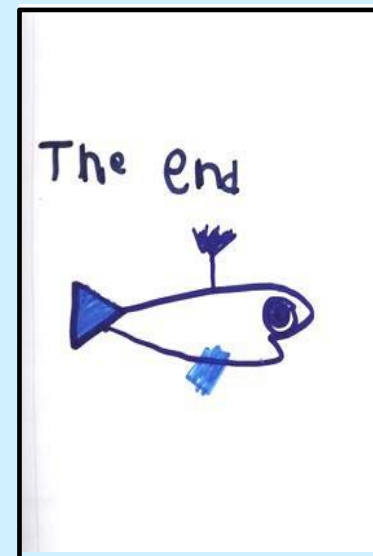
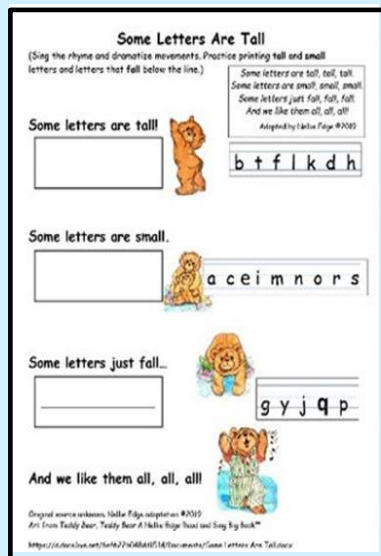
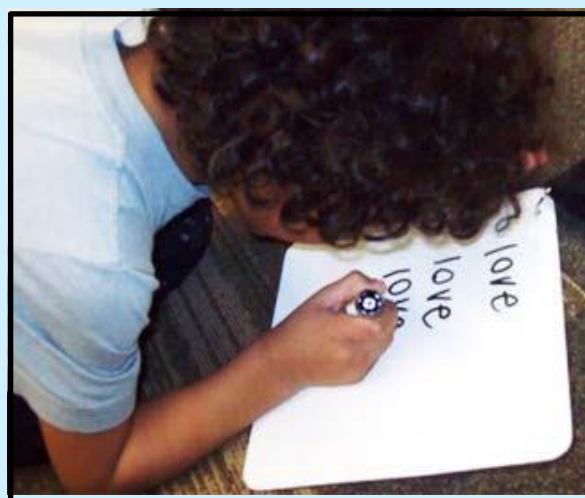
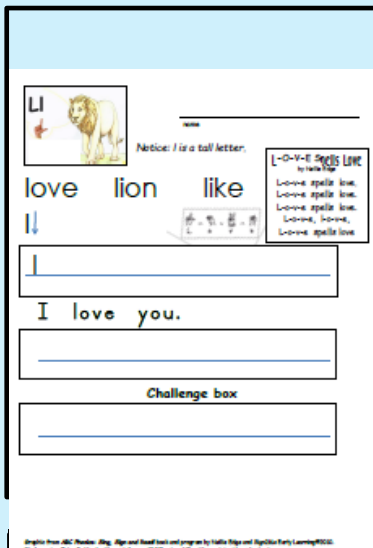
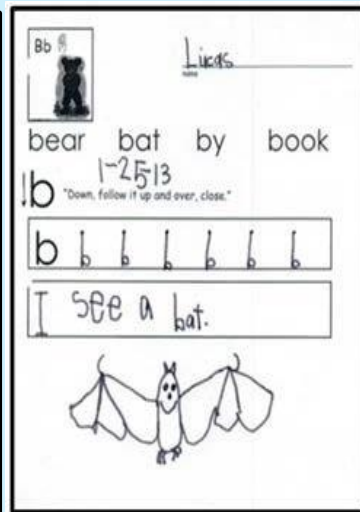


# Best Practices in Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting Students Simultaneously Build ABC Fluency and Sentence Writing Mastery for Writing Workshop



Another gift of joyful literacy from Nellie Edge

## Why Is Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting So Powerful?

*This kindergarten-friendly handwriting was developed BY kindergarten teachers FOR kindergarten teachers. It was the result of a Nellie Edge action-research project over several years. We wondered: What is the most efficient way to teach kindergarten handwriting and make it memorable?*

*We developed an authentic approach for handwriting instruction that simultaneously teaches writing-to-read heart word sentences and builds stamina for writing workshop. Integrated lessons are the most time-efficient, cost-efficient, and brain-friendly way we know to plant good handwriting habits! "I love you" is our handwriting anchor sentence, and we teach for mastery!*

**Watch [HERE](#) for videos of this multisensory, art-rich approach!**

(Scroll down on the [Nellie Edge Handwriting Tab](#)) and study Nellie Edge Online Seminars



### Table of Contents

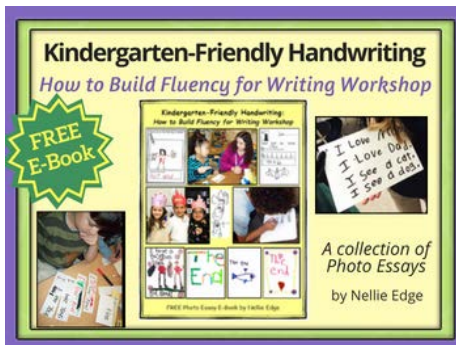
*Includes updated versions of Our BEST Handwriting Blogs!*

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# Why Does Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting Matter?

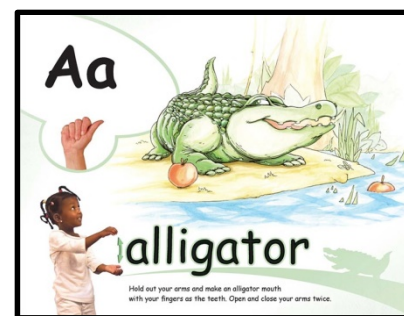
*If handwriting motions are not fluent, it interferes with the whole writing process.*



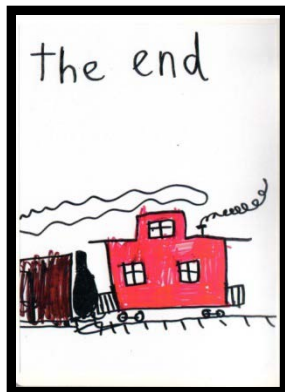
A multisensory, integrated approach to handwriting is the most time-efficient, inexpensive, and brain-friendly way we know to plant lifelong habits for good handwriting in kindergarten while building stamina and fluency for Writing Workshop!

The photo essays in this E-Book provide glimpses of an authentic approach to kindergarten handwriting that embraces the arts, differentiates learning, and invites parents to be partners in kindergarten success. Actively engage your students in these drawing and handwriting strategies and weave them into your own writing framework.

Fingerspelling, sign language, and singing are a part of our multisensory handwriting framework. These powerful strategies create multisensory memory hooks—especially for English Language Learners and harder-to-accelerate learners. (Scroll down the ABC Phonics page to find [free fingerspelling tutorials](#).)



Developed BY teachers FOR teachers! Over 10 years of collaboration with master writing teachers culminated in this approach to kindergarten-friendly handwriting and is documented on our action-research blogs from the 10 High-Impact Kindergarten Writing Strategies. MRIs of the child's brain prove: **Tracing over letters is NOT consistent with how the brain learns best!** Embedding handwriting into authentic writing experiences makes the brain work harder, motivates students to see themselves as writers, and directly transfers to Writing Workshop. That is why we teach children good handwriting as they practice real words and sentences, draw, and make books!



Your Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting E-Book includes:

- Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting: 10 Keys to Success
- Ten Tips for Teaching Pencil Grip
- Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting Matters
- 16 Frequently Asked Questions
- Ten Reasons to Teach Fingerspelling in Kindergarten
- Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting Resources on TpT
- Samples from T-he e-n-d The End pages

We invite you to share our journey as teacher-researchers committed to integrating handwriting into a multisensory, authentic, and comprehensive writing framework. [Join our online community](#) for weekly kindergarten blogs that wrap around Best Practices research and accelerate learning. Enjoy joyful documentation of how the brain learns best!

SMILES!  
Nellie Edge

# No Time for Isolated Kindergarten Handwriting Lessons?

*30 Essential Handwriting Lessons Build Sentence Writing Stamina and Fluency for Writing Workshop!*

## Why Is Good Handwriting Important?

Updated Sept 2023



- So we can write better and faster
- So our finger muscles won't get tired
- So everyone can read our writing
- So we can build our reading and writing brain

*"These lessons are a game changer for my kinders! So engaging and I've seen so much improvement. Wish I would have started these in the fall!" -C.G. from TPT*

**No time for isolated handwriting lessons? Want to build stamina and fluency for writing workshop?** This research-based handwriting model is NOT mindlessly tracing over one letter! You will **ACTIVELY ENGAGE** your students as they practice letters within real words and anchor sentences beginning with "I love you." Time-efficient! Brain-friendly! Inexpensive! **Scroll down for videos, sample pages and lessons.**

**Start with 30 Essential Handwriting Lessons.** (Includes 40 additional pages of printables, resources, parent letters and assessment.)

**Created BY master kindergarten teachers FOR kindergarten teachers** over 10 years of action-research in actual classrooms. These essential, integrated handwriting-to-read lessons focus on practicing high-frequency "heart words" and "heart word" sentences.

See handwriting videos from Nellie Edge:



- [Teaching Children to Write Their Name-Name Tickets](#)
- [Use Drawing to Teach Handwriting Motions](#)

## What are the 30 Essential Handwriting Lessons?

1. Teach pencil grip and build strong finger muscles with playful exercises: fingerspell a,b,c,d; duck talk with thumb and pointer; touch thumb to each finger; squeeze and release fist.

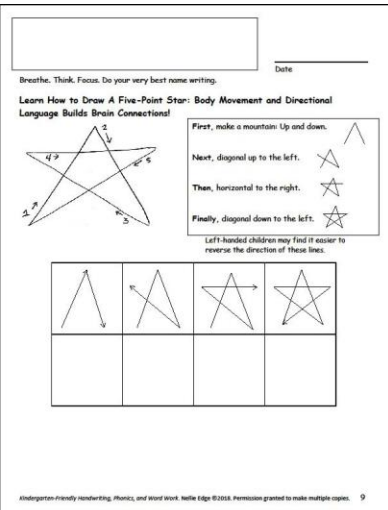
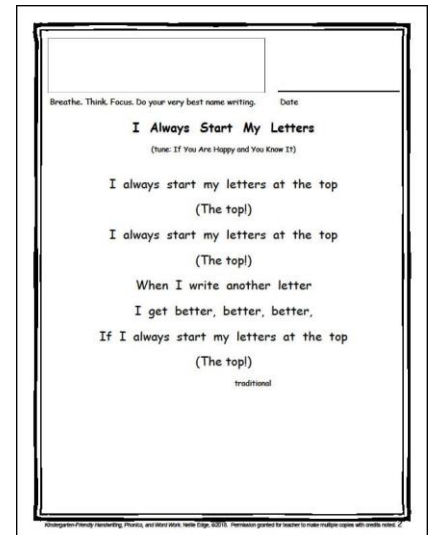
2. **I Always Start My Letters at the Top**

3. **I Chant (Top to bottom, left to right)**

4. **I can draw lines:** art lesson

5. **O Dance** (Curve up and around letters: c, o, a, d, g, q, f, s) plus practice page

6. **L-o-v-e** Spells Love song (Learn 4 basic handwriting movement patterns)



7. **Draw a Twinkling Star!** (lift-the-pen movement patterns)

8. **Draw a Van Gogh-like Star!** (continuous path of motion)

9. **How to Draw a 5-point Star**

10. **Some Letters Are Tall/Small/Fall**

11. **I remember "d" and "b"** (A Reading Recovery® lesson with streamers)

12. **How to draw and write dog** (white board, then paper)

13. **How to draw and write cat** (white board, then paper)

14. **The Spelling Chant and T-h-e e-n-d: The-end! Chant**

15. **How to Write "y" and "you!"** (learn two different language cues)

16. **M-o-m** Spells Mom and **I love... sentences**

17. **Celebrate mastery of name writing: Use this Crown Pattern**

18. **What Does Quality Handwriting Look Like? (Anchor chart)**

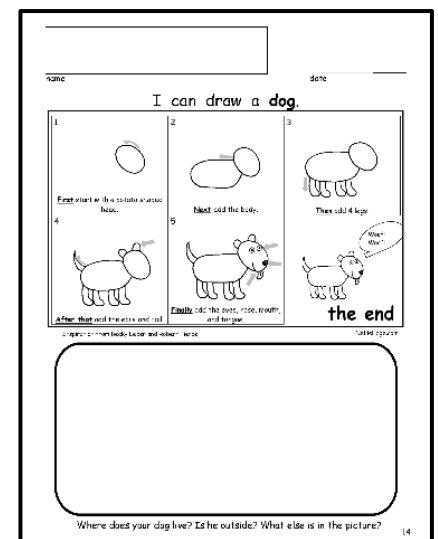
19. **Capital Letters: Lift the Pen Movement Pattern**

20. **Capital Letters: Continuous Motion Handwriting Pattern**

21. **This is my house: h-o-u-s-e lesson, plus drawing page**

22. **There's a King of "ing": i-n-g**

23. **"Make a Book" Sentences: I see the ... My Book, by (Also with Skinny Books)**







24. **I am a Master of Pink Heart Words:** Sing, Sign, Spell, and Read! (Use CD every day for spelling lessons. Make copies of the CD for your families: permission granted!)





25. **Fingerspell Everything:** Expect Students to ALL become masters. Make an "I am a Fingerspelling Expert!" book. Celebrate mastery. (Book cover incl.)

26. Take the **a, b, c, d Challenge:** Fingerspell and write each letter fluently.

**a,b,c,d Challenge**

<b>Aa</b> 	<b>Bb</b> 	<b>Cc</b> 	<b>Dd</b> 
--	--	--	--

none

Challenge yourself! Fingerspell the letter while saying the sound. Then print the letters a,b,c,d with good handwriting.

Practice handwriting fluency. (Fluency is speed and accuracy!)

The more you practice  
The better you get!

Graphics from ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign and Read! book and program by Nellie Edge and Ego/Me Early Learning®2010. Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting, Phonics, and Word Work. Nellie Edge ©2010. Permission granted to make multiple copies. 15

27. **I Can Write CVC Words** lessons with white boards/paper (especially words that begin with p, f, b, and r: less commonly used consonants).


28. **I Can Write: r, n, m, and h**

29. **I Can Write All of the Capital Letters**

30. **Brain Exercises for Fluency**

**Y-O-U Spells You**  
(Tune of L-O-V-E Spells Love)  
Y-o-u spells you.  
Y-o-u spells you.  
Y-o-u spells you.  
Y-o-u spells you!  
Nellie Edge

Breathe. Think. Focus. Do your very best name writing.



**I love you.**

"y" is a lift-the-pen letter! Short diagonal. (If the pen) long diagonal. Practice "y" movement pathways with jujitsu: "Why-yah! Why-yah!"

Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting, Phonics, and Word Work. Nellie Edge ©2010. Permission granted to make multiple copies. 15

**Save District Resources!** This is not a handwriting program with practice books that you need to purchase again every year: Print student book and engaging activity pages year after year. New updates are always included. You are encouraged to make copies for family "at-home learning": **good handwriting that builds sentence writing stamina is our goal.**

**For Kindergarten and First Grade Summer Learning at Home: Essential Handwriting Lessons are appropriate throughout the year!** Families appreciate simple, meaningful handwriting, drawing, and writing lessons—not boring workbook pages. Choose the pages appropriate for your students. Bind this distance learning booklet for home study!



## Essential Handwriting Lessons

**Some Letters Are Tall**  
(Sing the rhyme and dramatize movements. Practice writing tall and small letters and letters that fall below the line.)

Some letters are tall!   b t f l k d h

Some letters are small.   a c e i m n o r s



Some letters just fall...   g y j q p

And we like them all, all, all! 

Original source unknown. Nellie Edge adaptation ©2019. Art from Tasty Deer. "Tasty Bear A Nellie Edge Read and Sing Big Book."


NellieEdge.com

## Kindergarten Handwriting & Sentence Writing Curriculum Bundle

**Curriculum Bundle**


b b b b b b

I see a bat. 

www.nelliedge.com

If you have attended Nellie Edge live Kindergarten Workshops or Online Seminars, you will recognize many of these 30 Essential Lessons. Our *Handwriting Teacher's Guide* and *MasterClass Intensive* provide teacher support for this authentic approach to handwriting.

Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting lessons are consistent with the principles of visual learning research and a writing-to-read approach to kindergarten literacy. [See how this looks in REAL CLASSROOMS!](#)

**Aa**  \_\_\_\_\_  
name

alligator apple at

**ā** (Curve up and around, up and down.)

**a** · · **a** · ·

I see the apple.

If you know the letter "a", then you know the word "a"!

Source: First ABC Primer, Sing, Skip and Read! Book 4, prepared by Nellie Edge and Elizabeth van Looney ©1977. Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting for the 21st Century. Adapted with permission by Nellie Edge.

### A-Z Practice Pages Have Placement Dots

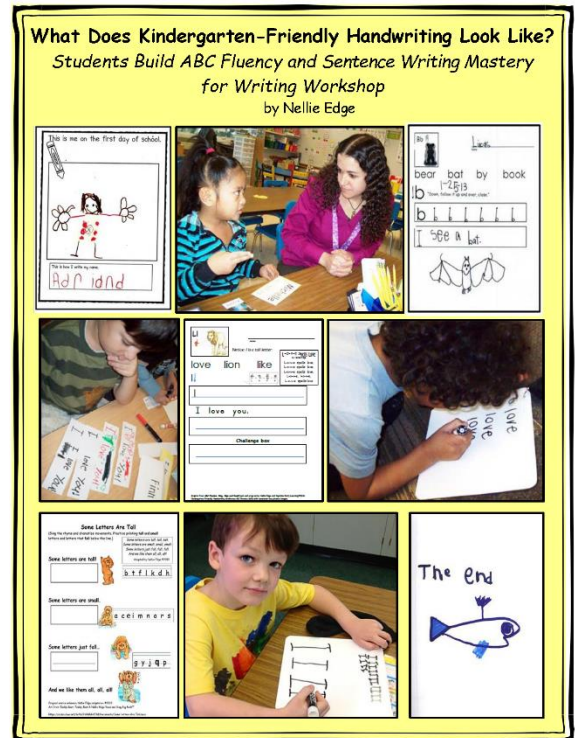
The brain works harder and the child's visual-motor development grows stronger when required to copy letters and words with minimal support. However, some younger students will benefit from the added dots showing where to start the letter. Notice: All students practice good handwriting while building fluency writing a consistent, high-frequency "heart word" sentence starter: I see the...

**Did You Know? Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting Integrates Phonemic Awareness, Word Work, and the Writing Process.**

## Learn more:

- Download [FREE updated e-Book, What Does Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting Look Like?](#)
- Peruse my Handwriting page at [NellieEdge.com](#)
- Learn Handwriting Chants on [YouTube](#)
- See [Handwriting Preview](#) on TPT
- Study [Nellie Edge Online Seminar #2: Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting Matters!](#)

*"These lessons are a game-changer for my kinders. So engaging and I've seen so much improvement. Wish I would have started these in the Fall!" - C.G. on TPT.*



FREE eBook on TPT

*Nellie Edge Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting Curriculum Integrates ABC Phonics, word work, sentence writing, drawing, and fingerspelling.*

### Kindergarten Handwriting & Sentence Writing

**Curriculum Bundle**

b b b b b  
I see a bat.

www.NellieEdge.com

### Kindergarten Handwriting

Teacher's Guide

Sentence writing, drawing, fingerspelling, and word work

NellieEdge.com

### Essential Handwriting Lessons

Some Letters Are Tall  
(Sing the rhyme and dramatize movements. Practice writing tall and small letters and letters that fall below the line.)

Some letters are tall: tall, tall  
Some letters are a small, small  
Some letters just fall, fall  
And we like them all, all, all  
Adapted by Nellie Edge 9/2019

Some letters are tall: b t f l k d h

Some letters are small: a c e i m n o r s

Some letters just fall: g y j q p

And we like them all, all, all

Original source unknown; Nellie Edge adaptation ©2019  
Art from Tidy Bear, "Tidy Bear A Public Edge Read and Sing by Book"

NellieEdge.com

### Handwriting Practice: Kindergarten & 1st Grade

Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting, Sentence Writing, Fingerspelling, and Word Work

Aa alligator apple at  
ä (Come up and around, up and down)

I see

See Nellie Edge Kindergarten Handwriting Bundle

www.NellieEdge.com

### Kindergarten Handwriting

Accelerate Kindergarten Writing Proficiency  
Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting: Building The Writing Brain  
A MasterClass Intensive with Nellie Edge

Language Celebrations • Growth Mindset • Parents as Partners

A MasterClass Intensive with Nellie Edge

www.NellieEdge.com

### Kindergarten Name Writing With Family Practice

My Name Ticket Practice Book

by \_\_\_\_\_

FREE

Kaitlyn

www.NellieEdge.com

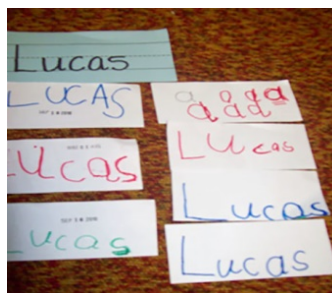


# Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting: 10 Keys to Success



Nellie Edge Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting program dramatically accelerates writing proficiency when used as designed within a comprehensive kindergarten writing program. The end result is kindergartners proudly writing, illustrating, and publishing books!

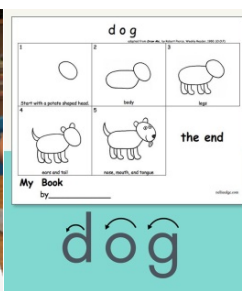
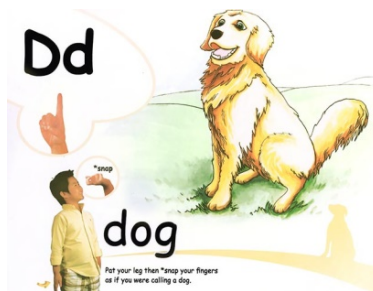
**We have decades of “best practice” and Visible Learning research**



Name writing experts celebrate!

1. Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting practices are consistent with decades of visual learning research documented by Dr. John Hatti. We give children high-expectations, crystal-clear, achievable learning targets, provide feedback, and then children learn to self-evaluate. Mastery of each phase of handwriting fluency is acknowledged and celebrated.

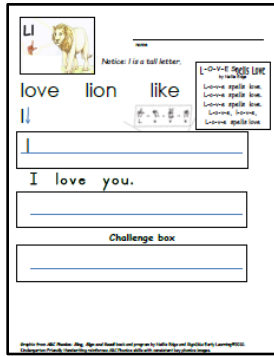
**Kindergarten-friendly handwriting creates a Growth Mindset**



2. We consciously nurture a Growth Mindset for our students by using carefully chosen words that empower learners. Children know what their next learning target is (*I'm remembering to make a lowercase "u"*), how to set goals, work hard, take pride in doing quality work, and think about how they learn: This is the beginning of metacognition!

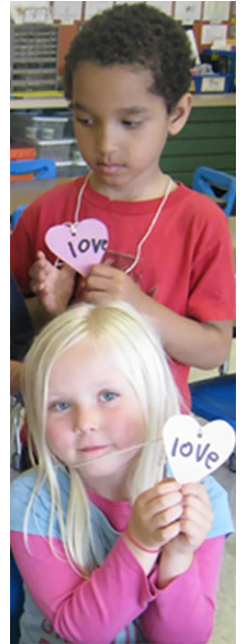
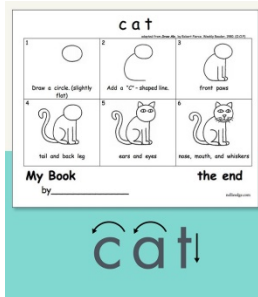
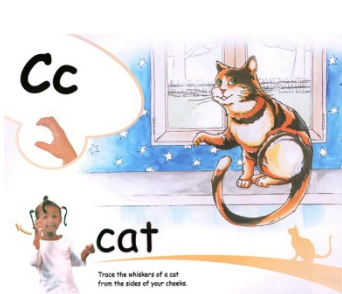
*Wow! How did you train your brain to remember that letter?*

## Integrated, multisensory handwriting instruction can prevent reading failure.



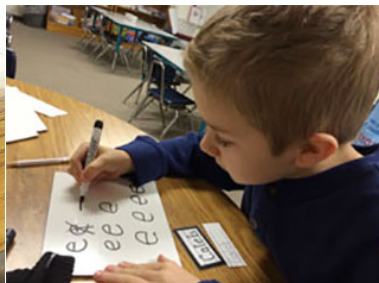
3. This authentic, meaning-centered approach to handwriting instruction honors Marie Clay's respected research and insights into preventing reading failure: We build on what is known. Handwriting is taught in an authentic context: first using each child's name, then using real words that have personal meaning to a child, and finally using high-frequency "heart word" sentences that build stamina for the Writing Workshop. We teach systematically and intentionally. Fingerspelling, letter recognition, and beginning sounds of words are intentionally reinforced.

## Handwriting and drawing instruction are intertwined.



4. Our arts-infused handwriting curriculum teaches children to write, draw, fingerspell, focus, do quality work, and enjoy expressing themselves! There is direct transfer to our Comprehensive Writing Workshop Model. The 30 Essential Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting Lessons are multisensory, meaningful, and memorable—the children are NOT copying workbook sheets!

## We have high expectations and involve Parents as Partners.



5. Teachers, students, and their parents all share high expectations for student learning. "Parents are Partners" in teaching efficient pencil grip and good handwriting.

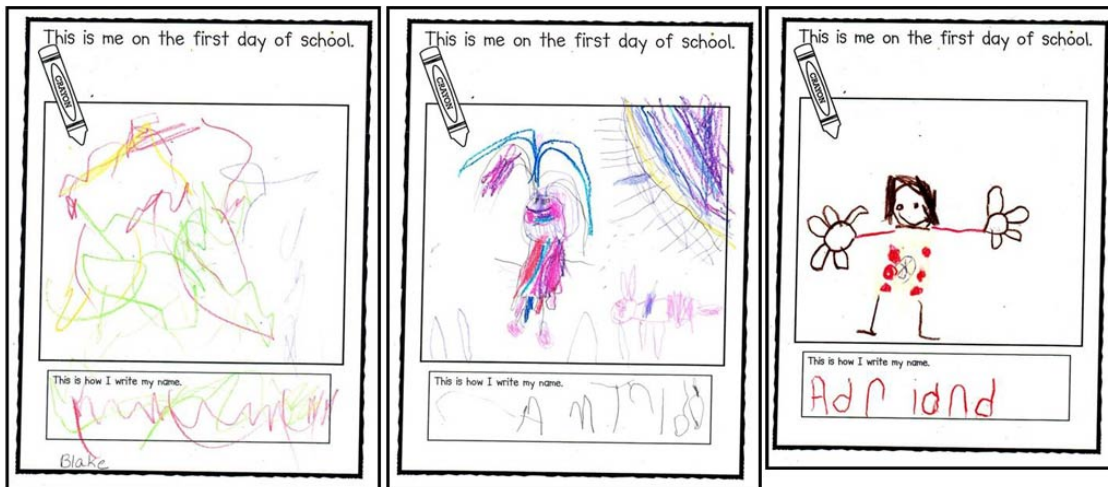


**“Saying and doing” increases handwriting proficiency and multiplies our teaching effectiveness!**

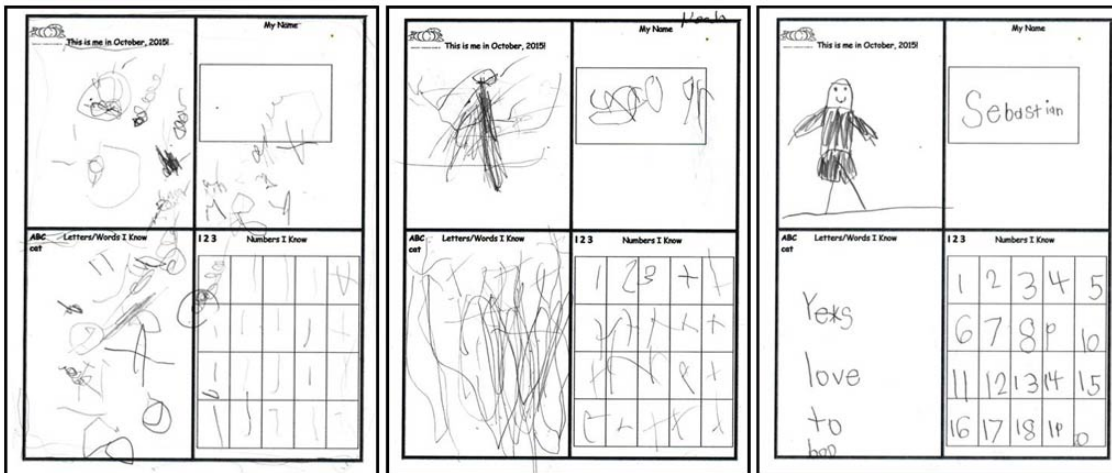


6. We recognize that “saying and doing” increases retention of new information up to 90%. This approach to handwriting develops Common Core Language and Speaking and Listening skills. Children verbalize handwriting directional language “curve up, around, and close” as their arms form the letter “O” in the air using “sky writing.” Combining handwriting cues and consistent movement patterns takes advantage of how the brain learns best.

**Our diverse kindergartens often represent a 4-year developmental span.**



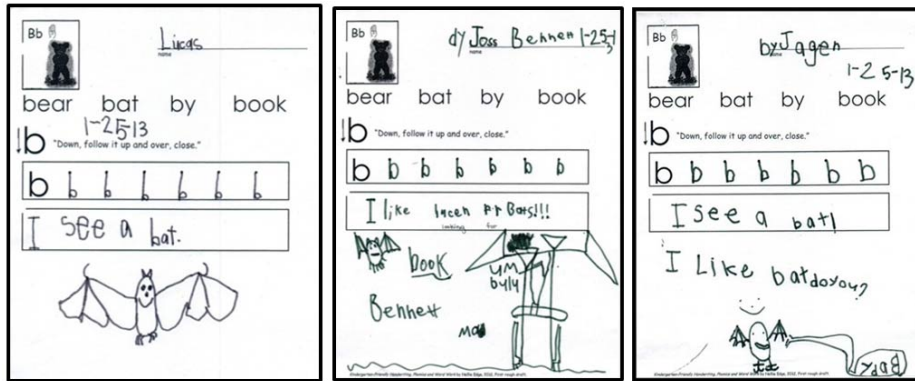
September assessment documentation from Title I Kindergarten



October Assessment documentation from kindergarten in a middle class community

7. This approach to handwriting recognizes the diverse nature of most Northwest kindergartens. Entering students often represent a 4-year span of literacy readiness! Kindergarten-friendly handwriting differentiates learning with intensive individual coaching during the handwriting process. This is especially honoring of English Language Learners and developmentally younger students: All children deserve joyful, multisensory teaching and learning!

**Kindergarten Handwriting, Phonics, and Word Work practice pages are introduced after several months of systematic handwriting instruction: They are NOT used to “teach handwriting!”**



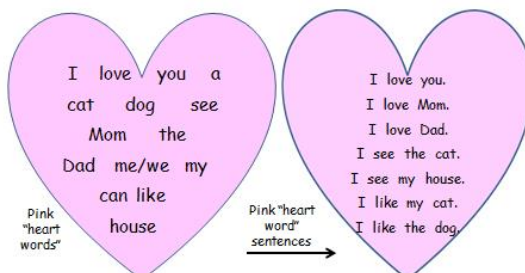
8. A-Z handwriting, phonics, and word work pages are NOT used to “teach handwriting” but rather to provide a review of handwriting movement patterns, in context, once children have mastered name writing and the pink “heart word” sentences (such as “I love you,” “I see the dog,” and “I like my cat”). This authentic approach to handwriting has direct transfer to a Comprehensive Writing Workshop in Kindergarten.

**Kindergarten-friendly handwriting builds stamina and fluency for Writing Workshop: 90% focus is lowercase letters**

The multisensory handwriting pages allow teachers to differentiate learning and provide individual coaching for hard-to-accelerate learners after the “30 Essential Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting Lessons” have been introduced and practiced. 90% of our focus is on writing lowercase letters since over 90% of kindergarten writing uses lowercase. The practice books may or may not be needed for all students.



**We Call These High-Frequency Words “Heart Words”**  
Because we want to learn them “by heart” and because these words let us write heart connecting sentences



These are the words young children use most in their writing: They are slightly different than most traditional basal word lists.





9. Kindergarten-friendly handwriting\* is one part of a powerful Comprehensive Writing Workshop Model (\*as documented in Nellie Edge Online Seminar #2). It was developed and refined BY kindergarten teachers FOR kindergarten teachers. Evidence-based research in diverse kindergarten classrooms documents the success of this approach. The results speak for themselves.

**Teachers' high expectations facilitate quality handwriting outcomes.**



10. **Teacher expectations are huge in teaching all new skills—especially handwriting!** Children KNOW if teachers expect them to do quality handwriting or if sloppy work is acceptable. They will rise to meet the expectation of a knowledgeable, caring teacher. Kindergarten handwriting instruction is much more than teaching efficient movement patterns for letters. We pay special attention to how we talk to and encourage children to focus and work hard so we can easily read their writing. Handwriting is where we first have the opportunity to develop the children's focus, metacognition, self-evaluation skills, and to develop their pride in doing quality work. **Our approach to teaching handwriting aims to integrate foundational literacy skills while developing a "growth mindset" that will support children in doing well in school—and in life!**

### Grow Your Kindergarten Writers



The goal of Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting is to grow proficient kindergarten writers who have the stamina and motivation to write, illustrate and publish books. They learn to meet—or exceed—Common Core Writing Standards. **This intentional approach to kindergarten handwriting instruction** provides a framework for teachers to take their writing program to a higher level.





Our children chant, fingerspell,  
and write t - h - e e - n - d The end!

Nellie Edge Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting is NOT a traditional  
handwriting program:

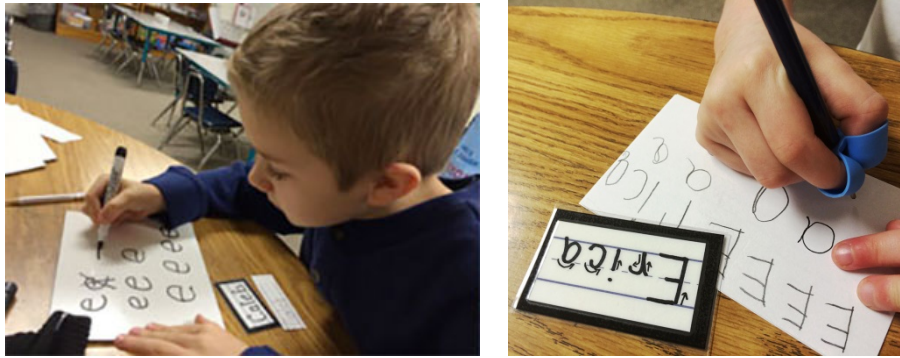


- This research-based handwriting model is **NOT mindlessly tracing** over one letter (the brain habituates after several repeated letters).
- **Not A one-size-fits-all approach** (While there are essential whole group and small group lessons, much of the important handwriting instruction is seen in brief teaching moments of close individual coaching and positive support.)
- **Not Isolated drills** separated from authentic writing and drawing work.
- **Not Rigid, scripted lesson plans.**
- **Not Tracing over dots:** research shows the brain works much harder when it is asked to copy letters from a model, rather than merely tracing over dots.

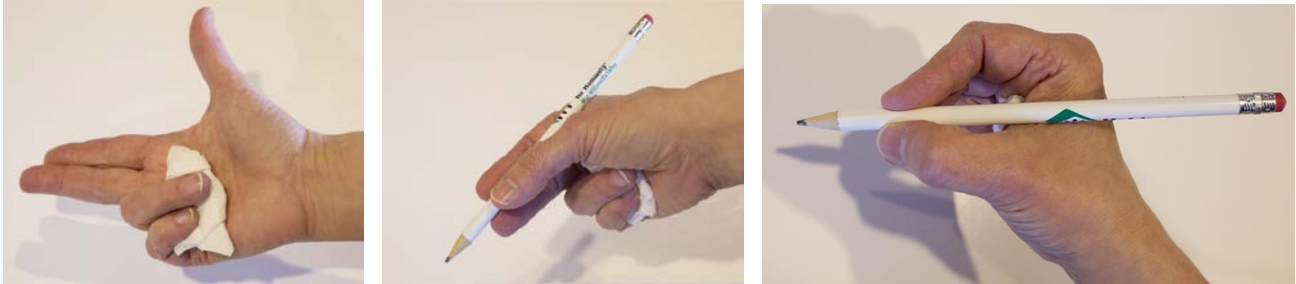
**Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting is one part of an authentic and comprehensive writing program.** Knowledgeable kindergarten teachers can integrate many of these principles into their existing practice without purchasing any resources. However, based on what works in real classrooms, we have updated and expanded our handwriting program to include *30 Essential Beginning Handwriting Lessons*, a stronger Parents as Partners program, and more direct instruction in letter recognition and beginning sounds of words.

# Ten Tips for Teaching Handwriting Pencil Grip

Two of the foundation skills for kindergarten teachers to introduce during the first busy weeks of school are good handwriting grip and efficient name writing.



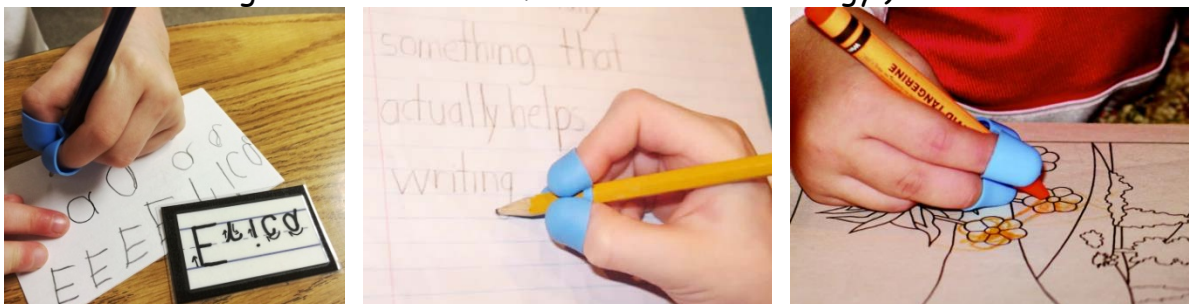
1. **Determine a child's handedness.** Ask parents. Watch the child with manipulative toys. Notice which hand the child uses to pick up crayons or small pencils. Help parents understand that a good pencil grip will help the child write better and enjoy the writing process! Share information to support left-handed writers. Have high expectations for good handwriting grip!



2. Ask the children who are still developing efficient grip to **hold a half a tissue, a cotton ball, or even a marble under two fingers.** This frees the pencil holding fingers to do their job. Place the child's fingers on the pencil.



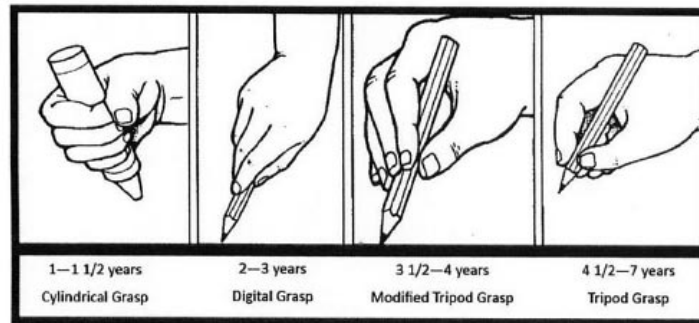
3. **Teach "duck talk"** with the thumb and pointer finger and enjoy a duck talking finger play. Tell the child to put the pencil in the duck's mouth: That's how we hold a pencil in kindergarten! (We do not know the original online source for this clever strategy.)



C.L.A.W. photos from [www.thepencilgrip.com](http://www.thepencilgrip.com)



4. Have a set of 8-10 finger grip supports available for your young writers. We like to use the C.L.A.W. Ask all of the children at the writing table to use one: *Today we get to write our names using a C.L.A.W. This holds fingers in a good handwriting position. The C.L.A.W. will help our fingers remember how to hold a pencil.*



5. Give families the parent handwriting letter with photos showing the developmental stages of pencil grip during Spring Kindergarten Registration.

Ask for their support at home with pencil grip and name writing. Often parents (and even preschool teachers) are not aware of the developmental sequence of pencil grip dexterity. Download Nellie Edge Parents as Partners Letters:

- [Developing Small Motor Skills and Efficient Pencil Grip](#)

6. Fingerspell with children throughout the day and encourage parents to reinforce fingerspelling at home. Expect firm, accurate fingerspelling shapes: Practice "l-o-v-e" (and other "heart words") and "o" and "k" every day! Remind children: *We fingerspell every day to help our brain remember letters, sounds, and words and to build our finger writing muscles.*



- Learn to fingerspell: Access the free instructional videos on the [ABC Phonics page](#).
- Use fingerspelling during transition times and while children are lining up.

All children can become fingerspelling experts and be honored in an "ABC Phonics Experts Book" with photos of them fingerspelling.



Early in the Year, Emphasize Accurate Fingerspelling Children Need to Be Experts! (See Video: Letters and Sounds)  
Here is our ABC Phonics Experts book: Children automatically read and fingerspell!

The block contains two images: on the left, the cover of the 'ABC Phonics Experts' book, which features a cartoon animal and the text 'We are ABC Phonics Experts!'; on the right, a photo of two young children sitting at a table, looking at and reading the book.

These Title I kindergarten children knew the song in September because the Head Start program used the ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read! and the school encouraged families to practice the song over the summer. We saw dramatic literacy gains!







7. At the beginning of the year, offer children short pencils and short triangular crayons. For the child with fine motor skill delays, occupational therapists recommend breaking thick crayons into small chunks so the only way a child can hold it is by using a tripod grip.



8. Encourage the use of scissors at home and at school. Using scissors correctly develops hand and finger strength for writing.



9. Provide stamping activities and a variety of fine motor table toys for children to manipulate. Use toys that require a two finger "pincer" grasp. Give families suggestions for fine motor development. Share [How to Help Your Child Develop the Small Muscles for Writing Control](#)

- Children can use tweezers to place beads in designs on suction cups as training for holding pencils.
- [ABC Play Dough Fingerspelling Mats](#) become an especially useful social learning and fine motor tool. Play Dough Mats and [ABC Phonics Family Reference Charts](#) are FREE downloads at the [Nellie Edge TpT store](#). Notice you can add images from the ABC Phonics Family Reference Chart for great differentiated learning.





Breathe, Think, and Focus

**10. Let children and parents know why we care about pencil grip: What are the benefits of an efficient pencil grasp?**

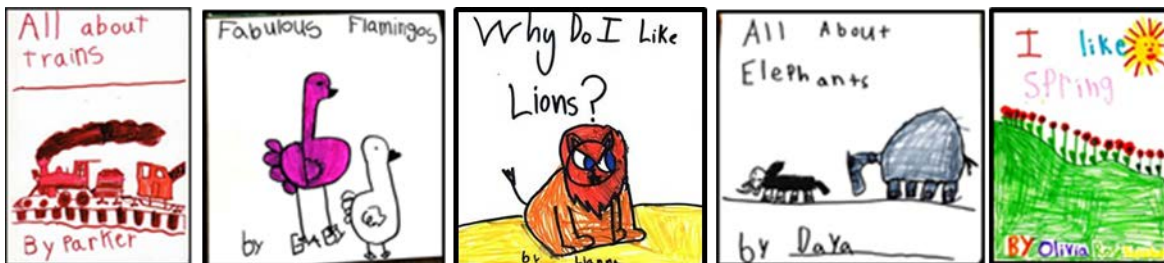
- Kindergarten friends, the reason we want to hold a pencil with a good finger grip is so we can write better and faster and so our finger muscles won't get tired.
- When you hold your pencil correctly, you will be able to see what you are writing.
- You get to think, focus, and work hard to learn new skills: the more you practice, the better you get.
- You'll practice writing your name every day at home and at school using correct kindergarten letter formation and good pencil grip. Soon it will be automatic: You won't even have to think about it... and you'll be an expert!

**To become a name writing expert, we breathe, think, focus, use good pencil grip, and learn to form our letters correctly.**



Name writing experts!

An efficient handwriting grip supports the writing process and happy, high-achieving kindergarten writers who love to write and illustrate their own published books!





# Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting Matters!

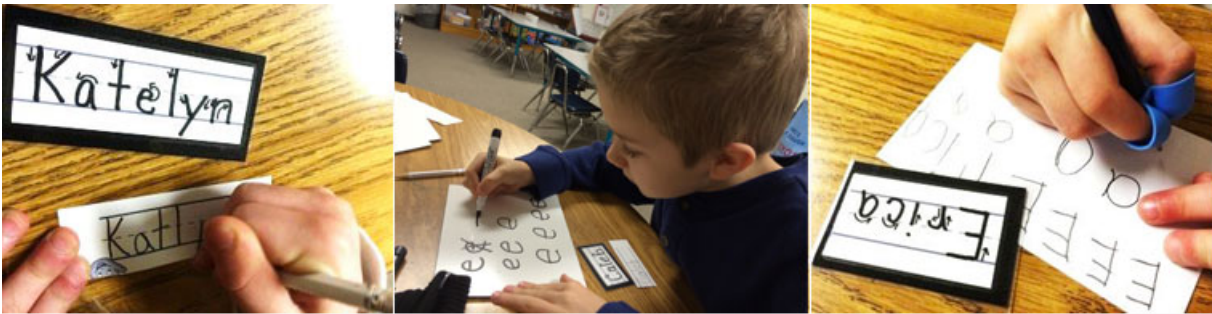
## A Preview of Nellie Edge Online Seminar #2

### Fall and Winter Handwriting Tips for Young Writers

- *If handwriting skills are not automatic, it interferes with the whole writing process!*
- Good handwriting skills facilitate rigorous Common Core writing standards: Continue working with each child's name!
- **Have high expectations**
- **Be intentional**
- **Create a sense of urgency: *Your name is so important!***

K.L.1.a-3 Print all uppercase letters

K.L.1.a-4 Print all lowercase letters



- Even by January, almost all kindergarten children will still need to see a **Name Ticket Model** of how their name looks when printed correctly—especially when they start working on their last name too. Consider using a model on lined paper: It will help some children learn letter-size relationships among letters. Use this Name Ticket as their standard of excellence to promote efficient name writing and beginning handwriting fluency. (Fluency = speed and accuracy!) Review ♪ **"Some Letters Are Tall"** song.
- Carefully observe each child forming the letters in their **first name**. Expect each letter to be formed correctly **before letting the child practice both first and last name**. Notice pencil grasp and whether letters are being formed from the top.
- Once a child can print their first name fluently, they may also practice pink "heart word" sentences for handwriting fluency.

**We Call These High-Frequency Words "Heart Words"**  
Because we want to learn them "by heart" and because these words let us write heart connecting sentences


I love you a  
cat dog see  
Mom the  
Dad me we my  
can like  
house

I love you.  
I love Mom.  
I love Dad.  
I see the cat.  
I see my house.  
I like my cat.  
I like the dog.

Pink "heart words"

Pink "heart word" sentences

These are the words young children use most in their writing:  
They are different than most traditional basal word lists.





- Remind children when they are writing their names on papers during the day to **"Breathe, think, and focus...and do quality work!"** We use American Sign Language (ASL).

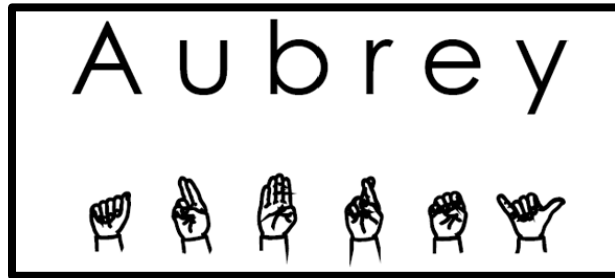


Breathe

Think

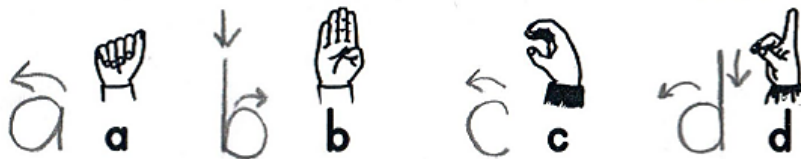
Focus

- Continue fingerspelling everything:** It develops writing strength in the finger muscles while building memory hooks for letters and sounds.



- Children need a **consistent routine and a short, targeted, systematic time for daily name writing practice, "heart word" quick writes, and a, b, c, d fluency drills.** In some classrooms, this works best first thing in the morning as part of "settling-in time"; other teachers provide this practice after recess and before independent "choice time." Expect ALL children to take the a,b,c,d "Handwriting and Fingerspelling Challenge" in September. Make connections with the **ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign and Read!** program and fingerspelling throughout the curriculum.

### a,b,c,d Challenge



Photos from *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* published by Sign2Me.

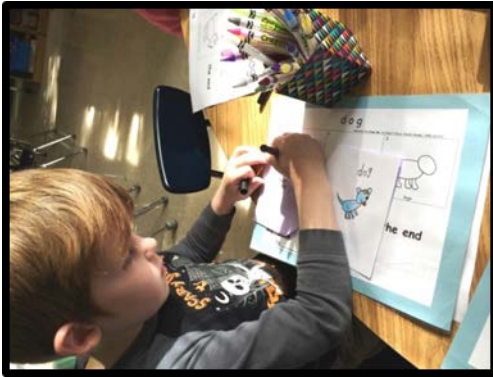
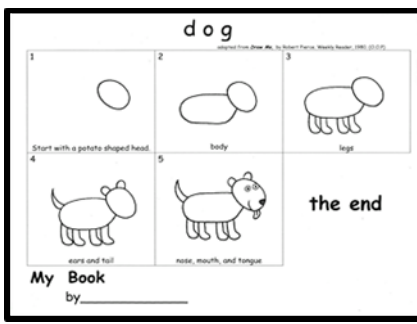
- In still other classrooms, the children are expected to **always do their best name writing**. Some teachers check the students' names on their illustrated "I Can Read" Anthology (Notebook) pages or other art/writing pieces which gets finished before recess. This becomes their "ticket" to go outside. **Expect good name writing throughout the day!**
- Reteach the concept of **continuous motion** and **lift the pen motion** using spiral and twinkling art star projects if needed. (See "30 Essential Beginning Kindergarten Handwriting Lessons" by Nellie Edge on TPT.)



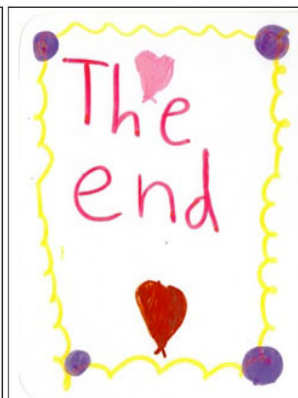
- Review the touchstone sentence: **I love you**. Notice how children are making the lowercase "y"—have them verbalize "short diagonal, long diagonal." Let them write fancy "I love you" secret messages (to take home and hide) as soon as they have demonstrated **mastery!** By January, they will add "I love you **because...**" (Opinion writing) or "I like cats/dogs **because...and because...**"



- **Review minilessons for the word "dog" and "cat"** to work on the counterclockwise "O" movement. Use white boards. Then introduce the Independent Writing Tote so the children can build fluency by writing, drawing, and making books about dogs and cats and other animals. Children love making books!

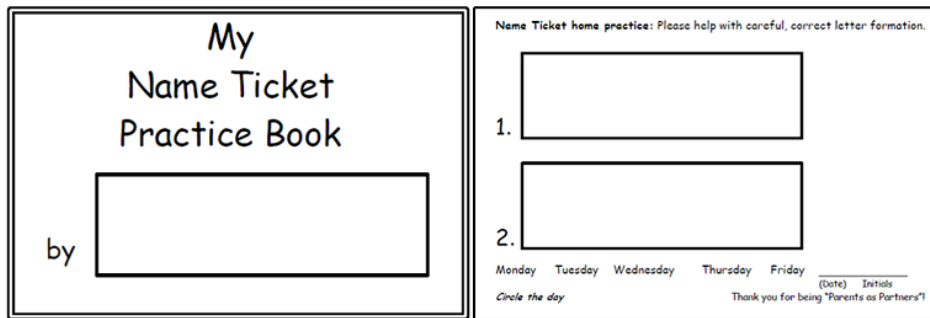


- Review handwriting motions within the context of **high-frequency "heart word"** sentence patterns before children do independent book making activities. Expect quality handwriting: "I see the dog." Teach children how to draw a house. Sing, sign, and write ♪ "I see my house..." or "This is my house, h-o-u-s-e" from the [Sing, Sign, Spell, and Read! CD](#) and video clip.
- Before children engage in the Book Making/Word Work Fluency totes, use white boards to reteach and review letter shapes for "My Book, by," and "the end." Always have **multiple copies of the language models at the table** as a memory scaffold for quality handwriting.



- Send home a first name—and later first and last name—model and the **Name Ticket Practice Book** again asking families to help the child practice twice a day (especially after your Fall or Winter Literacy Evening!). Parents value good handwriting and appreciate that it is being taught. Include the Name Ticket Model of the child's name.





- Continue to **notice each child's pencil grasp**. Teach an efficient pencil grip. Consider using the handwriting **CLAW** or a large triangle crayon with the children who need support to finger support and build muscle memory for pencil holding. Encourage families to use it at home.



- If you notice that several children are not making the "e" efficiently, do a white board lesson using the word "love" or "like" or "the end." **Fast writes build fluency!** Ask children to verbalize how to form the "e": "out and around" while forming the letter in the air.
- For optimal teaching, every time we introduce a new "heart word," we provide a lesson involving writing the word multiple times! This can be a white board lesson, a creative art piece, or a page from our *Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting, Phonics, and Word Work* student practice book. **Use the Sing, Sign, Spell and Read!** anthology pages for **follow-up practice**.



- For harder-to-accelerate children who are receiving **individual letter recognition/phonics tutoring as a Response to Intervention (R.T.I.)**, **always incorporate handwriting!** Shaping the letter efficiently will help the brain remember the visual pattern and sound of each letter.

- **Notice children's independent writing:** Record letter formation problems so you can provide appropriate individual or small group instruction. (We understand this is very challenging in large half-day programs however, we believe it will be the norm in quality all-day kindergarten models.)
- **Honor children as "name writing experts"** once they have learned efficient handwriting motions for each of their letters. The experts can each make a crown and have their pictures taken for a class book or receive a badge or certificate. Kindergarten children love recognition for having worked hard and achieved an important learning target.



- **Expect good handwriting for the pink and purple "heart words":** include writing the word with fluency as a part of becoming a master of each new set of words! Once pink and purple words are mastered, children will be able to efficiently write every lowercase letter except j, q, and z.



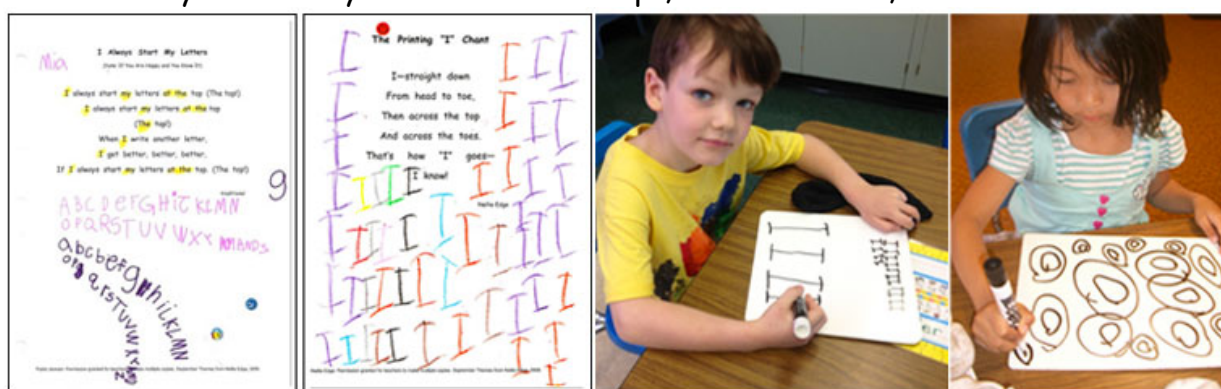
- For children who are still challenged by the skill of holding a pencil, **ask to have an occupational therapist, doctor, or learning specialist screen the child** for large motor integration and strength. Can the child crawl? Cross the midline? Are their arm and shoulder muscles strong enough to support handwriting? Can their fingers form a web for pencil control? Again, continue fingerspelling to build fine motor skills.

See our [Pinterest Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting](#) board for useful articles from occupational therapists.

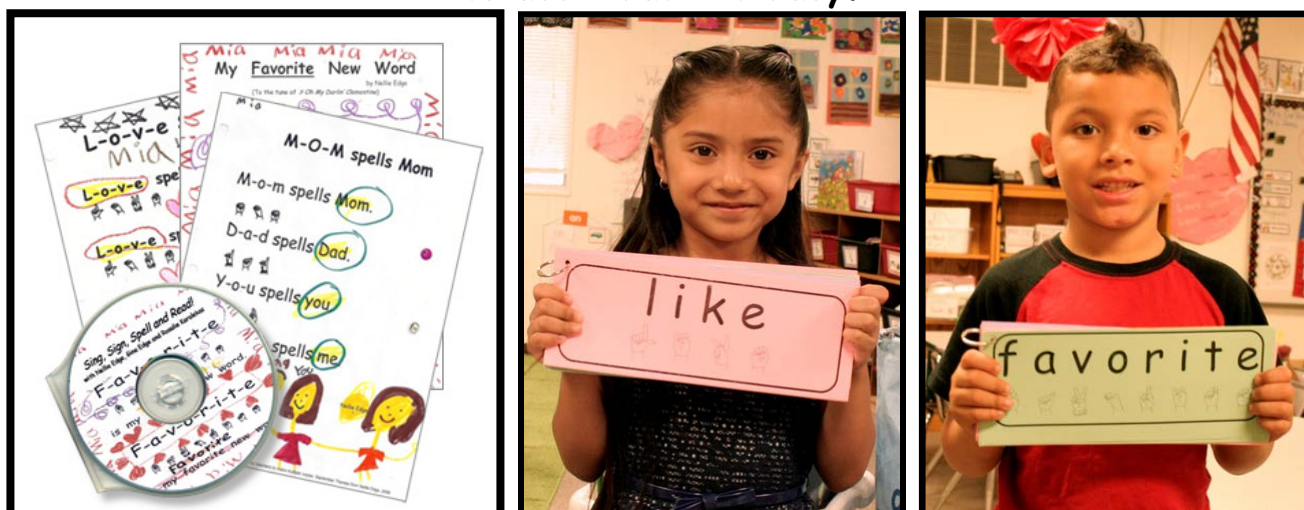




Sing the handwriting songs and chants when you **SCROLL DOWN** on the [Handwriting page](#): "I Always Start My Letters at the Top", "The I Chant", and "O Dance."



**Teach handwriting while simultaneously practicing high-frequency "heart words" to accelerate literacy.**



Families love singing along and being "parents as partners" in joyful accelerated literacy learning. Master kindergarten teachers send these components home with children:

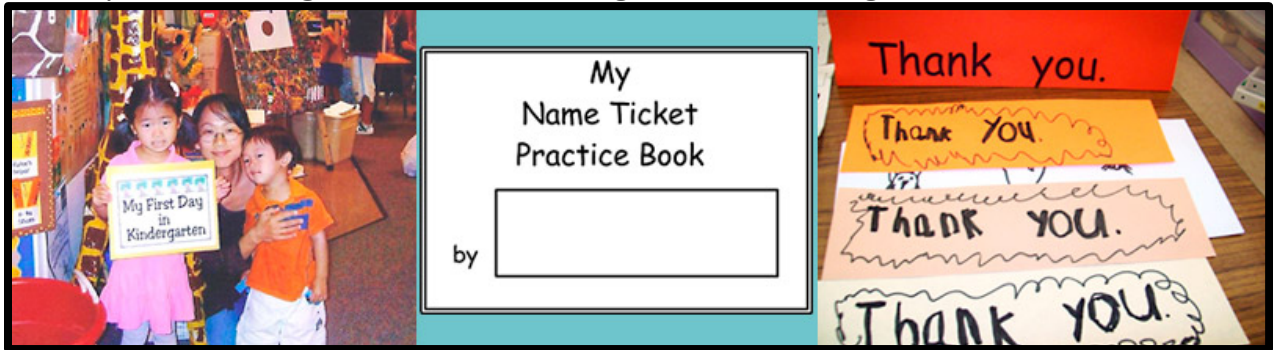
- Copies of our **Sing, Sign, Spell and Read!** CD
- "I Can Read" Anthology pages
- Fingerspelling word cards
- (Permission granted to make multiple copies for family literacy.)



# Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting Matters: 16 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

A Nellie Edge Kindergarten Blog

## A Follow-up to Kindergarten Handwriting Matters! blog



We are delighted with the response to our first article: "[Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting Matters!](#)" on our new monthly kindergarten blog. This is a follow-up FAQ in response to many emails and questions.

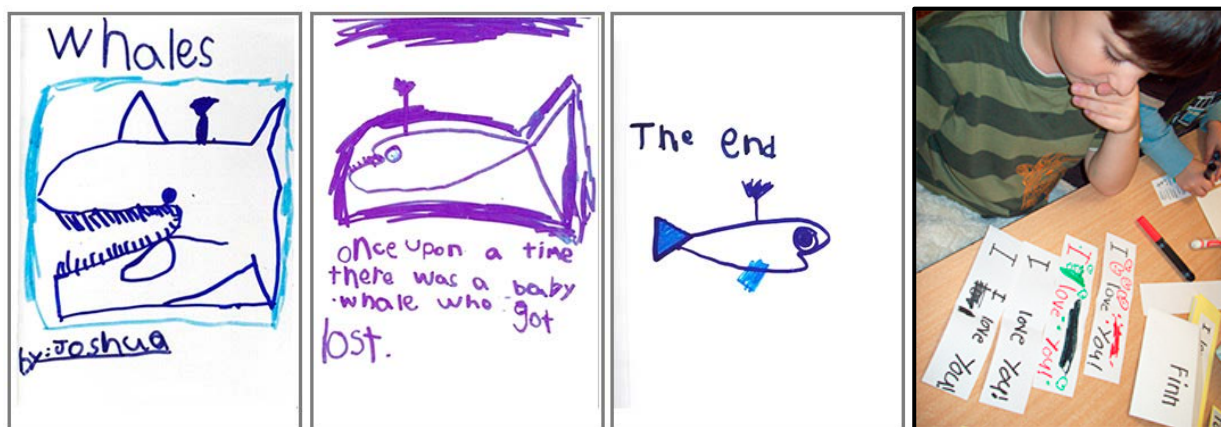
1. **What is the font that you use for adding fingerspelling under a child's name?** We use the inexpensive fingerspelling font from [educationalfontware.com](http://educationalfontware.com) You can download the font by going to that web address, click on "Buy new academic single user license," then scroll down to what they call the "Nellie Edge Special" (we do not receive a commission!) Click "Buy" and it will let you buy (through Paypal), download, and install the font for \$5.

2. **Why do you use unlined paper? What font do you use to get the arrows on the child's Name Ticket?**  
At the beginning of the kindergarten year (until children have control over basic letter shapes), we use unlined paper and provide the blank Name Ticket for daily practice. **It may cause unnecessary frustration to painstakingly write between three lines** before they have developed automatic control of letters. The brain simply does not learn well on cognitive overload. However, once letter forms are fluent, many teachers switch to three-lined paper for the Name Ticket model and practice paper. For the arrows, I usually handwrite them; **the first directional arrow is red**. Zaner-Bloser sells a font that we like that includes **letter forms**

**with arrows** both on lined and unlined paper. [http://www.schoolfonts.com/cursive-font-blockletter/Letters\\_zaner-bloser\\_style.htm](http://www.schoolfonts.com/cursive-font-blockletter/Letters_zaner-bloser_style.htm)

3. **How do I teach handwriting in 2nd grade if the children did not get handwriting instruction in kindergarten or in first grade?** Efficient handwriting motions and pride in doing quality work should be firmly entrenched by 2nd grade so children's primary focus can be on

producing thoughtful writing pieces that meet rigorous Common Core Standards. That is why K-2 teachers and district literacy coaches need to design a consistent, coordinated approach to handwriting instruction. It is very difficult, time-consuming, and tedious for 1st or 2nd grade teachers to have to reteach movement patterns for efficient handwriting if the foundation has not been laid in kindergarten. Consider using our original blog article as a starting point to begin this important dialog and collaboration within your school community because if handwriting skills are not efficient, it interferes with the whole writing process! By the 2nd grade level, we would hope teachers could continue modeling good handwriting and showcasing student examples of what "quality handwriting" looks like. Students might be engaged weekly in copying over a poem they have memorized with their "best handwriting", and recopying an occasional writing piece for final publications. Kindergartners and primary grade students all appreciate the motivation of book publishing to inspire their best handwriting efforts. Set the standard: We do quality work in this classroom!



4. **When do you teach spacing between words?** Right from the start of the kindergarten handwriting journey with the power sentence, "I love you." We have the child verbalize as they write "I (space), love (space), you (period or exclamation mark.)". Frequent teacher modeling and reminders will be needed. Children soon learn that they are writing for readers, and the spaces allow everyone to more easily read their sentences. Here again, the teacher's expectations become evident in the children's writing. Notice the spaces between words in these examples of "secret" messages.



## 5. What do you think of the commercial handwriting programs?

I have not personally used any commercial handwriting programs, however I am told that some programs start kindergartners working first on capital letters, which is a concern. We want kindergartners to be writing and reading lowercase letters right from the first days of school so we can build a classroom of prolific and engaged young writers who meet rigorous standards by the end of the year. Our colleagues who have used commercial handwriting programs have indicated that the training programs and materials can be expensive and practicing individual letters on worksheets does not transfer to the writing process as well as opportunities to build whole word fluency. With limited budgets, time restraints, and diverse kindergarten learners, **we prefer approaches to handwriting that differentiate handwriting instruction** while simultaneously teaching high-frequency "heart words" and reinforcing phonics skills. Our experience also has taught us that the counterclockwise "o" motion starting on a diagonal (as in "o, a, c, d, g") is more easily generalized with fluid movement than starting the "o" at the center line as is taught in some programs. That said, "If your handwriting program works well for you, use it!" Consider weaving fingerspelling and handwriting practice with high-frequency words into your literacy framework. There is no one right way for every teacher to incorporate handwriting instruction into a day filled with meaning-centered learning. We developed our integrated approach to handwriting in collaboration with master kindergarten teachers; our goal was maximum fluency and transfer to the writing workshop in the minimum amount of time.

### To summarize our priorities for kindergarten handwriting:

- Teach lowercase letters right from the start: begin with the child's first name.
- Weave capital letter practices into authentic writing experiences. See article, [How Do We Teach Capital Letters?](#)
- Use multisensory memory hooks to accelerate the handwriting development.
- Avoid a one-size-fits-all, isolated skills approach.
- Teach o, a, c, d, and g as continuous motion letters.
- Do not waste limited budgets on consumable materials.
- Teach for immediate transfer to writing workshop.

6. **Why do you recommend teaching ball and stick rather than D'Nealian?** The vertical manuscript alphabet is more quickly mastered by young children. It is easier for them to learn to read, write, and spell using the same visual alphabet. See the article, [The Great Handwriting Debate](#) on our website. with summary of research by our colleague Julie Lay. The alphabet system that children use to learn to read and to write needs to be visually consistent. (Note: we



have borrowed some ideas about efficient continuous motions for forming the letters o, a, c, d, and g from the D'Nealian approach.)

**7. How do you work with the left-handed student?** There are some excellent resource links for working with the left-handed learner on our Nellie Edge [Pinterest Handwriting board](#). Also see article from our teacher's guide called, [How to Work with Left-handed Writers](#). It is important to be aware and sensitive to the unique challenges for the left-handed child learning handwriting. For example, when we provide large muscle patterning, the left-handed child grasps both hands together to perform the movements.

**8. How does the Sing, Sign, Spell, and Read! program fit in with handwriting?** The "O" Dance and our handwriting songs and chants for 32 high-frequency "heart words" are recorded on this CD and accompanying anthology collection. Music, sign language, movement, and dance provide a multisensory and memorable link between high-frequency words, phonics, and handwriting. It simply multiplies our teaching effectiveness! [Purchase NEW Music CD and 32 printed pages from our online bookstore.](#)

**9. When do you actually start using the handwriting books?** The Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting, Phonics, and Word Work writing and drawing books are designed to reinforce handwriting patterns that have already been introduced and rehearsed using "heart words". We want most children to already have internalized basic handwriting motions before presenting them with these invitations to demonstrate handwriting using real words and sentences. Some teachers start these books in November while others (depending on the level of the writing progress) wait until as late as January. These pages provide an opportunity to target instruction (with small groups) to children who have been harder-to-accelerate while providing meaningful cognitive challenges for all learners. (Again, first see our blog article about how we teach efficient handwriting motions from the beginning of the year.)



**10. What is your recommendation for eliminating the "b" and "d" confusion?** Good first-teaching research from the Reading Recovery™ folks informed our approach to teaching "b" and

"d" ... First we intentionally teach "d" using the language "curve up and around, way up and down" with the words "dog" and "Dad". Children learn to draw a dog and build fluency with power sentence patters: "I love my Dad." "I see the dog." Later we consistently teach "b" using a different beginning language and movement pattern "down, up and around." Children write the words "book", "by", and "bat". It is essential that children verbalize the directional language cues which immediately cue the brain differently. If one letter is woven into authentic literacy

experiences for a week of writing (and drawing) projects before the other is introduced, children should avoid "b" and "d" confusion. Teaching both of the letters "b" and "d" with the same initial downward movement pattern is what creates the confusion for less experienced learners.

#### **11. I notice you often don't use lines. What kind**

**of paper do you recommend? When do you use three-lined paper?**

**Does it matter?** Here again, K-1 teams need to decide on a consistent progression and there is no "just one right way" for every child. My colleagues often begin the year with drawing lessons and labeling on unlined paper. Within a month we use "kid writing" paper with a white space for children to use and a shaded space for adult underwriting. By mid-year most children no longer need adult underwriting and we use single-lined paper. In May, some teachers invite children to experience the traditional (first grade) "three lined paper!" During the beginning of the year, however, until children are more proficient, we want our young writers putting their energy into learning good handwriting motions and getting their ideas down in print rather than consuming so much energy focusing on how to navigate three lined paper. Cognitive overload slows down the learning process.

**12. How do you help children who come into kindergarten without the fine motor skills to hold a pencil?** This is a constant challenge in our large, diverse kindergarten classrooms, especially in half day programs, when teachers are feeling tremendous time pressure. I have heard (I do not have research or statistics) of preschools programs where teachers are wisely suggesting that developmentally younger children enter kindergarten a year later. Some researchers are recommending that boys start kindergarten at age five and a half since often their fine-motor skills are delayed that much behind girls. Once our states are funding a quality kindergarten model, we hope to see a more integrated approach to early literacy (preK-1) with options for some children to have an extra year in a strong developmental preschool or kindergarten which emphasizes language development, self-regulation, and small muscle skills.

There are currently pilot projects supported by National Institute of Child Health and Human Development where they are targeting afterschool programs with kindergarten and first graders involved in skills to develop executive functions such as following directions and visual-motor skills such as cutting paper. We have attempted, as much as possible, to integrate both



of these skills into our approach to handwriting, word work, and phonics. Children need time and opportunity to cut and paste, build with Legos, create models with clay, and copy drawing models.

We like giving children pencils for little hands from Handwriting Without Tears® [www.hwtears.com](http://www.hwtears.com)

**Fingerspelling is the best multisensory tool we know of to develop both finger muscles and ABC/Phonics memory connections in young children.** We are happy to see more preschool and Headstart teachers using it. See the [ABC Phonics tab at nellieedge.com](http://nellieedge.com) for more details about this proven approach to accelerated literacy.

See article, [Activities for Developing Fine Motor Coordination](#).

**13. What do you tell parents about teaching handwriting in kindergarten?** Parents are Partners in every aspect of building strong literacy foundations. This includes handwriting: We provide name-writing models and ask parents to help their child in daily name writing practice at home on specially designed Name Ticket Books. We send home skinny books (and other blank books) for children to engage in meaningful word work using high-frequency "heart words". There are several sample parent information letters included in our handwriting teachers' guide. We find parents are very pleased that we care about building good handwriting skills and are very supportive of our efforts. See [Name Ticket Practice Book](#).

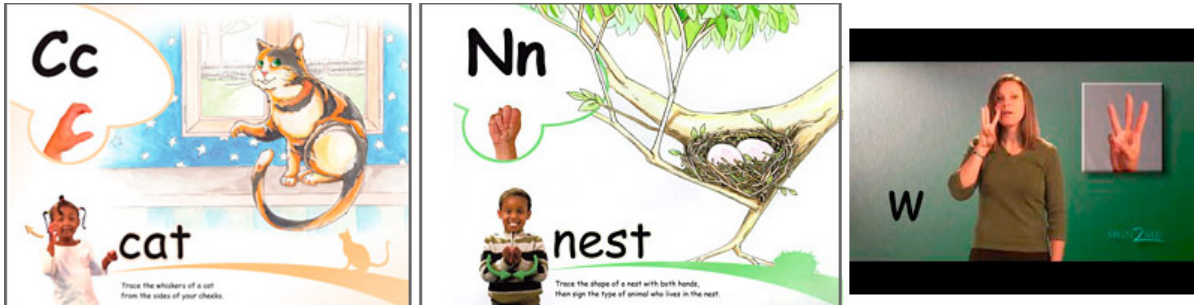
**14. How is your kindergarten-friendly approach to handwriting different than traditional handwriting programs?** Kindergarten-friendly handwriting is integrated with phonics and high-frequency word work (rather than primarily being taught as isolated drill). It is multisensory and includes fingerspelling and experiences in the arts. This approach does not require buying consumable workbooks each year; nor does this require the services of occupational therapists. (Though we wish all schools had one!) Our approach has a strong "Parents as Partners" component and has proven successful in meeting the accelerated writing standards of the Common Core. Traditional handwriting programs appear to progress slower, and be more expensive and time consuming to implement. The handwriting skills of older, traditional programs often do not introduce letters



within the context of real words, so the transfer to actual "kid writing" is not as strong. Our focus from the start is on developing proficient writers. This begins with highly differentiated instruction where each child learns how to print their first name.

### 15. What handwriting apps do you recommend for the iPad?

"Zaner-Bloser Handwriting ABC" (\$1.99) and the free app called "Little Writer" are the ones my colleague Winter Curry recommends. We caution you against apps that have children tracing over all uppercase letters to create words.



16. What's the easiest way to learn fingerspelling? Our publisher, Sign2Me, has generously provided quality instructional You-Tube videos to accompany our [ABC Phonics: Sign, Sign, and Read!](#) book and CD. You can access them from the ABC Phonics tab on our website. One of the excellent video tutorials teaches fingerspelling. Consider using it in the classroom and learn right along with your children!

**Teacher expectations are huge in teaching all new skills—especially handwriting!** Children KNOW if teachers expect them to do quality handwriting or if sloppy work is acceptable. They will rise to meet the expectation of a knowledgeable, caring teacher. Kindergarten handwriting instruction is so much more than teaching efficient movement patterns for letters. We pay special attention to how we talk to and encourage children because handwriting is where we first have the opportunity to develop the children's focus, metacognition, self-evaluation skills, and to develop their pride in doing quality work. Our approach to teaching handwriting aims to integrate foundational literacy skills while developing "habits of mind" that will support children in school—and in life!

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Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting, Phonics, and Word Work is [available online on Nellie Edge Kindergarten TpT](#). It includes

- A detailed teacher's guide
- 30 Essential Beginning Kindergarten Handwriting Lessons
- A-Z template pages for Student Practice Books
- "Parents as Partners" in Kindergarten Handwriting Guide

The entire program is included FREE as a part of Nellie Edge Online Seminar #2: "Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting Matters!"

# 10 Reasons to Teach Fingerspelling in Kindergarten



**1. Fingerspelling helps the brain remember letters and sounds:** It becomes the memory hook to ABC/Phonics mastery. Fingerspelling will enhance the effectiveness of any ABC/Phonics program.

*How did you teach your brain to fingerspell every letter in your name?*

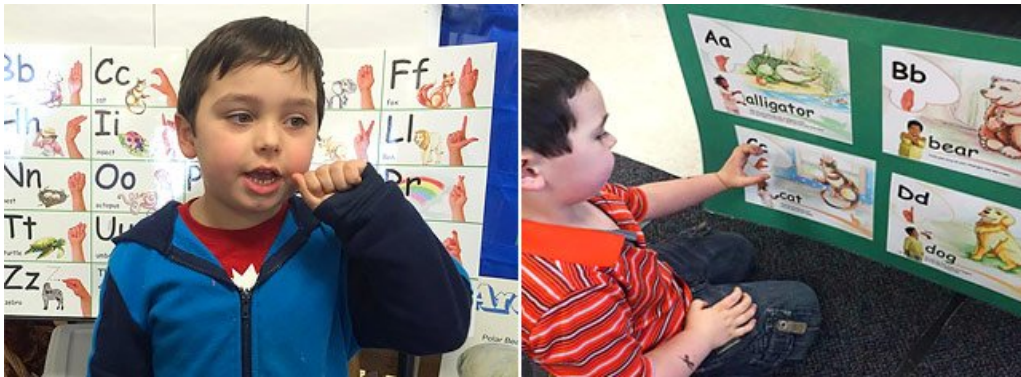


**2. Fingerspelling develops fine motor dexterity for efficient pencil grip and handwriting proficiency.**



**3. For English language learners, fingerspelling provides an additional pathway to learning success with letters, sounds, and high-frequency "heart words."** (Many English language learners master fingerspelling faster than their English-speaking classmates.)

***Wow! You learned to sing, sign, fingerspell, and read another new word!***



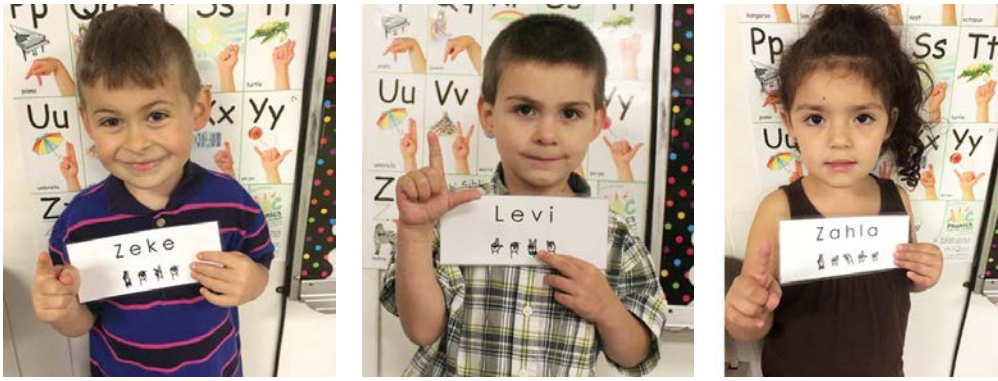
**4. While teaching fingerspelling, thoughtful educators develop metacognition and a growth mindset:** We teach children to focus, work hard, set goals, and think about their learning.

***Look closely, keep practicing, and you can teach your brain to remember!***



**5. The strategies used to teach fingerspell are supported by decades of visual learning research.** Teachers and children have crystal-clear, achievable learning targets. Teachers provide specific feedback, children learn to assess their progress, and mastery is acknowledged and celebrated! (Read John Hattie's book, *Visible Learning for Teachers*)





**6. Fingerspelling provides additional support for children who are highly kinesthetic learners:** All children are having the experience of learning a new language together while building stamina for writing workshop.



**The more you practice, the better you get!**

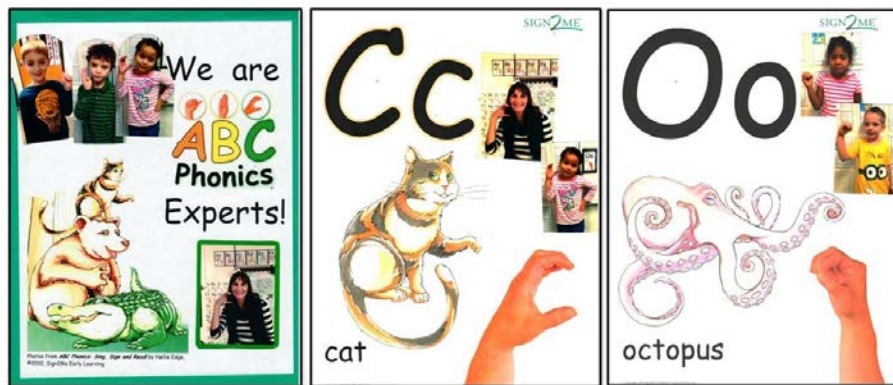
**7. Learning to fingerspell provides a family literacy experience,** multiplying our teaching effectiveness. Free online ASL video clips and abc support for at-home practice are available. Let parents know that fingerspelling not only builds hand-eye coordination for writing but also develops strength and dexterity for athletics and playing a musical instrument.

**Parents as Partners multiplies our teaching effectiveness.**



8. **Fingerspelling teaches young children a new language.** American Sign Language (ASL) is the third most commonly used language in the United States.

*Childhood is for language. ~ Lewis Thomas*



9. **Learning to fingerspell builds children's pride in mastering a new communication skill.** It teaches children to focus, observe closely, work hard, and develop visual motor integration.

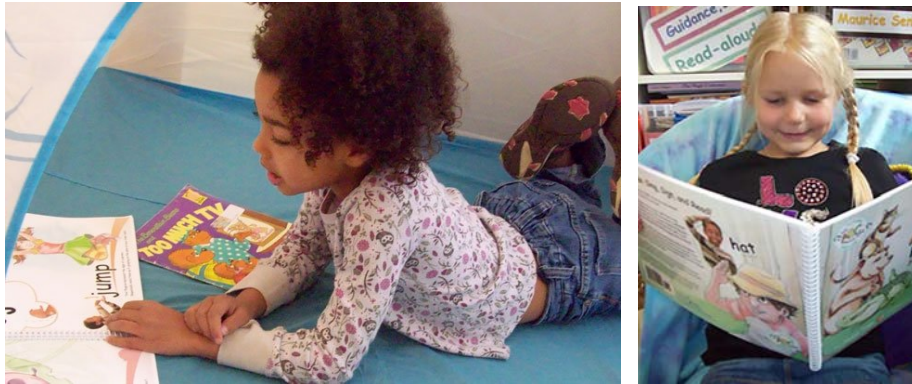
*You worked hard, and now you're an expert at fingerspelling every letter from A to Z. You must feel proud of becoming a master of fingerspelling!*



10. **Fluency with fingerspelling provides a memory hook to phonics during Writing Workshop** while children are learning how to encode sounds to print.

When children fingerspell, it triggers the letter/sound memory. It also enhances the memory for high-frequency "heart words."

**Wow! How did you teach your brain to remember that?**



## Learn to Teach Powerful Fingerspelling in Just a Few Minutes a Day

Free Resources at [www.NellieEdge.com/ABC Phonics](http://www.NellieEdge.com/ABCPhonics)

- Learn to Fingerspell: View FREE instructional videos from Sign2Me
- See glimpses of fingerspelling for ABC and Phonics learners with FREE teacher supports
- See document: ["Parents as Partners: Why We Teach American Sign Language and Fingerspelling"](#)
- See document: [How to Make Name/Fingerspelling Cards](#)



- Download FREE [ABC Phonics Family Reference Chart](#)
- See document: [Excerpts From Visible Learning: A Synthesis of Over 800 Meta-Analysis Related to Achievement](#) by John Hattie, Routledge Publishers, 2009
- *ABC Phonics: Sing, Sign, and Read!* Book and wall charts are available at [www.Sign2Me.com](http://www.Sign2Me.com) or [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) "



# Handwriting Instruction: How We Talk to Children Matters!

The first kindergarten handwriting priority is to teach children how to hold a pen efficiently and print their first name. This provides the foundation for a year of multisensory and engaging handwriting lessons as a part of our comprehensive kindergarten writing program. Proficiency in Common Core Writing Standards is our goal.

- Encourage children to fingerspell their name before they show you their daily name ticket—especially with children who do not have strong finger writing muscles. Fingerspelling reinforces letter knowledge while building fine motor handwriting skills for a firm pencil grip. Many highly kinesthetic children soon become fast and accurate with fingerspelling, which builds pride and confidence—especially for harder-to-accelerate learners. We want all children to build an “I can do it!” growth mindset for future learning.

**How we talk to children matters!** Powerful handwriting instruction involves close coaching by teachers and volunteers. They are learning “habits of mind” and attitudes about learning that may last a lifetime:

- *How did you learn how to make that L so well?*
- *Wow, you remembered that capital letter!*
- *The “r” is a “continuous motion letter.” Let’s make it again without lifting our pencil. Repeat after me, “down, up and around.” I bet you can remember how to make that letter – write your name one more time (or write the letter several times) and teach your brain to remember it!*
- *What is the focus letter that you have been working on? Yes, “y” is a “lift the pen” letter. How have you been teaching your brain to remember that?*
- *Stop and look at the Name Ticket model. Focus. Do your very best name writing!*
- *You paid attention and worked hard. That’s what good kindergarten writers do. What letter are you going to remember how to make? Let’s say the language and do the motion together.*

**When the child shows you their finished Name Ticket, always start instruction with a specific positive comment about what the child can do.** Then help the child remember the target letter or motion they are working on. When they show you their finished Name Ticket, give them one specific letter to improve. This is why we must be assessment-driven. The teacher, child, and parent need to know what the next name writing goals are. Expect improvement every day. Expect the child to verbalize their handwriting target letter and how they are teaching their brain to remember it.

## Have High Expectations

*If you expect students to write their first names perfectly, like your model, rather than just legibly, most students, with enough guidance and practice, will learn to write it very nicely. And for those who cannot and may never be able to write their names perfectly, your expectation will result in them writing it much better than they may have otherwise. Moreover, such an expectation at this point will result in neater handwriting throughout the year as well as an overall heightened quality of work in general. (quote from Randee Bergen)*

# Additional Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting Resources on TPT

Nellie Edge Online Seminar #2  
Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting Matters!

If handwriting motions are not efficient, it interferes with the whole writing process.  
Our goal is for letter formation to be fluid and automatic.

Kindergarten Handwriting MasterClass  
Intensive Power Guide from  
Nellie Edge Online Seminar #2

Parents as Partners in  
Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting

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

Dear Parents,

Good handwriting matters, beginning with a good pencil grasp!  
If handwriting motions are not efficient, it interferes with the whole process.  
As your child develops a better pencil grasp, the writing process becomes easier.

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

*A Family Guide to Support Handwriting Development*

Parents as Partners

My Name Ticket Practice Book

FREE

Kaitlyn

Name Ticket Practice Book

www.NellieEdge.com

FREE Parents as Partners  
Name Ticket Practice Book

FREE

Play Dough Mats:  
abc and Fingerspelling

Play Dough Mat Templates

FREE Play Dough Mats with abc,  
Fingerspelling, and Handwriting Guide

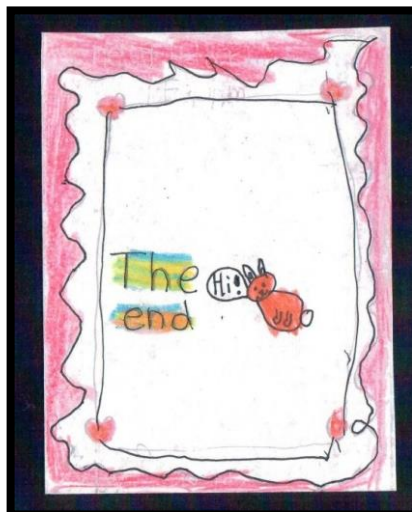
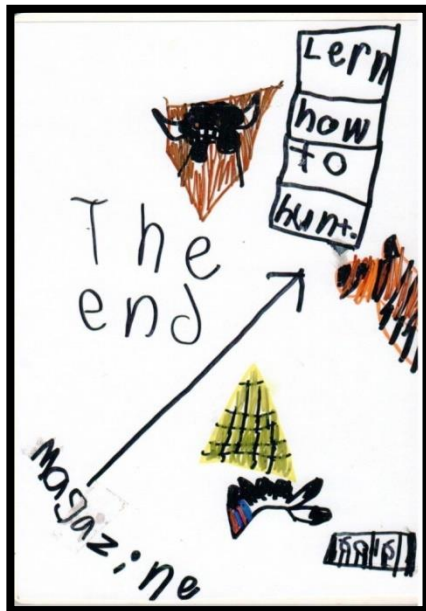
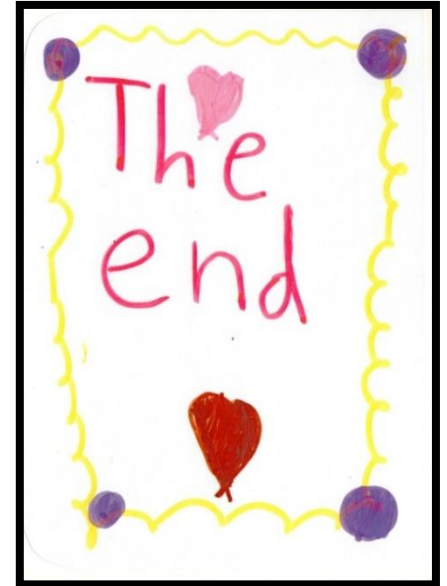
## Additional Nellie Edge Support for Kindergarten Handwriting Includes:

- *Sing, Sign, Spell, and Read!* CD and program with handwriting and sight word songs and "I Can Read" Anthology pages
- Kindergarten Family Learning Calendars

# Kindergarten Authors and Illustrators Learn to Fancy Up "The End" Pages

Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting provides authentic word work and builds stamina for writing workshop

Children produce unique and creative work.



**T-h-e e-n-d. The end!**  
 Enjoy spelling chants from *Sing, Sign, Spell and Read!* CD by Nellie Edge, Gina Edge, and Rosalie Karalekas

Teachers have permission to make multiple copies of *Sing, Sign, Spell, and Read!* program for Family Literacy.



**All kindergartners love to write, draw, and make books!**



# Nellie Edge Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting Curriculum

Integrates ABC Phonics, word work, sentence writing, drawing, and fingerspelling.

## Kindergarten Handwriting & Sentence Writing Curriculum Bundle

www.NellieEdge.com

## Kindergarten Handwriting Teacher's Guide

NellieEdge.com

## Essential Handwriting Lessons

www.NellieEdge.com

## Handwriting Practice: Kindergarten & 1st Grade

Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting, Sentence Writing, Fingerspelling, and Word Work

www.NellieEdge.com

## Kindergarten Handwriting Accelerate Kindergarten Writing Proficiency

Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting: Building the Writing Brain

A MasterClass Intensive with Nellie Edge

www.NellieEdge.com

## Kindergarten Name Writing With Family Practice

My Name Ticket Practice Book

FREE

Kaitlyn

www.NellieEdge.com

**Your colleagues evaluate this program:**

**"These lessons are a game changer for my kinders. So engaging and I've seen so much improvement. Wish I would have started these in the Fall!" -Chelsea G.**

**"This was very helpful to help teach writing. I homeschool my granddaughter and this was a perfect resource with little prep time." -Tamara R.**

**"Now we ..always start our letters at the top! :) Thank you for another great program." -Chantelle O.**

**"I had been wanting to get my hands on this resource for a while. So glad it finally came in a digital format. I have used Nellie Edge's resources to teach the alphabet, letter names and sounds. This was a wonderful match up product to reinforce teaching and learning." -Educom K.**

**"I love everything Nellie Edge! She uses best practices! I love, love, love! Ever since I began using her program, I've seen a huge increase in my students learning." -Jessica H.**

**"Really great for step by step writing for kids." -Sara B.**

**"Great activities for my first graders. I used it at the beginning of the year for review." -Andi S.**

# Download Gifts of Joyful Literacy from Nellie Edge

- Authentic Teaching and Learning
- Multisensory Strategies
- Meaning-Centered Experiences

Begin the Year with Social Emotional Learning

**Spark Joy All Year Long!**



Let's give our friend A "WOW"!



Another gift of joyful literacy from Nellie Edge

84-page PDF

**ABC Phonics Immersion Strategies:**  
Teacher's Guide and Nellie Edge Online Seminar #1

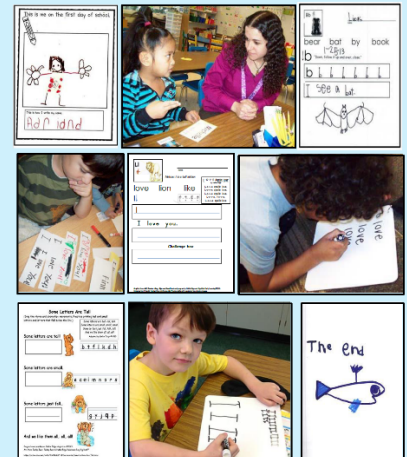
Simultaneously engage visual, auditory, and kinesthetic modalities to accelerate learning for ALL.



Another gift of Joyful Literacy from Nellie Edge

50-page PDF

**Best Practices in Kindergarten-Friendly Handwriting**  
Students Simultaneously Build ABC Fluency and Sentence Writing Mastery for Writing Workshop



Another gift of joyful literacy from Nellie Edge

40-page PDF



**What Does an Authentic, Accelerated K-1 Writing Curriculum Look Like?**

by Nellie Edge



- Joyful, Multisensory Teaching and Learning
- Meaning-Centered Writing Across the Curriculum
- Differentiated, Authentic, and Rich in the Arts

Another gift of Joyful Literacy from Nellie Edge

40-page PDF

**Best Practices for Teaching Kindergarten Writing-to-Read "Heart Word" Sentences**

a.k.a. Nellie Edge Sight Word Sentence Program



Integrate ABC Phonics, handwriting, and heart word sentences to build circles of writing mastery.

Another gift of Joyful Literacy from Nellie Edge

58-page PDF

**Purposeful Literacy Play:**

Develop Self-Regulation, Language, and Social-Emotional Skills

From Social Emotional Learning in Kindergarten, Book 2



A gift of joyful literacy from Nellie Edge

25-page PDF

"I know well that only the rarest kind of best in anything can be good enough for the young." Walter de la Mare, *Bells of Grass*

Spark joy and accelerate literacy! Subscribe to [Nellie Edge blogs](#) to receive weekly photo essays of best early literacy practices and frequent FREE resources.

Yes! I want to subscribe now!