



Equipping Literacy Assistants

Writing

Handwriting

Watch for:

- Correct grip of pencil
- Tall letters formed top to bottom
- Round letters like 'o' and 'a' start at 1 o'clock
- Spaces between words
- Writing on the line
- Not too small or large
- Not rushed



Handwriting

Correct pencil grip



Wrong pencil grip slows you down when writing exams.

Handwriting Yrs 1 & 2

- Writing patterns give practice in the different types of strokes needed for writing.
- BEFORE the children write, ask them to copy you in writing the letter in the air. (You will have to draw a mirror image of the letter in the air because you are facing them.)



Tricks for 'b's and 'd's

- Lower case b – 'a bat and a ball'
- Lower case d – 'a drum and a drumstick'
- Lower case p – 'a pole and a plate'



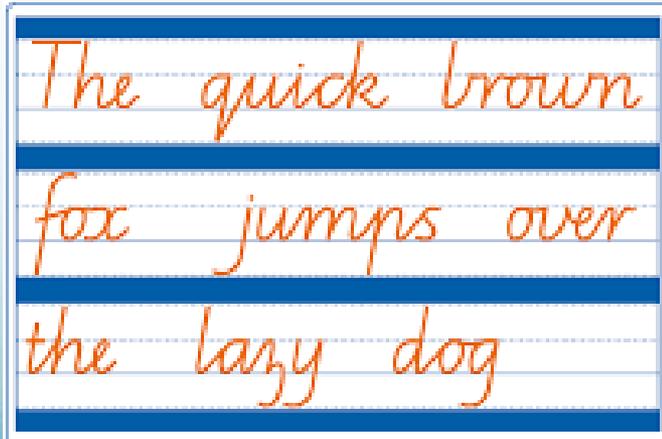
Handwriting Yr 3

- No need for writing patterns now.
- In Year 3 cursive writing is introduced and it is unjoined.
- Note that many letters have exits (flicks)
- They should start to use the same writing style in their exercise books in other subjects.



Handwriting Yrs 4 and up

- In Year 4 students use cursive **joined** writing.
- They should use the same writing style in their exercise books in all subjects. Why?
- Making a habit of using cursive instead of printing prepares them for higher level exams where they will need to write both neatly and FAST.



Written Expression

- Putting thoughts into words
- Putting those words into print
- Involves creative thinking, a good vocabulary, correct use of grammar, spelling and handwriting

Writing a sentence

- Beginners need to learn what a sentence is. A sentence is one idea. It has to have an action [verb].
- It starts with a capital letter and ends with a full stop.
- The student has to create the sentence in their mind and say it out loud... not copy a sentence that someone else has thought of.

Predictable sentence starters

- For beginners, e.g.
- Today is
- The weather is
- After school I am going to



Helping the student write a sentence

- Assistant says, “We are going to write a sentence together.”
- “What would you like to write about?”
- How will we start?

Using Thinking Hats to respond to a story

Story sample: At the market (Level 1 story).

The Assistant helps the student write the answer.

- What else could you buy at the market? (Green Hat)
- How many fruits were in this story? (White Hat)
- What are your favourite foods from the market? (Yellow Hat)

Student response

- I could buy ...
- There were ? fruits in the story.
- My favourite foods from the market are and

Different types of writing

Example 1: Personal experience

Example 2: How to make or do something

Example 3: Facts about a topic

Example 4: Answer questions about a story

Example 5: A rhyme

Example 6: A made-up story

Personal experience

Ask some questions such as:

- “What do you like to do on the weekend?”
- “What did you do on the weekend?”
- “What is your favourite place to go?”
- What games do you like to play?”

About themselves

Make a book using repetitive sentences.

Examples of sentence beginnings:

- I like to go

(Where else do you like to go?)

- On Saturday I like to

(What else to you like to do?)

- I like to eat (What else?)

How to make or do something

- How to play a game
- How to make a something to eat
- How to build a hut

Start: “This is how you make/play/build “

1. Get some

2. Continue with numbered instructions ...

Facts about a topic

- Sharks
- Volcanoes
- Anything that the student is interested in!

After making up their sentence, the student can draw a picture

Sentence formation



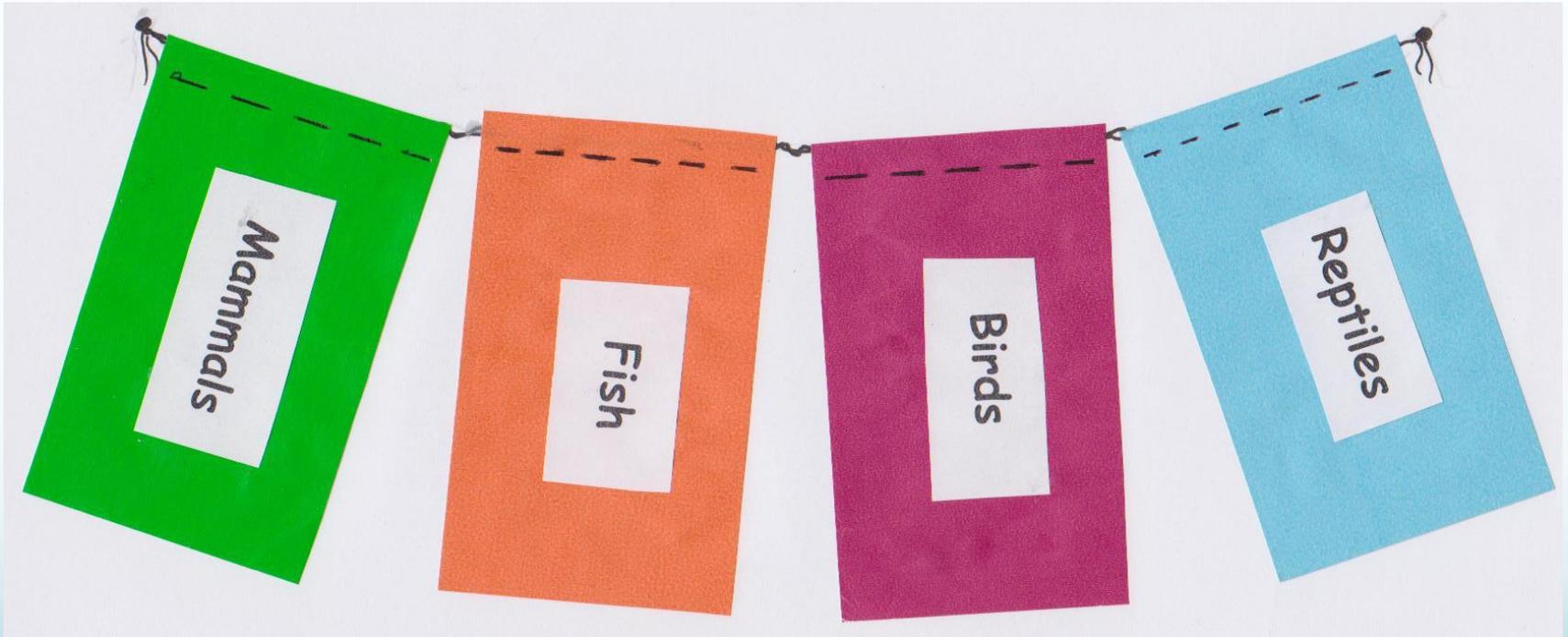
Ask: “Can you make an interesting sentence for me about sea creatures?”

Student response: “Lots of interesting things live under the sea.”

Make a book about the topic

- Drawing in your one-on-one sessions will take up too much time, but you can ask a student to draw their picture at home, and bring it back to you.
- Next session, think of a new sentence to illustrate on the same topic.
- When you have enough pages, staple together and make a book.

Topics of interest



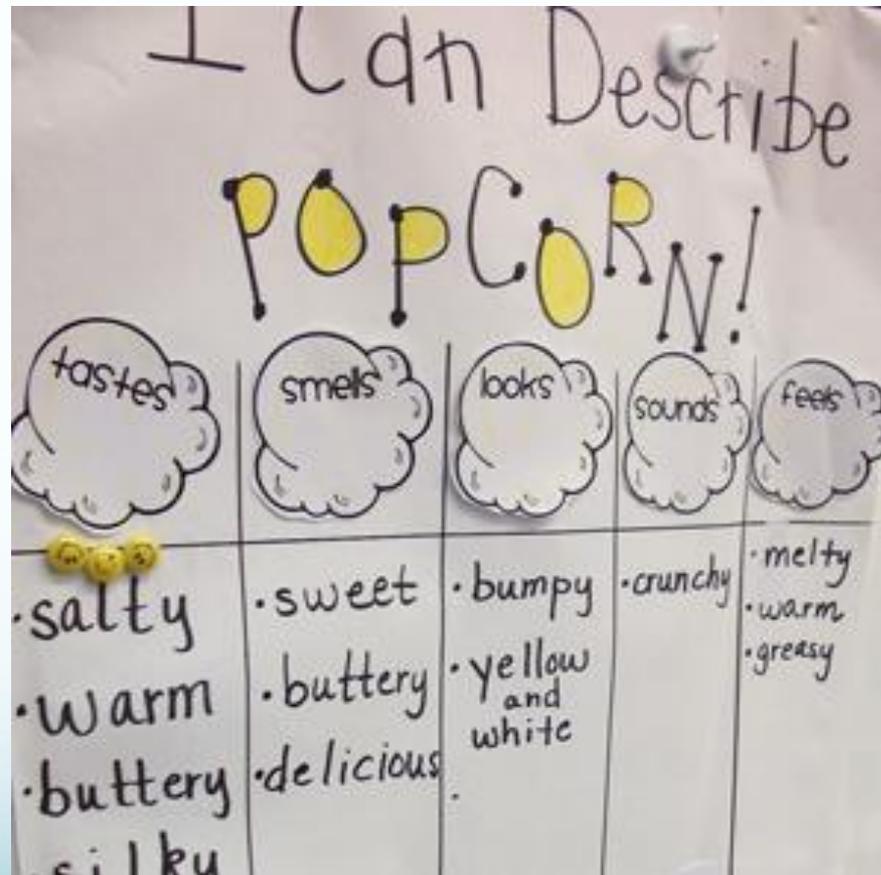
Teach punctuation

- Teach capital letters, full stops and question marks.
- Then teach exclamation marks and speech marks.

Teach grammar

- Ask students to add describing words
- e.g. the student says, "The **car** went up the **hill**."
- Ask, "What was the car like?" They add, 'big', little' 'red' 'old' 'new' etc.

Preparation for writing



Help them write the words they cannot write

- Always get the student to use sounds.
- “What sound does that word start with?”
- First let them ‘have a go’ on a scrap of paper.
- You can write some of the letters for tricky words.
- Don’t labour the sentence writing too long.

Beginners' made-up sentence



You ask, "Can you make up a sentence about your drawing?"
Student says, "I went to the beach and I saw a sea shell."
You say, "Let's write this sentence. How do we start?"
If they make a mistake, you rub it out as you go and correct it
IN PENCIL. The end product is a complete, correct sentence,
that they can read on another occasion.

Questions

- What are the tricks for teaching ‘b’ and ‘d’ in handwriting /printing?
- What is a writing pattern?
- When do the students start unjoined cursive writing, and when do they start joined cursive?
- What is written expression?
- What are the requirements for a sentence to be a sentence?