

Penmanship Tips

Teach Lower Case Letters First

- Lower case letters far outnumber capitals on a printed page.
- Capitals are mainly used at the beginning of a sentence and for proper names.
- Teach capitals only as needed. Begin with the first letter of a student's name.

Teach Cursive from the Beginning

- Until the 20th century English students around the world learned cursive for initial penmanship. See SWR pages 35-36.
- The abrupt shift to manuscript first has not produced improved language learning.
- Cursive helps curb reversals.

Clearer Distinction

b d p q

b d p q

- Students taught "connected writing" can read both book face and cursive. Students only taught manuscript cannot. See SWR pp. 39-40.

Greater Versatility

connected

unconnected

- **0 vs. 7.** Cursive has fewer stops and starts.

Smoother Fluidity

broken

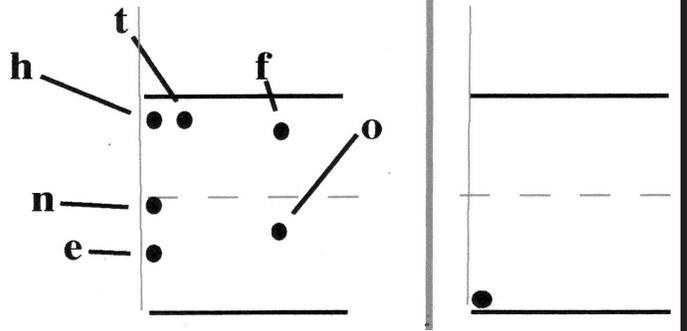
7 pencil lifts

unbroken

0 pencil lifts

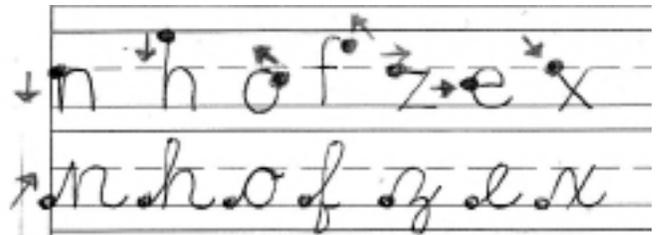
- **1 vs. 6.** Cursive letters all start at the base line. Manuscript letters have six different starting points.

Better Predictability



- **1 vs. 7.** Cursive letters all start at the same place and move in a consistent a left-to-right upswing. Manuscript letters use six different starting points and move in seven different directions: low/high vertical, low/high clock, low/lower horizontal, and low diagonal. Yikes!

Consistent Directionality



You don't have to start with cursive to successfully teach SWR. We believe that, if you do, you will be glad you did.