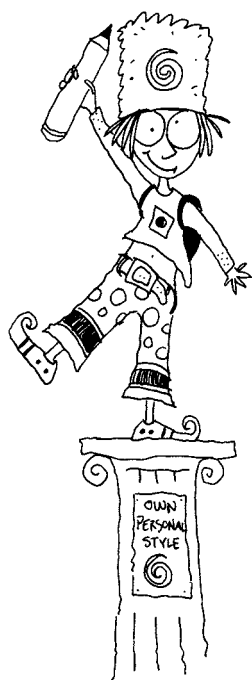


Years 4-5 Teacher Resource Book

# TARGETING HANDWRITING

*From cursive joins to a personal style!*



*by Tricia Dearborn, Tim Tuck and Susan Young*

*Illustrated by Stephen Michael King*

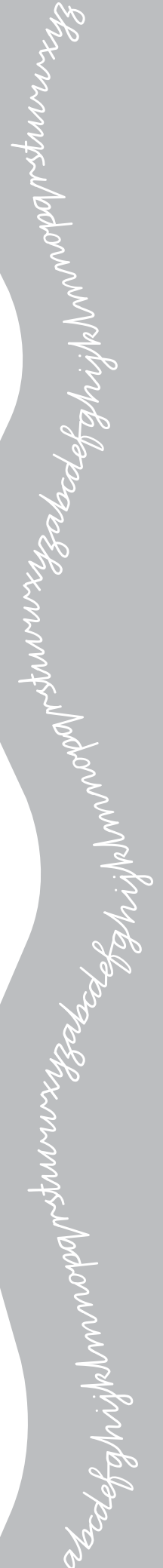
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\* Blackline master (BLM): Photocopiable black and white page.



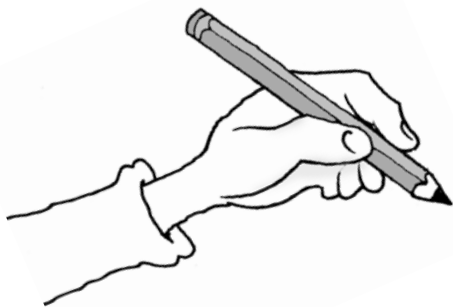
# INTRODUCTION

Handwriting is a vital, compelling form of communication. As adults, we write every day, for myriad reasons. Even if we're just writing a shopping list or scribbling down a telephone message, our handwriting plays an important part in the effectiveness of our written communication. Children too need to write every day, for a variety of purposes and for a variety of audiences. To be competent writers, their handwriting needs to be fluent and legible. The teaching of handwriting is an essential part of the writing curriculum.



## Handwriting in Middle and Upper Primary

When teaching Middle and Upper Primary, it can be hard to find the time to give handwriting the attention it deserves. However, in terms of the consolidation of handwriting skills, these are very important years. During this time students need support as they revise, practise and consolidate the joining skills necessary for writing in cursive, increase their fluency and legibility, and begin to develop their own personal style.



**Left-handed**



**Right-handed**

# THE MECHANICS OF WRITING

Maintaining a good pen grip, posture and paper position benefits students in several ways: it helps them to maintain relaxed writing movements and allows them to write for longer without finger, hand, wrist, or arm fatigue; it gives them the best view of what they are writing (which can prevent inefficient compensatory pen grips arising); and it allows maximum control of the writing instrument.

## Pen grip

The most comfortable and flexible grip for many students is called the dynamic tripod grip. In this grip:

- ⑥ The pen is gripped between the tips of the thumb and index finger, and rests on the middle finger. The other two fingers are loosely bent or curled.
- ⑥ The wrist is slightly bent, and positioned below the writing line. The fingers, rather than the wrist, control the pen movement.
- ⑥ There should generally be 2-2.5 cm between the tip of the index finger and the point of the writing instrument for right-handers, and 3-3.5 cm for left-handers. The extra distance for left-handers helps them see what they are writing.

## Posture

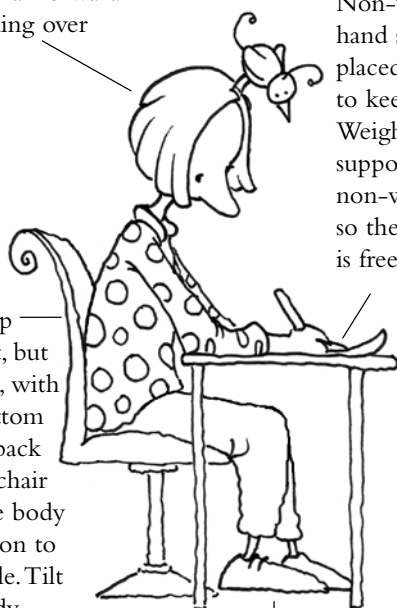
The recommended posture for writing is relaxed but upright. The weight of the student's upper body should be supported by their non-writing arm, so that the writing arm is free to move.

Check that students have furniture that suits their size, height and leg length.

If a left- and a right-hander are seated together, make sure the left-hander is seated on the left to avoid a lot of elbow bumping. Reminding left-handers to keep their elbow tucked in slightly can discourage the development of a hooked wrist when writing.

Head should not be too far forward or leaning over paper.

Back up straight, but relaxed, with the bottom at the back of the chair and the body square on to the table. Tilt the body forward from the pelvis.



Non-writing hand should be placed on paper to keep it steady. Weight should be supported on the non-writing side, so the other side is free to move.

Both feet should be flat on the floor.

## Paper position

For the right-hander, the paper is usually best placed to the right of the body midline and angled to the left. For the left-hander, the paper is usually placed to the left of the body midline and angled to the right. The angling required will vary between students (left-handers often

require a greater angle than right-handers), and finding the best angle and position for each student may require some experimentation. When the best position has been found, a strip of masking tape placed on the desk can be a useful guide until the positioning becomes automatic.



**Right-handed**



**Left-handed**

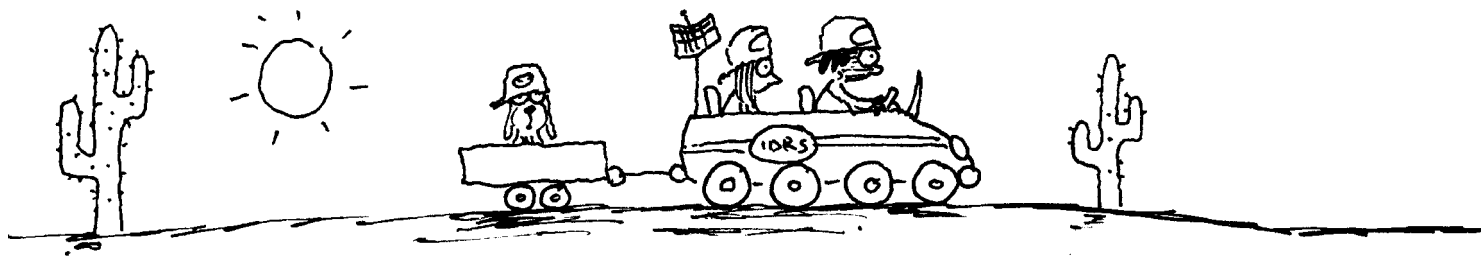
## Writing instruments

The writing instrument a student uses will affect the fluency and speed of their writing, its legibility and neatness, the amount of pressure required, the student's pen hold, and the amount the student can write comfortably without becoming fatigued.

When a student is using a writing instrument that doesn't suit them, they may develop a compensatory grip, or need to constantly adjust their grip as they write. A writing instrument that suits a student's needs can make writing more pleasurable as well as easier, and can improve as well as support good handwriting techniques.

Encourage students to experiment with a range of writing implements to determine which is the most comfortable and easy for them to use.

# USING THE TARGETING HANDWRITING BOOKS IN YOUR HANDWRITING PROGRAMME



## A sample handwriting lesson

Once students are in Middle and, particularly, Upper Primary, they are less likely to be having daily handwriting lessons. However, having even two or three dedicated handwriting lessons per week will make an enormous difference, and give students the support they need to consolidate the skills of Modern Cursive and use them as a basis in developing their own handwriting style.

A handwriting lesson could include the following activities.

- ⑥ **A few minutes warm-up**, including activities such as ‘finger aerobics’ or squeezing rubber ‘stress’ balls, can be a fun way to begin a handwriting lesson, as well as helping to improve students’ muscle strength and fine motor skills.
- ⑥ **Revision of a join or introduction of a technique on the blackboard**—giving consistent verbal cues for writing movements or techniques and using consistent terminology will provide students with a good model.
- ⑥ **Student practice**—have students complete the relevant page in the *Targeting Handwriting Student Book*, or a relevant blackline master from this book, or have them copy your model from the board. Individualised instruction can be given as you move around the class observing students as they write. Check for good posture, pen grip, and slope of page, as well as letter and join formation.

## The blackline masters in this book

The blackline masters in this book have been designed to provide support and extra, fun activities as students move from the consolidation of joining techniques, to improving their fluency and legibility, to developing their own personal handwriting style. The worksheets have not been assigned Year levels, as there will commonly be a broad range of handwriting abilities within any one class. BLMs 1–6 focus on joining techniques, BLMs 7–13 on practising cursive script, BLMs 14–16 on printing and capitals, BLMs 17–22 on fluency and legibility, BLMs 23–28 on presentation ideas, and BLMs 29–31 on the development of an individual style.

## Handy hints for teaching Modern Cursive

Following are some practical ideas that may make the teaching of handwriting easier:

- ⑥ Minimize the number of articles that students keep on top of their desks. A maximum number of items permitted can be set, so that students are restricted to the essentials. Discourage the use of large pencil cases, as they can take up too much space on students’ desks.
- ⑥ While students are still consolidating their knowledge of the basic joins, a ‘joins train’ wallchart can be a quick and handy reference.

- ⑥ Display plenty of examples of the handwriting style around the classroom. Use Modern Cursive when sending home notices, homework sheets and class newsletters to help reinforce the script to students.
- ⑥ Assess students' skills regularly. Collect samples of each student's handwriting and record all progress using one of the handwriting skills checklists on page 16.
- ⑥ Make sure students are using handwriting instruments that suit their grip, pressure and handwriting style. Encourage students to try out and assess different writing instruments, and choose one that is comfortable and easy for them to use.
- ⑥ Get parents involved. Send home a copy of the Modern Cursive script, along with some information about it. Alternatively, you may wish to discuss handwriting at a parent information night.



## When a student is having difficulties

Be sure to acknowledge students' skills and progress before pointing out any problem areas. If a student is having more than one main difficulty, focus on one at a time, beginning with the most important one. When the student is comfortable with that skill, move on to address the next area of difficulty.

The table on pages 12-15, Troubleshooting Handwriting Difficulties, summarizes some common handwriting problems, gives examples, and suggests strategies that may be useful in addressing specific problems.

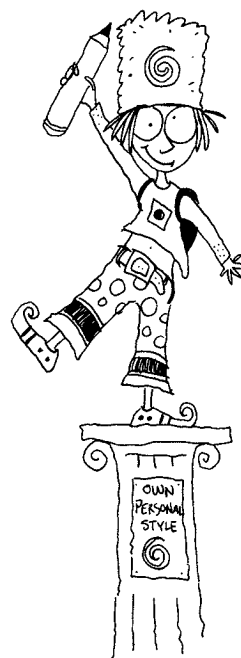
## When a student has learned a different handwriting style

If a student has previously attended school in another State or country, he or she is likely to have learned a handwriting style other than Modern Cursive. If the student has a well-developed, functional grip and handwriting style, it is best to support them in using this style. When a student's first language is not English, it can also be useful to know how the writing system works in their first language, for example the direction the script moves on the page, how punctuation is used. This can make it easier to support the student's handwriting development in English.

## Using the handwriting skills checklist

The skills checklist on page 16 can be photocopied, and a copy kept for each student as an ongoing record of their progress. (One has been provided for Years 4 and 5.)

The checklist can be added to as general observations are made, and can also be used in formal assessment. The pointers on the checklist provide a general guide for skills and behaviours to look out for when making observations, and will help you to develop a detailed profile of an individual student's achievement.



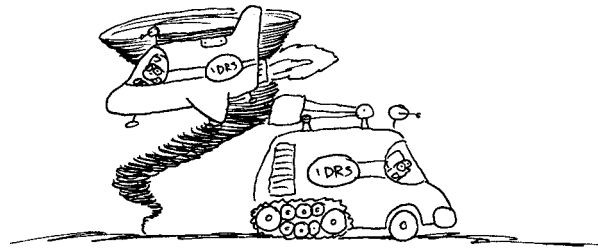
## The *Targeting Handwriting* Years 4–5 Student Books

The Years 4–5 *Targeting Handwriting* Student Books have been designed to make learning cursive handwriting as easy as possible for students. New skills and techniques are introduced sequentially, so that students build on skills one by one and are not called on to use skills that have not been introduced yet. Wherever possible, students copy words *underneath* models, so that left-handers are not disadvantaged, and practice of numerals and punctuation is integrated into the writing activities. Assessment pages make assessment of specific handwriting skills easy, and the books also encourage and support student self-assessment.

As students get older, they will encounter situations in which it is important to be able to write quickly *and* legibly. For that reason, speed trials have been included in the *Targeting Handwriting* Student Book 5. Speed trial pages always include a legibility assessment component.

Both these Student Books in the *Targeting Handwriting* series have a specific focus:

The **Year 4 Student Book** focuses on the **consolidation of joining skills**, with an extra focus on tricky joins such as joining to s and to modified f, joining from x, and double letter combinations. In this book, students begin to assess their own word and letter spacing and slope. Progressive improvement check pages allow students to track their progress throughout the year.



The **Year 5 Student Book** focuses on **improving fluency and legibility**. It includes practical techniques to help students check letter spacing, word spacing and slope, as well as practice of common letter clusters and high frequency words. Towards the end of the book, students are supported in the change-over from red and blue lines to 8 mm blue lines.





# TEACHING HANDWRITING IN YEARS 4–5

## Basic movement patterns and printing

The basic movement patterns in Modern Cursive remain the same as those in Beginner's script:

**Downstroke pattern** found in letters l, t, i, x, z, f, j

**Hopping pattern (clockwise movement)** found in letters m, n, r, h, b, p, k

**Wave pattern (anti-clockwise movement)** found in letters u, v, w, y, a, c, o, g, q, d, e, s

Note that it is important that students retain a functional printing style while developing their skills in cursive, as there will still be occasions when students need to print, for example when labelling maps and diagrams. Make sure students are clear which situations require printing rather than cursive.



## Letters with exits and entries

The Transition stage is the linking step between the Beginner's script and Modern Cursive.

The **letters with exits only** are *a, h, k, l, t, c, d* and *e*.

The **letters with rounded entries** are *m, n, r* and *x*.

The **letters with pointed entries** are *i, u, v, w, p, y* and *j*.

The **letters that change** are *f* and *z*.

The **letters that don't change** are *b, p,* and *s*.

The *Targeting Handwriting Years 1–3 Teacher Resource Book* contains blackline masters that may be helpful to students who need, at any stage, to revise the basic movement patterns or letter shapes, or the Transition stage letters.

## 'Joining' notes for teachers

### Diagonal joins

#### *Exits to rounded and pointed entries*

Letters with exits (for example *a, h, k, l,* and *t*) join easily to letters with entries because the exit stroke leads directly to the entry stroke. The movement requires the continuation of the exit stroke into the entry stroke.

#### *Exits to head and body letters*

To join a letter with an exit to a head and body letter (for example *b, h, k, l* and *t*), sweep the exit stroke up to the top of where the head and body letter begins. Retracing is required on the downward stroke. It is important to retrace at least a third of the way down the head and body letter.

#### *Exits to e*

*When using red and blue lines:* To join an exit to the letter *e*, extend the exit stroke diagonally upwards to a point about half-way between the blue lines and then begin writing the letter *e*.

*When using 8 mm blue lines:* To join an exit to the letter *e*, extend the exit stroke diagonally upwards to a point about half the height of a body-only letter and then begin writing the letter *e*.

#### *Exits to o*

*When using red and blue lines:* To join exits to the letter *o*, extend the exit stroke so that it

reaches the top, blue line. Move the pencil along the top blue line until you reach what will be the midway point of the top of the letter o, then retrace by moving the pencil anti-clockwise as you complete the letter o.

*When using 8 mm blue lines:* To join exits to the letter o, extend the exit stroke diagonally until it reaches the height of a body-only letter, then briefly to the right, to what will be the midway point of the top of the letter o. Retrace by moving the pencil anti-clockwise as you complete the letter o.

### **Diagonal joins from f**

To join from f, use the diagonal crossbar. The crossbar of f leads directly to a letter with an entry. To join the letter f to the letter o, a slight retrace at the top of o is required.

### **Diagonal joins to modified f**

Letters with exits can join to the letter f if the f is modified.

*When using red and blue lines:* Sweep the exit stroke up to the top, red line, move the pencil anti-clockwise along the red line and then down to the bottom red line. The anti-clockwise movement at the top of the red line creates a small loop. Lift the pencil and draw the diagonal crossbar.

*When using 8 mm blue lines:* Sweep the exit stroke up to the height of a head and body letter, move the pencil briefly anti-clockwise, and then down (this creates the loop at the top of the f) and past the baseline to form the trail of f. Lift the pencil and draw the diagonal crossbar.

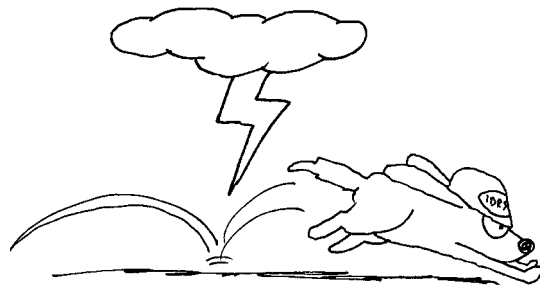
A common error is the formation of large, wide loops, so remind students that the loop should be kept small and quite slim. Have students colour in their loops to help them focus on the size of the loops they are making.

### **Diagonal joins to modified s**

Letters with exits can join to the letter s, if the s has been modified. Modified s is an s that has had the top part removed and an entry stroke added.

*When using red and blue lines:* To join a letter with an exit to modified s, extend the exit stroke to the top, blue line, and then move anti-clockwise briefly then clockwise to form the modified s.

*When using 8 mm blue lines:* To join a letter with an exit to modified s, extend the exit stroke to the height of a body-only letter, and then move anti-clockwise briefly then clockwise to form the modified s.



### **Drop-on joins**

When a letter begins with an anti-clockwise movement (for example a, c, d, g and q), it is 'dropped on' to a letter with an exit. The exit stroke needs to be extended so that it nearly reaches the top, blue line (if using red and blue lines; so that it nearly reaches the height of a body-only letter if using 8 mm blue lines). The pencil is then lifted and the next letter is dropped on to the exit stroke. Lifting the pencil is most important, and needs to be stressed to students.

The letter a can also be dropped onto the crossbar of f.

### **Joining from x**

Unlike the letter t, the letter x is crossed before x joins to the next letter. The rounded entry, left-to-right downstroke and the exit are done in one movement, then the pencil is lifted to add the right-to-left downstroke. If the exit of x is extended nearly to the top, blue line (if using red and blue lines; to just below the height of a body-only letter if using 8 mm blue lines), most letters can then be dropped on. The dropped-on letter should be begun at its usual starting point, and positioned so that it meets the extended exit of x.

## Horizontal joins

The letters o, r, v, and w join horizontally to the following letter. To keep the movement fluid, the join should have a slight dip.

### *Horizontal joins to anti-clockwise letters*

To join o, r, v or w to an anti-clockwise letter, take the join right across to the starting point of the anti-clockwise letter and retrace the line as the top of the letter is drawn.

### *Horizontal joins to s*

To join o, r, v or w to the letter s, take the join across the top of the s, and retrace the top of the s before heading down.

### *Up-sweeping joins*

To join o, r, v and w to head and body letters, the joining stroke sweeps up from the top blue line to the top red line (if using red and blue lines; from the height of a body-only letter to the height of a head and body letter if using 8 mm blue lines). Retracing occurs on the downward stroke. It is important to retrace at least a third of the way down the head and body letter.



## Double letter combinations

### *Double e and double o*

The letter pairs ee and oo join quite easily. However, it is important that slope and spacing are kept even.

### *Double l and double t*

The letter pairs ll and tt are also fairly easy to join. However, care must be taken to space them evenly, and it is important that both l's or t's have the same slope. One crossbar is used to cross double t.

### *Double m and double n*

The letter pairs mm and nn can be hard to read if the join between them is cramped. Remind students to space (and slope) them evenly.

### *Double f*

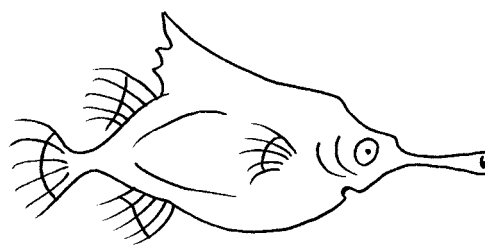
The crossbar from the first modified f joins diagonally to the second modified f.

### *Double s*

The letter s can be written in two different ways: as a printed s or as a modified s. When the letter s is doubled, the shape of the first s dictates what the next s will be. If the first s is printed, then the following s must be printed. If the first s is modified, then the second s must be modified.

### *Double r*

Some people find joining rr tricky and prefer to use a pencil lift between them. Have students try both ways, and choose whichever way they find most comfortable. When students join double r, remind them to include the small dip after the first r.



## Letters that don't join

### *No horizontal joins to e*

The top-finishing letters o, r, v and w do not join to the letter e.

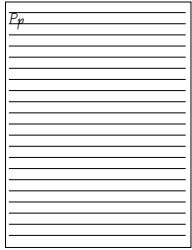
### *Capitals*

Capital letters do not join to the next letter.

## Troubleshooting handwriting difficulties

While not intended to be exhaustive, this chart details some of the common handwriting difficulties, and some strategies that may be useful in addressing them.

Script difficulty/Examples	Strategies to try
<p><b>Inconsistent letter shape</b></p> <p><i>took</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• revise formation of the problem letter, verbalizing the process</li> <li>• include revision of letters with related shapes and movement patterns</li> </ul>
<p><b>Uneven letter size</b></p> <p><i>are parallel</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• discuss the proportions of the heads, bodies and tails of letters</li> <li>• ruling a top body-line for their ordinary work may help some students</li> </ul>
<p><b>Uneven letter spacing</b></p> <p><i>portfolios</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• check that the student is securing the paper with the non-writing arm so it doesn't slip</li> <li>• show students how to mark dots at the base of each letter to check letter spacing</li> </ul> <p><i>evenly spaced</i></p> <p><i>unevenly spaced</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• if the problem is related to a particular writing movement or join, practise patterns which focus on that movement or join</li> </ul>
<p><b>Word spacing</b></p> <p><i>She told a fib .</i></p> <p><i>mywhole family</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• discuss the relationship between word spacing and legibility</li> <li>• show students how to place the letter o between words to check spacing — it should just fit with not too much space left over</li> </ul> <p><i>The cat ate fish.</i> ← good spacing</p> <p><i>The o cat o ate o fish.</i> ← too much space</p> <p><i>The cat ate fish.</i> ← too little space—o's won't fit</p>

Script difficulty/Examples	Strategies to try
<p><b>Inconsistent slope</b></p> <p>Slope varies</p> <p><i>daydream</i></p> <p><i>It was free and you could</i></p> <p>Slope increases going across the page</p> <p><i>all the sides are equal in length</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• check student's posture and pen grip, and that they are not in need of changing their grip in the middle of a word because of discomfort or fatigue</li> <li>• pattern practice to reinforce consistency of slope</li> </ul> <p><i>UUUUUUU hhhhhhhh</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• if student's writing shows one main slope with variations, make up practice patterns that reinforce the predominant slope</li> <li>• remind student to use more pressure on the downstroke — this can help establish rhythm and more consistent slope</li> <li>• slope cards may help some students</li> <li>• when slope increases going across the page — check that the student is sliding hand and arm across when necessary rather than bending hand back at the wrist</li> </ul>
<p><b>Letter position</b></p> <p><i>In a fortnights time we will</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• revise letter position with respect to head, body and tail parts of the letters</li> <li>• place letters at the beginning of each page to act as a guide</li> </ul> 
<p><b>Directional changes</b></p> <p><i>summer</i></p> <p><i>equal</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• directional changes that are too angular or too rounded may decrease fluency and slow down writing — practise basic letter pattern, and letter shape within that pattern</li> </ul> <p><i>mmmm mmmm</i></p> <p><i>uuuu uuuu</i></p>

Script difficulty/Examples	Strategies to try
<p><b>Mixture of print and cursive</b></p> <p><i>Cheltenham</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• discuss writing situations in which print and cursive are appropriate</li> <li>• check that there is no particular difficulty with the join at which cursive changed to printing</li> </ul>
<p><b>Diagonal joins</b></p> <p>Pencil lift instead of diagonal join</p> <p><i>Sometimes putting</i></p> <p>Lack of retracing in tall letters</p> <p><i>all will</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• remind students that diagonal joins go right up to where the next letter starts, and introduce practice patterns that reinforce the join <i>mimimimi lelelelele</i></li> <li>• lack of retracing in tall letters — pattern practice to reinforce retracing <i>lllllll hhhhhhhh</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Horizontal joins</b></p> <p>No horizontal join—letters join directly</p> <p><i>will what</i></p> <p>Dips too large</p> <p><i>will</i></p> <p>Up-sweeping joins</p> <p><i>took</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• revise use of horizontal joins</li> <li>• if there is no actual horizontal join and the letters join directly, use pattern practice that reinforces the dipped, horizontal joining stroke between the letters <i>wuwuy wiwiwiwi</i></li> <li>• if the problem is that the dips are too big, remind the student that dips are small, and use pattern practice to reinforce the correct dip <i>wuwuy ririririri</i></li> <li>• if the problem is with horizontal joins to tall letters, remind the student that the join goes up and retraces rather than going straight to the top of the tall letter <i>wh<sup>retrace</sup> rk<sup>retrace</sup> ol<sup>retrace</sup></i></li> </ul>

Script difficulty/Examples	Strategies to try
<p><b>Drop-on joins</b></p> <p><i>daydream</i></p> <p><i>tiptoe.</i></p> <p><i>each</i></p> <p><i>downpour</i></p> <p><i>blackout</i></p>	<p>Lack of drop-on joins can lead to displacement of letters, ambiguous letter shapes, and looping within words.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• discuss what drop-on joins are and why they are used</li> <li>• remind students that the exit flick before a drop-on join comes up diagonally and higher than usual — practise letters with longer exit flicks</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>d m a l</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• remind students that after the long exit flick, they must lift the pen before ‘dropping on’ the next letter — use a small mark above the pen lift point as a prompt in words students will copy</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>dodge equal</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• introduce pattern practice for reinforcement of drop-on join movement</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>ndndndnd lalalala</i></p>
<p><b>Joining to s</b></p> <p><i>reports</i></p> <p><i>Girls</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• check whether difficulty is with diagonal or horizontal joins to s, or both</li> <li>• pattern practice to reinforce the join</li> <li>• practise joining to s in common letter pairs and words</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>ls as is os rs</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>bus has rose cars</i></p>
<p><b>Joining to f</b></p> <p><i>backfire</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• remind students that when joining to f the exit stroke continues right up to the top of f, moves briefly anti-clockwise, then back down (creating the loop), all in one movement, before the crossbar is added. Introduce practice patterns to reinforce this movement.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>uf uf lf lf ff ff</i></p>
<p><b>Joining from f</b></p> <p><i>free</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• remind students that f joins from the crossbar</li> </ul>



# Handwriting skills checklist BLM—Years 4–5

Name	Term	Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⑥ <b>Uses correct pen grip</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses dynamic tripod or other acceptable grip</li> <li>• Left/right/mixed hand dominance</li> <li>• Uses appropriate pressure</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⑥ <b>Maintains correct body position and relaxed posture</b> (see page 5)</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⑥ <b>Maintains finger movements and arm slide during cursive script patterns</b></li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⑥ <b>Joins letters when writing texts using Modern Cursive</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can use the following joining techniques:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diagonal joins</li> <li>Diagonal joins to head and body letters</li> <li>Diagonal joins to e</li> <li>Diagonal joins to o</li> <li>Diagonal joins to modified s</li> <li>Diagonal joins from f</li> <li>Diagonal joins to modified f</li> <li>Diagonal joins to z</li> <li>Drop-on joins</li> <li>Joining from x</li> <li>Horizontal joins</li> <li>Horizontal joins to anti-clockwise letters</li> <li>Horizontal joins to s</li> <li>Up-sweeping joins</li> <li>Double-letter combinations</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Needs practice in these joins</li> <li>• Know which letters don't join</li> <li>• Knows when to use cursive writing and when to print</li> </ul> </li> <li>⑥ <b>Writes using consistent shape, size, spacing and slope using Modern Cursive script</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forms letter shapes consistently</li> <li>• Uses lines appropriately to form letters of uniform size</li> <li>• Maintains uniform spacing between letters and between words</li> <li>• Maintains uniform slope</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		



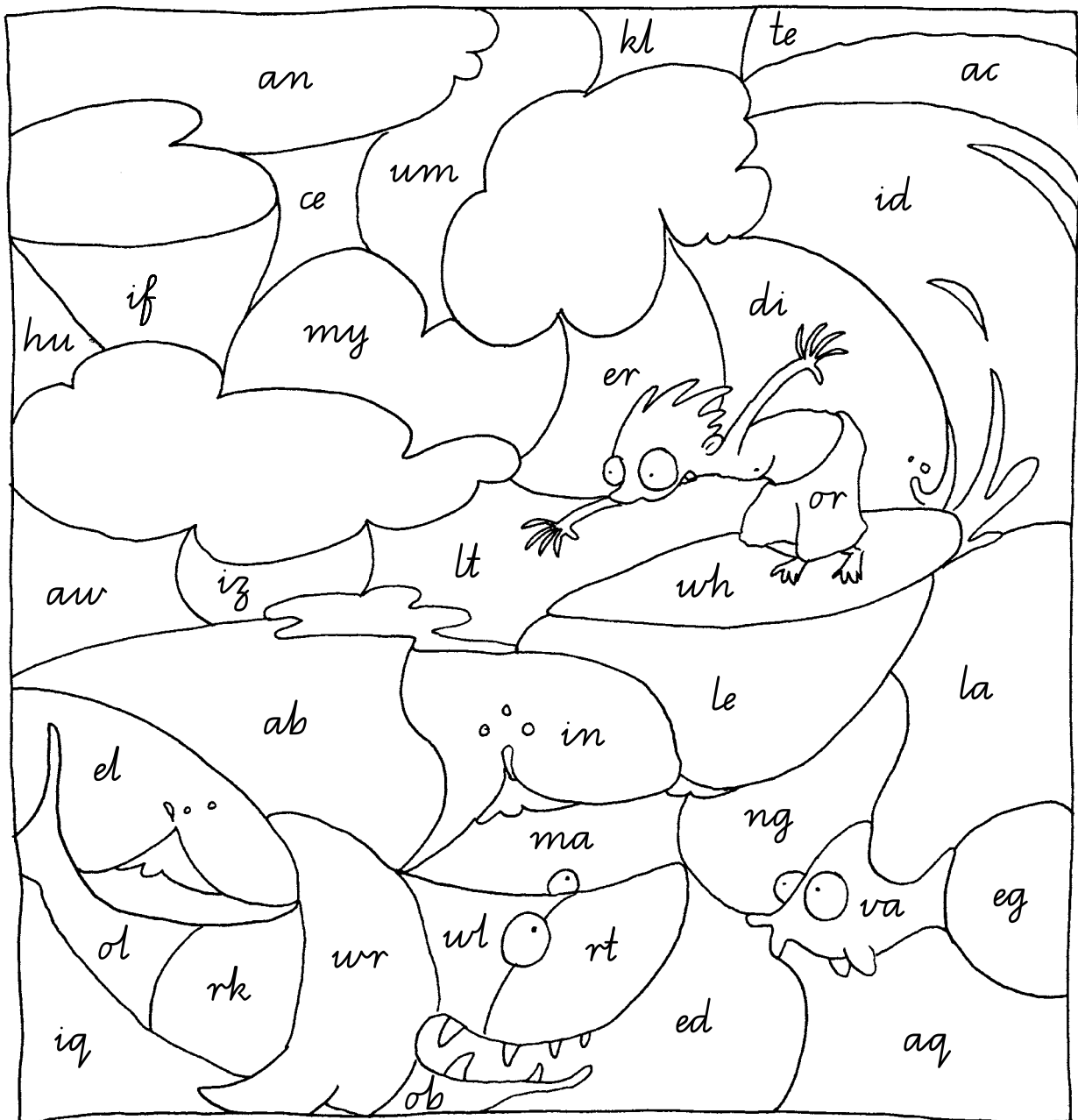
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

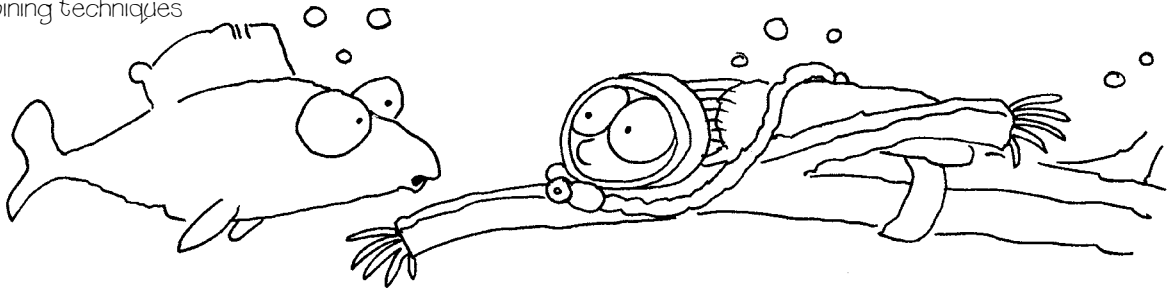
BLM 1

Joining techniques

Colour the letters, using the key below, to reveal the hidden picture.

- ⦿ Diagonal joins — light blue
- ⦿ Drop-on joins — dark blue
- ⦿ Horizontal joins — orange
- ⦿ Up-sweeping joins — black





Draw a line with a ruler to match up each letter pair with the join that it contains. When you have finished, the bubble letters with lines through them will spell an ocean word.

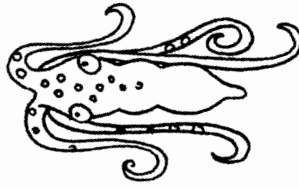
Diagonal join	(A)	(B)	wi
Drop-on join	(Y)	(C)	di
Horizontal join	(L) (G)	(F) (M)	na
Diagonal join to s	(H) (L)	(N)	es
Horizontal join to s	(O)	(A)	wh
Up-sweeping join	(W) (J) (A) (I)	(G)	os
Diagonal join to f	(S) (K) (F)	(K)	if
Double letter join	(I)	(D)	ve
Letters that don't join	(N) (N)		nn

What is the ocean word? \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_

BLM 3

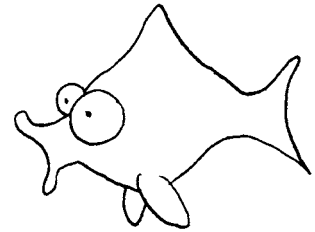
Joining techniques



Look carefully at each pair of words. Trace over the correctly joined word. Circle the mistake in the other word. The first pair has been done for you.

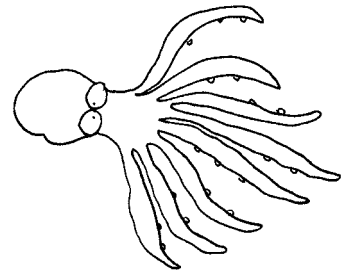
dolphin      dolphin  
✓                      ✗

fish                      fish



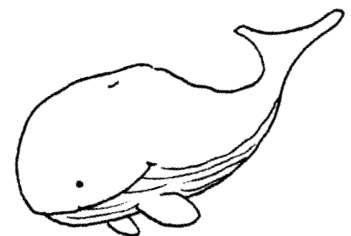
tuna                      tuna

octopus                      octopus



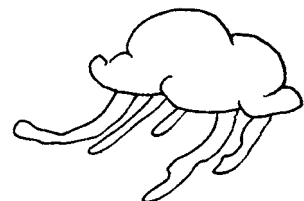
squid                      squid

cuttlefish                      cuttlefish

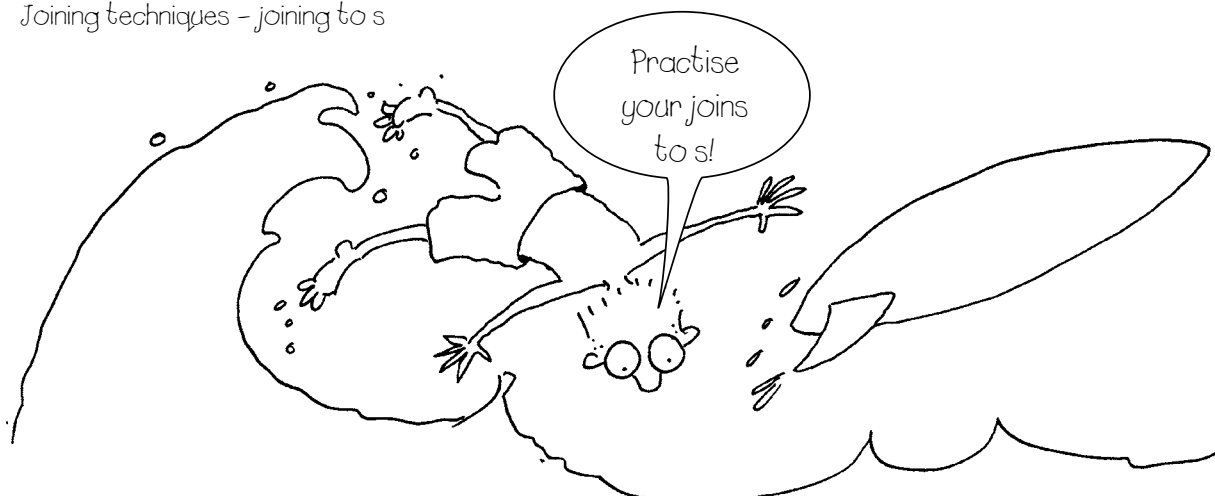


whale                      whale

jellyfish                      jellyfish



Joining techniques - joining to s



Trace each word, then make each one plural by adding s.

*wave*

*dolphin*

*breaker*

*reef*

*submarine*

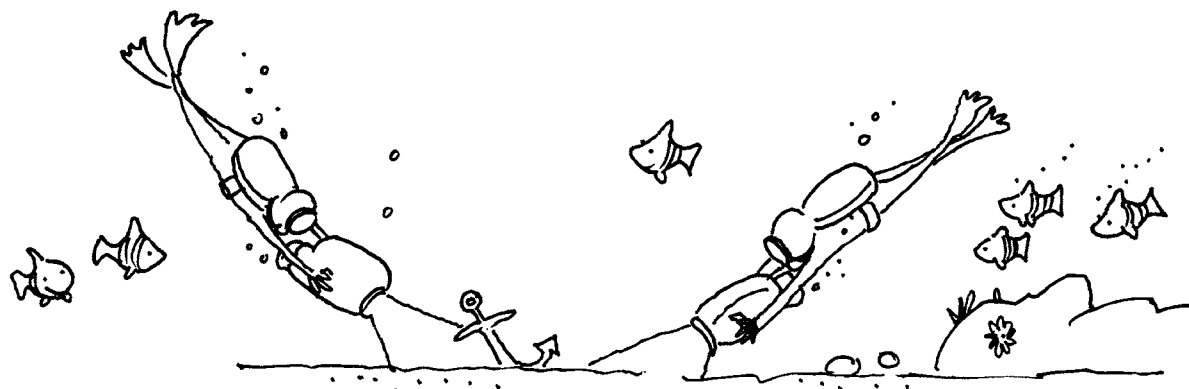
*surfer*

*diver*

*shark*

*prow*

*oyster*



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

BLM 5

Joining techniques - joining to modified f

This is a great game to play as a group of 4 or more, or as a whole class.



Choose 12 words from the table below. Copy them onto your bingo board, then cut out the board. The bingo caller should cut out the entire list of words and place them in a hat. When one of your words is called out, cover it with a counter. The winner is the first person to cover their entire card and call out "Bingo!".

gift	roof	before	life	half
chief	safety	affect	chafe	softly
leaf	enforce	sniffle	lift	reef
gulf	offer	crafty	nifty	surf
often	elf	strife	raft	scarf



Bingo Board

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____



Using a coloured pencil, circle all the letters that don't join to the next letter in this passage of writing.

Beach activities can be so much fun — running, jumping, peering into rock pools and making sandcastles can keep kids amused for hours!

To reveal the hidden message, write all the letters that you traced over in the boxes below. Keep them in the same order they were in in the passage.



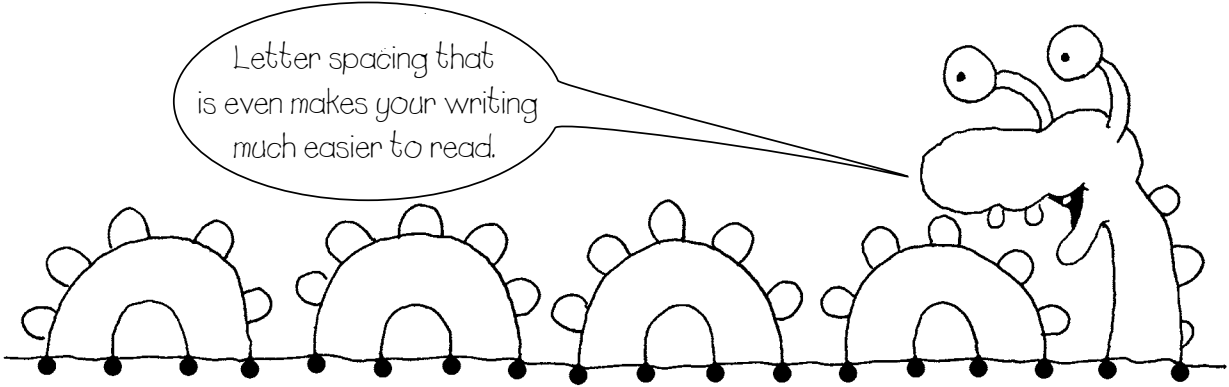
oogie  oarding,  wimming and  
 um  ing the waves are  o  ular  
 thing  to do at the  ea  ide.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

BLM 7

Practising cursive script - letter spacing

Letter spacing that is even makes your writing much easier to read.



Place dots at the base of the letters in the words below. You will notice that the dots under some words are evenly spaced, while the dots under other words are not. Put a tick under the words with even letter spacing and a cross under words with uneven letter spacing. The words on the first line have been done for you.

*kayaking*                      *paragliding*



*snorkelling*                      *kayaking*

*surfing*                      *sailing*                      *canoeing*

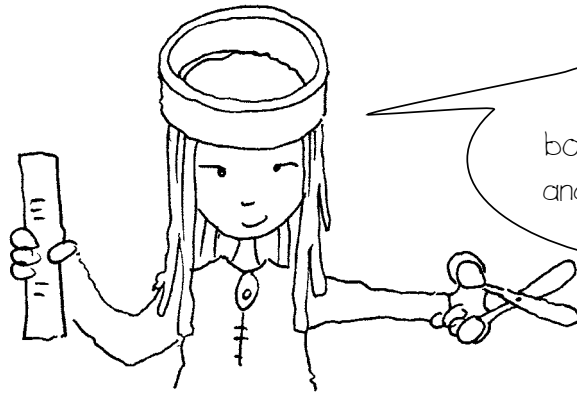
*fishing*                      *paddling*                      *floating*

*outrigging*                      *paragliding*



How many evenly spaced words did you find?

\_\_\_\_\_



Cut out these bookmarks, trace the text and fill in the missing details. Then decorate them.

My favourite book about sharks is

\_\_\_\_\_


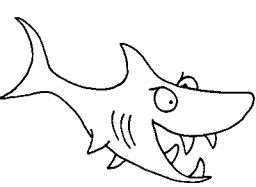
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

by

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

My favourite book about whales is

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

by

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



My favourite book about dolphins is

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

by

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



My favourite book about surfing is

\_\_\_\_\_


\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

by

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_





Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

BLM 9

Practising cursive script



Write an acrostic\* about surfing by starting each sentence with the capital letter that is already there. Use your best cursive writing.

S

U

R

F

I

N

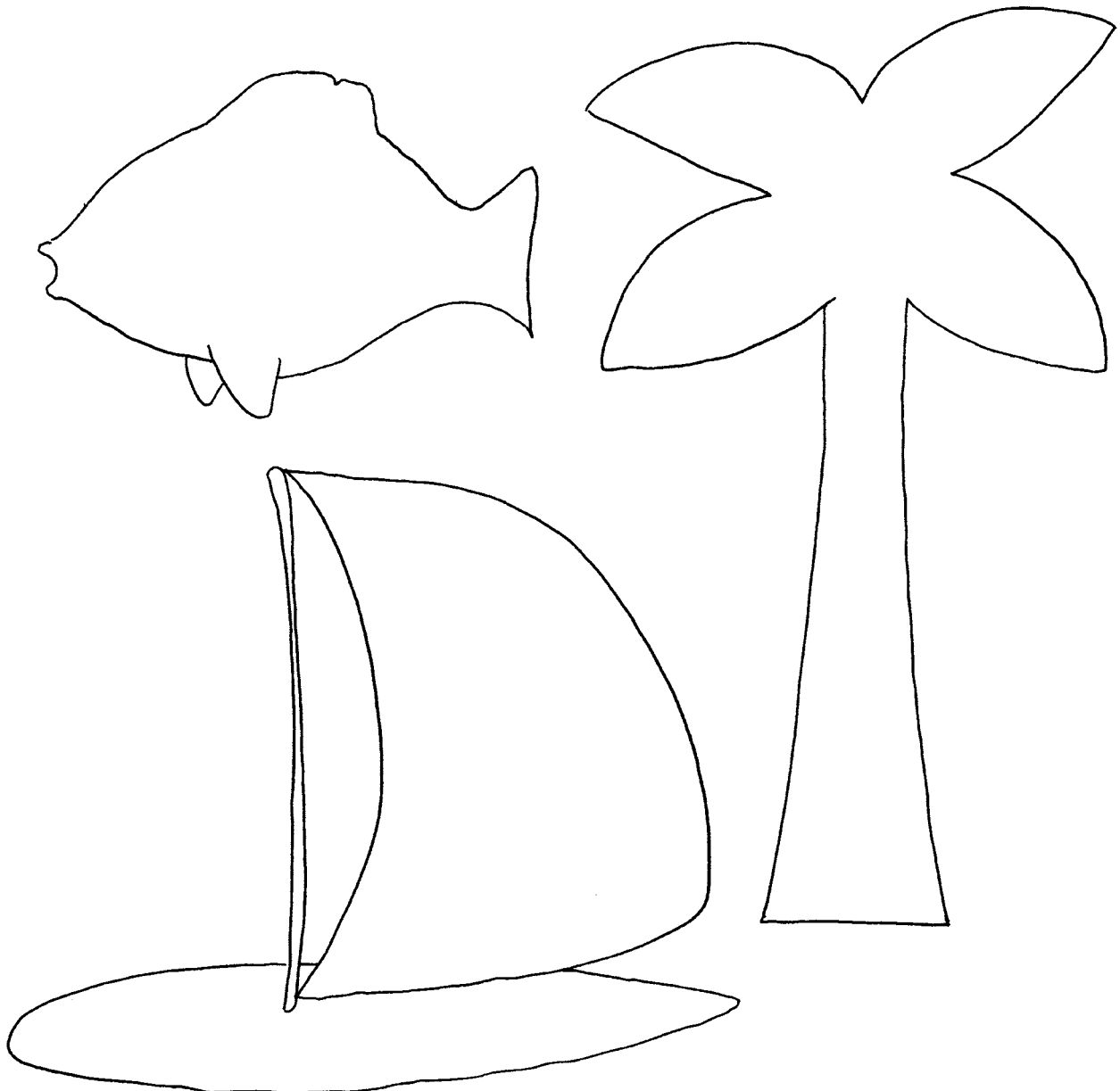
G

\*Acrostic: is a poem or other form of writing in which the first letter, syllable or word of each line, paragraph or other recurring feature in the text spells out a word or a message.

Look at the example below. The shape of the eel makes a frame.  
Information about eels has been written inside it.



Write about each object, using its shape as a frame for your writing.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

BLM 11

Practising cursive script

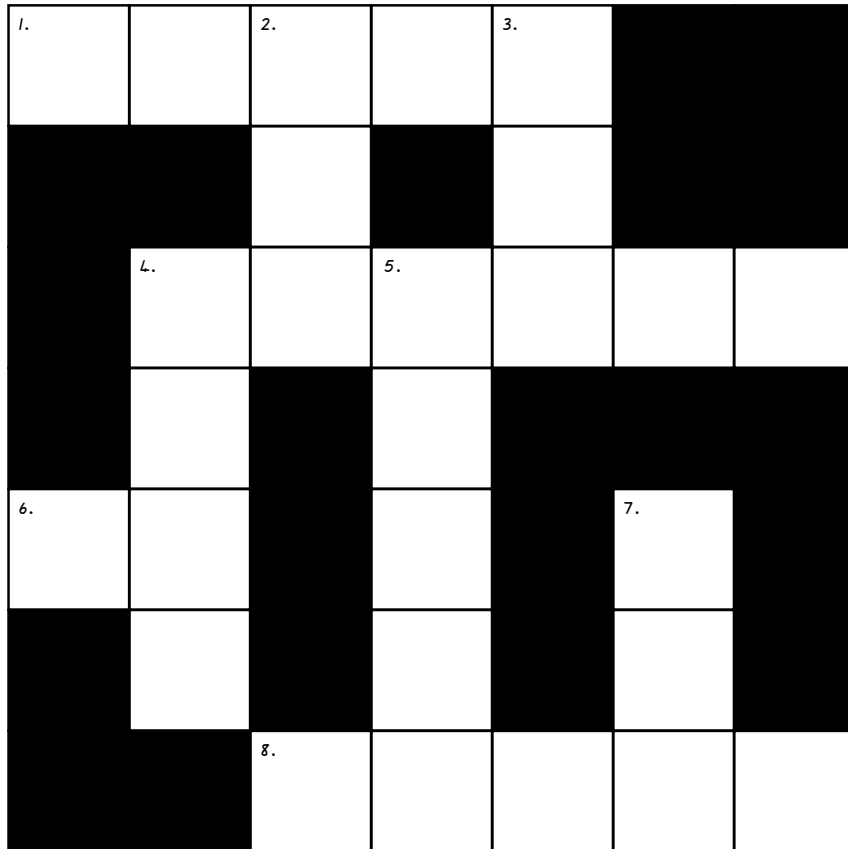
Fill up this alphabet grid with names. Ask each of your classmates to write his or her first name in the correct box. Do not forget to include your own.



		A	B
C	D	E	F
G	H	I	J
K	L	M	N
O	P	Q	R
S	T	U	V
W	X	Y	Z

Practising cursive script

Create your own crossword. First choose words that fit this crossword grid. Write them in lightly, in pencil. Create a short clue to each word, and write the clues neatly in cursive. Rub out the pencilled words in the grid. Give your crossword to a classmate to solve.



**CLUES**  
*Across*

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. \_\_\_\_\_
- 8. \_\_\_\_\_

*Down*

- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. \_\_\_\_\_
- 7. \_\_\_\_\_

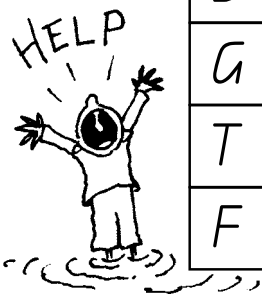
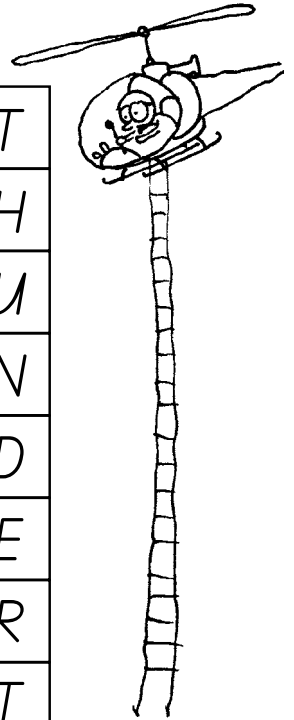
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

BLM 13

Practising cursive script

There are 18 words related to natural disasters hidden in the word search below. Circle each word as you find it and write it underneath in your best cursive. The letters left over make up a secret message.

E	A	R	T	H	Q	U	A	K	E	V	T
B	S	C	O	N	G	R	A	N	T	O	H
L	H	A	I	L	S	T	O	R	M	L	U
I	U	M	L	A	F	L	O	O	D	C	N
Z	T	A	I	O	C	R	L	A	V	A	D
Z	N	G	S	Y	E	O	N	G	E	N	E
A	T	M	C	T	O	R	N	A	D	O	R
R	T	A	S	I	N	G	E	R	U	P	T
D	T	I	H	G	A	L	E	S	R	O	U
G	W	H	A	V	A	L	A	N	C	H	E
T	S	U	N	A	M	I	S	A	F	U	E
F	I	R	E	S	T	O	R	M	L	Y	E



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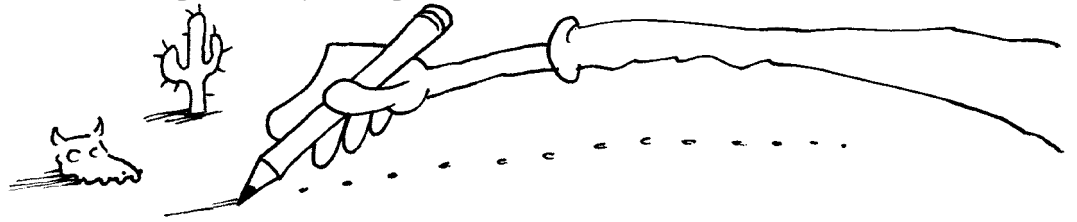
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Answers: ash, avalanche, blizzard, cyclone, earthquake, erupt, firestorm, flood, gale, hailstorm, lava, magma, rescue, thunder, tornado, tsunami, twister, volcano

Printing for labels

Draw a map of a place you would like to explore. It could be a real country in the world, a fantasy place, or a planet in outer space. When you have drawn your map, label the places in it using printing script, then draw your exploring route.

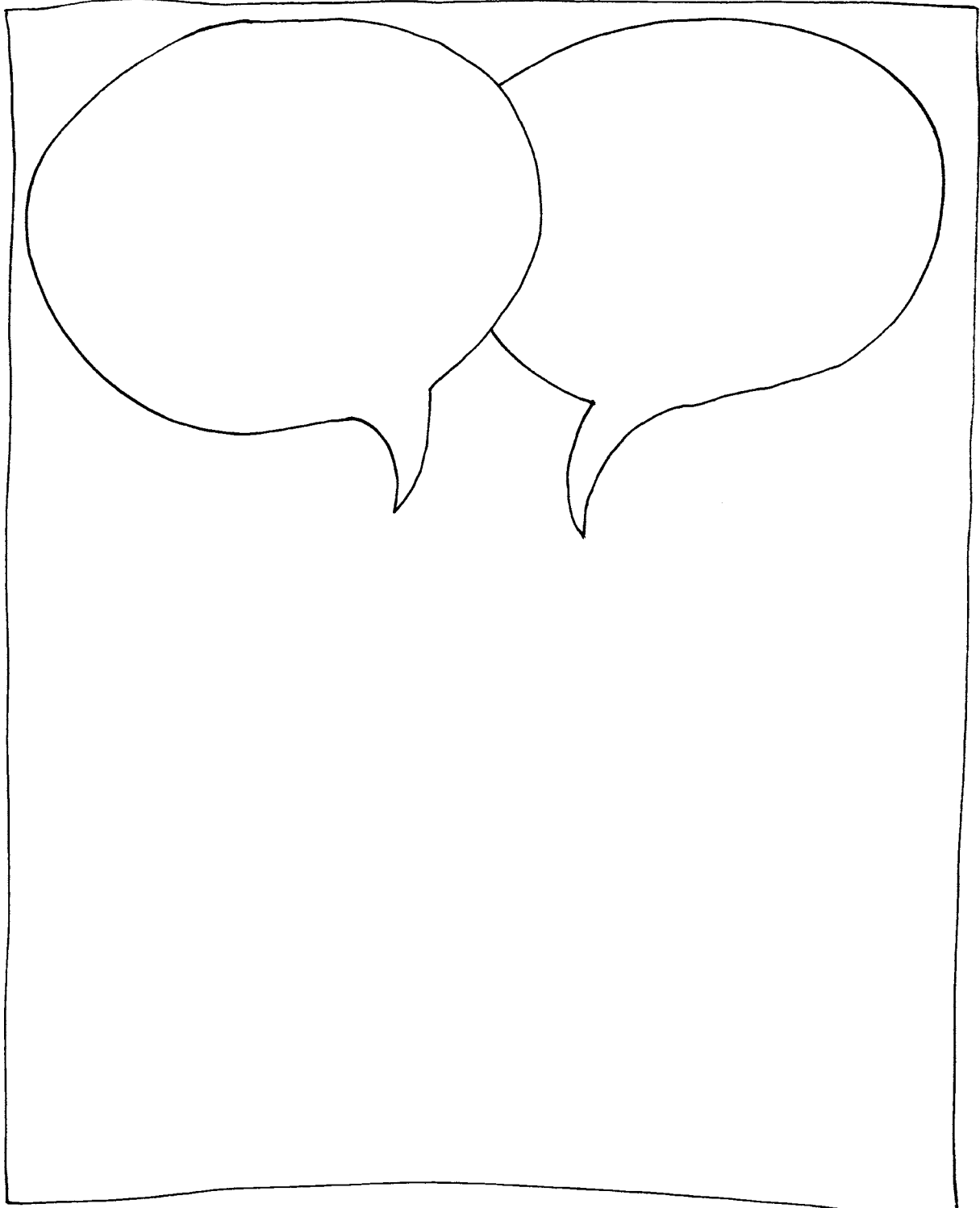
A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the student to draw their map and exploring route.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

BLM 15

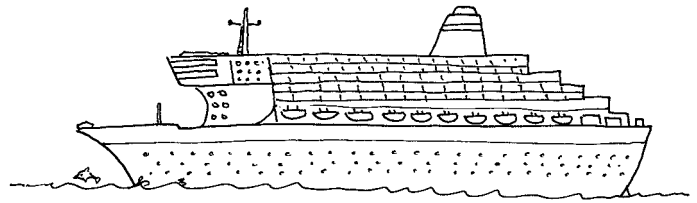
Printing/Capitals

Draw your own cartoon in the frame below.  
Fill in the speech bubbles using printing or  
capital letters.



Capitals

You are a famous chef, known for your expertise in world cuisine. You have just seen a job advertised that offers a new challenge. Apply for the job using the form below.



### Dolphin Cruises

Explore new worlds  
www.dolphincruises.com

POSITION VACANT: MASTER CHEF,  
DOLPHIN CRUISE LINERS

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF BIRTH: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

QUALIFICATIONS: \_\_\_\_\_

REASON FOR APPLYING: \_\_\_\_\_

PREVIOUS JOB EXPERIENCE: \_\_\_\_\_

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE: \_\_\_\_\_

INTERESTS: \_\_\_\_\_



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

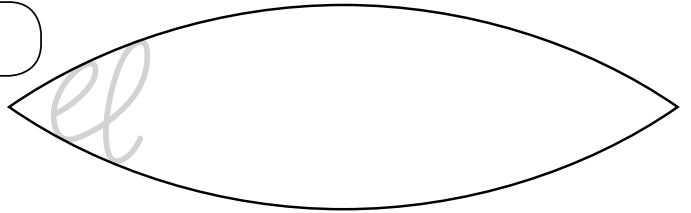
BLM 17

Fluency and legibility

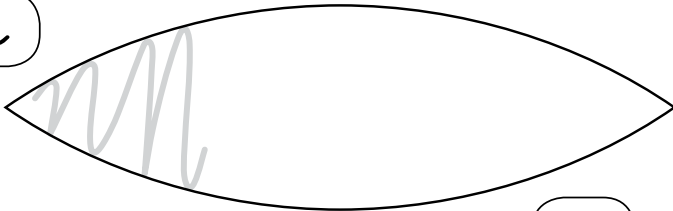


Fill up the surfboards by joining the same letters over and over again! My surfboard looks really cool filled with the letter k!

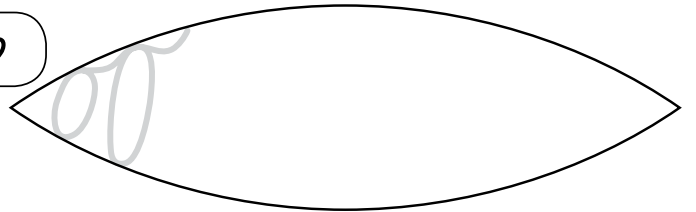
e



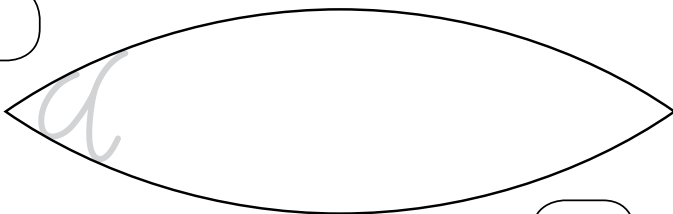
n



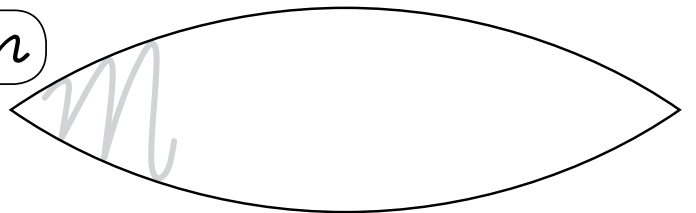
o



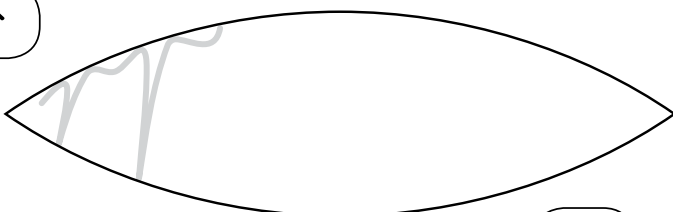
c



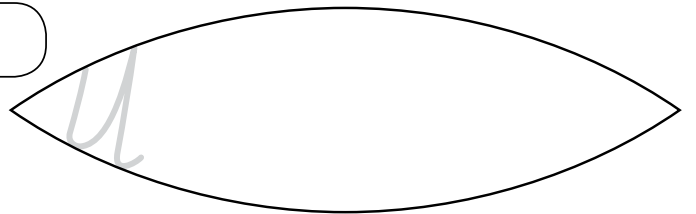
m



r



l



You will need a friend to race and a copy of this sheet each. Start copying the text at the same time, and stop as soon as one of you has finished. Ask an impartial judge to give each of you a mark out of 10 for legibility. Multiply the number of words you copied by your legibility mark. The person with the highest score wins!

Some volcanoes stay dormant for hundreds of years before they erupt again. Other volcanoes, like Stromboli Volcano in Italy, erupt regularly. Stromboli has been erupting about every 20 minutes for more than 2,500 years.



\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Number of words copied: \_\_\_\_\_ Mark for legibility (out of 10): \_\_\_\_\_

Score (number of words x mark for legibility): \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_




Play this game in a group. Each person will need a copy of this sheet. One person names a letter of the alphabet, and then says "Go!". Everyone then has to write down something that begins with that letter in each column. For example, if the person says "B", you could write "Beena, Bilal, Brazil, banana". The first person to have a word in each column wins that round and gets to choose the next letter.



Girl's name	Boy's name	Country	Fruit or Vegetable

When you have finished, assess your handwriting.

Rate your legibility.

Needs work  Force 5  Earth-shaking! 

SELF ASSESSMENT




Fluency and legibility

Try this memory test. Look at the pictures on this sheet for 15 seconds. (Ask a classmate to time you.) Then turn the sheet over and write as many items as you can remember in 15 seconds. Turn the sheet back over, and check how many you remembered. Then assess your handwriting.



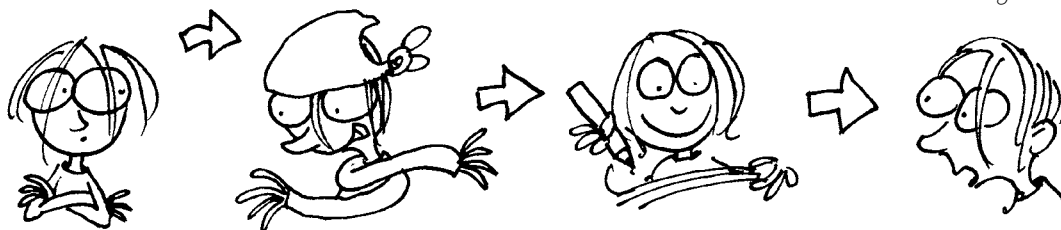
Number of items remembered: \_\_\_\_\_

Rate your legibility

Needs work  Force 5  Earth-shaking! 

SELF ASSESSMENT

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_



Work in a group of four to create a serial story. The first person has 30 seconds to write the beginning of a story in the first section. The next person should read it (without letting the others see it), fold it back so it can't be seen, then add their 30 seconds' worth. Each person should read only what the person just before them wrote. When you have all had your go, read the whole story through together. Now rate your legibility—whose writing holds up well at speed?

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You will need a group for this one. One person reads a passage aloud, fairly quickly. (The passage can be made-up, and should be exactly 100 words long.) The rest take notes, and then use their notes to write out the passage on another piece of paper. Each person then reads their complete version back to the reader, to see how much they got right.



NOTES:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What percentage did you get right? (Number of words right out of 100.) \_\_\_\_\_ %

What note-taking techniques did you use? (For example, using abbreviations, increasing your slope for greater speed.) \_\_\_\_\_

Did any particular letter combinations or joins get really messy? Write them here. Then practise them when you are not under pressure so your hand gets used to doing them automatically. \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

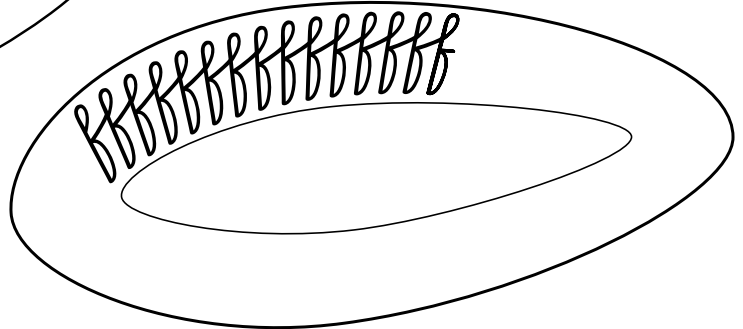
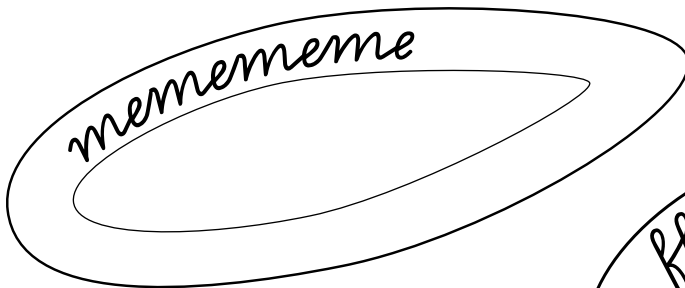
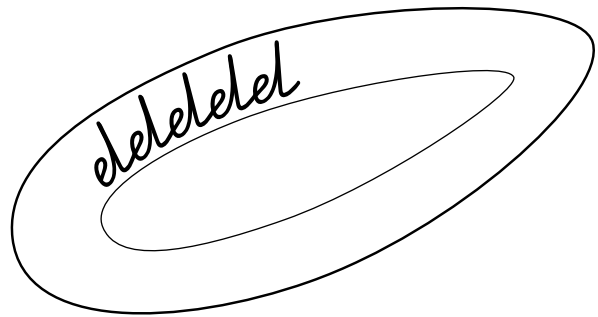
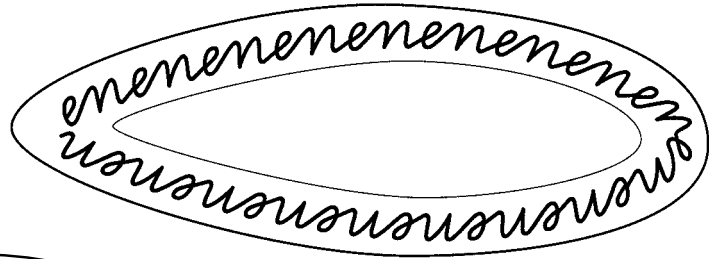


Letter patterns can be used to create groovy borders around charts, stories, poems – even my surfboard!

These letter patterns have been used to make borders.

enemenenenen    kikikikikiki    memememe    elelelelel    fffffff

Complete the borders around the surfboards by following each pattern. You will have to turn the paper around as you go.



Which letter patterns do you like best?

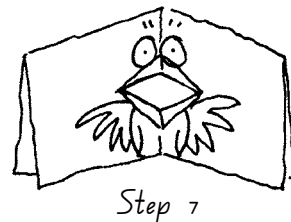
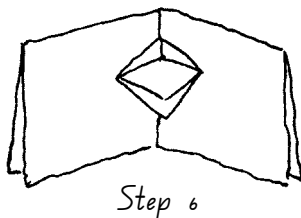
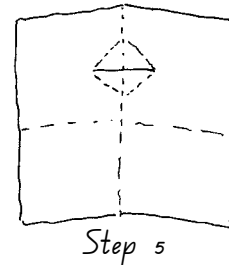
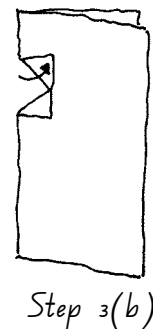
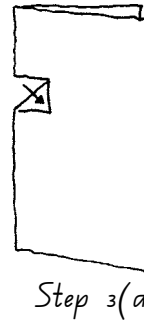
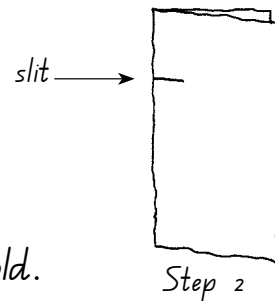
\_\_\_\_\_



Send a friend a talking parrot card!

You will need a square of paper or card with sides about 16cm long.

1. Fold the square in half.
2. Cut a  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cm slit as shown.
3. Fold top and bottom parts of slit back, then unfold.
4. Flip card over and repeat Step 3.
5. Unfold the card completely.
6. Fold card in half in the other direction, and help the "beak" to pop out.
7. Draw the eyes and body of the parrot.
8. Decorate the front of the card.
9. Write a message inside the card, and inside the beak, and send the card to a friend.





Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Make an information cube!

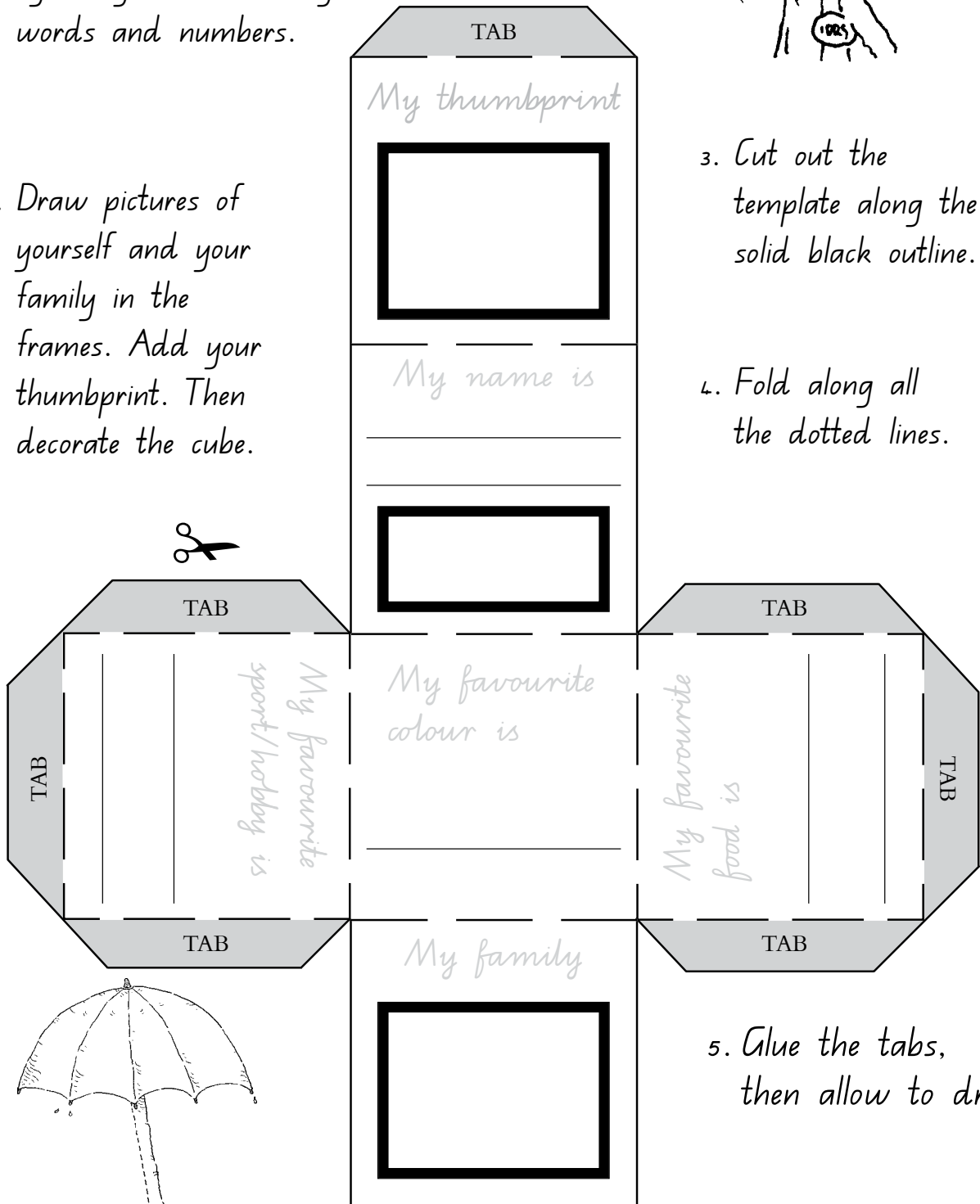


1. Trace over the writing, then complete each sentence by filling in the missing words and numbers.

2. Draw pictures of yourself and your family in the frames. Add your thumbprint. Then decorate the cube.

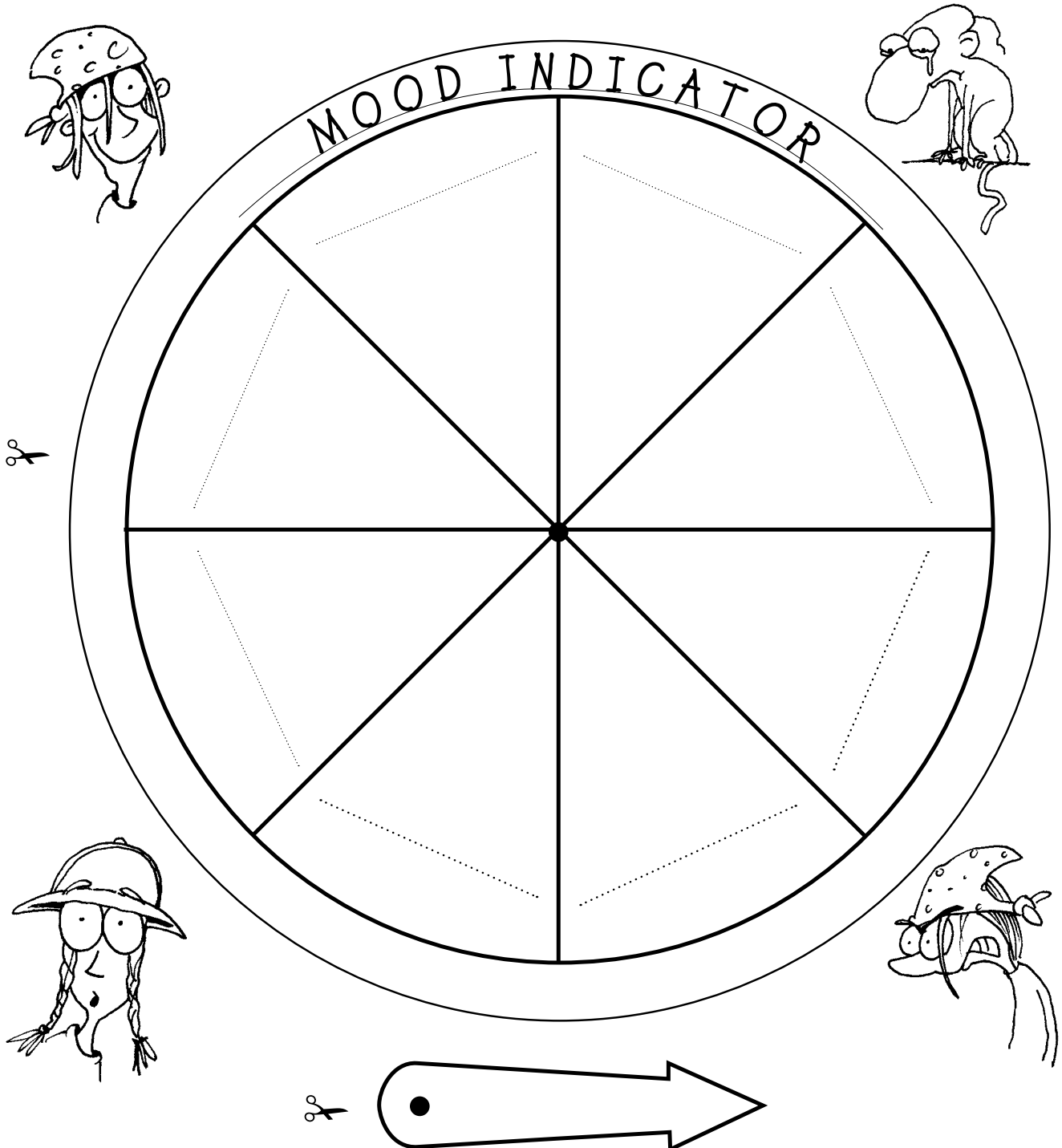
3. Cut out the template along the solid black outline.

4. Fold along all the dotted lines.

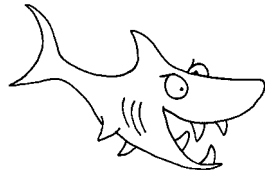


5. Glue the tabs, then allow to dry.

Make a mood indicator for your desk. First fill in the mood readings for the different sections. You could include things like Happy, Sad, Angry, Confused. Use your neatest handwriting. Glue this sheet to a thin card, then cut out the dial and the indicator arrow. Attach the arrow to the indicator with a split pin.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_



Make your own name stand for your desk.

First practice writing your first and last names on the line below.

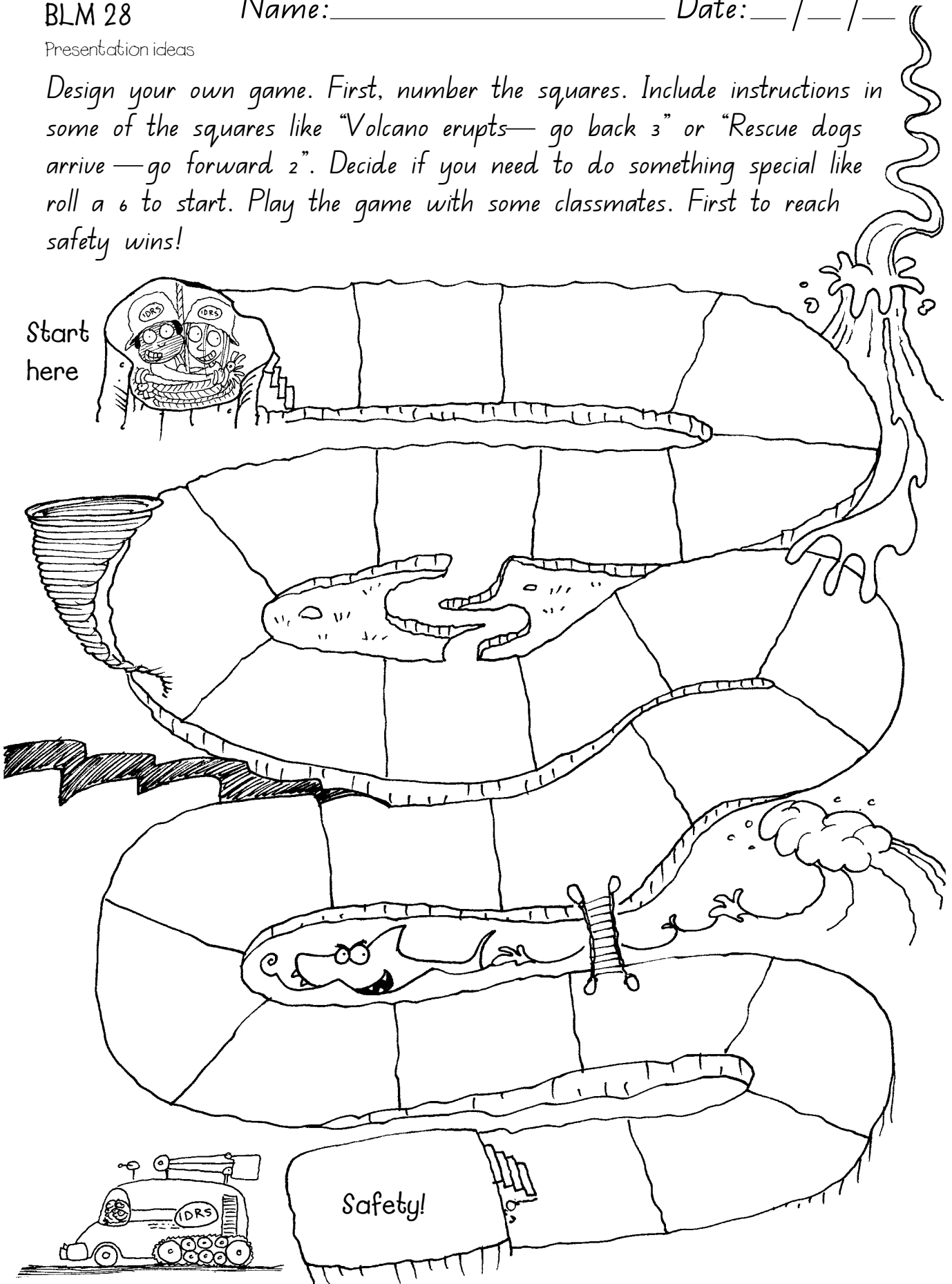
1. Cut out the name stand template by cutting along the solid black outline.
2. Write your first and last names on both sets of lines.  
(Turn the card around when writing your name on the top line, or your name will be upside down!)
3. Decorate the border.
4. Fold along the dotted lines.
5. Put glue along the tab.
6. Secure the tab to the opposite side.



Presentation ideas

Design your own game. First, number the squares. Include instructions in some of the squares like "Volcano erupts— go back 3" or "Rescue dogs arrive —go forward 2". Decide if you need to do something special like roll a 6 to start. Play the game with some classmates. First to reach safety wins!

Start here

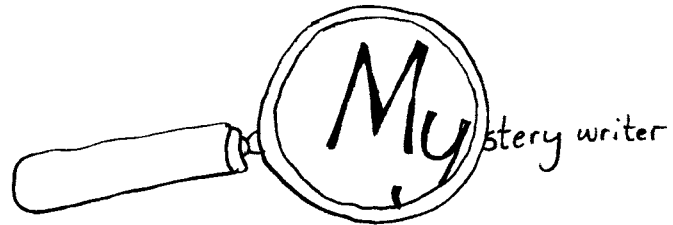


Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

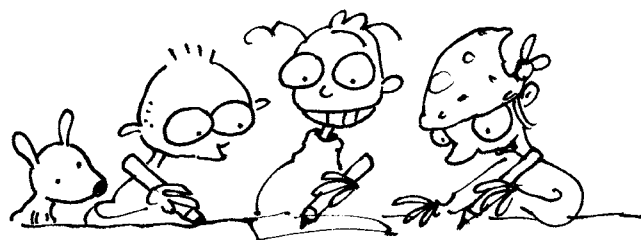
BLM 29

Developing a personal style

You will need a group for this activity. One person (the Handwriting Detective) should leave the room. One of the others writes "I am the Mystery Writer" in the space. Everyone (including the Mystery Writer) should then write their name in the first column, and write "Am I the mystery writer?" in the second column. Call the Handwriting Detective back in and challenge them to name the Mystery Writer by comparing the handwriting samples.

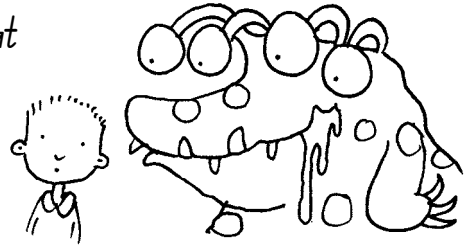


Name	Writing sample
Mystery writer	



Developing a personal style

Imagine you have just finished your first term at the Mr Hyde School for Hideous Underwater Monsters. Fill in your report card. Give each teacher different handwriting and a unique signature.



Subject	Grade	Teacher's Comments	Signature
Howling	A+	A young monster of extraordinary talent!	Gary Gremlin
Drooling			
Stomping			
Making scary faces			
Hiding under sunken ships			
Leaping out from behind reefs			

Are there any handwriting elements in this report card that you would like to use in your own handwriting or signature? Write them here. Test them out to make sure they do not slow you down.

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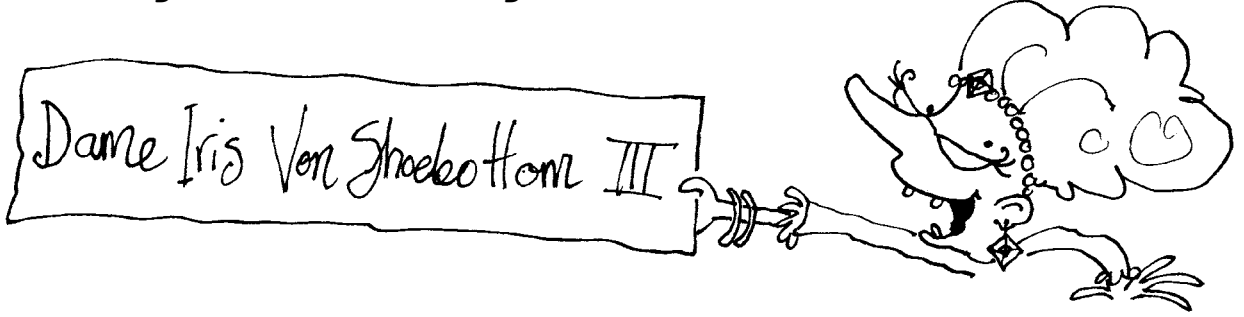
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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Use this page to collect signatures of adults you know. Which are your favourite signatures? What do you like about them?



Person's name

Signature

Features I like

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Try mixing some of the features you like into your own signature. Test them out on the lines below. Remember that a signature should be easy to write and easy to reproduce.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

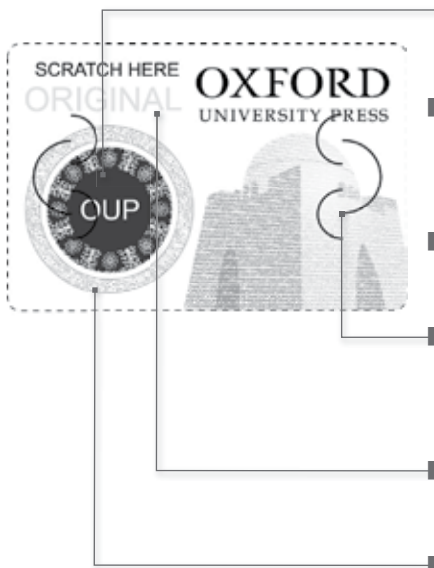
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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