

How to Support the Left-Handed Kindergarten Writer

When I first work with left-handed kindergarten writers, I love to say something like, "Oh! Lots of famous people are left-handed: President Reagan, President Barak Obama, and Queen Victoria..." It is important to be extra sensitive to the special challenges that left-handed children face in developing efficient and legible handwriting. We want all children to not just learn how to write, but to love being a writer. There are many excellent resources available online to support our continued study. Following are some excerpts from documents and videos we think are especially useful.

"Left hand dominance when writing often is synonymous with poor handwriting, but with proper training this need not be the case.

Angle the Paper for a Left-Handed Writer

When writing with the left hand, paper angle is very important. Start with the paper just to the left of the student's mid-line. Likewise, a right-handed writer should have the paper just to the right of mid-line. The paper should be angled for the left-handed writer so that the top right corner is closer to the body than the top left corner. Different children may prefer more or less angle to the paper." (From *The Handedness Research Institute Papers*)

Proper Pencil Grip

"Many left-handed students grasp a pencil so close to the point that they cannot see what they are writing. Giving these students pencils with harder lead will ease part of the problem, but to make sure the student writes most legibly, he or she must learn the right way to hold a pencil.

The Handedness Research Institute, which contains a wealth of information on how to deal with left-handed students as well as making sure designers remember that left-handed people exist, recommends having the student hold the pencil two and a half centimeters back.

The teacher must understand that left-handed people do face different problems than right-handed students when learning handwriting skills for the first time. The techniques mentioned above will help, but even better are the books written on the subject." (From *Teach Handwriting to Left-Handers*)

Some Famous Left-Handed People:

Recent Left-Handed U.S. Presidents

Ronald Reagan (1911 - 2004) 40th
George H.W. Bush (1924-) 41st
Bill Clinton (1946-) 42nd
Barack Obama (1961-) 44th

Queen Victoria - England
Prince Charles - England
Prince William - England

Left-Handed Musicians

Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, composer

Left-Handed Artists

Michelangelo
Raphael
Leonardo da Vinci

Olympic Athletes

Greg Louganis (diving)
Bruce Jenner (decathlon)
Dorothy Hamill (skating)

Teach Handwriting to Left-Handers, <http://suite101.com/article/teaching-lefties-handwriting-a49995>

How to Write with the Left Hand, <http://suite101/article/how-to-write-with-the-left-hand-a95316>

Also see video *Writing Left-Handed*, http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x1g658_writing-left-handed_school