Zaner-Bloser Handwriting

TEACH ALL STUDENTS TO SHINE

PROGRAM OVERVIEW with Sample Lesson Pages

ZB Zaner-Bloser
It’s a feeling only teachers can describe: the moment they share students’ joy at printing their names for the first time, or watch as students express themselves with ease and fluidity through a handwritten essay.

That combination of pride, accomplishment, and excitement is a feeling that every student should experience—and every teacher should have the opportunity to provide.

Research shows handwriting instruction in both manuscript and cursive can benefit students’ learning. Building and refining these foundational skills over time increases fluency and automaticity in writing and improves both composition and comprehension.

TEACH WITH THE GOLD STANDARD. SEE THE RESULTS FOR ALL STUDENTS.

When you teach with Zaner-Bloser Handwriting™ you’re teaching all students to shine, with proven, research-based instruction that has helped generations of children to excel. Together we can help them gain the key literacy skills they need to develop into confident, capable communicators who are prepared to succeed in school and in life.

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The Case for Handwriting

Research proves explicit handwriting instruction is an important component in building literacy skills and a strong indicator of future success for all students. Following are just five key points regarding the importance of handwriting.* For the complete article, go to zaner-bloser.com/Handwriting2020.

* excerpted from the Teacher Edition of Zaner-Bloser Handwriting
1. Self-generated action, in the form of handwriting, is a crucial component in setting up brain systems for reading acquisition. (James 2010)

2. Children with stronger fine motor skills do better not only in literacy tasks such as letter writing, but also in kindergarten math; in addition, these skills are associated with ongoing reading and math achievement as late as fifth grade. (Dinehart, et al., 2014)

3. For developmentally typical students in grades 4-7, fluent cursive writing consistently predicted both higher level spelling and composing skills at each grade. (Berninger, et al., 2015)

4. Research results show that fluency in handwriting is strongly related to the quality and quantity of students’ complex written texts as late as Grade 8. (Christensen and Jones, 2013)

5. People who take handwritten notes process information better than those who type notes on a laptop. (Mueller & Oppenheimer, 2014)

Read on to see how research directly informs the pedagogy of Zaner-Bloser Handwriting and how you can effectively put it into practice.

Resources


Focused and Flexible Instruction

Zaner-Bloser Handwriting is the definitive method used by generations of children. Available in English and Spanish, the Zaner-Bloser approach teaches lifelong handwriting skills, from kindergarten through grade 6, in a comprehensive, skills-focused program, with time-tested techniques that don’t take a lot of time to implement.

Whether it’s five, ten, or 15 minutes, lessons work within your daily plan and fit alongside any type of curriculum to facilitate handwriting expertise.

SHORT WORK YIELDS LONG-TERM RESULTS.

The Teacher Edition’s three-step lesson presents a clear, simple instructional plan—Model, Practice, Evaluate—to help you easily and effectively teach handwriting in fewer than 15 minutes a day.

Excerpt from Teacher Edition, Grade 2C

1. Model
Instruct students to look at the two keys on the student page. Read and discuss the information about Shape and Size.

2. Practice
Ask students to complete the student page at a literacy center, during independent work time, or for homework.

3. Evaluate
Discuss the letters students marked and help them determine whether each mark is correct.

Additional tools in the Teacher Edition include:
- clearly stated learning objectives
- detailed letter models and formations for accurate modeling
- Handwriting Digital Tutor QR Codes
- Practice Masters facsimiles for quick reference

Inclusive instruction for all students  Opportunities to shine!
MyZBPortal.com includes easy-to-use digital teaching tools to engage students and support teachers. Online handwriting quests can be auto-generated or assigned to individual students. Progress and activity data is reported to teachers in real time. In addition, teachers can use Animated Letter Models to introduce letter formation in a whole-class setting.

CONSISTENT PRACTICE EQUALS CONTINUAL LEARNING.

Teacher Editions are packed with tips for quick, explicit instruction, coupled with practice opportunities and reinforcement, that teachers can implement throughout the day across disciplines and assign as homework.
The Zaner-Bloser Method

Effective handwriting instruction isn’t complicated—in fact, the simpler the better. Zaner-Bloser keeps it clean with fewer strokes, accessible language, and a common-sense approach to letter introduction that easily surpasses other handwriting programs.

BEGIN WITH THE FOUR KEYS.

The Keys to Legibility—Shape, Size, Spacing, and Slant—are a hallmark of Zaner-Bloser’s unique instructional system. The Keys appear in every lesson to help students self-evaluate their handwriting.

This continual assessment is critical to developing the handwriting process. By identifying their own strengths and weaknesses, students become independent learners!

**SHAPE**
Circle your best letter that has a vertical line.

**SIZE**
Circle your best tall letter.

**SPACING**
Circle two letters with good spacing between them.

**SLANT**
Circle a word that has good vertical slant.
MASTER BASIC STROKES.

Four basic strokes each for manuscript and cursive are used to form all letters and numerals.

Manuscript (K–2M)

- **Vertical**
  - Pull down straight.
  - Push up straight.

- **Horizontal**
  - Slide right.
  - Slide left.

- **Circle**
  - Circle back.
  - Circle forward.

- **Diagonal**
  - Slant left.
  - Slant right.
  - Slant up.

Cursive (2C–5)

- **Undercurve**
  - Touch the baseline; curve under and up to the midline (or headline).

- **Downcurve**
  - Touch the midline (or headline); curve left and down to the baseline.

- **Overcurve**
  - Touch the baseline; curve up and right to the midline (or headline).

- **Diagonal**
  - Touch the midline (or headline); slant left to the baseline.

USE SIMPLE, STUDENT-FRIENDLY LANGUAGE.

Easy-to-understand language and modeling with fewer, more specific letter formation descriptions make instruction accessible for all students. The same terms are used across grade levels, so no need to relearn terms each year. Students don’t need to have a rich reading vocabulary to master writing!
The Zaner-Bloser Method

**ESTABLISH IDENTIFIABLE PATTERNS.**

When a child sees an individual letter and attempts to write it, he or she may look at the letter and try to copy its shape. This can result in incorrect methods for writing letters, like starting at the baseline or using a forward instead of a backward circle line.

For both manuscript and cursive handwriting, Zaner-Bloser presents the letters of the alphabet in groups that share:

- common strokes
- formation patterns
- visual attributes

Presenting letters that contain similar strokes helps children identify patterns and learn to write letters correctly and efficiently.

**Manuscript groupings** are based on the strokes used to form the lowercase letter.

**Cursive groupings** are based on the initial stroke used to form each letter.

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Meaningful Practice

*Zaner-Bloser Handwriting* Student Editions and online quests feature multiple opportunities to practice fundamentals, self-assess, and reinforce literacy skills.

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**TEACHERS GIVE OWNERSHIP—STUDENTS GAIN CONFIDENCE.**

The proven pedagogy is designed to reach all types of learners—visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. Not only does differentiated instruction help all students to learn (and shine!) on their own, it helps build confidence and allow **transfer of ownership for learning** onto the student.
SELF-ASSESS FOR LETTER SUCCESS!

Stop sign icons direct students to pause, identify the best letter they’ve written on the page, and follow the steps in the self-evaluation process to assess their letter-making skills:

- Question and Compare
- Evaluate and Diagnose
- Improve

Letters with good size are easy to read. Trace these letters.

![Letters](image)

Tall letters touch the headline.
Short letters touch the midline.
Letters with descenders go below the baseline and touch the next headline.

- Circle a short letter.
- Underline a tall letter.
- Draw a box around a letter with a descender.

Handwriting quests at MyZBPortal.com track student progress from tracing to free writing. Students complete each unit by self-selecting their best work based on the four keys and pinning it to demonstrate mastery of the unit’s concepts. Use a stylus and a tablet for optimal student experience.

Digital Tutor QR Codes throughout the Student Edition allow students to conduct independent assessment and extend practice. Students simply scan the code with a mobile device to access the tutorials online. These Animated Letter Models and how-to videos extend learning to classroom centers and the home.

Scan the QR code to go to zaner-bloser.com/Handwriting2020 to see Digital Tutor in action.
Sequence of Instruction—Print

**Zaner-Bloser Handwriting** introduces manuscript, or printing, to students in kindergarten and grade 1. Schools can also choose to include an extra year of manuscript at grade 2.

Cursive instruction begins in either grade 2 or 3, with continued practice and refinement through grade 6. Increasingly, students are encouraged to write original compositions that rely on automaticity and fluency.

Online handwriting quests provide additional daily practice and engagement! See page 22 for more about MyZBPortal.com.
Explore Your Book

Meet Zaney
Zaney will be popping up in your book to help you form letters and make sure your writing is easy to read!

Digital Tutor
Scan the Digital Tutor codes with a mobile device to watch Zaney’s videos. You will learn how to write your best letters!

Models and Guidelines
There are writing models in your book. The models are on guidelines.

The red arrows and numerals show you how to write each letter. Start at the green dot when you trace and write.

Stop and Check
When you see a ✓ sign, circle the best letter you wrote on that line.

Circle the best letter on this line.

Keys to Legibility
There are four kinds of keys in your book. These Keys to Legibility™ will remind you to check the Shape, Size, Spacing, and Slant of your writing.

The Keys to Legibility will help you make your writing legible. Legible means easy to read.

Students are introduced to elements they’ll encounter across all grade levels, like Keys to Legibility.
Discover

Writing Positions

Left-Handed Writers If you use your left hand to write, follow the rules on this page.
Sit up tall.
Keep your feet on the floor.

Preparatory instruction includes pencil, paper, and sitting position for right- and left-handed writers.

Slant your paper.
Put both arms on the desk.
Pull your pencil toward your left elbow.
Use your right hand to move the paper.

Hold the pencil like this.
Do not squeeze the pencil when you write.

Scannable QR codes link to online tutorials.
Trace and write. ☑ Circle your best b.

Vertical manuscript reflects materials young readers see every day.

Students learn their letters while writing them! Uppercase and lowercase are introduced together in Kindergarten.
Unit 1 provides a quick review of manuscript before introducing cursive in Grade 2C or 3.

Objective: Notice the similarities and differences between manuscript and cursive letters and numerals.

1. Model
Project the student page on a whiteboard or screen. Model the first instruction by saying and circling the uppercase letters that are your initials. Then model the second instruction by underlining the lowercase letters that are in your name.

2. Practice
Ask students to complete these activities at a literacy center, during independent work time, or for homework:
• Tell students to complete the student page.

3. Evaluate
Ask students to tell which letters they drew beside. Have them explain why they think those manuscript and cursive letters are most alike or different.

Cursive Letters and Numerals
Circle the uppercase cursive letters that are your initials. Underline the lowercase cursive letters that are in your name.

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii
Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq
Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

Circle the cursive numeral that tells your age.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Helpful strategies for whole-class instruction are featured in the margins.

Writing in the Content Areas
Language Arts: Ask partners to discuss how they feel about learning cursive writing. Are they excited? Why? Are they fearful? Why? How do they think cursive writing will benefit them? Then have students write a journal entry describing their feelings and expectations about learning cursive.
Write

1. Undercurve, loop back, slant, undercurve.

Circle e and e in these words.

Trace and write. ✅ Circle your best e.

Join e and other letters. ✅ Circle your best joining and your best word.

Green dots indicate where to start.

Elephant ears

Stop and Check icons prompt students to self assess.

Explicit practice on joinings promotes fluidity and legibility.

Models and practice lines are oriented so left- and right-handed students can both see clearly.
Objective: Practice writing lowercase cursive e.

1. Model
Write cursive e on guidelines on the board as you say the letter formation, or display the Animated Letter Model at MyZBProna.com.
Use skywriting to model writing e in the air. Have students say the letter formation with you as they skywrite e or use their index finger to trace the letter model at the top of the student page.

2. Practice
Ask students to complete the student page at a literacy center, during independent work time, or for homework.

3. Evaluate
Tell students that when they come to the stop sign symbol, they should stop writing and circle their best letter, joining, or word.
Use these questions to help students evaluate their cursive e:
- Does your e have a good loop?
- Does your e end at the midline?
- Does your e have good slant?

English Language Learners
Sound Discrimination To help students understand the long and short sounds of the vowel e, gather several picture cards containing e or make your own with pictures from magazines. Say the name of each picture card, and have students repeat it after you. Help them distinguish between the short e sound (egg) and the long e sound (feel). Hold up each picture card. Have students say the word after you.
Objective: Practice writing lowercase cursive f.

1. Model
Talk about cursive f. Ask,
• How does f begin and end? (with an undercurve)
• Where does the upper loop close in f? (near the midline)

Write cursive f on guidelines on the board as you say the letter formation, or display the Animated Letter Model at MyZBPortal.com.
Use skywriting to model writing f in the air. Have students say the letter formation with you as they skywrite.

2. Practice
Ask students to complete the student page at a literacy center, during independent work time, or for homework.

3. Evaluate
Tell students that when they come to the stop sign symbol, they should stop writing and circle their best letter, joining, or word.

• Proper shape makes each letter easy to read. Ask,
  • Does your upper loop close near the midline?
  • Does your lower loop close at the baseline?

Occupational Therapist Tip
American Sign Language Using sign language provides opportunities to strengthen individual finger movements and improve visual motor skills. Find pictures of the letters of the alphabet in American Sign Language. Post the pictures around your classroom so students can see them. Help students learn the letter signs, allowing time to practice signing their names.

Prevention vs. Intervention! Proven tips from OTs provide classroom teachers with exercises to head off potential issues.

Home Practice opportunities and activities are intended for students to do with their families.

Home Practice
Practice Masters 29, 79
For more practice, download the Practice Masters from MyZBPortal.com, or make copies using the Practice Masters booklet.
Headlines, midlines, and baselines change as students’ writing abilities improve. Red baseline is phased out in grade 4; midlines to guide lowercase letters disappear in grade 5.

Objective: Review uppercase cursive A, O, D, C, and E.

1. Model
Review the letter formations and model any letters students have difficulty writing. Point out that all the letters you reviewed are downcurve letters.
Ask volunteers to give verbal descriptions of the letters. Challenge the other students to identify the letters being described. Then write the letters on guidelines on the board.

2. Practice
Ask students to complete the student page during independent work time or for homework.

3. Evaluate
Remind students to complete the checklist at the bottom of the page.
Use these questions to help students evaluate their writing:
- Did you write with correct strokes so your letters have good shape?
- Did you write letters with good size to fit the writing space?
- Did you use correct spacing?
- Does your writing have uniform forward slant?

**English Language Learners**

Multiple-Meaning Words and Similar Words Explain to students that the meaning of the noun form of desert is a dry, hot landmark and that the verb form of desert means to leave a place or people behind. Help students with the different pronunciations of the two words. Have them write a sentence using each word appropriately.
Objective: Write a road-trip plan using legible cursive handwriting.

1. Model
   Read aloud the directions on the student page and the labeled cities and states. Point out the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans on the map and answer any questions students might have.
   Remind students to correctly form A, O, D, C, and E when they write their plan.

2. Practice
   Ask students to complete the student page during independent work time or for homework.

3. Evaluate
   Use these questions to help students evaluate their writing:
   - Did you write with correct strokes so your letters have good shape?
   - Are your letters the right size?
   - Did you use proper spacing between your letters and words?
   - Does your writing have uniform forward slant?

Writing in the Content Areas

Social Studies: Give students information about the cities in their Road Trip Plan on the student page. Have students choose one of the cities and write an informative/explanatory paragraph that describes the place. Instruct them to give particular information, such as its population, popular attractions, average seasonal temperatures, and basic geography.

Four-color visuals engage students and support opportunities for further practice.

Easily customize worksheets to extend handwriting practice throughout the day.

Challenge students to use their handwriting skills in meaningful contexts and with different types of writing styles.
Print Program Components

Zaner-Bloser Handwriting doesn’t take a lot of direct instructional time, but it does provide rich and varied opportunities for practice! In addition to the colorful print Teacher and Student Editions, package components include manipulatives for hands-on work as well as black and white practice masters that can be assigned as homework.

The Teacher Edition includes everything you need to teach students to write legibly and fluently in as few as 15 minutes per day.

- Research-based instruction
- Simple, three-step lesson
- Additional resources, including multisensory activities to differentiate instruction, teaching tips, and authentic handwriting opportunities

Student Edition worktexts provide meaningful, engaging handwriting practice and application.

- Developmentally appropriate content
- Colorful, fun activities
- Opportunities for self-evaluation
- Digital Tutor QR Codes that link to online videos

Inclusive instruction for all students

Opportunities to shine!
Practice Masters offer opportunities to strengthen students’ handwriting skills and involve families.

- Reproducible practice pages for students
- Use in small groups, centers, or for homework
- Include QR codes to access online tutorials
- Also available online

Classroom Resource Kits provide a full selection of classroom multisensory practice materials with extra support for teaching handwriting and making learning fun. Resources include Alphabet Desk & Wall Strips, Touch and Trace Cards, Home Handwriting Pack, and Manuscript/Cursive Cards.

Available as:
- Manuscript Kit
- Manuscript/Cursive Kit
- Cursive Kit
Online Tools Extend & Engage!

Enhanced digital tools available on MyZBPortal.com provide even more flexibility to supplement proven instruction and reinforce handwriting skills across the curriculum.

EXTRA PRACTICE FOR STUDENTS

MyZBPortal.com provides a student-driven, online learning experience.

- Colorful characters lead students through handwriting quests.
- Quests are motivating to-do lists that consist of tracing and free writing activities, followed by opportunities to self-select and pin best work.
- Students earn stars for their progress—rewards can be redeemed for stickers to customize their characters.
- Progress is both communicated to the student in real time and sent to the teacher.
- MyZBPortal.com access is web-based—students can hop online at school, at home, or on the go.
INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS

The digital tools for teachers at MyZBPortal.com are designed for whole-class or small-group instruction and can be used with any interactive whiteboard or projector. Access materials easily—everything teachers need is organized by lesson.

- Animated Letter and Numeral Models in English and Spanish
- Short instructional videos
- Teacher Edition eBook
- Projectable Student Edition pages
- Inclusive instruction for all students
- Printable Home Practice pages
- Corrective strategies
- Matching with ZaneR games
- Professional development resources
- Online worksheet maker to generate original, grade-specific practice from templates
- Real-time reporting on student activity and progress
Zaner-Bloser La escritura for Grades K–6 provides parallel instruction to the English program with linguistically appropriate content. Bilingual students can progress in handwriting alongside their English-speaking peers while learning appropriate academic Spanish writing skills.

**Manuscript (K–2M)**

- Vertical/Verticales
  - Raya recta hacia abajo.
  - Raya recta hacia arriba.
- Horizontal/Horizontales
  - Raya hacia la derecha.
  - Raya hacia la izquierda.
- Circle/Círculo
  - Cirulo completo hacia arriba.
  - Cirulo completo hacia abajo.
- Diagonal/Inclinadas
  - Inclinación hacia la izquierda.
  - Inclinación hacia la derecha.
  - Inclinación hacia abajo.

**Cursive (2C–6)**

- Undercurve/Curva leve hacia arriba
- Downcurve/Curva hacia abajo
- Overcurve/Curva alta hacia delante
- Diagonal/Raya inclinada

Online resources in Spanish available on MyZBPortal.com are similar to those available for the English version, including Animated Numeral and Letter Models, Worksheet Maker, and handwriting quests.
Los que trabajamos en Zaner-Bloser comprendemos perfectamente la alegría que comparte un maestro de la escuela primaria, con el estudiante que logra escribir su nombre por primera vez, al igual que cuando ve que el estudiante entiende el “por qué” de las formas ortográficas, y el uso de patrones para escribir palabras nuevas. Esa combinación de alcanzar logros, de orgullo y emoción es algo que todo estudiante debería sentir y que todo maestro debería tener la oportunidad de ofrecerle.

Cuando usted enseña con los instrucciones de Zaner-Bloser Handwriting, Zaner-Bloser La escritura, y Spelling Connections, usted les está enseñando a todos los estudiantes a que se destaquen mediante la adquisición de las destrezas esenciales de lecto-escritura que requieren para convertirse en comunicadores capaces y seguros de sí mismos, preparados para triunfar en la escuela y en la vida.
Teach All Students to Shine—Online!

VISIT ZANER-BLOSER HANDWRITING ONLINE

- Access to MyZBPortal.com
- Online Teacher Editions
- Digital Resources
- Research

zaner-bloser.com/Handwriting2020

Why choose Zaner-Bloser Handwriting?

- Explicit, systematic instruction and practice in print and online
- Proven and research based
- Respects teachers’ time

Zaner-Bloser
A Highlights Company