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<http://leatherbarrow.nbed.nb.ca>

Mrs. Allaby  
Mrs. Earle  
Mrs. Kingston  
Mrs. White  
Mrs. Walsh

Many children have acquired letter formation habits that are not helpful, efficient or legible. "Fully 95 percent of what we read is written in lower case letters...therefore, 95 percent of the (printing) practice required should be with **lower case** letters." "If parents understood the importance of careful direction in learning how to print, **they would give it.** If parents understood the importance of supervised practice in learning how to print...**they would provide it."**

[http://www.cafemom.com/group/41/forums/read/12505693/Proper\\_Letter\\_Formation\\_IS\\_important](http://www.cafemom.com/group/41/forums/read/12505693/Proper_Letter_Formation_IS_important)

#### A few specific suggestions:

Teach children consistent formation of letters. Please refer to the handout provided to help with consistent language between home and school. Focus first on learning the motor pattern rather than perfect legibility or size. Have fun with some of the suggested activities rather than writing the letter on paper. Work on similarly formed letters and those that are used frequently. c, a and o all begin with the same loop and are letters used often. Separate reversible letters such as b and d. Use written arrow cues to help children remember how to form letters. Aim for speed after children can form letters legibly and from memory.

[http://www.ldonline.org/spearswerling/The\\_Importance\\_of\\_Teaching\\_Handwriting](http://www.ldonline.org/spearswerling/The_Importance_of_Teaching_Handwriting)

# Teacher Tips

## Weekly Work

Here are a few ways to strengthen and increase your child's awareness of their fine motor muscles. These exercises will also reinforce these muscles.

- Have your child practice screwing nuts and bolts together.
- Have your child place elastics or rubber bands around soup cans, paper towel holders, card board tubes or the bottom of muffin tins.
- Have your child use a paper punch on various weights of paper.
- Have your child peel off stickers and place them on a line or spiral drawn on a piece of paper.
- Use a highlighter to draw letters, shapes, and various types of lines. Have your child trace over top with any writing tool. Then place stickers around the shape or letter. Last have him/her cut around the shape or letter.
- Have fun practicing lower case letter formation and their name in/on flour, salt, rice, zip lock baggie filled with paint or hair gel, shaving cream & pudding etc. Let them use their fingers or a paint brush to practice the stroke. Please refer to the handout provided explaining how to properly form lower case letter. Pay close attention the counter clockwise direction for "o" and starting letters at the top.
- Have your child use tweezers, tongs or clothes pins to pick up small items (pompoms, cotton balls, beans etc.) and place into an ice cube tray. For more of a challenge, fill up a shallow dish with shaving cream, add cut up straws and have your child remove the items with any kind of tongs.
- Use a spoon to "pour" marbles into a water bottle or another container with a small opening.

## Connections

This week's edition of Teacher Tips highlights outcomes for Reading and Writing. Appropriate Achievement means the child is able to...

- Understand basic concepts of print including directionality, word, space, letter and sound.
- Understand that letters can be written in upper and lower case forms.

Reading, Writing and Spelling are supported by 3 aspects of memory: 1. Visual: Can your child match a "b" with another "b"? Can they recognize differences between letters? 2. Auditory: Does your child know which sound to attach to the letter shape when reading/writing? (Phonics) 3. Proprioceptive: (muscle): Can your child reproduce the letter's shape (from memory) to the sound when spelling?  
<http://www.readitwriteitcountit.com/page12/page12.html>

### B.I.B. Friday

**Bring back your completed name printing page. Print name between the lines. At this point, proper formation of the letters is more important than their legibility or size.**