

Sharing Best Practice Port Fairy 27th April 2024



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https://riseliteracy.com.au/sbp-handwriting/

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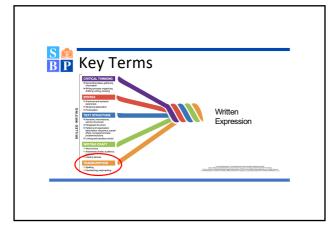
Session 2: Handwriting Instruction – What does the evidence say?



BP Objectives

- Handwriting research and links to written expression
- Handwriting instruction research
 Limitations on specific method, dosage, sequence, prompts, line type, font choice, commercial programs
- What can we do in the classroom?

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BP Handwriting Research

It is a minefield - there is a lot of research on handwriting What we can take away from the body of research is:

- Handwriting IS important
- Handwriting aids reading, writing & spelling (in fact, reading improves if you can write the words)
- \bullet Teachers MUST explicitly teach handwriting from the start of school
 - Min 20 minutes, twice a week
 - Optimal is daily 10-15 minutes



BP Handwriting Instruction Research

Current research asserts that a cognitive approach is the most effective instructional approach

- Explicit instruction on the formation of the letters i.e. teacher models, students
- Lots of practice and ideally then in the context of words

The exact specifics, i.e., a specific method, dosage, sequence, line type, and font choice, are lacking.

There are lots of commercial programs which be been developed with a sound theoretical framework BUT limited evidence of their efficacy

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BP What can we do in the classroom?

Employing a cognitive load lens and other practical frameworks can effectively guide our practice and enhance our instructional strategies.

Prompts

• Abstract (head, body, tail using cat/seahorse analogies; tall man, short man, over the hill, under the hill, etc) or direct ('this letter sits here on the line')

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\mathbf{BP} What can we do in the classroom?

Line types

- The currently accepted use is 24mm dotted thirds. However, there are many differences in how they are used.
- Can we develop a system that starts with a strong scaffold but allows teachers to gradually remove the scaffold as students' writing develops?



\mathbf{BP} What can we do in the classroom?

Sequence

- Many handwriting programs (and common OT recommendations) are to group letters in their formation patterns. The background stems from early research on prewriting patterns.
- \bullet However, it doesn't take into account more recent research on the importance of linking letter formations with orthographic patterns.

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BP What can we do in the classroom?

Let's look at some practical examples

• Line types

- Prompts
 Word-writing practice
- Graded dictations

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