



## Handwriting Without Tears

- Handwriting Without Tears is a structured handwriting program
- The multisensory lessons teach to all learning styles - tactile, auditory, visual, and movement, as well as reinforce learning by using these multiple channels
- It is a simple developmentally based curriculum for writing readiness, printing and cursive
- Multisensory components:
  - Tactile - using wood pieces or chalkboards
  - Auditory - songs and verbal directions
  - Visual - boundaries in which to fit the letters
  - Movement - warm ups, wood pieces
- Benefits of program: teach correct formation, reduce reversals (chalkboard, grey block paper), teach letters in similar groups, emphasize top start, multisensory
- Automatic handwriting very important as it supports all other student skills, source of pride, communication, more willing to engage in learning activities if able to write
- Potential drawback of HWT program - two lined paper is different from what students and teachers are used to, while more visual simple, offers fewer visual cues for letter starting points
- Foundations for handwriting: strength and stability, sensory-motor abilities, fine motor coordination and grasping, visual-motor perception, cognition, attention

- Wood Pieces
  - Learn the language of big line, little line, big curve and little curve
  - Learn directionality-top, bottom, above, below, right, left
  - Mat man teaches body awareness
  - Laminated capital letter cards with perceptual activities on the back
  - Make letters and shapes on the blue mat or on the floor
  
- Chalkboards - Wet, dry, try
  - Reference happy face corner for starting corner letters
  - Adult demonstrates correct letter formation
  - Child uses small wet sponge to trace over letter
  - Child dries with small piece of paper towel
  - Child draws the letter with small chalk
  - There are large 2 lined chalkboard available for lower case practice
  
- Other HWT materials and activities
  - Roll a dough letters
  - Stamp and see (magnadoodle)
  - Music CD's
  - Lined and gray block paper
  - Flip crayons
  - Workbooks
  - Can go to their website for other activities, handouts and videos  
hwtears.com
  
- Workbooks (and teacher's guides)
  - Developmental/ Pre-K: Get Set for School
    - coloring, learning shapes and tracing capital letters and numbers
  - Kindergarten: Letters and Numbers for Me
    - copying upper case letters, lower case letters and numbers
  - 1st grade: My Printing Book

- Review letters using smaller lines, copying words and sentences
  - 2nd grade: Printing Power
    - reviews letters, copying words, sentences and paragraphs
- Teaching Sequence
  - Capitals then lowercase
  - Tracing then copying
  - Letters, words, paragraphs
  - Developmental progression for easie formation patterns and frequency of use
  - Teach child's name in correct upper and lower
- Capital Letter Sequence
  - Frog jump capitals: F E D P B R N M
  - Starting corner capitals: H K L U V W X Y Z
  - Center starting capitals: C O Q G S A I T J
- Lowercase Letter Sequence
  - Same as capital: c o s v w and t
  - Magic c letters: a d g
  - More vowels: u i e
  - Transition group: l k y j
  - Diver letters: p r n m h b
  - Final group: f q x z
- Numbers
  - Taught in numerical order
  - They all fit into the chalkboard for capitals
  - Can use the gray block paper
  - There are no reversals with this method
  - They all start at the top and use basic lines and curves
  - 1-7 starting in corner, 8 is center top, 9 is right top
- 2 Lined Paper
  - Less visually stimulating

- Consistent with workbooks
- The bottom line keeps the writing straight and the top line controls the size
- 14 lower case letters fit exactly between the lines
- Use letter strip for reference
- No matter what type of lined paper students need to be taught how to use it
  
- Grey Block Paper
  - Excellent for teaching capital letters and numbers
  - Grey blocks are “pictures” of the chalkboard
  - Easy to transfer what they have learned with chalk to paper and pencil
  - A dot on the gray block can show exactly where to start the letter (top corners or center)
  - Where do you start your letters? At the top!
  
- Teaching Approaches
  - Direct instruction: One on one or small group
  - Practice should be fun yet organized
  - Build a positive relationship with the child
  - Take it at a relaxed speed and adapt according to the child’s needs
  - Keep actual handwriting sessions short and sweet. (5-20 minutes)
  - Do live demonstrations and encourage imitation
  - Teach directionality concepts
  - Multisensory approach
  - Consistency and repetition
  - Supervision to develop good habits
  - Opportunities for student self evaluation - circle their best letter
  
- Resources
  - Lwtears.com (Learning Without Tears is new name for company)
    - handouts, downloads, webinars (some free)
  - Youtube videos
  - OT :)

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March 2019

