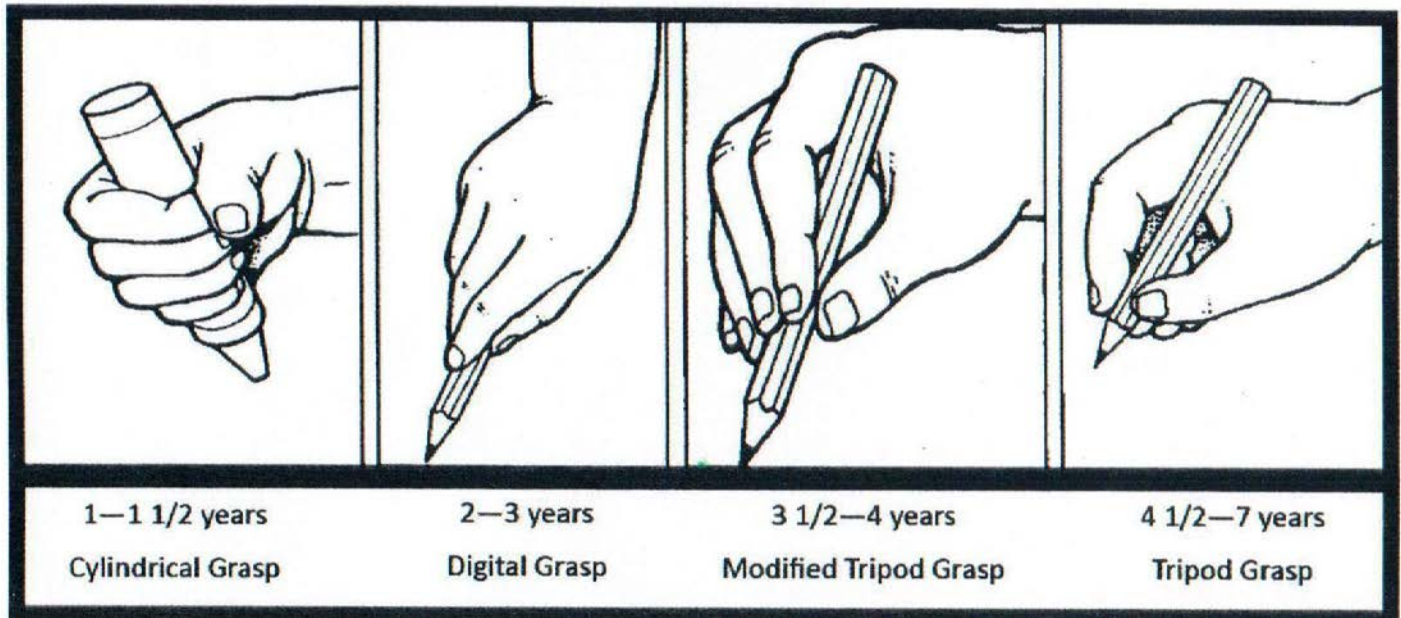


Developing Small Motor Skills and an Efficient Pencil Grip Are Important Parts of Learning How to Write—and Enjoying the Process!



(This drawing shows typical progression of preschool development of pencil grasp. We were not able to locate its source.)

Dear Parents,

Good handwriting matters, beginning with a good pencil grasp! *If handwriting motions are not efficient, it interferes with the whole writing process.*

As your child develops a better pencil grasp, **the writing process becomes easier.** It is normal for children to enter kindergarten with a wide range of fine-motor development. **Some children start the year with an efficient pencil grasp,** and others are developing one. This is because children's finger muscles develop with time and experience.

We are asking you to support your child in learning an efficient pencil grasp:

- Teach your child how to hold crayons, draw, and color within lines.
- Then, provide many opportunities to fingerspell, use scissors, tweezers, pencils, pens, and small building toys.
- We want learning this important skill to be a positive experience!

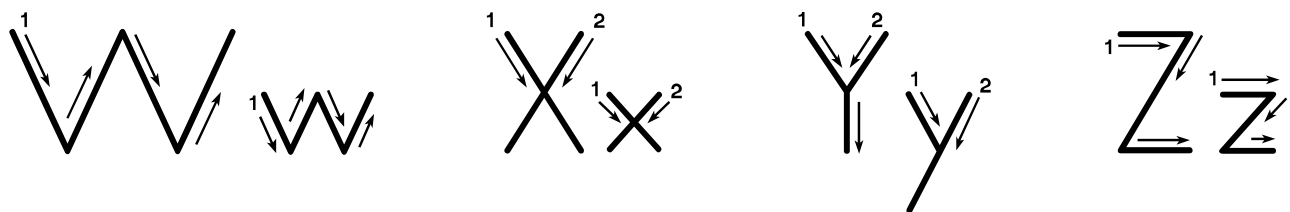
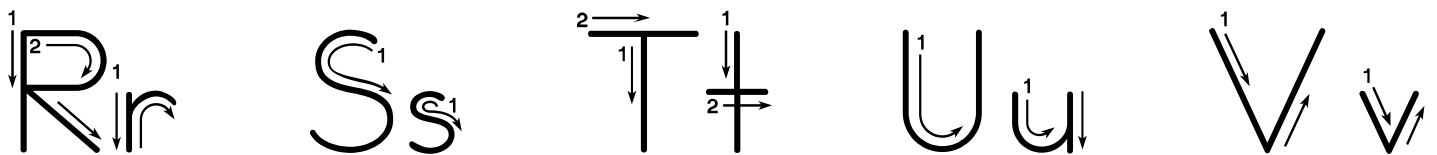
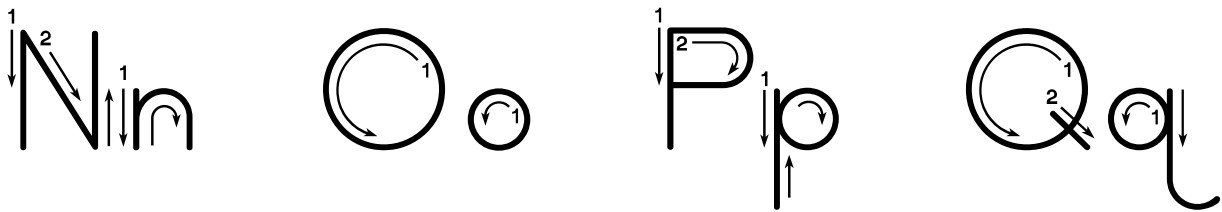
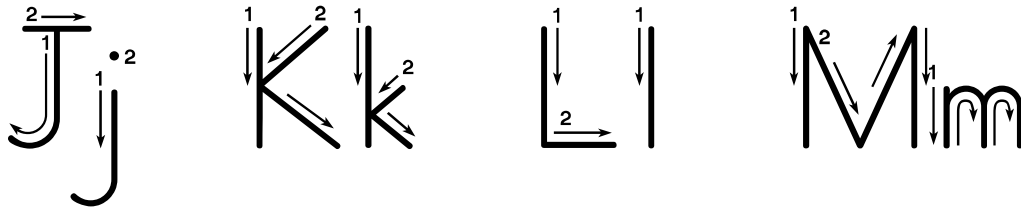
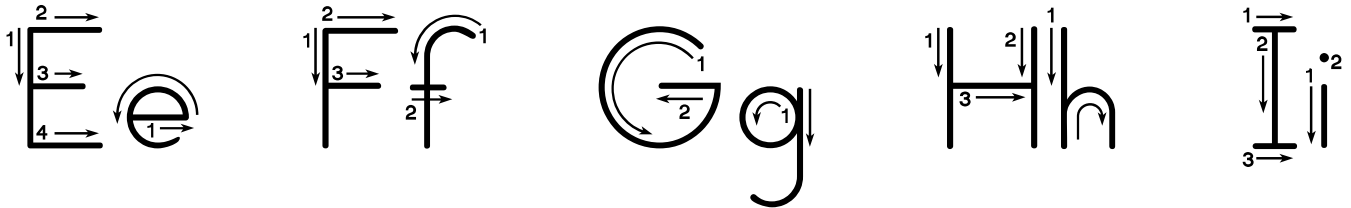
Why is a good pencil grip so important? *So we can write better and faster and so our finger muscles won't get tired.*

Parents as Partners allows us to give your child the life-long habit of efficient handwriting!

With appreciation,

Zaner-Bloser Style Handwriting Guidelines

Nellie Edge Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting uses Zaner-Bloser font.



(Used with permission)

The ZB Manuscript with Arrows font may be purchased from Zaner-Bloser. www.zaner-bloser.com/zb-fontsonline-plus. This online program allows you to create worksheets in manuscript and/or cursive. You can choose to use lined or unlined paper rulings. **We do not expect children to prematurely write on traditional forms of penmanship paper that displays the dotted mid-line as this may not be developmentally appropriate for most children until late kindergarten or first grade.**

See Handwriting page at www.nellieedge.com for additional information.

How to Make Fingerspelling Cards and Name Ticket Models

We recommend mounting and laminating these (with fingerspelling on one side and Name Ticket models on the other). Make them all the same color and size to fit into a pocket chart. Students fingerspell and name letters daily.

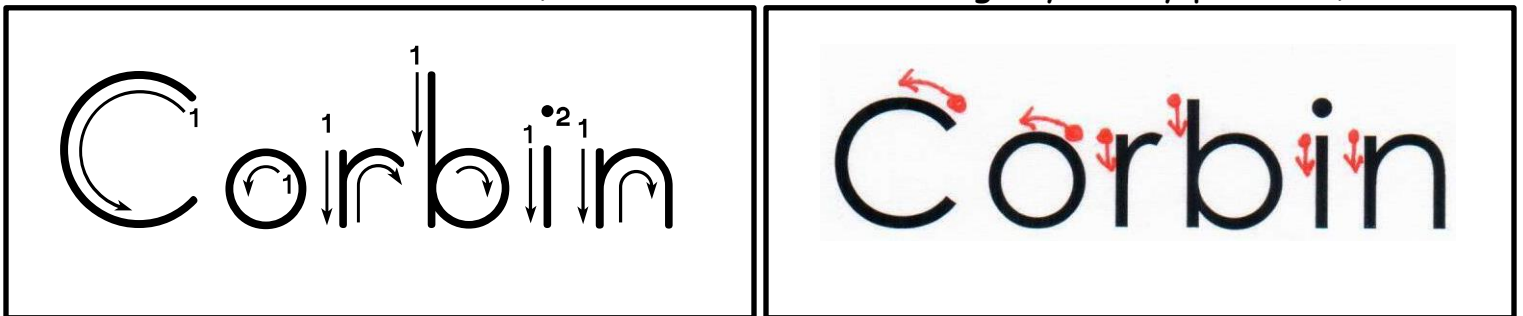


The *Fingerletters* font may be purchased from Educational Fontware, Inc. 1-800-806-2155. Go to www.educationalfontware.com, on left side of page click on "Buy New Academic Single User License;" in center of page, scroll down to "Nellie Edge Special - Finger Letters only, no CD, \$5." Click on "Buy Now" (with credit card.)

How to make name/fingerspelling cards:

1. Insert a one-column table into the document.
2. Use *Ball-and-Stick* font (or similar, such as *Century Gothic*) for letters in approximately size 80-90 font, bold. Size will depend on length of name.
3. Place a space between each letter.
4. For fingerspelling underneath, use font *Fingerletters* in approximately size 90 (or a size that matches the letters above it). Center justify. For ease in reading, do not bold *Fingerletters*.

Name Ticket Model (make a second one for nightly family practice)



The *ZB Manuscript with Arrows* font may be purchased from Zaner-Bloser. www.zaner-bloser.com/zb-fontsonline-plus. This online program allows you to create worksheets in manuscript and/or cursive. **We do not expect children to prematurely write on traditional forms of penmanship paper** that displays the dotted mid-line as this may not be developmentally appropriate for most children until late kindergarten or first grade.

See Handwriting page at www.nellieedge.com.

Give Children Songs and Chants that Reinforce Good Handwriting and Build the "I Can Do It!" Attitude

The Printing "I" Chant

I—straight down
From head to toe,
Then across the top
And across the toes.
That's how "I" goes—
I know!

Nellie Edge

Nellie Edge: Permission granted for teachers to make multiple copies. September Themes from Nellie Edge, 2008.

I Always Start My Letters
(tune: If You Are Happy and You Know It)

I always start my letters at the top (The top!)
I always start my letters at the top (The top!)
When I write another letter,
I get better, better, better,
If I always start my letters at the top. (The top!)

Mia

traditional

ABCDEFGHIJKL MN
OPQRST UV WX Y Z

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
0123456789

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I Can — c-a-n!
(tune: What do you do with a Drunken Sailor?)

I can — c-a-n.
I can — c-a-n.
I can — c-a-n.
Yes, I know I can!

Nellie Edge and Kathie Bridges

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L-o-v-e Spells Love

love

love love

L-o-v-e spells love. love

L-o-v-e spells love. love

L-o-v-e L-o-v-e

L-o-v-e spells love. love

love love

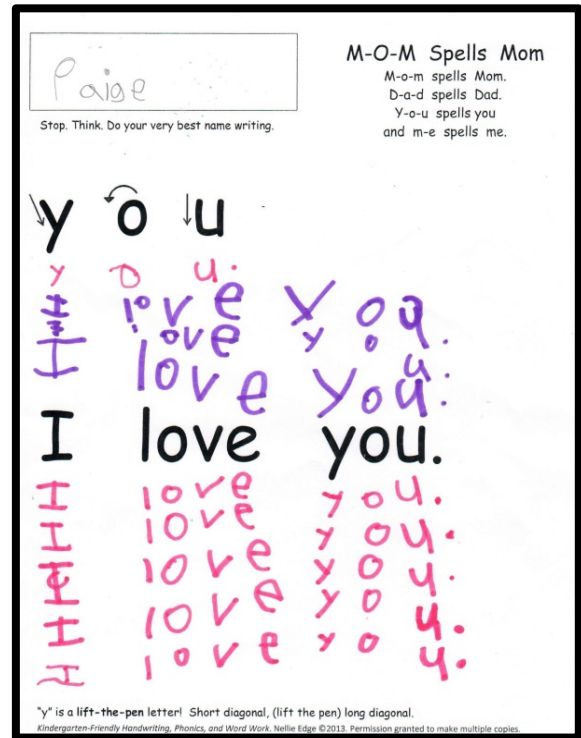
Nellie Edge

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Integrate handwriting and sight word work with *Sing, Sign, Spell and Read!* Anthology pages and CD of songs.

Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting Pages Are Designed for Large Group Lessons

"I love you" is the first power sentence that the kindergarten children in this Title 1 school learn as they develop handwriting and "heart word" fluency. By mid-October, they are already making amazing progress!



- The next name writing goal for Darric is lowercase "a" with continuous motion; then close attention to the lowercase "r" with continuous motion.
- He is beginning to develop the fine motor control where teachers can expect almost daily improvement in the letters of his name.
- It will be helpful for Darric to verbalize, "I need to make a lowercase "a" in my name, **not a capital.**" Use the Capital Letter chant.
- "r" goes **down**, up and around."
- "i" gets a little dot on top."
- All of these students will benefit from another lesson on "o" (a left leaning arc) so they can make o, a, c ,d, g and q efficiently.



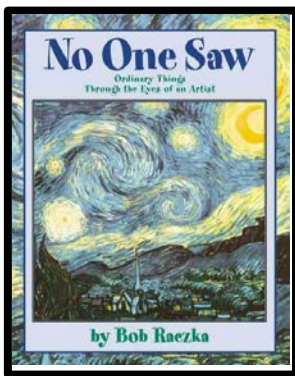
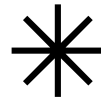
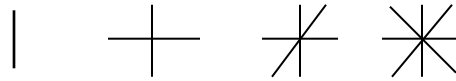
October writing samples from **Shabri Vigneri and Kristi Nelson's Title 1 Kindergarten at Bush Elementary**. This is a useful practice page before the children enjoy writing "I love you" secret messages to take home.

Guided Drawing Teaches Handwriting Motions and Vocabulary

Let's learn lift-the-pen motions and continuous motion while drawing stars!

A Twinkling Star

Vertical |
Horizontal —
Diagonal \
Diagonal /

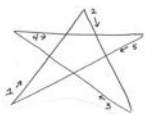
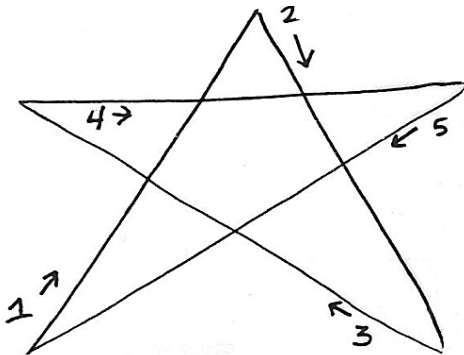


The artist van Gogh often made spiral looking stars. Practice van Gogh-like stars from the painting *Starry Night*. "No one saw stars like Vincent van Gogh."



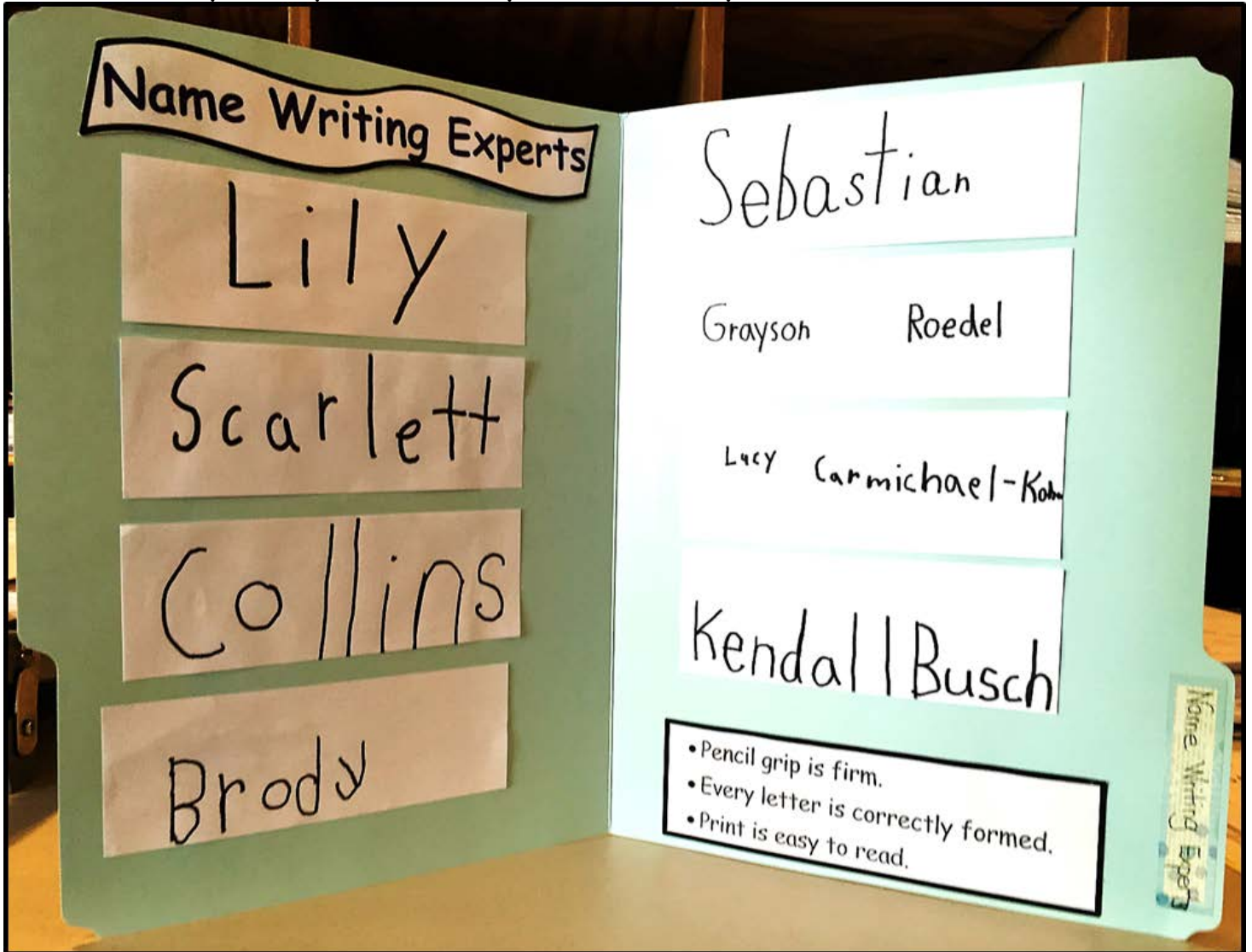
Learn How to Draw A Five-Point Star:

Body Movement and Language Builds Brain Connections!



What Does Expert Kindergarten Name Writing Look Like?

By mid-year, we expect smaller print from students.



Expect name writing mastery and celebrate!

Children only get to practice last names after first name is mastered.

Make a midline on blank Name Tickets for students who have a "y" or "g" in their name.

