WORK BOOKS

PRACTISE REINFORCE CONSOLIDATE

HANDWRITING TODAY

Evaluation pack – Foundation to Year 6 for Victorian Modern Cursive

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HOW DOES *HANDWRITING TODAY* HELP STUDENTS AND TEACHERS?

'There are few supportive handwriting programs and teaching resources for Year 6 students, however *Handwriting Today* provides me with developmentally appropriate activities and great teacher support for my Year six students.'

Brett Year 6 Teacher

'Our school loves the *Handwriting Today* series and feels the transition of skills throughout the series are perfectly timed for our students.'

Lana Year 2 Teacher

'Our students love the characters and the colourful formation patterns in *Handwriting Today*. I love the progression of the books and the inclusion of some fun cross-curricular activities.'

Anne-Marie Year 1 Teacher

PROVIDE A GREAT FOUNDATION TO HANDWRITING
A word from our literacy expert: Debbie Hendriks

'When I began teaching, handwriting was a priority and taught in all classrooms. However, in today's crowded and demanding curriculum we've seen an understandable decline in the teaching of handwriting. Adding reduced handwriting opportunities, due in part to the dependency on technology, means that when students are asked to complete written tasks, they struggle, due to the lack of the required handwriting and cognitive skills.

Research has shown that explicit handwriting instruction and repetitive practice is essential for students to achieve automaticity and legibility; however, finding the time and appropriate resources has proved difficult for teachers.

Handwriting today incorporates a structured, developmentally-sequenced whole-school handwriting program with cross-curricular activities, developed specifically to meet the needs of students and teachers.'

Debbie Hendriks

WORK BOOKS

HANDWRITING TODAY

IMPROVE READING FLUENCY THROUGH GREAT HANDWRITING

Give your students the practice they need to write legibly, fluently and quickly in order to succeed. By achieving mastery of handwriting through repeated practice, students can concentrate on developing their ideas rather than on their effort to write. *Handwriting today* is whole-school program that will give you the support to plan and execute a successful handwriting strategy. Have a closer look and find out how they can help your students today!

Meet our HANDWRITING TODAY characters:

- Visually engaging with intuitive prompts to guide your students through the correct letter formations.

- Structured to provide robust scaffolding in the development of students' handwriting skills.

WELL-DESIGNED PRACTICE ACTIVITIES TO ACHIEVE GREAT RESULTS

- Includes specialised materials with differentiated tasks for left-handed writers, vision-impaired, or students with poor fine motor skills.

REINFORCE AND CONSOLIDATE EVERY DAY

1 PLAN

Plan handwriting lessons through the guidance of the Teachers guide. Prepare students adequately by showcasing the right fundamentals – posture, grip models and much more.

2 DEMONSTRATE

Demonstrate the correct letter formations using the complementary online tool (launching in 2020), as well as the additional activities provided in the Teachers guide.

3 PRACTISE AND REINFORCE

Lead students to practise and reinforce successfully through the workbooks. Help them grow and improve their skills through the year, as new formations are introduced.

4 ASSESS AND REMEDIATE

Continuously track students' progress and identify areas that require remediation. Use the assessment templates for formal assessments to gather evidence of students' progress.

ENGAGING IMAGERY USED THROUGHOUT

VMC FOUNDATION SAMPLE

Downstroke—Letter formation

Trace, then copy.

h h

H H

✓ Full-colour tracing patterns

✓ Numbered formation guide

Trace, then copy the words.

has her him here hand

Trace, then copy the sentence.

Hugh hurt his head.

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CHARACTERS USED AS VISUAL PROMPTS FOR LINE SPACING

VMC FOUNDATION SAMPLE

Trace the patterns.

Trace.

r r r r r r r

Write your own.

✓ Lower and upper case practice

r

Trace.

R R R R R R R

Write your own.

R

Trace.

ran run red

WARM UP WITH WRITING PATTERNS

VMC YEAR 1 SAMPLE

Downstroke—Letter formation

Trace, then copy.

w w

W W

Trace, then copy the words.

was were what want

Trace, then copy the sentence.

Whales swim in water.

NUMBERED CUES TO INDICATE PEN MOVEMENT

VMC YEAR 1 SAMPLE

Numeral formation

Trace, then copy the numerals.

10 10

20 20

30 30

40 40

50 50

Numeral formation and practice

Count by tens, then trace each number.

Write the numbers in order.

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INTRODUCE ENTRIES AND EXITS

VMC YEAR 2 SAMPLE

Letter formation—Practice

Trace, then write the lower case and capital letter.

b b

B B

Trace, then write the words.

but bull hobby bribe rabbit

Introduce entries and exits

Trace, then write the sentence.

Baby boys blow big bubbles.

Trace, then write the word that matches each meaning, using correct letter sizing.

nibble fibbed

Take small bites

Told a small lie

CROSS-CURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

VMC YEAR 2 SAMPLE

Cross-curricular—Mathematics

Trace, then write each number.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25

Write the time shown on each analog clock onto the digital clock below (in 12-hour time).

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STRUCTURED TO PROGRESS SKILLS

VMC YEAR 3 SAMPLE

Diagonal joins

am
a diagonal join

Diagonal joins are the most common type of join. They connect from the exit of one letter up to the entry of the next letter.

Trace, then copy these diagonal joins.

an an

ir ir

xy xy

um um

in in

ap ap

po po

mi mi

es es

du du

ly ly

ev ev

su su

cr cr

hu hu

Self-assessment

Circle your best diagonal join.

FULL CURSIVE

Horizontal joins—Tricky horizontal joins to *s*

os

When joining to an *s* from *b*, *f*, *o*, *r*, *v* or *w* the *s* doesn't change like it does for a diagonal join—just trace back around the top of the *s* instead.

Trace, then copy these tricky horizontal joins to ***s***.

nurse hose abs boss

goofs horse bluffs verse

curse tubs bows close

Using joined writing, trace the sentence and write the correct word to complete it.

flowers blows cows doors

Please shut all the .

'Moo', said the .

Wherever the wind .

The plants grew .

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ASSESSMENT AND RECORDING

USING HANDWRITING SAMPLES

Regular collection, analysis, dating and filing of writing samples provides teachers with a vast amount of evidence from which to assess students' handwriting development over a period of time.

When assessing handwriting skills, an assessment that requires students to copy a pangram, such as the sample on page 37, will allow teachers to effectively assess students' skills, without students experiencing fatigue. Teachers should assess the size, slope, positioning and formation of each letter; the spacing between letters within words and words within sentences; and the legibility, fluency and speed of their writing. Teachers should use a common assessment piece, such as the ones provided on pages 35–37, at regular intervals throughout the year. Using the same assessment at the end of each term will allow teachers to see students' handwriting development throughout the year. By using a similar assessment between year groups, teachers can monitor students' progress over the course of their schooling.

The application of students' handwriting skills can also be assessed through cross-curricular tasks, such as [illegible] provided in the *Handwriting today* student workbooks or through English writing samples, to ensure their handwriting skil[illegible] transferred to different contexts. The use of assessment tasks such as recounts may prove useful to monitor stu[illegible] application of handwriting skills.

Handwriting samples should be assessed carefully with annotations identifying students' handwriting strengths and difficulties. Strengths should be analysed to provide positive feedback to students and to identify any that require extension. Difficulties should be analysed to inform targeted instruction, and to identify any students that require individual education programs, remediation or specialist referrals.

Checklists, such as the ones provided on pages 38–40 may be useful for recording and analysing information about students' handwriting mechanics and skills, after work samples have been carefully examined and annotations have been made.

ANNOTATING HANDWRITING SAMPLES EXAMPLE (YEAR 1)

STUDENT A

STUDENT B

KEY
✔ DEMONSTRATED
● DEVELOPING
○ NOT DEMONSTRATED
– NOT ASSESSED

STUDENTS' NAMES	MECHANICS OF HANDWRITING					HANDWRITING SKILLS										COMMENTS
	Demonstrates correct posture	Demonstrates correct furniture positioning	Demonstrates correct tripod pencil grip	Demonstrates appropriate pencil pressure	Demonstrates appropriate pencil control	Forms anticlockwise lower-case letters with correct formation, sizing and positioning	Forms clockwise lower-case letters with correct formation, sizing and positioning	Forms downstroke lower-case letters with correct formation, sizing and positioning	Forms upper-case letters with correct formation, sizing and positioning	Forms numerals with correct formation, sizing and positioning	Uses appropriate spacing between letters in a word, and words in a sentence	Consistently slopes letters at the same angle, between 5°–15°	Uses pen lifts appropriately to minimise the disruption to their fluency and speed	Writes legibly	Writes with fluency and speed	
Student A	✔	✔	–	✔	✔	●	●	●	●	–	●	●	●	✔	●	letter formations and size need work
Student B	✔	✔	✔	✔	○	✔	✔	✔	✔	–	✔	●	✔	✔	○	pencil control and fluency not apparent

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WARM-UP EXERCISES

WARMING UP BEFORE HANDWRITING

Before every handwriting lesson, it is important that students warm up the muscles in their arms and hand to minimise unnecessary strain on their body. Instruct students to warm up the large muscles in their wrist, arm, shoulders, neck and back first and then warm up the smaller muscles in their hand and fingers. Each warm up should be conducted for approximately 10 seconds, depending on how demanding it is on the muscles, and should be repeated 2–3 times. Remind students to perform all activities sensibly within their limits, by allowing stretching and resting periods for their muscles, which will reduce the chance of injuries or fatigue before the handwriting lesson begins.

WARM-UP CARDS—LARGE MUSCLES

Wall push-ups Place both hands on a wall at shoulder height. Bend your arms to move your nose towards the wall. Keep your body straight. ***Challenge:*** *Use each hand on its own.*	**Chair push-ups** Sit correctly in your chair. Place your hands on the edge of the seat or the arm rests and push your body up off the seat. ***Challenge:*** *Hold your body off the seat for as long as possible.*	**Sitting push-ups** Sit on the floor with yo crossed. Place your palms n the floor. Straighten your arms to lift your body off the floor. ***Challenge:*** *Hold your body off the floor for as long as possible.*
Shoulder rolls Sit up straight with your shoulders in line with your back. Roll both shoulders forwards, then backwards, while keeping the body still. ***Challenge:*** *Roll each shoulder in a different direction.*	**Wrist rolls** Hold your arms straight out in front of you. Keep your arms still and roll both wrists in a clockwise, then anticlockwise direction. ***Challenge:*** *Roll each wrist in a different direction.*	**Arm rolls** Fold your arms. Lift one arm up slightly higher than the other. Roll your arms around each other in a forward and backwards motion. ***Challenge:*** *Roll your arms at different speeds.*
Hand pushes Touch your hands together with fingers facing up. Hold each elbow horizontally in line with your hands. Push your hands together. ***Challenge:*** *Tilt your hands towards and away from you.*	**Hand pulls** Curl your fingers over and turn them so one hand faces up and one hand faces down. Link your fingers together and try to pull your hands apart. ***Challenge:*** *Move your linked arms up and down.*	**Shoulder shrugs** Sit up straight with your shoulders in line with your back. Shrug both shoulders up and down, then alternate between each shoulder. ***Challenge:*** *Change the speed of your shoulder shrugs.*
Arm circles Hold your arms out to the side in line with each shoulder. Keep your arms straight and make small circles. Slowly make the circles bigger. ***Challenge:*** *Circle each arm in a different direction.*	**Clap the beat** Create a beat by clapping the hands together. Use loud and soft beats and make sure it is repetitive and rhythmic. ***Challenge:*** *Make beats that use different tempos.*	**Air writing** Hold your writing hand out in front of you. Think of a word and write each letter in the air while keeping the rest of your body still. ***Challenge:*** *Write a whole word, without twisting your body.*

WARM-UP ACTIVITIES

VMC YEAR 4 SAMPLE

HANDWRITING SKILLS

WARM-UP CARDS—HAND AND FINGER MUSCLES

Pencil shuffle Use correct pencil grip to hold the pencil. Tuck the ring finger and pinky into the palm and shuffle the other three fingers to the end of the pencil and back. ***Challenge:*** *Shuffle a pencil in each hand at the same time.*	**Twirl the baton** Pretend the pencil is a baton and twirl it around each finger without dropping it. ***Challenge:*** *Twirl the pencil around all fingers without pausing.*	**Pencil tug of war** Hold both ends of a pencil using only the fingertips. Pull each end of the pencil in opposite directions. ***Challenge:*** *Use only the thumb, index and middle finger.*
Finger spider crawl Press firmly against the desk with the fingertips. Using a spider crawl, move the fingers on each hand, one at a time, across the desk and back again. ***Challenge:*** *Have a spider crawl relay using both hands.*	**Finger star bursts** Hold both hands in a closed fist. Using one hand at a time, rapidly outstretch all fingers simultaneously, then return them to a fist. ***Challenge:*** *Change the speed of each star burst.*	**Finger soccer** Hold the index and middle fingertips to the desk. Scrunch a small piece of scrap paper to make a ball. Flick the ball back and forth between hands. ***Challenge:*** *Set up a goal and try to score.*
Finger counting Use finger counting to count forward or backwards to a given number. Alternate between opening and closing the fist for each set of tens. ***Challenge:*** *Count at different speeds.*	**Finger tap the beat** Create a drum beat by tapping different fingertips on the desk. Use loud and soft beats and make sure it is repetitive and rhythmic. ***Challenge:*** *Make beats that use different tempos.*	**Finger spelling** Use finger counting to count the number of letters in a word while silently spelling it. ***Challenge:*** *Think of a sentence and use finger counting to count how many letters are in it.*

USING THE WARM-UP CARDS

Enlarge the cards to A3 or larger and print each set on different coloured paper. Laminate and cut out each card, then:

- attach the cards to a display wall for students to use during all writing tasks.
- attach the cards to a hinged book ring for each student to choose their own warm ups.
- create a box for each set containing three copies of each card. Students select one warm-up card from each box before each handwriting lesson.

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REMEDIATION

Students experiencing handwriting difficulties need assistance, encouragement and support. Identifying and finding strategies to assist students is exceedingly important as handwriting difficulties can occur at any stage of development.

Some common difficulties are identified in the table below, with some strategies for ways to help rectify the problem. This table is by no means exhaustive.

HANDWRITING DIFFICULTY	POSSIBLE STRATEGIES TO USE
POOR PRE-WRITING SHAPE FORMATION	• Determine which shapes the student can and cannot copy. Try different ways of teaching them—copying, tracing, painting, making the shapes with playdough, playing games, forming the shapes with whole body, worksheets etc. • Increase fine motor skills activities such as mazes, colouring and tracing to promote pencil control. • Use different writing implements—pencils, crayons, markers etc. • Change the size of the writing implement to a thicker one which is easier to grip. • Choose the correct implement for the purpose. For example, use an implement with a softer lead for colouring and one with a harder tip for writing letters. • Have the student's vision assessed.
POOR POSTURE	• Improve muscle strength with gross motor activities. • Have the student sit on a cushion. • Use a gym ball of the correct height for the student to sit on for short periods of time. • Use a poster to show correct posture. Have the student refer to it regularly. • Ensure that the student is sitting upright and square to the table. • Check that desk and chair are at the correct height. • Check that the chair is not too close to the table. • Check that feet are flat on the floor. • Ensure that half of the forearm of the writing hand is resting comfortably on the desk to be used as a pivot. • Set a time limit for correct posture to be maintained throughout a handwriting lesson. Commence with a short time then increase it. • Carry out regular stretching exercises and breaks from desk work. • Consider using a slanted board for writing. • Have the student's vision checked.
POOR PENCIL CONTROL	• Use lined paper to assist the student to develop consistent letter sizing in relation to letter formation. • Use finger spaces for writing spaces. • Review pre-writing patterns. • Include pre-writing shapes into drawings.
POOR PENCIL HANDLING	• Encourage the use of a variety of handwriting implements. • Check body posture. Encourage the student to place the weight of the body through the elbows and forearms when completing fine motor activities such as tracing and colouring. • Use activities that require the arm, fingers and wrist to move simultaneously such as when completing mazes, dot-to-dots etc.
WRITING RELUCTANCE	• Praise correct formations, slope etc. when it occurs. • Ensure the length of time for handwriting is not too arduous. • Allow handwriting breaks often—after letters, at the end of a line or sentence. Shake hands, wiggle fingers, stretch arms and necks etc. • Make handwriting fun and more creative with patterning and colouring; for example, the speed loops in letters. • Conduct handwriting lessons when the student is less fatigued; i.e. in the morning. • Extend the time allowed to complete the handwriting activity.

Revision

Joining to and from *f*

Joins to and from *f* can be tricky. They change depending on where the letter comes in the word. Joins from *f* at the beginning of a word have a crossbar from *f* to the next letter.

Trace, then copy the joins from *f* to other letters.

Five fat frogs fell from fresh

fern fronds.

Joins within a word

These need a small loop from the letter to *f*. The loop crosses at the height of a body letter. After the loop, the crossbar goes to the next letter.

Trace, then copy, the joins to f from other letters.

thief shelf chef gulf half leaf

self reef loaf sofa lift craft left

Double *f*

Words with double *f* use the crossbar from the first to join to the second. Both letters will have a loop.

Trace the ff joins in words.

stuff cliff puff fluffy effort whiff

foodstuff lift-off muffin offer huff

buffalo different coffee daffodil

Underline the words where the second crossbar joins to the next letter in the word.

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Revision

Speed loops from descenders

Speed loops to and from some letters make words faster and easier to write. Using speed loops makes handwriting more fluent. When speed loops are used you don't have to slow down or use retracing.

eg aj ly iz

The descender letters are _____.

Look at the letters of the alphabet in a speed loop font.

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Which two descenders DO NOT have a speed loop? _____ and _____

Speed loops from descenders cross at the baseline.

Trace, then copy the speed loops from these descenders. Do not make the loops too wide or you will slow down again!

gi _____ ga _____ gu _____ je _____ jo _____ ys _____

ye _____ yi _____ ze _____ zi _____ zo _____

Trace, then copy the speed loops from descenders in these words. Speed loops for body and tail letters are not usually needed at the end of a word because the letters are not joining to another letter.

major game gym youth juggle

joke enjoyable guilt drizzle hygiene

Write the sentence adding speed loops where they are needed.

The python had no legs so he could not jump.

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TRACK AND RECORD PROGRESS

VMC YEAR 5 SAMPLE

ASSESSMENT

STUDENT HANDWRITING SKILLS CHECKLIST

NAME	DATE L R	DEVELOPING	NEEDS FURTHER PRACTICE
EXHIBITS LEFT-HANDED/RIGHT-HANDED GRIP			
SKILL			
PENCIL GRIP			
• Exhibits left-handed/right-handed grip			
• Uses correct pencil grip			
• Uses appropriate pressure			
POSTURE			
• Assumes a correct, comfortable body and head position for handwriting			
PAPER POSITION			
• Places paper in an appropriate position for handwriting			
LETTER FORMATION			
• Forms anticlockwise letters correctly			
• Forms clockwise letters correctly			
• Forms downstroke letters correctly			
• Forms exits from letters correctly			
• Forms capital letters correctly			
NUMBERS			
• Forms numbers 0 to 9 correctly			
JOINS			
• Forms diagonal joins from baseline exit letters correctly			
• Forms diagonal joins to ascenders correctly			
• Forms diagonal joins from q to u correctly			
• Forms diagonal joins to touch joins correctly			
• Forms horizontal joins to ascenders correctly			
• Forms horizontal joins from first dotted line exit letters correctly			
• Forms touch joins correctly			
• Forms double letter joins correctly			
• Forms joins to and from *f* correctly			
• Forms joins to and from *s* correctly			
• Forms speed loops to ascenders correctly			
• Forms speed loops from descenders correctly			
SHAPE			
• Forms all letter shapes correctly			
SPACING			
• Uses a consistent space between letters in a word, and between words in a text			
SIZE			
• Keeps letter sizes consistent within words and/or words in a text			
SLOPE			
• Uses a consistent slope when writing letters in words and/or words in a text			
GENERAL			
• Developing fluency and legibility in speed tests			
• Uses fluent and legible handwriting skills in cross-curricular learning areas			
• Developing an awareness of the need for different scripts for different writing purposes			
• Developing an awareness of the need for a personal handwriting style			

Assessment records

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CURRICULUM LINKS

HANDWRITING FOCUS

Develop a handwriting style that is becoming legible, fluent and automatic (ACELY1706) AC

SKILLS PAGES

The skills pages incorporate activities that cover English concepts relating to:

- word knowledge
- phonics and spelling
- sentence knowledge and structure
- alphabetical knowledge and order
- writing for a purpose
- proper nouns
- developing vocabulary
- creating short texts
- poetry, including rhymes
- text structures
- simple and complex sentences
- language features such as adjectives to enhance texts
- pronouns and text connectives
- alliteration
- dictionary skills
- acronyms and abbreviations
- word meanings
- paragraphs in text

Making programming easier

CROSS-CURRICULAR PAGES

PAGE	LEARNING AREA	AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM CONTENT DESCRIPTION
101	Mathematics Measurement and Geometry	Estimate, measure and compare angles using degrees. Construct angles using a protractor (ACMMG112) AC
102	English Literature	Understand, interpret and experiment with sound devices and imagery, including simile, metaphor and personification, in narratives, shape poetry, songs, anthems and odes (ACELT1611) AC
103	Science Biological Sciences	Living things have structural features and adaptations that help them to survive in their environment (ACSSU043) AC
104	Humanities and Social Sciences Geography	The impact of bushfires or floods on environments and communities, and how people can respond (ACHASSK114) AC
105	Humanities and Social Sciences History	The reasons people migrated to Australia and the experiences and contributions of a particular migrant group within a colony (ACHASSK109) AC
106	Humanities and Social Sciences Civics and Citizenship	Why regulations and laws are enforced and the personnel involved (ACHASSK117) AC
107	Humanities and Social Sciences Economics and Business	Types of resources (natural, human, capital) and the ways societies use them to satisfy the needs and wants of present and future generations (ACHASSK120) AC
108	The Arts Visual Arts	Explain how visual arts conventions communicate meaning by comparing artworks from different social, cultural and historical contexts, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artworks (ACAVAR117) AC
109	English Language	Understand the use of vocabulary to express greater precision of meaning, and know that words can have different meanings in different contexts (ACELA1512) AC
110	The Arts Drama	Develop skills and techniques of voice and movement to create character, mood and atmosphere and focus dramatic action (ACADRM036) AC
[illegible]	The Arts Music	Explain how the elements of music communicate meaning by comparing music from different social, cultural and historical contexts, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music (ACAMUR091) AC
114	Mathematics Number and Algebra	Recognise that the place value system can be extended beyond hundredths (ACMNA104) AC
115	English Literature	Understand, interpret and experiment with sound devices and imagery, including simile, metaphor and personification, in narratives, shape poetry, songs, anthems and odes (ACELT1611) AC

Revision

Horizontal joins to ascenders

Write a sentence that explains ascenders. Include a list of the seven letters of the alphabet that are ascenders. You may also describe them in terms of body, head and tail letters.

Write horizontal joins to these ascenders from *b, o, r, v* and *w*. One has been done for you as an example.

bb _b _b _b _b _d _d _d _d _d _h _h _h _h _h

_t _t _t _t _t _k _k _k _k _k _l _l _l _l _l

Use the clues to write words with horizontal joins to ascenders. The letter in the brackets after the clue is the first letter in the word.

- The part of the body of a mammal containing most of the digestive organs; the belly (a) _____
- That which is owed; obligation (d) _____
- A thick, strong rope; often several wires twisted together (c) _____
- A piece of timber sawn thinly (b) _____
- A reddish, edible leafstalk often used for making pies (r) _____
- A dessert made from meringue, cream and fruit (p) _____
- A large number of people gathered closely together (c) _____
- To move about in a stealthy manner (p) _____

Trace, then copy the sentences.

The rowdy cowboy heard the spooky squawk.

A low whine in the undergrowth made his skin crawl.

Furtively, he moved forward.

Assessment

Spacing, slope and size

DATE: ___/___/_____

Rewrite the verse of *The Jumblies* by Edward Lear below, taking care with letter shape and size, the slope of letters in words, and spacing between letters in words and between words.

The water it soon came in, it did,
The water it soon came in;
So to keep them dry, they wrapped their feet
In a pinky paper all folded neat,
And they fastened it down with a pin.
And they passed the night in a crockery-jar;
And each of them said, 'How wise we are!
Though the sky be dark, and the voyage be long,
Yet we never can think we were rash or wrong,
While round in our Sieve we spin!'
Far and few, far and few,
Are the lands where the Jumblies live;
Their heads are green, and their hands are blue,
And they went to sea in a Sieve.

SELF-ASSESSMENT

spacing ☆☆☆☆☆ slope ☆☆☆☆☆ size ☆☆☆☆☆

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MECHANICS OF HANDWRITING

PAPER POSITIONING

Paper positioning refers to the position of the paper on the desk and the relative positioning of the paper to the writer. Positioning paper correctly on the desk will encourage students to use correct posture and write with a fluid movement across the page, using correct letter formation, sizing and slope.

It is recommended that students tilt their page at an angle of approximately 5°–15° to the left or right, depending on the font and the hand dominance of the writer. The angle of the page is designed to give students the optimal angle for their arm and wrist to write smoothly. The Victorian Modern Cursive font used in the *Handwriting today* series has a 7° slope. When using the *Handwriting today* series, students should be encouraged to turn their book approximately 7° to the left or right side, depending on hand dominance, or an angle that is comfortable and allows for legible, fast and fluent handwriting. *See page 136 for slope card resource.*

Before students begin handwriting sessions, desks should be cleared to allow adequate room for students to place their page or workbook on the desk, without any part of it overhanging or bumping into other objects on the desk. This will allow students to move the page further up the desk as their writing continues down the page. Students should be encouraged to hold the page in position using their non-dominant/supporting hand.

CORRECT PAPER POSITIONING

PAPER POSITION RELATIVE TO THE DESK

The desk should be cleared to allow space for the paper to move up the desk without interference. The paper should be placed on the desk in front of the writer with no part of the page overhanging.

MIDLINE POINT FOR LEFT AND RIGHT HANDED WRITERS

LEFT HANDED RIGHT HANDED

PAPER POSITION RELATIVE TO THE WRITER

The paper is positioned on the desk to the dominant side of the midline of the writer's body. The paper should be tilted to the left or right depending on a writer's hand dominance. The tilt of the paper should align with the slope of the font being taught or the writer's developed handwriting style. To encourage students to tilt their page correctly, place a piece of masking tape onto the desk at the correct slope for students to align their page to. *See pages 10, 29 and 30 for information about paper positioning for left- and right-handers.*

LEFT HANDED RIGHT HANDED

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Capital letters – 3

Revision

Capitals letters are always found at the beginning of proper nouns such as the names of cities and countries.

Trace the shaded capital cities and countries in the table, then add the missing ones. Then in the last column, choose one word from each row to rewrite using an invented join from the capital letter. Tick the word in each row you prefer.

CAPITAL CITY	COUNTRY	JOINED CAPITALS
Brussels	Belgium	
Dhaka	Bangladesh	
Dublin	Ireland	
Freetown	Sierra Leone	
Hamilton	Bermuda	
Helsinki	Finland	
Islamabad	Pakistan	
Oslo	Norway	
	China	
Copenhagen		
	Martinique	
Jakarta		
	Canada	
Baghdad		
	Brazil	
Budapest		
	Vietnam	
Douglas		
New Delhi		

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INCREASED COMPLEXITY OF WORKSHEETS

VMC YEAR 6 SAMPLE

Revision

Joining to and from *s*

Joins to and from *s* involve retracing part of the letter before joining to the next letter.

Joins to *s* can be diagonal or horizontal. After each type of join, take care to correctly form the letter *s*.

Trace, then copy each join to *s*, remembering to retrace where you need to.

submersible _____ venomous _____

scarves _____ coleslaw _____

ferries _____ embarrassment _____

newsprint _____ flaws _____

awesome _____ disturbance _____

Could each retracing be formed as a type of 'touch join'? **YES** ☐ **NO** ☐

Would this make your writing more fluent or not? **YES** ☐ **NO** ☐

Rewrite each word using a type of 'touch join' to *s* rather than retracing.

ruinous _____ nodules _____

feelings _____ waifs _____

choosing _____ sentences _____

Which version is easier to write—retracing or using a type of 'touch join'? Why?

_____

Copy the verse of poetry below using the most suitable joins to and from *s*.

The seasons evolve and the winds blow hard.
The rain beats down on the heat-burdened grass.
The rooftops are battered by giant feet
Beating a tattoo, a ceaseless refrain.

_____

_____

_____

_____

What other method could you use when writing words containing *s*? Would you find it easier to write every letter *s* the same shape rather than changing it after a diagonal join? Write a sentence giving your opinion.

_____

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