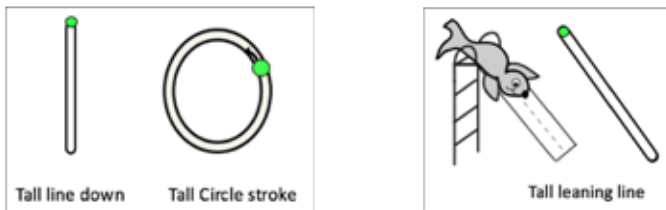
Upper case modules –  
the digital versions  
of the program have  
practice pages to  
introduce each  
module






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## Suggested teaching modules - BLOCK STYLE/upper case:

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3. Work on the following letters through large motor, medium motor and small motor practice. Review letter groups through multi-sensory activities. Students should motorically sequence the letters in the correct pattern/letter formation.

Tall line down letters	BD	
	EFHI	
	JKL	
	MN	
	PRT	
		* Multi-sensory review of BDEFHIJKLMNPRT
Tall circle stroke letters	OQCG	
		* Multi-sensory review of OQCG, BDEFHIJKLMNPRT
Tall leaning letters	V W X	
	Y A	
		* Multi-sensory review of VWXYA, OQCG, BDEFHIJKLMNPRT
Sleepy line letter Z 	Z	
coiled sea snake S 	S	
turn around U 	U	
		* Multi-sensory review of Z, S, U, VWXYA, OQCG, BDEFHIJKLMNPRT

\*Multi-sensory review – large motor review (write letters within group in the air), scribble sheets, wipe off sheet practice (see activities in this training module)



# Digital download files include introduction practice sheets for each stroke group.

## Tall line down letters:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Tall line down stroke:

Trace the tall line down letters:

B D

Use your "go" fingers on a pencil, to color the shape in the same direction as the arrow.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Tall line down stroke:

Trace the tall line down letters:

E F H I

Use your "go" fingers on a pencil, to color the shape in the same direction as the arrow.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Tall line down stroke:

Trace the tall line down letters:

J K L

Use your "go" fingers on a pencil, to color the shape in the same direction as the arrow.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Tall line down stroke:

Trace the tall line down letters:

M N

Use your "go" fingers on a pencil, to trace the shape.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Tall line down stroke:

Trace the tall line down letters:

P R T

Use your "go" fingers on a pencil, to trace the shape.

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## Sleepy line Z:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Trace the sleepy line stroke from LEFT to RIGHT 5 times.

Trace the letters from LEFT to RIGHT

Z Z Z

Use your "go" fingers on a pencil, to trace LEFT to RIGHT

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## Tall circle stroke letters:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Tall circle stroke:

Trace the tall circle letters:

C R Q G

Use your "go" fingers on a pencil, to trace or color the shape.

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## Tall leaning line letters:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Tall leaning line stroke:

Trace the tall circle letters:

V W X

Use your "go" fingers on a pencil, to trace or color the shape.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Tall leaning line stroke:

Trace the tall circle letters:

Y A

Use your "go" fingers on a pencil, to trace or color the shape.

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## "Coiled sea snake S", and "turn around U" letters:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

"Coiled sea snake S" stroke.

Trace the "coiled sea snake S" letter.

S S S

Use your "go" fingers on a pencil, to trace the shape.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

"Turn around U" stroke.

Trace the "turn around U" letter.

U U U

Use your "go" fingers on a pencil, to trace the shape.

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