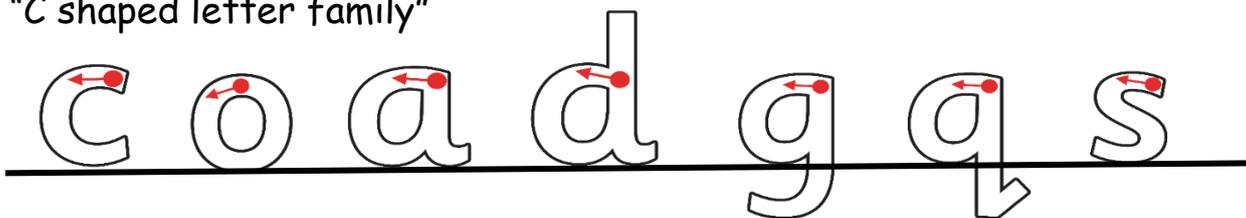


A handwriting guide for parents

Children learn to form letters in 'families' that all share some of the same movements. Fluent handwriting enables children to focus their attention on recording their ideas in fluent sentences that closely match their spoken language. The guide below shows how we teach each letter family and the language we use to help children to remember them.

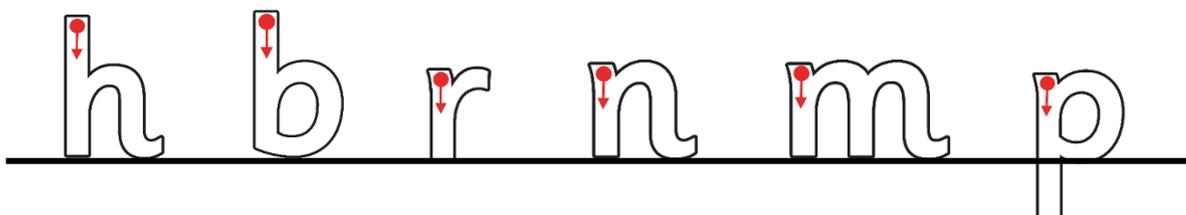
Children should be taught to "start at the top" for all letters, and "add a flick" where relevant in preparation for joining letters in Year 2. When learning to form letters, children should learn that they are grouped into 'families'.

"C shaped letter family"



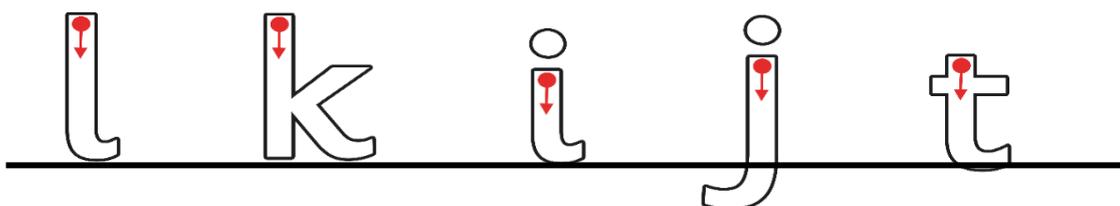
a is formed with "a big fat tummy; straight up, straight down and add a flick; make sure he has a straight back". g has "a monkey tail; tuck it under." s starts with a "little c". You may remind children to form d with the correct orientation by saying "curly c becomes a d (using the letter names in both cases)"

"Bouncy letters family"

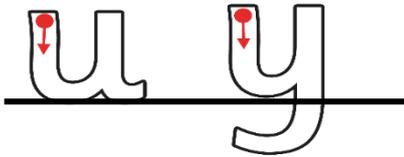


All letters "start at the top, bounce on the line and go over the top." For h, children will be told to go "back to the middle", and for other letters to "leave a stick". Children should be taught that p goes "below the line."

"Single line letter family"



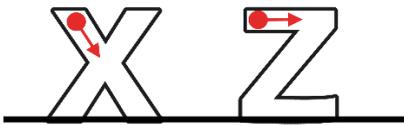
All letters start at the top. Children should be taught that j goes below the line, and that you must add "a cross" to a t. To form the "kicking legs" for a k "start at the top, go to the middle, kick down and flick.



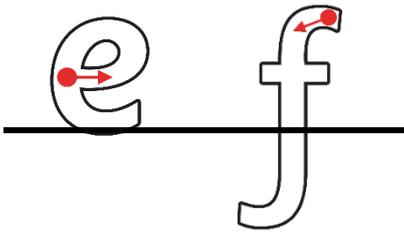
For u and y we "start at the top, curl under and go down again." For y we add "a monkey tail" below the line.



For v and w we go "down and up again" using the mnemonic "zig zag."



X is a "criss-cross", and z is a "zig-zag" that goes "forwards, slide back and forwards again."



To form an e, we "lie the little boy down, pull the blanket over and tuck it under." For f we "start like an s, tuck the tail under and add a cross; it looks like a seahorse."

Letters can be distinguished as being "tall", "short" and those that "go below the line". Letters "sit on the line so they don't get tired dancing in the air."

Useful online resources:

<http://www.doorwayonline.org.uk/letterformation.html>

http://www.ictgames.com/sky_writing.html

Useful apps:

- Pocket Phonics
- Hairy Letters