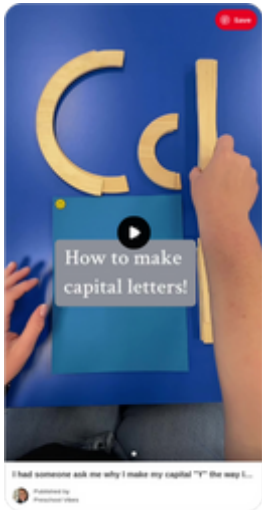


# DEAR SISTER THERAPY

## HANDWRITING WITHOUT TEARS<sup>®</sup> GUIDE

*why we love the program*

Some cool products from Handwriting Without Tears



[Click here to watch the video!](#)



[Click here to watch the video!](#)

*handwriting doesn't  
have to be boring*

We absolutely love using the Handwriting Without Tears (HWT) program when teaching children how to write their letters. This program utilizes some neat approaches to laying the foundation of good directionality (top to bottom and left to right) while also maximizing the joy of learning to write. It's all fun and no tears when we use this program!

Some really cool features of the HWT program:

### Emphasizes directionality

- Directionality is the term we use for top to bottom and left to right formation
- Writing with proper directionality is fundamental for good reading skills and strengthens neural pathways

### Uses a multi-sensory approach

- Facilitating a strong sensory connection during handwriting practice enriches the learning experience and strengthens neural pathways
- HWT uses multi-sensory learning materials which promotes kinesthetic learning. Kinesthetic learning is a learning style that involves physical movement and activity and is based on the idea that students learn best by doing.

### Explore not bore

- This program incorporates fun songs/rhymes/phrases/sayings to help promote memorization of how to properly write letters
- The multi-sensory learning materials make learning handwriting significantly more fun than traditional methods of worksheet based learning.

*Dear Sister Therapy*

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# DEAR SISTER THERAPY

## HANDWRITING WITHOUT TEARS<sup>®</sup> GUIDE

Principles of Learning

### the developmental progression

It's crucial to understand WHY the HWT program goes about teaching handwriting in a few unique ways compared to other curriculums.

We have boiled it down into a few key principles for you to understand:

#### Unique order of learning

Handwriting Without Tears (HWT) facilitates good directionality and core handwriting habits by following a unique learning order. Instead of learning to write letters in alphabetical order, HWT features a developmental progression. You start with the group of letters that are cornerstones to the framework of good letter directionality: top to bottom and left to right formation. Children are to start learning the "frog jump" letters first. Once the "frog jump" letters are consistently written with good letter directionality/formation, a child moves onto the next group of letter fundamentals, then the next, then the next, etc. Eventually your child will follow the entire progression learn all of the capital letters.

We have found in real life application that children generally take the longest amount of time to learn how to write the first letter group. The second letter group often goes by faster, the next group goes by even faster, and so forth. If you spend time developing good fundamentals with learning the program and how to teach letters starting with the most influential letters (the frog jump letters), you will find great success with the HWT program.

1st

F E D B P R N M *frog jump capitals*  
H K L U V W X Y Z *corner starter capitals*  
**C O Q G S** A T I J *center starter capitals*  
*magic capitals*

2nd

c o s v w t  
a d g  
u i e l k y j  
p r n m h b  
f q x z

*the lowercase letters are taught in a specific progression to increase ease of learning and decrease confusion/reversals*

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## HANDWRITING WITHOUT TEARS<sup>®</sup> GUIDE

### HWT “Language”

The HWT program emphasizes use of special “language” for describing the types of strokes that each letter needs to write that letter. We use this sing-songish approach for increasing memorization by tapping into the part of the brain that remembers songs vs. words since it’s much easier to memorize words to a song. By using consistent phrases/jingles when writing each letter, you are increasing the neural pathway that’s being laid as a child writes the letter increasing recall and decreasing confusion and the prevalence of errors/reversals/etc.

At DST, we have adjusted the HWT language used when writing each stroke of a letter to emphasize directionality, so below is the phrasing that WE use with children who have well developed language skills:

Principles of Learning

Dear Sister Therapy's Version

\*Please see appendix for all guides and visuals for learning capital and lowercase letters

F E D B P R N M

Point to the smiley face corner each time you say “start at the top”

These are the words that we say when writing each stroke, you say each line of the phrase/jingle as you make that stroke



In the beginning when first introducing the “frog jump” to kids we make a frog sound “ribbit” to emphasize what we are meaning when we do a “frog jump” back to the starting corner

H K L U V W X Y Z

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE CORNER  
BIG LINE DOWN  
LITTLE LINE ACROSS  
LETTER H

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE CORNER  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
KARATE CHOP LETTER K

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
LITTLE LINE ACROSS  
LETTER L

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
CURVE IT AROUND  
LETTER U

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
AND UP  
LETTER V

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
UP  
DOWN  
UP  
LETTER W

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE CORNER  
BIG LINE DOWN  
LETTER X

START AT THE TOP  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
BIG LINE DOWN  
LETTER Y

START AT THE TOP  
LITTLE LINE ACROSS  
BIG LINE DOWN  
LITTLE LINE ACROSS  
LETTER Z

C O Q G S A T I J

START AT THE MIDDLE  
BIG CURVE  
MAKES A MAGIC C

START AT THE MIDDLE  
MAGIC C  
TURN IT INTO AN “O”  
WOW! THAT’S A MAGIC C LETTER

START AT THE MIDDLE  
MAGIC C  
TURN IT INTO AN “O”  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
TURN IT INTO A “Q”  
WOW! THAT’S A MAGIC C LETTER

START AT THE MIDDLE  
MAGIC C  
TURN IT INTO AN “G”  
“IF YOUR CHILD NEEDS MORE DIRECTION: START AT THE MIDDLE MAGIC C LITTLE LINE UP LITTLE LINE ACROSS NOW IT’S A “G” WOW! THAT’S A MAGIC C LETTER

START AT THE MIDDLE  
START YOUR MAGIC C  
TURN IT INTO AN “S”  
WOW! THAT’S A MAGIC C LETTER

START AT THE MIDDLE  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP  
BACK TO THE MIDDLE  
BIG LINE DOWN  
LITTLE LINE ACROSS  
LETTER A

START AT THE MIDDLE  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP  
BACK TO THE TOP  
LITTLE LINE ACROSS  
LETTER T

START AT THE MIDDLE  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP  
BACK TO THE TOP  
LITTLE LINE AT THE BOTTOM  
LETTER I

START AT THE MIDDLE  
BIG LINE DOWN  
HOOK IT AROUND  
FROG JUMP  
BACK TO THE TOP  
LITTLE LINE ACROSS  
LETTER J

Over time, a child memorizes how to write each letter and you need less and less of the language. The language is mostly used at the introduction of that letter and learning the strokes needed for properly forming that letter

Feel free to adjust the “language” to fit your child and suit your own needs. Do what makes sense to you. This is the language that we have found to be very helpful for children who have well developed language. \*Please note: for some children, adding the language while writing is TOO HARD and make writing even harder. Discuss this with your child’s therapist to find a “just right” fit for them.

Dear Sister Therapy

PEDIATRIC SPEECH AND OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

# DEAR SISTER THERAPY

## HANDWRITING WITHOUT TEARS<sup>®</sup> GUIDE

*the products we love + ways we use them*

### Wooden Letter Pieces



\$37.95 from  
Learning Without  
Tears Website  
in 2024

[Link to purchase!](#)

### How to Use

- The wooden letter pieces are used to “build” the letters prior to writing them. You can use the HWT program “language” while building the letters, then “drive” your finger along the letter prior to writing the letter at the chalkboard
- We love to use the wooden letter pieces to incorporate play into instruction vs. only using when doing structured teaching/lessons in order to increase the connection between handwriting + fun
- We frequently use in a “hunt and gather” play sequence where the pieces needed for making letter “B” are hidden by the adult all around the room and the child can collect the pieces needed and make letter “B” after bringing back to the table or teaching area.
- You can increase the challenge of the task above by scattering or hiding all of the letter pieces from the box and “quiz” your child by having them collect ONLY the letter pieces needed to make letter “B” to provide a challenge and test to see if your child is recalling the components needed for building each capital letter.



### Chalkboard, chalk bits, sponges, and wet rag



Sponges we use @ DST  
sourced from Walmart  
cut into 1"x1" squares



\$5.95 from  
Learning Without  
Tears Website  
in 2024

[Link to purchase!](#)



Regular size chalk  
(not sidewalk chalk)

source from Walmart, Target, etc.

### How to Use

- The wet, dry, try, approach is based on the principle of:
- FIRST, the child first sees the adult write the letter on the chalkboard using proper directionality while also using the HWT “language”.
- SECOND, the child takes the sponge piece and wets the letter to erase it following the same sequence using HWT “language”
- THIRD, the child then writes the letter on the chalkboard using HWT “language”
- FOURTH, the child then erases the letter they wrote using the sponge bit
- FIFTH, the child or the adult wipes off the whole board getting it clean again and ready for the next letter or next repetition

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## HANDWRITING WITHOUT TEARS<sup>®</sup> GUIDE

*the products we love + ways we use them*

### Mat for Letter Pieces

\$4.95 from  
Learning Without  
Tears Website  
in 2024



[Link to purchase!](#)

### How to Use

- The mat is used with the wooden letter pieces (and can be used with the magnetic pieces too if not using the special magnetic blue board). The smiley face in the top left corner is used as a marker to show kids where the “starting corner” is. At DST we use a little jingle “Where do we start our letters? At the top, bom bom” in sing-song fashion while we point to the top starting corner to help orient to top to bottom and left to right letter formation. The jingle/song used every time we start writing practice helps a child to recall the starting corner and increases ease of learning vs. using words alone.

### Magnetic Letter Pieces



\$35.95 from  
Learning Without  
Tears Website  
in 2024

[Link to purchase!](#)

Difficult to find on  
website, may be  
discontinued in future

### How to Use

- The magnetic letter pieces work the same way that the wooden letter pieces work. You can use one or the other or alternate between using one set for practice one day, and the other set for practice the other day.
- If you are working intensively with your child. Having a set of the magnetic wooden pieces can be helpful for “changing it up” to increase the length of time that you can practice without the activity getting “old”. You know your child best and know their attention span, and need for novelty to stay focused/“stick with it”.
- The magnetic letter pieces can be used on the blue magnetic mat and whiteboard that it comes with, or with a larger whiteboard. We like using the magnetic pieces when we are increasing the challenge from writing at the chalkboard to writing letters more freely on a whiteboard. The same wet, dry, try, concept can be used without water by using a whiteboard eraser/paper towel instead.

## Adding a little challenge with the whiteboard!

At the chalkboard, a child has tactile cues for where to start and stop since the HWT chalkboard has a frame around it. The physical frame stops the chalk from going outside and makes it easier for a child to start and stop letters appropriately. When you start writing on other materials such as the whiteboard, it increases the challenge and a child has to start and stop on their own in order to form letters with appropriate proportions/sizing.

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## HANDWRITING WITHOUT TEARS<sup>®</sup> GUIDE

*more products we love*

### Lowercase Letter Learning Kit



\$30.95 from  
Learning Without  
Tears Website  
in 2024

[Link to purchase here!](#)

### Stamp and See Screen



[Link to purchase here!](#)

\$17.95 from  
Learning Without  
Tears Website  
in 2024

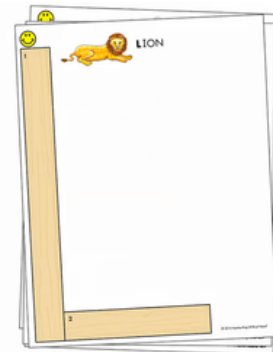
### Roll-a-dough Letters



\$21.95 from  
Learning Without  
Tears Website  
in 2024

[Link to purchase here!](#)

### Laminated Capital Letter Cards



\$24.95 from  
Learning Without  
Tears Website  
in 2024

[Link to purchase here!](#)

These products can be used to “change it up and add variety to the learning methods in order to increase generalization of learned concepts and increase engagement in writing. This works especially well for children who struggle with writing or for those who don’t consider handwriting to be a highly preferred activity. It works great to maintain interest, especially if you are working more intensively in preparation for school, or if you are working to help your child “catch up” to their peers with handwriting practice at home.

We have listed all of our favorite products: the ones we own and use with our clients on a regular basis. Talk to your child’s therapist to get a personalized recommendation on which products your therapist believes your child would benefit from the most, or find most engaging based on their particular strengths and interests.

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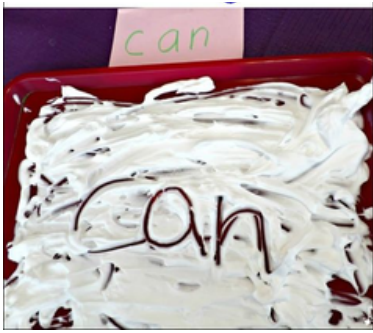
## HANDWRITING WITHOUT TEARS<sup>®</sup> GUIDE

*ways to "change it up"*

Here are some fun ideas you can use to "change up" your handwriting routines and practice sessions in order to make them fun and engaging. Because after all, practice makes all the difference in developing good handwriting skills. Being able to keep it exciting will help your child to be successful in learning even if it doesn't come naturally and takes some effort to master.

*handwriting doesn't  
have to be boring*

Try some fun multisensory writing activities=writing in different sensory medias  
this is a fun and easy way to "change it up"



Try writing in:

sandbox  
sprinkles  
playdoh  
shaving cream  
kinetic sand  
magnadoodle



Try building letters  
with different  
object/medias:

foam beads  
playdoh  
wiki sticks  
pipecleaners  
pom poms



Try writing letters  
in different  
mediums:

sidewalk chalk  
water colors  
paint  
crayon



Try writing with different tools such  
as paint brushes, dot markers, scratch  
sticks (to use with scratch off paper)

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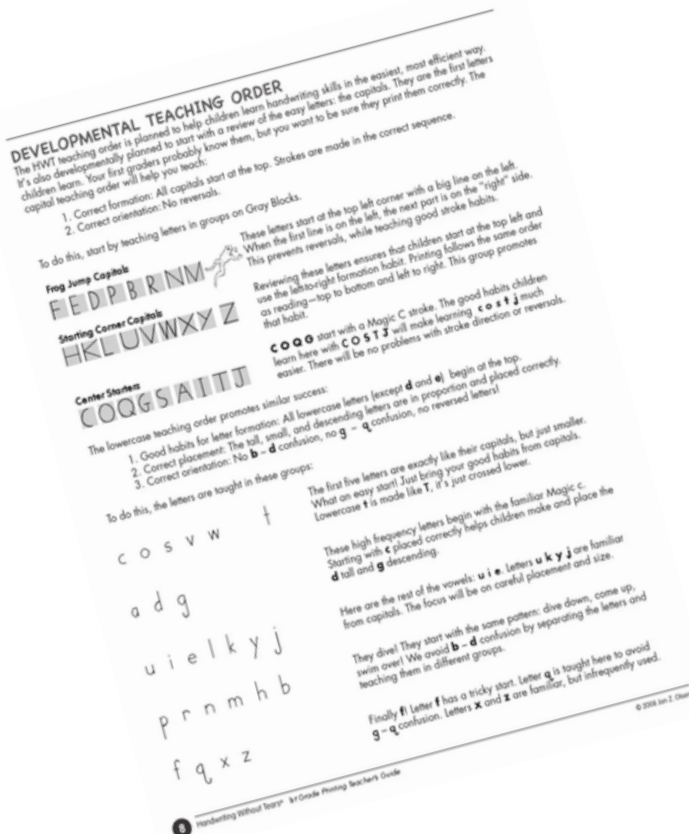
### Appendix

Teaching  
Guides



+

Visual  
Aids



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## HANDWRITING WITHOUT TEARS® GUIDE

### *Handwriting Without Tears' Version*



#### Capital Formation Chart



Big Line  
Big Line  
Little Line



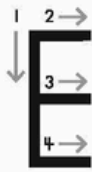
Big Line  
Little Curve  
Little Curve



Big Curve



Big Line  
Big Curve



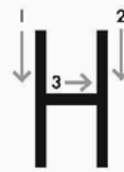
Big Line  
Little Line  
Little Line  
Little Line



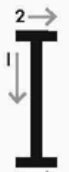
Big Line  
Little Line  
Little Line



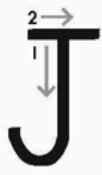
Big Curve  
Little Line  
Little Line



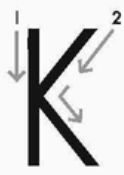
Big Line  
Big Line  
Little Line



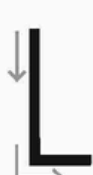
Big Line  
Little Line  
Little Line



Big Line  
Turn  
Little Line



Big Line  
Little Line  
Little Line



Big Line  
Little Line



Big Line  
Big Line  
Big Line  
Big Line



Big Line  
Big Line  
Big Line



Big Curve  
Go around



Big Line  
Little Curve



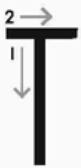
Big Curve  
Go around  
Little Line



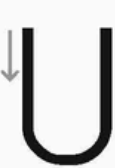
Big Line  
Little Curve  
Little Line



Little Curve  
Turn  
Little Curve



Big Line  
Little Line



Big Line  
Turn  
Big Line



Big Line  
Big Line



Big Line  
Big Line  
Big Line  
Big Line



Big Line  
Big Line



Little Line  
Big Line



Little Line  
Big Line  
Little Line

© 2018 Learning Without Tears

✦ This chart from Handwriting Without Tears shows adults how to form the letters, what strokes are used when, and it shows the simple language for the types of strokes used (big line, little line, big curve, little curve). This is a great option for kiddos who have a hard time motor planning for writing while also talking. If your child likes the “language” part of the program and enjoys chanting the jingle while writing, you may opt for Dear Sister Therapy’s version that utilizes additional directionality terms for increasing awareness for which direction the lines go. Either way is great, the key is consistency and utilization or avoidance of language in order to help your child learn most efficiently and effectively as possible.

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# DEAR SISTER THERAPY

## HANDWRITING WITHOUT TEARS<sup>®</sup> GUIDE

### Handwriting Without Tears Developmental Teaching Order

#### DEVELOPMENTAL TEACHING ORDER

The HWT teaching order is planned to help children learn handwriting skills in the easiest, most efficient way. It's also developmentally planned to start with a review of the easy letters: the capitals. They are the first letters children learn. Your first graders probably know them, but you want to be sure they print them correctly. The capital teaching order will help you teach:

1. Correct formation: All capitals start at the top. Strokes are made in the correct sequence.
2. Correct orientation: No reversals.

To do this, start by teaching letters in groups on Gray Blocks.

##### Frog Jump Capitals



These letters start at the top left corner with a big line on the left. When the first line is on the left, the next part is on the "right" side. This prevents reversals, while teaching good stroke habits.

##### Starting Corner Capitals



Reviewing these letters ensures that children start at the top left and use the left-to-right formation habit. Printing follows the same order as reading—top to bottom and left to right. This group promotes that habit.

##### Center Starters



**C O Q G** start with a Magic C stroke. The good habits children learn here with **C O S T J** will make learning **c o s t j** much easier. There will be no problems with stroke direction or reversals.

The lowercase teaching order promotes similar success:

1. Good habits for letter formation: All lowercase letters (except **d** and **e**) begin at the top.
2. Correct placement: The tall, small, and descending letters are in proportion and placed correctly.
3. Correct orientation: No **b – d** confusion, no **g – q** confusion, no reversed letters!

To do this, the letters are taught in these groups:



The first five letters are exactly like their capitals, but just smaller. What an easy start! Just bring your good habits from capitals. Lowercase **t** is made like **T**, it's just crossed lower.



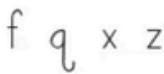
These high frequency letters begin with the familiar Magic c. Starting with **c** placed correctly helps children make and place the **d** tall and **g** descending.



Here are the rest of the vowels: **u i e**. Letters **u k y j** are familiar from capitals. The focus will be on careful placement and size.



They dive! They start with the same pattern: dive down, come up, swim over! We avoid **b – d** confusion by separating the letters and teaching them in different groups.



Finally **f**! Letter **f** has a tricky start. Letter **q** is taught here to avoid **g – q** confusion. Letters **x** and **z** are familiar, but infrequently used.

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HANDWRITING WITHOUT TEARS GUIDE  
HWT "Language"

The HWT program emphasizes use of special "language" for describing the types of strokes that each letter needs to write that letter. We use this sing-songish approach for increasing memorization by tapping into the part of the brain that remembers songs vs. words since it's much easier to memorize words to a song. By using consistent phrases/jingles when writing each letter, you are increasing the neural pathway that's being laid as a child writes the letter increasing recall and decreasing confusion and the prevalence of errors/reversals/etc.

At DST, we have adjusted the HWT language used when writing each stroke of a letter to emphasize directionality, so below is the phrasing that WE use with children who have well developed language skills:

F E D B P R N M

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE TOP  
LITTLE LINE AT THE TOP  
LITTLE LINE AT THE MIDDLE  
LITTLE LINE AT THE BOTTOM  
LETTER F

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE TOP  
LITTLE LINE AT THE TOP  
LITTLE CURVE  
LETTER B

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE TOP  
LITTLE CURVE  
LETTER P

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE TOP  
LITTLE CURVE  
LETTER R

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE TOP  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
AND UP  
DOWN  
LETTER N

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE TOP  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
LETTER M



In the beginning when first introducing the "frog jump" to kids we make a frog sound "ribbit" to emphasize what we are meaning when we do a "frog jump" back to the starting corner

These are the words that we say when writing each stroke, you say each line of the phrase/jingle as you make that stroke

H K L U V W X Y Z

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE CORNER  
BIG LINE DOWN  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
LETTER H

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE CORNER  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
LETTER K

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
LITTLE LINE ACROSS  
LETTER L

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
CURVE IT AROUND  
LETTER U

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
AND UP  
LETTER V

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
UP  
LETTER W

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE CORNER  
BIG LINE DOWN  
LETTER X

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
BIG LINE DOWN  
LITTLE LINE ACROSS  
LETTER Y

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
BIG LINE DOWN  
LITTLE LINE ACROSS  
LETTER Z

C O Q G S A T I J

START AT THE MIDDLE  
BIG CURVE  
MAKES A MAGIC C

START AT THE MIDDLE  
MAGIC C  
TURN IT INTO AN "O"  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
TURN IT INTO A "Q"  
WOW! THAT'S A MAGIC C LETTER

START AT THE MIDDLE  
MAGIC C  
TURN IT INTO AN "O"  
LITTLE LINE ACROSS  
LETTER Q

START AT THE MIDDLE  
MAGIC C  
TURN IT INTO AN "O"  
LITTLE LINE ACROSS  
LETTER S

START AT THE MIDDLE  
MAGIC C  
TURN IT INTO AN "O"  
LITTLE LINE ACROSS  
LETTER A

START AT THE MIDDLE  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP  
BACK TO THE TOP  
LITTLE LINE AT THE TOP  
LITTLE LINE ACROSS  
LETTER T

START AT THE MIDDLE  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP  
HOOK IT AROUND  
FROG JUMP  
BACK TO THE TOP  
LITTLE LINE ACROSS  
LETTER I

START AT THE MIDDLE  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP  
HOOK IT AROUND  
FROG JUMP  
BACK TO THE TOP  
LITTLE LINE ACROSS  
LETTER J

Over time, a child memorizes how to write each letter and you need less and less of the language. The language is mostly used at the introduction of that letter and learning the strokes needed for properly forming that letter



# DEAR SISTER THERAPY

## HANDWRITING WITHOUT TEARS GUIDE

F

E

D

B

P

R

N

M

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE TOP  
LITTLE LINE AT THE TOP  
LITTLE LINE AT THE BOTTOM  
LETTER F

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE TOP  
LITTLE LINE IN THE MIDDLE  
LITTLE LINE AT THE BOTTOM  
LETTER E

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE TOP  
BIG CURVE  
LETTER D

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE TOP  
LITTLE CURVE  
LETTER B

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE TOP  
LITTLE CURVE  
LETTER P

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE TOP  
LITTLE CURVE  
LETTER R

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE TOP  
AND UP  
LETTER N

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
UP  
DOWN  
LETTER M

H

K

L

U

V

W

X

Y

Z

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE CORNER  
BIG LINE DOWN  
LITTLE LINE ACROSS  
LETTER H

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE CORNER  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
LETTER K

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
LITTLE LINE ACROSS  
LETTER L

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
CURVE IT AROUND  
LETTER U

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
AND UP  
LETTER V

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
UP  
DOWN  
UP  
LETTER W

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE CORNER  
BIG LINE DOWN  
LETTER X

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
LETTER Y

START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
LITTLE LINE ACROSS  
LETTER Z

C

O

Q

G

S

A

T

I

J

START AT THE MIDDLE  
BIG CURVE  
MAKES A MAGIC C

START AT THE MIDDLE  
MAGIC C  
TURN IT INTO AN "O"  
WOW! THAT'S A MAGIC C LETTER

START AT THE MIDDLE  
MAGIC C  
TURN IT INTO AN "Q"  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
TURN IT INTO A "Q"  
WOW! THAT'S A MAGIC C LETTER

START AT THE MIDDLE  
MAGIC C  
TURN IT INTO AN "G"  
WOW! THAT'S A MAGIC C LETTER

START AT THE MIDDLE  
MAGIC C  
TURN IT INTO AN "S"  
WOW! THAT'S A MAGIC C LETTER

START AT THE MIDDLE  
BIG LINE DOWN  
BACK TO THE MIDDLE  
BIG LINE DOWN  
LITTLE LINE ACROSS  
LETTER A

START AT THE MIDDLE  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP  
BACK TO THE TOP  
LITTLE LINE AT THE TOP  
LITTLE LINE AT THE BOTTOM  
LETTER I

START AT THE MIDDLE  
BIG LINE DOWN  
HOOK IT AROUND  
FROG JUMP  
BACK TO THE TOP  
LITTLE LINE ACROSS  
LETTER J



# DEAR SISTER THERAPY

## HANDWRITING WITHOUT TEARS® GUIDE

### HWT “Language” for Lowercase Letters

Dear Sister  
Therapy's  
Version

Teaching  
Guide

c

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE,  
START IN THE CENTER  
LITTLE CURVE  
MAKES A MAGIC “c”

o

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE,  
START IN THE CENTER  
MAGIC C  
TURN IT INTO AN “o”  
WOW! THAT’S A MAGIC C LETTER

s

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE,  
START IN THE CENTER  
START YOUR MAGIC C  
TURN IT INTO A “s”  
WOW! THAT’S A MAGIC C LETTER

v

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE,  
START ON THE LEFT  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
AND UP  
LETTER “v”

w

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE,  
START ON THE LEFT  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
UP  
DOWN  
UP  
LETTER “w”

t

LETTER “t” STARTS AT THE TOP  
START AT THE MIDDLE  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE MIDDLE  
LITTLE LINE ACROSS  
LETTER “t”

Lowercase letters can be confusing, they have two different starting lines (top line or middle line) and they have three different starting places along those lines leaving 5 total starting places which makes it confusing when learning for the first time. We recommend using top, middle, and bottom lines (rulings) when teaching your child to write lowercase letters. This helps them to visualize where the letter goes and helps them to start the letter in the correct place, reducing errors and reversals. We use language to help a child remember where to start each lowercase letter, but this is a LOT of language and can make things worse for those easily overwhelmed by language. Reduce as needed or stick to simple big line, little line, big curve, little curve language, just recognize that the lines/curves that connect to make lowercase letters become less obvious compared to the capital letters.

As you can see, lowercase letters don’t have as many consistent starting places, and most letters are not the same general formation as the uppercase version. Feel free to adjust the “language” to fit your child and suit your own needs. Do what makes sense to you. This is the language that we have found to be very helpful for children who have well developed language. Please note: for some children, adding the language while writing is TOO HARD and make writing even harder. Discuss this with your child’s therapist to find a “just right” fit for them.

a

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE,  
START IN THE CENTER  
MAGIC C  
TURN IT INTO AN “a”  
WOW! THAT’S A MAGIC C LETTER

d

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE,  
START IN THE CENTER  
MAGIC C  
TURN IT INTO AN “d”  
WOW! THAT’S A MAGIC C LETTER

g

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE,  
START IN THE CENTER  
MAGIC C  
TURN IT INTO AN “g”  
“g” DIPS INTO THE WATER  
WOW! THAT’S A MAGIC C LETTER

u

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE  
START ON THE LEFT  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
CURVE IT AROUND  
LETTER “u”

i

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE  
START IN THE CENTER  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
DOT AT THE TOP  
LETTER “i”

e

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE  
START ON THE LEFT  
GO ACROSS  
UP THE MIDDLE LINE FOR A  
MAGIC C  
TURN IT INTO AN “e”  
WOW! THAT’S A MAGIC C LETTER

l

LETTER “l” STARTS AT THE TOP  
START IN THE MIDDLE  
START ON THE LEFT  
BIG LINE DOWN  
LETTER “l”

k

LETTER “k” STARTS AT THE TOP  
START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE MIDDLE CORNER  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
FOR A LITTLE KAROTE CHOP “k”

y

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE,  
START ON THE LEFT  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
BIG LINE DOWN  
“y” DIPS INTO THE WATER

j

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE,  
START IN THE CENTER  
BIG LINE DOWN  
HOOK IT AROUND  
“j” DIPS INTO THE WATER

p

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE,  
START ON THE LEFT  
BIG LINE DOWN  
“p” dips into the water  
FROG JUMP TO THE TOP  
CIRCLE AROUND  
LETTER “p”

r

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE,  
START ON THE LEFT  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE TOP  
LITTLE CURVE  
LETTER “r”

n

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE,  
START ON THE LEFT  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE TOP  
HOOK IT AROUND  
LETTER “n”

m

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE,  
START AT THE LEFT  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE TOP  
HOOK IT AROUND  
LETTER “m”

h

LETTER “h” STARTS AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
HOOK IT AROUND  
LETTER “h”

b

LETTER “b” STARTS AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
CIRCLE AROUND  
LETTER “b”

f

LETTER “f” STARTS AT THE TOP  
HOOK IT DOWN  
LITTLE LINE ACROSS  
LETTER “f”

q

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE  
START IN THE CENTER  
MAGIC C  
TURN IT INTO A “q”  
WOW! THAT’S A MAGIC C LETTER

x

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE  
START AT THE LEFT  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE CORNER  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
LETTER “x”

z

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE  
START AT THE LEFT  
LITTLE LINE ACROSS  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
LITTLE LINE ACROSS  
LETTER “z”

Dear Sister Therapy

PEDIATRIC SPEECH AND OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

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# DEAR SISTER THERAPY

## HANDWRITING WITHOUT TEARS® GUIDE

### HWT “Language” for Lowercase Letters

c

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE,  
START IN THE CENTER  
LITTLE CURVE  
MAKES A MAGIC “c”

o

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE,  
START IN THE CENTER  
MAGIC C  
TURN IT INTO AN “o”  
WOW! THAT’S A MAGIC C LETTER

s

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE,  
START IN THE CENTER  
START YOUR MAGIC C  
TURN IT INTO A “s”  
WOW! THAT’S A MAGIC C LETTER

v

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE,  
START ON THE LEFT  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
AND UP  
LETTER “v”

w

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE,  
START ON THE LEFT  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
UP  
DOWN  
UP  
LETTER “w”

t

LETTER “t” STARTS AT THE TOP  
START AT THE MIDDLE  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE MIDDLE  
LITTLE LINE ACROSS  
LETTER “t”

a

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE,  
START IN THE CENTER  
MAGIC C  
TURN IT INTO AN “a”  
WOW! THAT’S A MAGIC C LETTER

d

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE,  
START IN THE CENTER  
MAGIC C  
TURN IT INTO AN “d”  
WOW! THAT’S A MAGIC C LETTER

g

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE,  
START IN THE CENTER  
MAGIC C  
TURN IT INTO AN “g”  
“g” DIPS INTO THE WATER  
WOW! THAT’S A MAGIC C LETTER

u

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE  
START ON THE LEFT  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
CURVE IT AROUND  
LETTER “u”

i

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE  
START IN THE CENTER  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
DOT AT THE TOP  
LETTER “i”

e

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE  
START ON THE LEFT  
GO ACROSS  
UP THE MIDDLE LINE FOR A  
MAGIC C  
TURN IT INTO AN “e”  
WOW! THAT’S A MAGIC C LETTER

l

LETTER “l” STARTS AT THE TOP  
START IN THE MIDDLE  
START ON THE LEFT  
BIG LINE DOWN  
LETTER “l”

k

LETTER “k” STARTS AT THE TOP  
START AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE MIDDLE CORNER  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
FOR A LITTLE KAROTE CHOP “k”

y

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE,  
START ON THE LEFT  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
BIG LINE DOWN  
“y” DIPS INTO THE WATER

j

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE,  
START IN THE CENTER  
BIG LINE DOWN  
HOOK IT AROUND  
“j” DIPS INTO THE WATER

p

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE,  
START ON THE LEFT  
BIG LINE DOWN  
“p” dips into the water  
FROG JUMP TO THE TOP  
CIRCLE AROUND  
LETTER “p”

r

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE,  
START ON THE LEFT  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE TOP  
LITTLE CURVE  
LETTER “r”

n

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE,  
START ON THE LEFT  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE TOP  
HOOK IT AROUND  
LETTER “n”

m

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE,  
START ON THE LEFT  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE TOP  
HOOK IT AROUND  
LETTER “m”

h

LETTER “h” STARTS AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
HOOK IT AROUND  
LETTER “h”

b

LETTER “b” STARTS AT THE TOP  
BIG LINE DOWN  
CIRCLE AROUND  
LETTER “b”

f

LETTER “f” STARTS AT THE TOP  
HOOK IT DOWN  
LITTLE LINE ACROSS  
LETTER “f”

q

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE  
START IN THE CENTER  
MAGIC C  
TURN IT INTO A “q”  
WOW! THAT’S A MAGIC C LETTER

x

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE  
START AT THE LEFT  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
FROG JUMP TO THE CORNER  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
LETTER “x”

z

1ST GO TO THE MIDDLE LINE  
START AT THE LEFT  
LITTLE LINE ACROSS  
LITTLE LINE DOWN  
LITTLE LINE ACROSS  
LETTER “z”

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