

Sir Alexander Fleming Primary School and Nursery



Handwriting Guide

Why is handwriting important at Sir Alexander Fleming Primary School?

Intent

Handwriting is a skill which, like reading and spelling, affects written communication across the curriculum. Children must be able to write with ease, speed and legibility. Cursive handwriting teaches pupils to join letters and words as a series of flowing movements and patterns. The development of this fluid style when mastered allows children to apply their energy into the content of their writing as opposed to the formation of the letters themselves. Handwriting skills are taught regularly and systematically throughout the school.

At Sir Alexander Fleming Primary School our aims in teaching handwriting are:

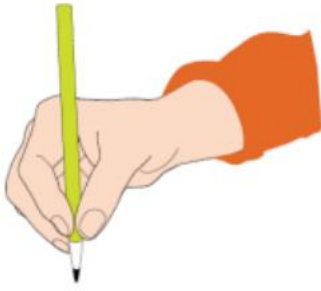
- To enable children to write in a consistent, well presented and legible format.
- To have a consistent approach across Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and 2 when teaching handwriting.
- To ensure that from Year 2 to the end of Year 6 children are using a cursive writing style.
- To make sure all children know the difference between lower and upper case letters.
- To ensure the skills taught at Key Stage 1 continue to develop throughout Key Stage 2.
- To adopt a consistent approach towards handwriting by all adults when writing in children's books, on the whiteboard or on displays / resources.

Implementation

Children will be taught to:

- hold a pencil correctly

Children should be encouraged to use a tripod pencil grip, where the pencil is gripped between the index finger and the thumb. The middle finger is then used to support the underside of the pencil as shown below.

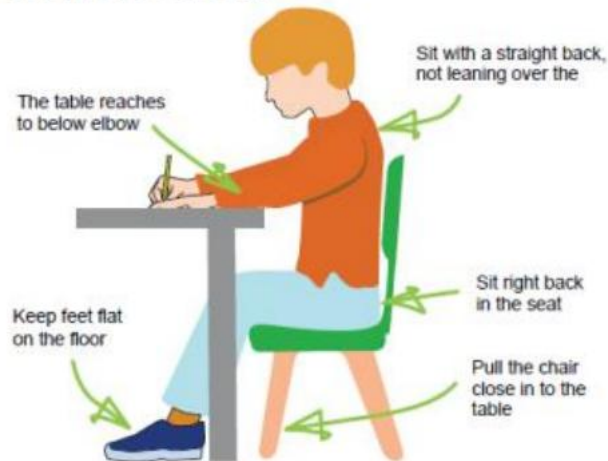


- 1) Grip the pencil with your index finger and thumb with the nib pointing away.
- 2) With your free hand, spin the pencil from underneath.
- 3) Use your middle finger to support the underside of the pencil

- and adopt the correct posture when writing

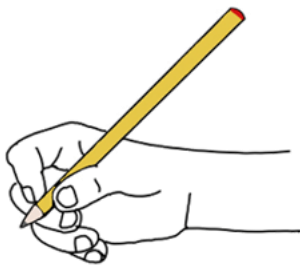
Children should be encouraged to adopt the correct writing position as shown below

SITTING POSITION



Right-handed:

PENCIL



POSTURE

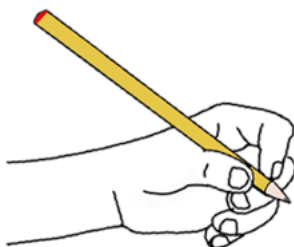


PAPER



Left-handed:

PENCIL



POSTURE



PAPER



(children who are left handed should reposition the paper the other way and sit to the left hand side if seated next to a right handed child)

- write from left to right and from top to bottom of the page
- start and finish letters correctly
- form regularly sized and shaped letters
- use regular spacing between letters and words
- take a pride in their written work and the overall presentation

As a school we follow our own bespoke handwriting pattern, which ensures a consistent handwriting approach for all year groups. All typed resources, display material and PowerPoint presentations use our bespoke font which follows our handwriting letter formation.

Handwriting sessions take place five times per week, where children will practise joined handwriting in Years 2-6 and Nursery, Reception and Year 1 focus on letter formation through print. We will teach children single letter formation, letter families, digraphs and trigraphs.

Teachers will assess handwriting through live marking, providing in the moment feedback to aid fluency. Handwriting pens are provided to children when they achieve a pen license, the children will only **achieve** this license by consistently meeting the handwriting success criteria in all subjects.

Teachers have a good understanding of the specific needs for left-handed children, making appropriate provision for the positioning of their paper, monitoring of pencil grip, and ensuring that they are sat to the left of a right-handed child, so they are not competing for space.

All teaching staff use the correct letter formation and cursive handwriting as a model for pupils and CPD opportunities allow staff to improve and ensure consistency across school.

Handwriting

Across the school, handwriting is carefully modelled by the teacher and teaching assistant and outcomes are recorded by the children in their writing books. The use of patterns to support letter formation and appropriate letterjoins is also embedded enabling children to also further develop their fine motor skills.

Handwriting Glossary:

Ascender	The part of a lower-case letter that extends above the height of the main body of letters.
Cursive	A style of joined handwriting which letters are connected.
Descender	The part of a lower-case letter that extends below the baseline of the main body of letters.
Fine motor skills	The control of the small muscles in the fingers, hands and wrists. These are developed through small movements.
Gross motor skills	The control and movement of larger muscles in the body such as the hands and legs.
Letter families	Lower-case letters are split into four letter families: curly caterpillars, one-armed robots, long ladders and zigzag monsters.
Letter formation	The ability to correctly write the letters of the alphabet with the correct starting and ending positions.

Lower-case letters	The formation of the letters of the alphabet that are within a word, the opposite of upper-case letters.
Mark making	The improvised marks made by a child, this can be lines, dots, shapes or patterns and must happen for early handwriting development.
Pangram	A sentence that contains all letters in the alphabet.
Pencil control	The ability for a child to control their pencil to make intentional marks on a page.
Pencil grip	The way a child holds their pencil or pen to make shapes, this develops in different stages before the age of 6 from palmer grasp, digital pronate grasp, four-fingered grip, quadruped grip and finally tripod grip.
Print	The unjoined version of handwriting.
Upper case letters	Also known as capital letters, these are used at the start of a sentence and for proper nouns.

Curriculum – Handwriting:

Statutory Requirements:		How are we supporting this?
Nursery:		Develop gross motor control through the use of large equipment for mark making such as big chinks, paint brushes, finger paints, shaving foam. Children will engage in Squiggle While You Wiggle which is a form of dance to support gross-motor skills. Develop their fine motor skills and use a range of mark making tools such as pencils, pens and crayons. Encourage the pupils to talk about shapes and movement. As the children progress they will be taught to form letters correctly using our bespoke school patter guidance on letter formation.

Reception:	Pupils should be taught to: • Show a preference for a dominant hand. • Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using tripod grip in most cases. • Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed.	To support motor skills, children will use Squiggle While You Wiggle. To develop hand and finger strength children will participate in Dough Disco. Direct and discrete teaching 3 times a week. Focus on pencil grip (froggy fingers) and pencil size chosen to support child.
Year 1:	Pupils should be taught to: • sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly • begin to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place • form capital letters • form digits 0–9 • understand which letters belong to which handwriting ‘families’ (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these. Letter families Set 1: c o a d g f s q e Set 2: i l t j u y Set 3: b h k m n p r Set 4: v w x z	Daily discrete and direct teaching. Pencil size chosen to support children’s needs (taking care of the size of a child’s hands) Demonstration for left-handed children. Focus on posture, position, paper and pencil grip (froggy fingers). Handwriting addressed consistently.

Pupils should be taught to:

- form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another
- start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined
- write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters
- use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.

In Year 2 children should now have mastered the correct formation of the shapes of individual letters, know the letter families and can now be introduced to joined handwriting.

Joined handwriting is taught by joining vowel consonant digraphs – this also helps with the recall of spelling patterns. From Year 2 onwards, all pupils receive a daily handwriting session for 10 mins.

- Pre cursive script

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

(Note the letters which do not yet join to another letter known as the break letters: b, g, j, p, q, s, x, y and z.

Note the letters which do not join from another letter: c, h, q, r, t, y and z)

At this stage, the pupils are taught to form the k with a loop to support the fluidity of joined letters.

Joining Groups

The joining groups divide the letters according to how they will join to the other letters.

Group 1 a c d e h l k l m n t u

Thirteen letters with exit flicks

Group 2 a c d e g i j m n o p g r s u v w x y

Nineteen letters which start at the top of the x height

Group 3 b f k l t

Six letters which starter at the ascender

Group 4 f o r v w

five letters which start at the x height.

Direct teaching through writing lessons 5 times a week.

Models and demonstrations of joined style once letter formation and orientation is secure.

Focus on posture, position, paper and pencil grip (froggy fingers).

Demonstration for left-handed children.

Handwriting addressed consistently.

Year 3 and 4:	Pupils 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 downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch). In Year 3 children should have now mastered the correct formation of the diagonal and horizontal joins and focus on learning the first, second and third joins. In Year 4 the children will revise all taught joins and be introduced to the fourth join. The Joins <table><thead><tr><th></th><th>Group</th><th></th><th>Group</th><th></th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>The first join</td><td>1</td><td>→</td><td>2</td><td>in am</td></tr><tr><td>The second join</td><td>1</td><td>→</td><td>3</td><td>ab ch</td></tr><tr><td>The third join</td><td>4</td><td>→</td><td>2</td><td>oa wo</td></tr><tr><td>The fourth join</td><td>4</td><td>→</td><td>3</td><td>wh ob</td></tr><tr><td>The break letters</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>bigger</td></tr></tbody></table> The Joined Style The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.		Group		Group		The first join	1	→	2	in am	The second join	1	→	3	ab ch	The third join	4	→	2	oa wo	The fourth join	4	→	3	wh ob	The break letters				bigger	Direct teaching through writing lessons 4 times a week. Models of increasing speed and fluency with joined writing. Demonstration for left-handed children. Handwriting addressed consistently.
	Group		Group																													
The first join	1	→	2	in am																												
The second join	1	→	3	ab ch																												
The third join	4	→	2	oa wo																												
The fourth join	4	→	3	wh ob																												
The break letters				bigger																												
Year 5 and 6:	Pupils should be taught to 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 In Year 5 and Year 6, teachers model handwriting. Targeted groups of learners who are experiencing difficulty in fluency and formation of letters will receive additional intervention sessions. The majority of pupils will be encouraged to develop their own style.	Direct teaching through writing lessons 5 times a week in Year 5. Year 6 practise specific letters or joins to avoid misconceptions. Models of different types of handwriting i.e. unjoined writing for email addresses etc. Demonstrations of increased speed. Demonstration for left-handed children. Handwriting addressed consistently.																														

Implementation

Whole class and group teaching

In the early stages, pupils will receive handwriting lessons in small groups of children. Later on, as children come to understand the concept of written language and show evidence of developing control, teachers work with large groups and whole classes.

Handwriting is taught alongside the teaching of Phonics. However, teaching the mechanics of handwriting, ensuring correct letter formation and pencil hold including additional practice should be planned into the weekly timetable outside the Phonics lesson.

10 minutes at the beginning of the English lesson is timetabled for Handwriting everyday.

Resources

Sharpened HB pencil

Lined paper

Reception pupils will begin their writing journey with a chunkier pencil to support them with the tripod grip. They will also transition between larger lines to 15mm lined paper.

Practice

1. Practice the basic letter formation / join
2. Practice letter formation / joins in words.
3. Practice letter formation / joins in a sentence.

Assessment

Whole school and class assessment

Senior leaders monitor children's writing and presentation in books regularly (half-termly). The following is considered:

- Is the writing generally legible?
- Are the letters correctly shaped and proportioned?
- Are the joins made correctly?
- Are the spaces between the letters, words and lines appropriate?
- Is the size of the writing appropriate?
- Is the writing properly aligned?
- Are the writing standards achieved by the majority of pupils in line with age related expectations?

Individual assessment

Children are observed as they write during handwriting lessons – the teacher circulates, monitors and intervenes.

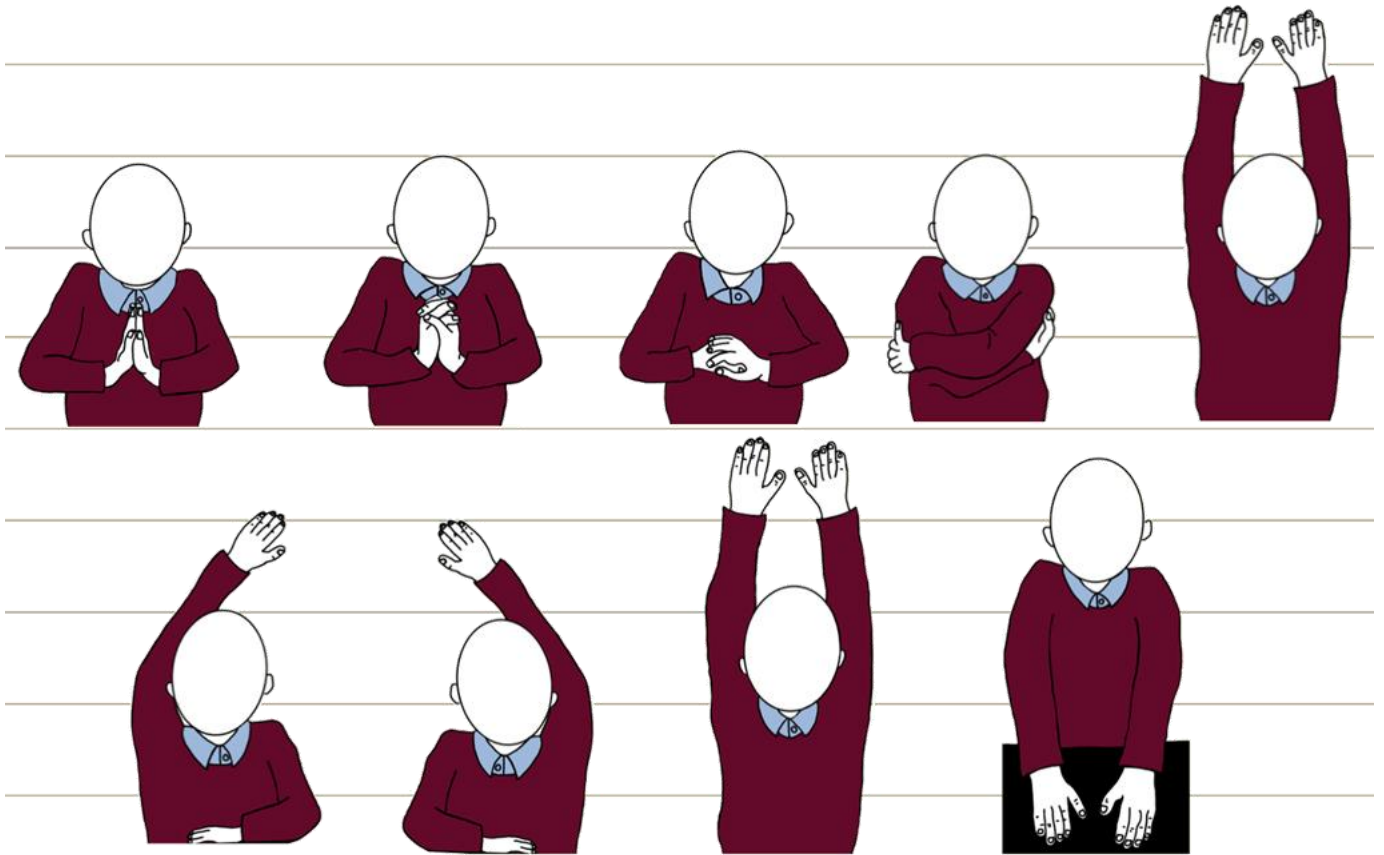
Teachers monitor and mark whole pieces of writing. The following is considered:

- Is the posture correct?
- Does the child hold the pencil correctly?
- Does the child use the correct movement when forming and or joining letters?
- Are any letters reversed or inverted?
- Does the child write fluently and rhythmically?

- Is the writing easily legible?
- Is the pupil's handwriting development should be in line with age related expectations?

Before you begin writing:

It is important to warm up the body for writing by completing a set of stretches that support the arms, hands and wrists.



Children must also ensure that they are ready for writing by checking their pencil grip, posture and paper positions, this is slightly different depending on which hand is their dominant writing hand.

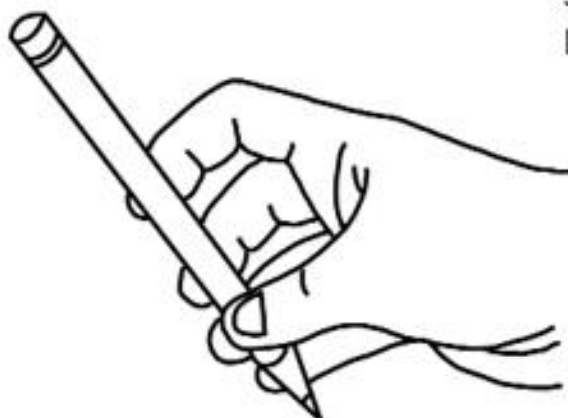
Pencil Grip Development



STAGE 1:
Palmer Grasp



STAGE 2:
Digital Pronate Grasp



STAGE 3:
Four finger Grip



STAGE 4:
Quadrupod Grip
(Early tripod grip)

Froggy Fingers

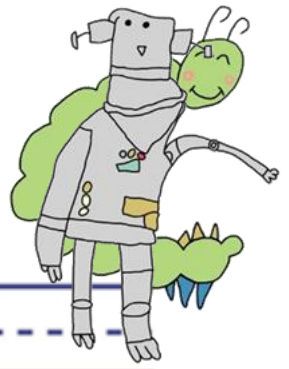


STAGE 5:
Dynamic Tripod Grip

Letter formation:

Letter formation:

Curly caterpillars



Start in the middle, curl round to the bottom, up, down and flick.

a a a a

Start in the middle, curl round to the bottom.

c c c c

Start in the middle, curl round to the bottom, up to the top, down, flick.

d d d d

Start in the middle, curl up, over and round.

e e e e

Start above the middle, curl down, round and cross.

f f f f

Start in the middle, curl round to the bottom, up, down and curl.

g g g g

Start in the middle, curl round to the bottom and back up again.

o o o o

Start in the middle, curl round to the bottom, up, down and diagonal.

q q q q

Start in the middle, curl around and back again.

s s s s



b

Start at the very top, down, back up to the middle and round.

b b b b

h

Start at the top, down, up and over and flick.

h h h h

k

Start at the top, down, up, loop and kick.

k k k k

m

Start in the middle, down, up, over, over and flick.

m m m m

n

Start in the middle, down, up, over and flick.

n n n n

p

Start in the middle, down, up, over and round.

p p p p

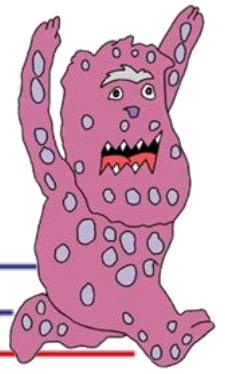
r

Start in the middle, down, up and over.

r r r r

Letter formation:

Long ladders



Start in the middle, down, under and dot on top.

i i i i

Start in the middle, down, curl and dot on top.

j j j j

Start at the top, down and curve.

l l l l

Start above the middle, down, curve and across.

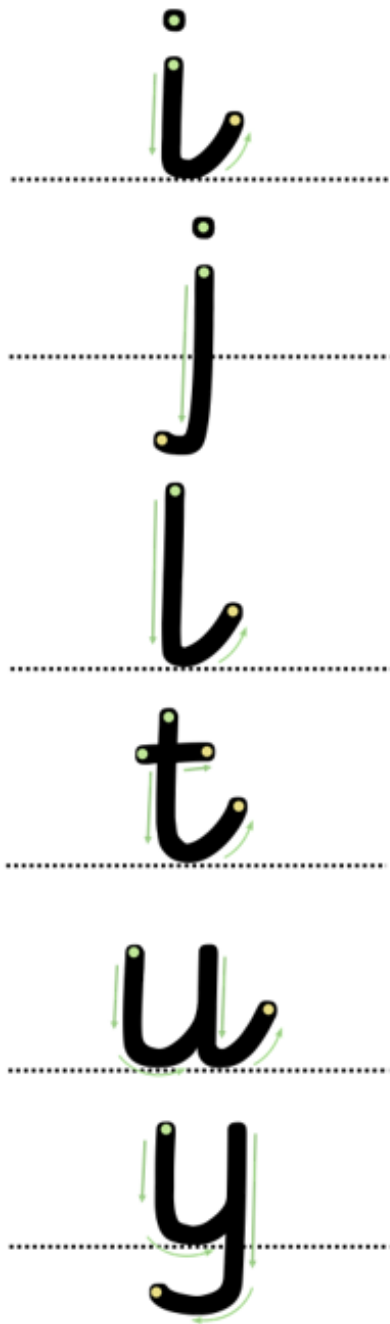
t t t t

Start in the middle, down, up, down and flick.

u u u u

Start in the middle, down, under, up, down and curl.

y y y y



Letter formation:

Zig zag monsters



Start in the middle, down and up.

V V V V



Start in the middle, down, up, down and up.

W W W W



Start in the middle, down to the bottom and up.

X X X X



Start in the middle, across, down and across.

Z Z Z Z

Letter formation:

Capital letters



A diagram of the uppercase letter 'E' showing stroke order. A vertical green arrow on the left points downwards, indicating the first stroke. Three horizontal green arrows point to the right, indicating the second, third, and fourth strokes. Small colored dots (green, orange, and green) mark the starting points of the strokes at the top right, middle right, and bottom right respectively.

A diagram of the uppercase letter 'F' showing stroke order. A vertical line is drawn first, indicated by a downward arrow. Then, two horizontal lines are drawn from the top and middle of the vertical line, indicated by rightward arrows. The top horizontal line ends with a green dot, and the middle horizontal line ends with an orange dot.

A diagram of the uppercase letter 'I'. It shows three strokes: a horizontal line at the top (left to right), a vertical line in the middle (top to bottom), and a horizontal line at the bottom (left to right). Green arrows indicate the direction of each stroke. A green dot is at the top left of the vertical stroke, and a green dot is at the bottom right of the vertical stroke.

A large uppercase letter 'N' is shown with green arrows indicating the correct stroke order for tracing. The first arrow points down the left vertical stroke, the second arrow points diagonally down from the top left to the bottom right, and the third arrow points up the right vertical stroke.



Letter formation:

A A A A

B B B B

C C C C

D D D D

E E E E

F F F F

G G G G

H H H H

I I I I

J J J J

K K K K

L L L L

M M M M

N N N N

O O O O

P P P P

Q Q Q Q

R R R R

S S S S

T T T T

U U U U

V V V V

W W W W

X X X X

Y Y Y Y

Z Z Z Z

Number formation:

Around and round and round we go,
When we get home we have zero.

0	0	0									
---	---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Start at the top and down we run,
That's the way we make a one.

1	1	1									
---	---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Around and back on a railway track,
Two, two, two!

2	2	2									
---	---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Around the tree and around the tree,
That's the way we make a three.

3	3	3									
---	---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Down and over, down some more,
That's the way we make a four.

4	4	4									
---	---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Down and around then a flag on high,
That's the way we make a five.

5	5	5									
---	---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Down we go and make a loop,
Number six makes a hoop.

6	6	6									
---	---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Across the sky and down from heaven,
That's the way we make a seven.

7	7	7									
---	---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Make an 's' and do not wait,
When it's joined up you have an eight.

8	8	8									
---	---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Make a loop and then a line,
That's the way we make a nine.

9	9	9									
---	---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

The Dolch list:

In 1948, Edward Dolch made a list of the words that are used most often in everyday reading and writing.

have

before

right

could

made

into

other

much

little

only

Pangram:

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

The five boxing wizards jump quickly.