

CAN YOU READ MY WRITING?

Printing is a way for us to record and share our thoughts and ideas. Sometimes printing is hard to read. If you are working on making printing easier to read, focus on one thing from the list below that, if corrected, would make it easier to read.

If printing is messy but you can read it, its OK! Don't aim for perfection.

When letters are not the right shape, teaching and practicing letter formation can help. If this is the main problem, see our *Learning to Print* Tip Sheet.

Things to try when...

There is too much or not enough space between letters and words

- Give reminders to leave a “finger space”. You can use a finger, a Popsicle stick with a picture of a “Space Man” attached or another small object.
- Teach kids to leave a “spaghetti” space between letters and a “meatball” space between words.

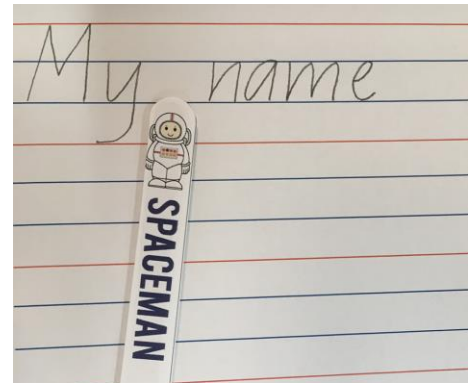


Image source: teachstarter.com

Letters do not sit on the lines

- Make the baseline easier to see by tracing it with a highlighter. Use your computer and printer to make your own lined paper with a heavy, dark baseline.
- Let the child feel the baseline when they touch it with their pencil by using raised line paper, a Wikki Stix or a dried bead of white glue.
- The “fishing” or “digger” letters (g, j, p, q, y) are tricky because they go below the baseline. Some kids need extra practice or a visual model to place these letters correctly. Try “grass, sky, dirt” paper.

Letters are the wrong size

- Review the three groups of letters; tall/giraffe/sky (b, d, f, h, k, l, t, and upper case), small/ladybug/grass (a, c, e, i, m, n, o, r, s, u, v, w, x, z) and fishing/digger/monkey/dirt (g, j, p, q, y). Teach the child how interlined paper helps to get the right size.
- Try different line styles and spacing between lines on the page.
- When letters are large, printing on alternate lines can make a difference. Put marks in the margin to show which lines to use and which ones to skip.

There is poor organization on the page

- Teach the child how to use the margin. Teach them how to decide when to drop to the next line and when to hyphenate a word.
- Put the name, date and title in the same place on the page every time.
- Graph paper can help to organize math work.

Should my child print or type?

- If a child's handwriting is hard to read, or if printing is painful or fatiguing for them, using technology (laptop or tablet) might be helpful.
- Start with learning basic typing skills and operation of the device.
- When basic skills are in place, using technology for writing can free up a child's thinking for the story they are writing or the information they are sharing.
- All students use technology in the classroom. Some students will benefit from earlier and more frequent use, while some students will benefit from specialized equipment and software. School resource teachers often know about the available options.

These are general suggestions that may or may not be appropriate for your child's age and stage.

If you have questions and are waiting for Occupational Therapy service, consider booking a Consultation Clinic appointment.