

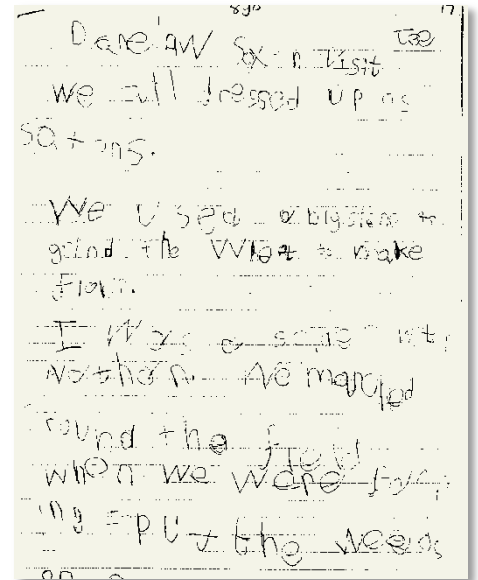
Handwriting

Quick reference
SHEET #26

Handwriting difficulties

There are a number of reasons why a learner cannot write e.g.

1. These can be related to difficulties making the shapes on the page - motor planning
2. With flow and spacing - as a consequence of visual processing difficulties
3. Because of pain in writing from joints or ligaments e.g. joint hypermobility syndrome / arthritis
4. Restriction or difficulty with movement e.g. cerebral palsy
5. Lack of training / opportunity



Strategies and considerations

1. **Consider why you are asking someone to handwrite** - Is this an essential part of the task or just the way it has always been done?
2. If the learner is younger and they want/need to improve handwriting, provide sufficient practise gaining skills relating to shape and flow before attempting content as well.¹
3. **Do not penalise poor handwriting** - Instead seek out alternative forms of recording such as encouraging the learning of keyboard skills to redress handwriting difficulties. Also consider 'speech-to-text' software for learners who have pain in their joints. Asking them to do *more* handwriting is never likely to be the answer!
4. **Keep worksheet format simple and keep materials needed to hand.**
5. **Consider using alternative ink colours rather than red when marking work** e.g. green, and be specific about how improvements can be made, using positive language.
6. **Some school and homework tasks should be marked for content rather than presentation and spelling accuracy**, to avoid constant negative feedback.
7. **When there are errors it is more useful for the learner to review the errors** rather than rewriting the whole piece.
8. **Reduce the volume of note taking** by providing notes beforehand, so they can be annotated or added to.
9. **Using a scribe for note taking needs practise**, and for some learners this can create an additional cognitive load.
10. **Place notes on the intranet** so learners can access them.

My name is

My name is

My name is

¹ National Handwriting Association