



SSMJ POLICY FOR

Writing

---

*Following the example of Jesus, together we learn, love and respect one another to be the best we can be.*

Written by Sam Cross

Role English Subject Leader

Date policy agreed September 2023

Date to be reviewed September 2024



“Following the example of Jesus, together we learn, love and respect one another to be the best we can be,”

## **Writing Policy June 2020**

### **Contents**

1. The Purpose of Study in Writing
2. Aims
3. Subject Statement (Intent, Implementation and Impact)
4. Teaching and Learning
5. Assessment
6. Planning and Resources
7. Organisation
8. EYFS
9. KS1 and KS2
10. Equal Opportunities
11. Inclusion
12. Online Safety
13. Role of the Subject Leader
14. Parents
15. APPENDIX 1
16. APPENDIX 2

### **The Purpose of studying Writing:**

At SSMJ we follow the National Curriculum Programme of Study for English, which contains the curriculum for writing. Our school strives to deliver a high-quality education in English, which will teach pupils to write so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others. It allows our children to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. Our curriculum supports children in having a strong command of written language. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society.

### **Aims:**

In line with the national curriculum 2014, the curriculum at SSMJ aims to ensure that all pupils:

- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for writing
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately, and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes, and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas

### **Intent:**

At SSMJ, English, including writing is given a high priority. We aim to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the written language.

### **Implementation:**

Learning to write follows the structure of the National Curriculum with a focus on transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing). Children are also taught how to plan, revise and evaluate their writing. Composition and editing work is taught through English lessons and spelling and handwriting sessions are taught discretely.

### **Impact**

By focussing on both transcription and composition skills, this should allow for children to become fluent and effective writers. Their spelling should be quick and accurate as they have been taught the relationship between sounds and letters (phonics) and also the

morphology (word structure) and orthography (spelling structure) of words. A focus on composition also means that our children will be able to articulate and communicate their ideas and organise them in an effective way for the reader, thinking about audience, purpose, context, vocabulary and grammar.

### **Teaching and Learning**

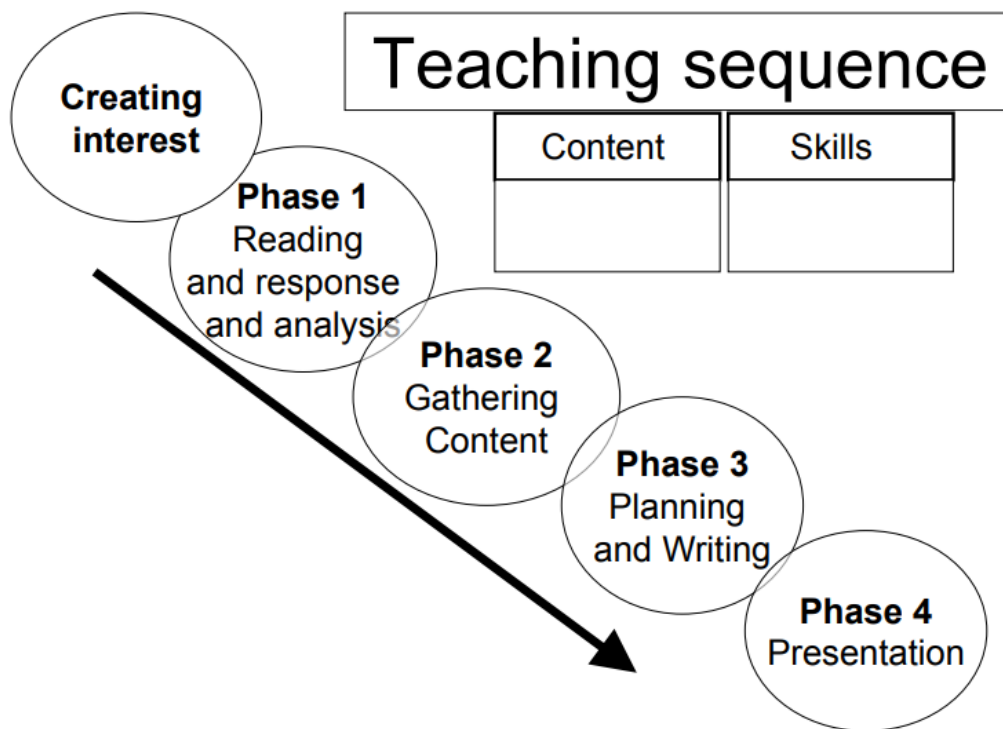
Writing covers two main areas as described above, transcription and composition.

### **Composition**

Composition of writing takes into account many different elements.

### **Reading into writing model**

At SSMJ, we follow the reading into writing model. How long is spent on each phase in the diagram below will depend upon the length of the whole unit and the needs of the children in the class.



Composition is taught in various ways, which are described below.

#### 1. **Shared writing**

Shared writing is taught as a whole class where the teacher models how to write. Most of this writing will be handwritten and will demonstrate to children the writing process. The teacher will verbalise his/ her thinking strategy to show the children how to think like a

writer. In a narrative unit for example, the shared write will model to the children how to write each section in each lesson. The teacher will model a section, then the children will write it. This could be broken down further if necessary, so that children can focus on the structure of a single sentence and copy that structure, selecting their own vocabulary, into their work. Sometimes the teacher may ask the children for their input into word choices or sentence starts etc in order to model that selection of appropriate vocabulary.

## 2. Guided Writing

Guided writing takes place in small groups, with children who are working on the same writing skill. The teacher will support the children in working on this particular writing skill. The teacher will model that skill and support the children in implementing it in their writing. This will then lead to increased independence with children's writing.

## 3. Scaffolded writing

Scaffolded writing is writing that has been supported by the teacher. The teacher has modelled the writing process, style, audience, purpose, grammar and punctuation and there is often a set of success criteria, with examples that has been generated. Scaffolded writing can take place throughout the unit of work as a short writing task. At the end of every unit of work, there will be a scaffolded end of unit outcome, which will often be a scaffolded write. This writing can be edited by the pupils and/ or teacher and be revised and redrafted.

## 4. Independent Writing

Independent writing is used as a summative assessment tool for children's writing to check on their application of the skills that have been taught. Independent writing happens as short writing tasks within the reading phase and also a long writing task after the end of a unit to check that children have remembered the style of writing from that genre. Independent writing can be edited, but only by the children themselves or their peers. This writing must follow the guidance set out in the Statutory Assessment document for the end of each Key Stage. Writing that is completed independently should be labelled as such.

## 5. Writing across the curriculum

Writing across the curriculum gives children the opportunity to write for different purposes and audiences and enhances cross-curricular links. This writing can be scaffolded and used as an end of unit piece or it could be independent.

## 6. Writing environment

Our classrooms have English walls, which display supportive resources to aid children with their writing, for example Jane Considine's Writing Laundry and various spelling resources. Our classroom environments are word literate, displaying vocabulary for different subjects. New vocabulary for the unit of work in English is also displayed and is then collated over the year for the children to refer back to.

## 7. Vocabulary

See vocabulary policy

## Punctuation

It is important that children know:

- the names of different punctuation.
- the purpose(s) of each piece of punctuation.
- how to write the piece of punctuation correctly.

These skills need to be taught and learnt in accordance with the National Curriculum. The progression for each year can be found in the Key Learning in Writing document or in Appendix 1.

Skills should build through the week to ensure deep learning takes place. Skills should be revisited throughout the year. Punctuation objectives should link to the English lesson and genre being taught where possible, for example inverted commas when teaching narrative. Punctuation, where this is the focus, should be taught daily during the reading and gathering content phase of the teaching sequence. To support punctuation teaching, follow the weekly teaching sequence, using the 5 I's model:

1. Immerse
2. Imitate
3. Innovate
4. Invent
5. Improve

During the writing phase, the skill is applied, including teacher modelling, establishing success criteria, pupil self evaluation, peer evaluation and marking.

With regards to the formation of punctuation, children will:

- Sit full stops on the line.
- Use a , for a comma
- Use “ ...” for inverted commas
- Use ? and !

## Grammar

Grammar requirements are clearly stated in the National Curriculum. These requirements have been linked to each genre in our Long Term Plan, which are based on the Lancashire Units of Work and Key Learning in Writing documents. The Learning and Progression Steps (LAPS) helps to break these skills down even further.

Teachers must use Standard English when they speak to the children and also in their written work. In order for grammar to be accurate in children's writing, children need to be able to speak using Standard English. Therefore children should be corrected when speaking if their grammar is wrong.

Grammar learning objectives should be clear and concise and use the key language that the children need to know, use and understand (see National Curriculum and also Grammar Glossary to support this). Skills should build through the week to ensure deep learning takes place. Skills should be revisited throughout the year. Grammar objectives should link to the English lesson and genre being taught where possible, for example adjectives when exploring characters. Grammar, where this is the focus should be taught during the reading and gathering content phase of the teaching sequence, for example in an English warm-up. To support grammar teaching, follow the teaching sequence, using the 5 I's model (as above). During the writing phase, the skill will be applied as per punctuation.

### Planning, revising and evaluating writing

Children are taught how to plan, revise and evaluate their writing in various ways. There are a variety of planning models used, for example chunk the plot, story mountain, story mapping and story graphs. Children have the opportunity to improve their own work, for example through editing stations and have the opportunity to evaluate it (See assessment policy).

### Transcription

Transcription is made up of handwriting and spelling. These lessons are taught discretely.

### Handwriting

There should be weekly teaching of handwriting (ideally a minimum of 2 x 15mins handwriting lessons each week as well as time to practise). At SSMJ, we teach a cursive style from the beginning (See appendix 2 for detail on handwriting progression). We encourage children to take pride in their work and recognise that handwriting is a form of communication and as such should be considered important in order for it to be effective.

### Spelling

There are three main strands to spelling teaching:

- Learning and applying the spelling of the most common English words.
- Learning sounds and spelling patterns of collections of words.
- Learning how to be accurate with 'unknown' words.

Spelling needs to be taught regularly and words taught need to follow a spelling rule. Children will group and learn words according to spelling strings and rules. Alongside this, the key words for each year group need to be taught (found in Key Learning in Writing document). All spellings should be applied.

In Early Years and Year 1 our spellings will link with our phonics work which follows letter patterns and learning the spelling of high frequency words. From Y2 - Y6, we follow Spelling Shed as our spelling scheme of work. Y2 may alter the order of this scheme to fit better with Red Rose Letters and Sounds and the children in the class. Generally, teachers use the lessons and spelling lists in this scheme, alongside other resources, which ensures curriculum coverage and progression. This scheme works on a spelling rule/ string of letters that the children can apply. The key words are split up into year groups on the Key Learning in Writing documents and the children are taught how to spell these words too.

In the Infants, the focus of learning to spell is based on phonics and with the high frequency words, identifying the 'tricky' part of the word. Using this strategy and also considering that our children learn in different ways, we use various strategies to help our children with spelling as per the Spelling Shed scheme, including:

- box up the word (shape of the word)
- pyramid
- vowels/ consonants/ letter pattern in a different colour
- look, say, cover, write and check
- syllables

Spelling homework will be set and will be linked to the spelling rule and key words that have been taught that week. Children will be tested weekly. Where appropriate, spelling homework can be differentiated as follows:

- By number of words, up to a maximum of 10 words.
- By length of word (eg past tense –ed ending is the rule, give higher ability child the word 'exclaimed' and a lower ability child the word 'asked').
- By task set (eg give higher ability children a dictation to fill in the blanks or they could practice using a dictionary or a thesaurus to find other words, whereas lower ability children just give the spelling list).

### **Assessment:**

In EYFS, children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals. The EYFS LAPs document may be used to support this.

In Y1-6, children's attainment is assessed and recorded at the end of each year using the Lancashire end of Year Expectations (KLIPs), which are based on the National Curriculum.

These assessment judgements are based on children's independent writing. Teachers may use the LAPS (Learning and Progression Steps) to help inform these judgements.

Assessment for learning is continuous throughout the planning, teaching and learning cycle. We use a range of assessment for learning techniques, including: quality questioning, verbal feedback, other effective feedback methods, observation etc (See teaching and learning policy and also assessment policy).

At the end of EYFS, KS1 and KS2 the children's attainment is assessed against the statutory assessment guidance for that year and the information is sent to the relevant authorities.

### **Planning and Resources:**

#### **Planning**

The Long Term Plan contains information about the genre (with a list of texts) and learning objectives by year group per half term. If teachers wish to change the order of units or wish to change a text from the suggested text list, then he/ she must speak to the English Subject Leader prior to doing this.

Our Medium Term Plans are taken from the Lancashire Scheme of Work and organise the Key Learning in Writing statements, which are based on the National Curriculum. Teachers use these plans to help to structure their short term unit plan, which follows the reading into writing model (see above). Teachers also break these key learning statements down further by using the Learning and Progression Steps (LAPS).

Teachers also use supplementary planning material eg a variety of websites such as TES.

Spelling Shed Scheme is used to plan spelling sessions in Y2-Y6 and Red Rose Letters and Sounds supports the planning of spelling in EYFS and Y1.

#### **Resources**

- Spelling Shed Scheme is on the school server
- Lancashire Units and long term plans are on the school server.
- Teachhandwriting.com provides the letter formation (Nelson books in each classroom as this is being phased out).
- Lots of our English resources are now accessed through the computer, including online resources eg through extracts on websites, audiobooks, Kindle etc There is a

computer in every classroom and there is also access to ipads and the computer suite (see timetable).

- Other English resources eg magnetic letters, phoneme frames etc are stored in classrooms (some in phonic boxes) and there is a central store in the Infants and on the mezzanine.

### **Organisation:**

At SSMJ, we explicitly teach writing skills (transcription and composition) during English lessons, spelling lessons, handwriting lessons and phonic sessions.

### **EYFS:**

In Early Years, children receive a daily whole class reading or writing session. There is also a daily phonics session where children focus on their word reading skills and application to their writing. Fine motor skills are developed through a variety of activities and when children are ready to write with a pencil, handwriting lessons focus on letter formation following the scheme.

Children also have access to writing opportunities through the continuous provision, both indoors and outdoors.

### **KS1:**

In KS1, a daily English lesson is taught, which will focus on the reading into writing model. In addition to this, there is a daily phonics or spelling session, where children can apply their knowledge to writing words. Handwriting sessions are taught discretely.

### **KS2:**

In KS2, children receive a daily English lesson, which focuses on the reading into writing model. Spelling and handwriting sessions are taught discretely.

### **Equal Opportunities:**

At SSMJ Primary school, we are committed to providing a teaching environment which ensures all children are provided with the same learning opportunities regardless of social class, gender, culture, race, special educational need or disability. Teachers use a range of strategies to ensure inclusion and also to maintain a positive ethos where children demonstrate affirming attitudes towards others. Support for specific individuals is well considered and planned for, with consideration given to how deeper learning and further challenge can be provided for and demonstrated by children who require further challenge.

### **Inclusion:**

All pupils are entitled to access the English curriculum at a level appropriate to their needs. To ensure inclusion, teachers use a range of strategies in line with the school's inclusion planning key. Independent tasks, as well as teaching, are also well-adapted to ensure full accessibility, as well as to provide appropriate challenge to different groups of learners. The school makes full use of additional adults who are deployed effectively to ensure that identified children are able to make progress in each curriculum area, according to their full potential.

Opportunities for enrichment are fully utilised, to ensure a fully inclusive and engaging curriculum.

### **Online Safety**

In all subjects, as a school, we ensure children are provided with the opportunity to become the best they can be. This is through a progressive curriculum that inspires and innovates students to experience English in its greatest sense. At SSMJ, we understand Online Safety is paramount in an everchanging world. We continue to ensure all children are safe in education and, following closely the Online Safety Policy, in English we ensure children are appropriate in their Conduct, Content, Contact and Commerce. This is also in accordance with our Safeguarding Policy and in line with the Keeping Children Safe in Education Act.

### **The Role of the Subject Leader:**

The Subject Leader's responsibilities are:

- To encourage a high profile for the subject
- To aim to provide a full range of relevant and effective resources are available to enhance and support learning.
- To model the teaching of writing
- To monitor progression of the key knowledge and skills identified within each unit and that these are integral to the programme of study and secure at the end of each age phase.
- To monitor books and ensure that key knowledge is evidenced in outcomes, alongside and as supported, by SLT
- To monitor planning and oversee the teaching of writing
- To lead further improvement in and development of the subject as informed by effective subject overview
- To promote the writing curriculum so that it has a positive effect on all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or have low attainment
- To keep up-to-date with approached so that we are in line with current identified good practice and pedagogy.

**Parents (Including Homework):**

We, at SSMJ, actively encourage the involvement of families and the wider community to help support the teaching of writing. We send home:

- Weekly spellings are sent home in Y1 – Y6, with a maximum of ten words (See above).
- Key word lists for Y1 – Y6 are sent home at the beginning of each academic year.
- Grammar and/or punctuation homework may be provided as the teacher sees fit for his/her class.
- Letter formation guidance is on the website for parents to access.
- Various links on the website to support learning in writing at home.
- Y6 are provided with homework to support their learning and preparation for SATs.

## APPENDIX 1

<b>St Michael and St John's Punctuation and Grammar Progression Document</b>	
<p>This is based on the Key Learning in Writing document produced by the English Team at Lancashire County Council. The skills below are expected to be seen in most children's writing in that year group. These skills have already been taught in the previous year and become a non-negotiable for the next year group. As the year progresses the list of non-negotiable skills is added to as skills are learnt. Some children will progress beyond the skills for their year group and some children will need skills revisiting.</p>	
	<p><b>Grammar and Punctuation</b>  <b>At the beginning of each year group, children will:</b></p>
<b>EYFS</b>	Working towards Year 1 non-negotiable skills.
<b>Year 1</b>	<p>Attempt to write simple sentences.</p> <p>Sometimes use full stops and capital letters.</p> <p>Separate words with finger spaces.</p>
<b>Year 2</b> (in addition to the above)	<p>Use capital letters for the beginning of sentences, personal pronoun I, names of people, places and days of the week.</p> <p>Use final punctuation; full stops, question marks and exclamation marks.</p> <p>Use the conjunction (joining word) 'and'.</p>
<b>Year 3</b> (in addition to the above)	<p>Use the conjunctions (joining words) 'because', 'but', 'so' and 'or'.</p> <p>Use commas to separate items in a list.</p> <p>Use apostrophes for contraction and singular possession.</p> <p>Attempt subordination for time and reason (when, if, that).</p> <p>Know and use nouns and adjectives.</p> <p>Use verbs in the correct tense.</p>
<b>Year 4</b> (in addition to the above)	<p>Use a range of conjunctions.</p> <p>Use subordination for time and reason in complex sentences.</p> <p>Use prepositions for where.</p> <p>Use adverbs.</p> <p>Use inverted commas to punctuate direct speech.</p>

<p><b>Year 5</b> (in addition to the above)</p>	<p>Use sentences with fronted adverbials for when and where.</p> <p>Use commas to mark clauses.</p> <p>Use dialogue punctuation.</p> <p>Select adjectives appropriately to build effective noun phrases.</p> <p>Use pronouns within and across sentences.</p> <p>Use Standard English verb inflections.</p> <p>Use apostrophes for singular and plural.</p>
<p><b>Year 6</b> (in addition to the above)</p>	<p>Use relative pronouns in complex sentences (who, which, where, whose, that or an omitted relative pronoun).</p> <p>Vary sentence openings and use adverbials to link ideas within and across paragraphs.</p> <p>Use commas to demarcate complex sentences.</p> <p>Use brackets, dashes and commas to indicate parenthesis.</p>

## APPENDIX 2

### **Handwriting**

At St. Michael and St. John's, a cursive, joined up handwriting style is taught. Reception, Year 1 - Year 5 are teaching a cursive style, where all letters will begin on the line. This has been rolled out annually over recent years. Nelson Handwriting Scheme is being phased out accordingly and is now only used in Year 6 (2022-23).

### **Paper**

Paper choice depends on the stage of writing that the child is at. Generally, children will start with lines in Reception, unless children struggle with writing then teachers differentiate. Children continue to focus on sitting writing on the line, with tall letters and descenders being clear. Infant children tend to use wide lines. As writing improve, wide lines become narrow lines, usually in the Juniors.

### **Getting ready to write**

#### **Fine motor skills**

Children will first need to develop their fine motor skills to be able to have an effective pencil grip and handwriting style. Developing children's fine motor skills and pre-writing skills is done in a variety of ways, such as copying and tracing patterns, using paintbrush, using other tools eg playdough, writing over the teacher's writing, writing in sand with finger, using chalk, plasticine, writing in the air etc

#### **Seating and posture**

- Chair and table should be at a comfortable height
- The table should support the forearm so that it rests lightly on the surface and is parallel to the floor
- Encourage children to sit up straight and not slouch
- The height of the chair should be such that the thighs are horizontal and feet flat on the floor
- Tables should be free of clutter
- Rooms should be well lit
- Left handed pupils should sit on the left of their partners

## **Pencil grip**

Children should write with a pencil with a rounded nib. Pencils should be reasonably sharp. When children have achieved a good standard of writing in cursive style they will be rewarded with a 'pen licence'. Learners should use a handwriting pen for all lessons except Maths where a pencil should always be used. A tripod grip is the most efficient way of holding a pencil

## **For right handers**

- Hold lightly between the thumb and forefinger about 3cm away from the point
- The paper should be placed to the right tilted very slightly to the left
- Use the left hand to steady the paper

## **For left handers**

- Hold lightly between thumb and forefinger resting on the first knuckle of the middle finger
- Hold about 3cm from the tip
- The hand should be kept below the writing line
- The paper should be tilted slightly to the right at about 20 - 30°
- Use the right hand to steady the paper

NB It is very important that a right handed child is NOT seated on the left hand side of a left handed child as their elbows will collide!

## Handwriting Progression

These steps have been put together based on the Nelson Handwriting Scheme, the Early Learning Goals and KLIPs documents.

<https://www.teachhandwriting.co.uk/continuous-cursive-beginners-choice-3.html>

See below for an example of this letter formation.

## **Step 1**

By the end of Reception year, children will have been introduced to:

- A comfortable and efficient pencil grip
- Producing a controlled line which supports letter formation
- Writing letters using the correct sequence of movements
- Writing letters in a cursive style, starting letters on the line

- Pattern-making and letter/number formation in various media
- Some simple joins in conjunction with Red Rose Letters and Sounds

## **Step 2**

By the end of Year 1, children will have been introduced to:

- An effective pencil grip.
- Sitting correctly at a table.
- Forming lower case letters correctly – starting and finishing in the right place, going the right way round and correctly oriented.
- Forming digits 0-9 correctly.
- Practising forming letters in handwriting families: ‘long ladders’ (i, j, l, t, u), ‘one armed robots’ (b, h, m, n, p, r), ‘curly caterpillars’ (c, a, d, e, g, o, q, f, s) and ‘zig-zag’ letters (k, v, w, x, y, z)
- Having clear ascenders (tall letters) and descenders (‘tails’).
- Forming capital letters correctly.

## **Step 3**

By the end of Year 2, children will have been introduced to:

- Practising handwriting patterns from Year 1.
- Forming lower case letters of the correct size relative to one another.
- Orientating capital letters correctly.
- Using capital letters appropriately, for example not using capitals within words.
- Writing capital letters and digits of the correct size relative to one another and to lower case letters.
- Starting using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understanding which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined.
- Using spacing between words which reflects the size of the letters.

## **Step 4**

By the end of Years 3 & 4, children should be taught to:

- Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left un-joined.
- Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting (for example, by ensuring that the down strokes of letters are parallel and

equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch).

### **Step 5**

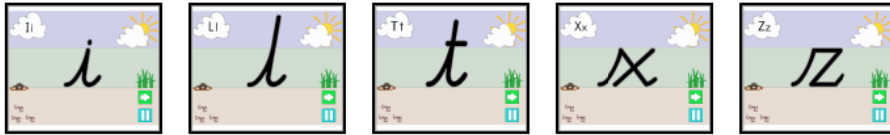
By the end of Years 5 & 6, children should be taught to:

- Using a joined style throughout their independent writing.
- Writing with consistency in size and proportion of letters, for example by ensuring that downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch.
- Using a range of presentational skills, for example:
  - print script for captions, sub-headings and labels;
  - capital letters for posters, title plates, headings;
  - a range of computer-generated fonts and point sizes.
- Write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by:
  - Choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters
  - Choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task

# Continuous Cursive Letters - Animations and Worksheets

## Letter version 3 - Beginners

### Straight line Continuous Cursive Letters



[Worksheets](#) 

### Curves to start Continuous Cursive Letters



### Tunnel Continuous Cursive Letters



[Worksheets](#) 

### Hooks, loops and lines Continuous Cursive Letters



[Worksheets](#) 