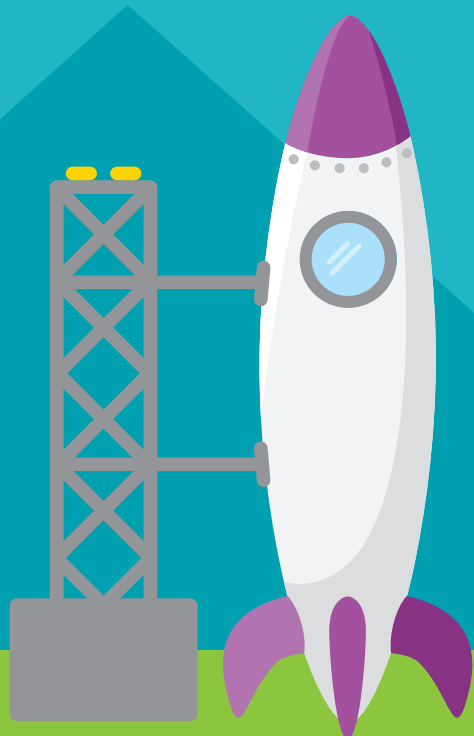


# Really Great Handwriting



for Countdown



A Bridge Between Reading and  
Spelling for Countdown Students

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# Countdown Scope and Sequence

## Introduction

Really Great Reading is excited to present a sample of our brand new Really Great Handwriting program, launching for Back to School 2023. This program is designed to work in conjunction with Countdown's decoding and encoding instruction to facilitate more efficient and effective learning of letter sounds and application of phonics concepts. Really Great Handwriting includes two scope and sequence options. The first follows Countdown's scope and sequence and teaches letter formation according to the Countdown letter clusters. When handwriting is integrated with decoding and encoding instruction, it increases student mastery and supports orthographic mapping. This is why RGH is aligned with Countdown's scope and sequence. Embedding handwriting into phonics instruction provides a powerful multi-sensory opportunity for students that is invaluable.

The additional scope and sequence is organized based on each letter's formation using vocabulary from our verbal pathways. When letters are grouped by formation and not by a phonics sequence, students are able to learn, reinforce, and master similar strokes that are used to form letters. This can help students avoid reversals and practice orienting their letters correctly. Even though RGH is not aligned with this scope and sequence, it still provides important information for educators to use to support students who are struggling to master certain letters. Students who already know how to form a lowercase **o** can use this knowledge to form lowercase **a**, **c**, **d**, **g**, and **q**. Both of these scope and sequence options can be found on the following pages.



## Really Great Handwriting Countdown

Unit	Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3	Lesson 4	Lesson 5
1	Countdown Introduction to Countdown Describing & Comparing	Countdown Introduction to Category Hear That Rhyme	Countdown Eat vs Wear Sort Left to Right & One to One First/Next/Last Before/After	Countdown Before/After Whales/Part Hear That Rhyme	Countdown Beginning/Middle/End Above/Below First/Next/Last
	Handwriting Foundational Handwriting 3-Ps: Pencil	Handwriting Foundational Handwriting 3-Ps: Pencil Introduction to Handwriting Strokes	Handwriting Foundational Handwriting 3-Ps: Paper	Handwriting Foundational Handwriting 3-Ps: Paper & Pencil Practicing Handwriting Strokes Erasing Activity*	Handwriting Foundational Handwriting 3-Ps: Posture Capital Letters in Names Capital A
2	Countdown Peel That Sound Sound Stories - /m/ Mystery Bag	Countdown Peel and Sort Sound Stories - /s/ Which Words Rhyme?	Countdown Peel That Sound Sound Stories - /l/ Mystery Bag	Countdown Peel and Sort Sound Stories - /n/ Which Words Rhyme?	Countdown Peel and Say Sound Stories - /r/ Mystery Bag
	Handwriting Foundational Handwriting Review 3-Ps Command Center: Sound Story /m/ Capital M	Handwriting Review 3-Ps: Paper, Pencil Posture Capital S	Handwriting Foundational Handwriting Review 3-Ps Capital L Space Walk*	Handwriting Review 3-Ps: Paper, Pencil, Posture Capital N	Handwriting Review 3-Ps Capital F Capital E Orbital Pathways*
3	Countdown Peel That Sound Sound Stories - /t/ What's That Word?	Countdown Peel and Sort Sound Stories - /v/ Creating Rhymes	Countdown Peel That Sound Sound Stories - /z/ What's That Word?	Countdown Peel and Match Sound Stories - /p/ Creating Rhymes	Countdown This or That? Sound Stories - /g/ What's That Word?
	Handwriting Foundational Handwriting Review 3-Ps Command Center: Sound Story /t/ Capital R	Handwriting Capital V	Handwriting Foundational Handwriting Review 3-Ps Capital Z Space Walk	Handwriting Capital P	Handwriting Review 3-Ps Capital G & O Orbital Pathways
4	Countdown Peel That Sound Sound Stories - /d/ Mystery Bag	Countdown Peel and Say Sound Stories - /h/ Mystery Bag	Countdown This or That? Sound Stories - /k/ What's That Word?	Countdown Peel and Sort Sound Stories - /b/ Mystery Bag	Countdown Peel and Match Sound Stories - /w/ Mystery Bag
	Handwriting Foundational Handwriting Review 3-Ps Command Center: Sound Story /d/ Capital D	Handwriting Capital T & I	Handwriting Foundational Handwriting Review 3-Ps Capital K & C Space Walk*	Handwriting Capital B	Handwriting Review 3-Ps Capital W Orbital Pathways*

\*Optional activity

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## REALLY GREAT HANDWRITING

## Alternative Countdown Scope and Sequence

Planet O Letters	Star Line Letters	Moon Line Letters	Zoom Letters
a	b	i	v
c	f	j	w
d	h	m	x
e	k	n	y
g	l	p	z
o	t	r	k
qu		u	
s			
Planet O Letters	Star Line Letters	Landed Letters	Zoom Letters
C	E	B	A
G	F	D	V
O	I	H	W
Qu	J	K	X
S	T	L	Y
		M	Z
		N	
		P	
		R	
		U	

**Planet O Letters:** Letters that are formed beginning with the Planet O movement.

**Star Line Letters:** Letters that cross on the Star Line.

**Moon Line Letters:** Letters that begin on the Moon Line.

**Zoom Letters:** Letters that use the Zoom movement at the beginning (or within) the letter formation.

**Landed Letters:** Letters that begin with the Land the rocket on the Earth Line movement.

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# Really Great Handwriting Countdown

*\*There are a variety of additional Foundational Skills activities housed in the Handwriting section of Countdown Online's Supply Room. Use these as needed before or during the first weeks of handwriting instruction to strengthen students' fine motor skills, pencil control, and knowledge of the handwriting strokes.*

Unit		Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3	Lesson 4	Lesson 5
1	Countdown	Introduction to Countdown Describing & Comparing	Introduction to Category Hear That Rhyme	Eat vs Wear Sort Left to Right & One to One First/Next/Last Before/After	Before/After Whole/Part Hear That Rhyme	Beginning/Middle/End Above/Below First/Next/Last
	Handwriting	Foundational Handwriting 3-Ps: Pencil Fine Motor Skills*	Foundational Handwriting 3-Ps: Pencil Introduction to Handwriting Strokes	Foundational Handwriting 3-Ps: Paper Fine Motor Skills*	Foundational Handwriting 3-Ps: Paper & Pencil Practicing Handwriting Strokes Erasing Activity*	Foundational Handwriting 3-Ps: Posture Capital Letters in Names Capital <b>A</b>
2	Countdown	Peel That Sound Sound Stories - /m/ Mystery Bag	Peel and Sort Sound Stories - /s/ Which Words Rhyme?	Peel That Sound Sound Stories - /l/ Mystery Bag	Peel and Sort Sound Stories - /n/ Which Words Rhyme?	Peel and Say Sound Stories - /f/ Mystery Bag
	Handwriting	Foundational Handwriting Review 3-Ps Command Center: Sound Story /m/* Capital <b>M</b>	Review 3-Ps: Paper, Pencil Posture Capital <b>S</b>	Foundational Handwriting Review 3-Ps Capital <b>L</b> Space Walk*	Review 3-Ps: Paper, Pencil, Posture Capital <b>N</b>	Review 3-Ps Capital <b>F</b> Capital <b>E</b> Orbital Pathways*
3	Countdown	Peel That Sound Sound Stories - /r/ What's That Word?	Peel and Sort Sound Stories - /v/ Creating Rhymes	Peel That Sound Sound Stories - /z/ What's That Word?	Peel and Match Sound Stories - /p/ Creating Rhymes	This or That? Sound Stories - /g/ What's That Word?
	Handwriting	Foundational Handwriting Review 3-Ps Command Center*: Sound Story /r/ Capital <b>R</b>	Capital <b>V</b>	Foundational Handwriting Review 3-Ps Capital <b>Z</b> Space Walk	Capital <b>P</b>	Review 3-Ps Capital <b>G &amp; O</b> Orbital Pathways
4	Countdown	Peel That Sound Sound Stories - /d/ Mystery Bag	Peel and Say Sound Stories - /t/ Mystery Bag	This or That? Sound Stories - /k/ What's That Word?	Peel and Sort Sound Stories - /b/ Mystery Bag	Peel and Match Sound Stories - /w/ Mystery Bag
	Handwriting	Foundational Handwriting Review 3-Ps Command Center*: Sound Story /d/ Capital <b>D</b>	Capital <b>T &amp; I</b>	Foundational Handwriting Review 3-Ps Capital <b>K &amp; C</b> Space Walk*	Capital <b>B</b>	Review 3-Ps Capital <b>W</b> Orbital Pathways*

\*Optional activity

Unit		Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3	Lesson 4	Lesson 5
5	Countdown	Peel That Sound Sound Stories - /h/ What's That Word?	Peel and Say Sound Stories - /kw/ Mystery Bag	Peel and Sort Sound Stories - /j/ What's That Word?	This or That? Sound Stories - /y/ Mystery Bag	Peel and Match Sound Stories - /ks/ What's That Word?
	Handwriting	Foundational Handwriting Review 3-Ps Command Center*: Sound Story /h/ Capital <b>H</b>	Capital <b>Q</b> <b>u</b>	Foundational Handwriting Review 3-Ps Orbital Pathways Capital <b>J</b> Space Walk*	Capital <b>Y</b>	Capital <b>X &amp; U</b> Orbital Pathways*

## Lowercase Letter Instruction

6	Countdown	Letter-Sound Intro Name That Sound Peel and Say	Peel and Sort This Letter or That? Stretch Those Sounds	Peel and Match This Letter or That? Stretch Those Sounds	Letters Make Words Find That Letter Stretch Those Sounds	Connect the Letter Touch and Say Mystery Bag
	Handwriting	New Letters: <b>m</b> and <b>t</b>	New Letters: <b>p</b> and <b>a</b>	Review New Letters: <b>m, t, p, a</b>	Writing Words: <b>m, t, p, a</b>	Dictation: <b>m, t, p, a</b>

7	Countdown	Stretch Those Sounds Name That Sound Which Letter?	This or That? This Letter or That Letter? Guess My Word	What's That Word? This Letter or That? Find That Letter	Peel and Sort Connect the Letter Which Letter?	Stretch Those Sounds Touch & Say Unscramble This
	Handwriting	New Letters: <b>s</b> and <b>h</b>	New Letters: <b>i</b> and <b>c</b>	Review New Letters: <b>s, h, i, c</b>	Writing Words: <b>s, h, i, c</b>	Dictation: <b>s, h, i, c</b>

8	Countdown	Peel and Say Name That Sound Look, Think, Say: Pop Up; 3-Up ( <b>the, in, my</b> )	Stretch Those Sounds This Letter or That? Guess My Word	Where's That Heart Word? ( <b>the, in, my</b> ) This Letter or That? Which Letter?	Stretch Those Sounds Find That Letter Unscramble This	Connect the Letter Pop-Up, 3-Up ( <b>the, in, my</b> ) Touch & Say
	Handwriting	New Letters: <b>d</b> and <b>f</b>	New Letters: <b>r</b> and <b>o</b>	Review New Letters: <b>d, f, r, o</b>	Writing Words: <b>d, f, r, o</b>	Dictation: <b>d, f, r, o</b>

9	Countdown	This Letter or That? Look, Think, Say; Pop Up; 3-Up ( <b>a, is, for</b> ) Which Letter?	Stretch Those Sounds Find That Letter Unscramble This	Peel and Match Where's That Heart Word? ( <b>a, is, for</b> ) Guess My Word	Count the Sounds Connect the Letter Build a Word	This Letter or That Pop Up; 3-Up ( <b>a, is, for</b> ) Touch & Say
	Handwriting	Review Letters: <b>m, t, p, a</b> <b>s, h, i, c</b> <b>d, f, r, o</b>	Review Letters: <b>m, t, p, a</b> <b>s, h, i, c</b> <b>d, f, r, o</b>	Review Letters: <b>m, t, p, a</b> <b>s, h, i, c</b> <b>d, f, r, o</b>	Writing Words: <b>m, t, p, a</b> <b>s, h, i, c</b> <b>d, f, r, o</b>	Dictation: <b>m, t, p, a</b> <b>s, h, i, c</b> <b>d, f, r, o</b>

Unit		Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3	Lesson 4	Lesson 5
10	Countdown	This or That? Name That Sound Look, Think, Say; Pop Up; 3-Up <b>(I, am, here)</b>	Touch & Say This Letter or That? Build a Word	Connect the Letter This Letter or That? Where's That Heart Word? <b>(I, am, here)</b>	Find That Letter Stretch Those Sounds Unscramble This	Count the Sounds Pop Up, 3-Up <b>(I, am, here)</b> Phrase Reading
	Handwriting	New Letters: <b>g and n</b>	New Letters: <b>I and u</b>	Review New Letters: <b>g, n, I, u</b>	Writing Words: <b>g, n, I, u</b>	Dictation: <b>g, n, I, u</b>
11	Countdown	Peel and Sort Name That Sound Look, Think, Say; Pop Up; 3-Up <b>(and, at, go)</b>	Guess My Word This Letter or That? Which Letter?	Stretch Those Sounds This Letter or That? Where's That Heart Word? <b>(and, at, go)</b>	Find That Letter Touch & Say Build a Word	Count the Sounds Pop Up, 3-Up <b>(and, at, go)</b> Phrase Reading
	Handwriting	New Letters: <b>b and k</b>	New Letters: <b>v and e</b>	Review New Letters: <b>b, k, v, e</b>	Writing Words: <b>b, k, v, e</b>	Dictation: <b>b, k, v, e</b>
12	Countdown	This Letter or That? Look, Think, Say; Pop Up; 3-Up <b>(it, like, be)</b> Touch & Say	Stretch Those Sounds Find That Letter Unscramble This	Mystery Bag: Where's That Heart Word? <b>(it, like, be)</b> Guess My Word	Count the Sounds Connect the Letter Build a Word	This Letter or That Pop Up; 3-Up <b>(it, like, be)</b> Phrase Reading
	Handwriting	Review Letters: <b>m, t, p, a</b> <b>s, h, i, c</b> <b>d, f, r, o</b> <b>g, l, n, u</b> <b>b, k, v, e</b>	Review Letters: <b>m, t, p, a</b> <b>s, h, i, c</b> <b>d, f, r, o</b> <b>g, l, n, u</b> <b>b, k, v, e</b>	Review Letters: <b>m, t, p, a</b> <b>s, h, i, c</b> <b>d, f, r, o</b> <b>g, l, n, u</b> <b>b, k, v, e</b>	Writing Words: <b>m, t, p, a</b> <b>s, h, i, c</b> <b>d, f, r, o</b> <b>g, l, n, u</b> <b>b, k, v, e</b>	Dictation <b>m, t, p, a</b> <b>s, h, i, c</b> <b>d, f, r, o</b> <b>g, l, n, u</b> <b>b, k, v, e</b>
13	Countdown	Peel and Match Name That Sound Look, Think, Say; Pop Up; 3-Up <b>(to, not, can)</b>	Add That Sound This Letter or That? Which Letter?	Find That Letter? This Letter or That? Where's That Heart Word? <b>(to, not, can)</b>	Touch & Say Stretch Those Sounds Build a Word	Add that Sound Pop Up; 3-Up <b>(to, not, can)</b> Phrase Reading
	Handwriting	New Letters: <b>j and w</b>	New Letters: <b>z</b>	Review New Letters: <b>j, w, z</b>	Writing Words: <b>j, w, z</b>	Dictation: <b>j, w, z</b>
14	Countdown	This or That? Name That Sound Look, Think, Say; Pop Up; 3-Up <b>(you, are, do)</b>	Guess My Word This Letter or That? Which Letter?	Add That Sound This Letter or That? Where's That Heart Word? <b>(you, are, do)</b>	Connect the Letter Unscramble This Build a Word	Touch & Say Pop Up; 3-Up <b>(you, are, do)</b> Phrase Reading
	Handwriting	New Letters: <b>qu and x</b>	New Letters: <b>y</b>	Review New Letters: <b>qu, x, y</b>	Writing Words: <b>qu, x, y</b>	Dictation: <b>qu, x, y</b>

# Handwriting Application




Unit		Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3	Lesson 4	Lesson 5
15	Countdown	Mystery Bag Look, Think, Say; Pop Up; 3-Up <b>(did, too, will)</b>	Letter-Sound Review Find That Letter Unscramble This	Which Letter? Where's That Heart Word? <b>(did, too, will)</b> Phrase Reading	Add That Sound Connect the Letter Build a Word	Touch & Say Pop Up; 3-Up <b>(did, too, will)</b> Phrase Reading
	Handwriting	Handwriting Application: Parts of a Sentence (Capital Letter: What Is It?)	Handwriting Application: Parts of a Sentence (Capital Letter: Identify It)	Handwriting Application: Parts of a Sentence (Capital Letter: Act It)	Handwriting Application: Parts of a Sentence (Capital Letter: Sort It)	Handwriting Application: Parts of a Sentence (Capital Letter: Use It)
16	Countdown	Touch & Say Look, Think, Say; Pop Up; 3-Up <b>(with, all, me)</b> Which Letter?	Sound Swap Connect the Letter Unscramble This	Sound Swap Where's That Heart Word? <b>(with, all, me)</b> Phrase Reading	Sound Swap Find That Letter Build a Word	Touch & Say Pop Up; 3-Up <b>(with, all, me)</b> Phrase Reading
	Handwriting	Handwriting Application: Parts of a Sentence (Punctuation: What Is It?)	Handwriting Application: Parts of a Sentence (Punctuation: Identify It)	Handwriting Application: Parts of a Sentence (Punctuation: Act it)	Handwriting Application: Parts of a Sentence (Punctuation: Sort It)	Handwriting Application: Parts of a Sentence (Punctuation: Use It)
17	Countdown	Vowels vs. Consonants Letter Names vs. Sounds	Review What Makes Words Introduce Word Sort	Review Short Vowel Sounds and Motions		
	Handwriting	Handwriting Application: Parts of a Sentence (Subject: What Is It?)	Handwriting Application: Parts of a Sentence (Subject: Identify It)	Handwriting Application: Parts of a Sentence (Subject: Act it)	Handwriting Application: Parts of a Sentence (Subject: Sort It)	Handwriting Application: Parts of a Sentence (Subject: Use It)
18	Countdown	Letter-Sound Review <b>was, no, so</b>	Introduce Long Vowel Sounds	Introduce Vowel-Consonant Pattern (Closed Syllables) Introduce Build a Word Introduce Spell It!		
	Handwriting	Handwriting Application: Parts of a Sentence (Verb: What Is It?)	Handwriting Application: Parts of a Sentence (Verb: Identify It)	Handwriting Application: Parts of a Sentence (Verb: Act it)	Handwriting Application: Parts of a Sentence (Verb: Sort It)	Handwriting Application: Parts of a Sentence (Verb: Use It)
19	Countdown	Letter-Sound Review <b>say, now, have</b>	Short a vs. Long a	Introduce Phrases & Sentences to Read Reading and Spelling Real and Nonsense Words with All Short Vowels		
	Handwriting	Handwriting Application: Parts of a Sentence (Review)	Handwriting Application: Parts of a Sentence (Review)	Handwriting Application: Parts of a Sentence (Review)	Handwriting Application: Parts of a Sentence (Review)	Handwriting Application: Parts of a Sentence (Review)





# Handwriting Application with New Graphemes

Unit		Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3	Lesson 4	Lesson 5
20	Countdown	Letter-Sound Review <b>said, come, down</b>	Short i vs. Long i	Digraph <b>sh</b> Reading and Spelling with All Short Vowels Introduce Detective Work		
	Handwriting	Review Parts of a Sentence	Review Parts of a Sentence	Write New Sound: /sh/	Writing Words: /sh/	Dictation: /sh/
21	Countdown	Letter-Sound Review <b>they, that, this</b>	Short u vs. Long u	Digraph <b>th</b> Reading and Spelling with All Short Vowels		
	Handwriting	Review Parts of a Sentence	Review Parts of a Sentence	Write New Sound: /th/	Writing Words: /th/	Dictation: /th/
22	Countdown	Letter-Sound Review <b>ate, our, who</b>	Short o vs. Long o	Review Digraphs <b>sh &amp; th</b> Reading and Spelling with All Short Vowels		
	Handwriting	Review Parts of a Sentence	Review Parts of a Sentence	Writing Sounds: /sh/ & /th/	Writing Words: /sh/ & /th/	Dictation: /sh/ & /th/
23	Countdown	Letter-Sound Review <b>where, what, must</b>	Short e vs. Long e	Digraphs <b>ch &amp; wh</b> Reading and Spelling with All Short Vowels		
	Handwriting	Cumulative Handwriting Review: Write Words	Cumulative Handwriting Review: Write Words	Write New Sounds: /ch/ & /wh/	Writing Words: /ch/ & /wh/	Dictation: /ch/ & /wh/
24	Countdown	Letter-Sound Review <b>we, he, she</b>	Review All Short and Long Vowels	Digraph <b>ck</b> Reading and Spelling with All Short Vowels		
	Handwriting	Cumulative Handwriting Review: Write Words	Cumulative Handwriting Review: Write Words	Write New Sound: /ck/	Writing Words: ck	Dictation: /ck/

Unit		Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3	Lesson 4	Lesson 5
25	Countdown	Letter-Sound Review <b>but, want, there</b>	Sound Buddies (2-Sound Blends)	Chunk <b>all</b> and Digraph Review Reading and Spelling with All Short Vowels		
	Handwriting	Cumulative Handwriting Review: Write Words	Cumulative Handwriting Review: Write Words	Write New Sound: /all/ Review Digraphs	Writing Words: /all/ Review Digraphs	Dictation: /all/ Review Digraphs
26	Countdown	Letter-Sound Review <b>saw, own, please</b>	Sound Buddies (2-Sound Blends)	2-Sound Blends (Initial and Final)		
	Handwriting	Cumulative Handwriting Review: Sentence Writing	Cumulative Handwriting Review: Sentence Writing	Write 2-Sound Blends	Writing Words with 2-Sound Blends	Dictation: 2-Sound Blends
27	Countdown	Letter-Sound Review <b>make, good, new</b>	Introduce <i>Syllable Stomp</i> Introduce Blending Syllables	Introduce Terms "Syllable" and "Closed Syllable" Reading Two-Syllable Words with Closed Syllables		
	Handwriting	Cumulative Handwriting Review: Sentence Writing	Cumulative Handwriting Review: Sentence Writing	Write Closed Syllable Words	Write Closed Syllable phrases	Dictation: Closed Syllable Sentences
28	Countdown	Letter-Sound Review <b>out, one, two</b>	Review <i>Syllable Stomp</i> Review Blending Syllables	More Reading Two-Syllable Words with Closed Syllables		
	Handwriting	Cumulative Handwriting Review: Sentence Writing	Cumulative Handwriting Review: Sentence Writing	Write Closed Syllable Words	Write Closed Syllable Phrases	Dictation: Closed Syllable Sentences

# Alternative Countdown Scope and Sequence

 Planet O Letters	 Star Line Letters	 Moon Line Letters	 Zoom Letters
a	b	i	v
c	f	j	w
d	h	m	x
e	k	n	y
g	l	p	z
o	t	r	k
qu		u	
s			

 Planet O Letters	 Star Line Letters	 Landed Letters	 Zoom Letters
C	E	B	A
G	F	D	V
O	I	H	W
Qu	J	K	X
S	T	L	Y
		M	Z
		N	
		P	
		R	
		U	

**Planet O Letters:** Letters that are formed beginning with the Planet O movement.

**Star Line Letters:**

Capital: Letters that cross on the Star Line.

Lowercase: Letters that begin on the Star Line.

**Moon Line Letters:** Letters that begin on the Moon Line.

**Zoom Letters:** Letters that use the Zoom movement at the beginning (or within) the letter formation.

**Landed Letters:** Letters that begin with the Land the rocket on the Earth Line movement.

# Command Center: Following Directions

## Rationale

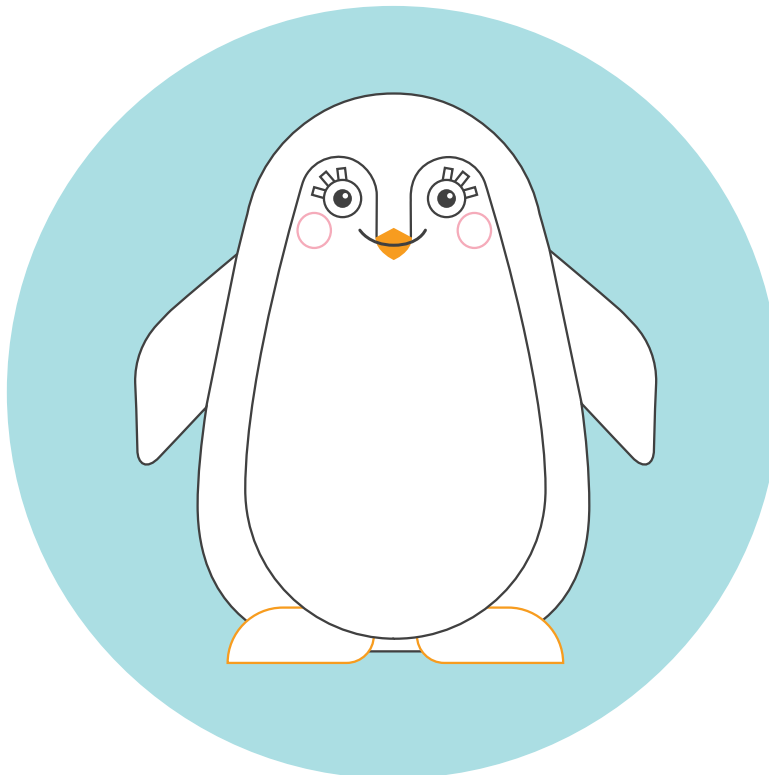
Following directions is an important part of the school environment and plays a major role in their school day. Students learn to follow directions to navigate the classroom and the school. Additionally, directions help students learn information. Students will follow directions to learn how to form letters or learn how to read. Really Great Handwriting includes several optional activities that help students practice following directions while learning some of the language and stamina needed to eventually write letters. This activity combines following directions with Countdown's directional words to prepare students for letter formation. It also leverages the Countdown Sound Story characters in a fun and engaging way.

## Sample Directions

1. Before coloring Penny's cheeks, color the left foot orange.
2. Next, color the right foot orange.
3. After coloring the feet orange, color the cheeks pink.
4. Next, color the eye lashes black.
5. Before you color the penguin's body, color the wings black.
6. Last, color the outside of the penguin's body black.

★ \_\_\_\_\_  
NAME: ☾ \_\_\_\_\_  
🌍 \_\_\_\_\_

## Following Directions

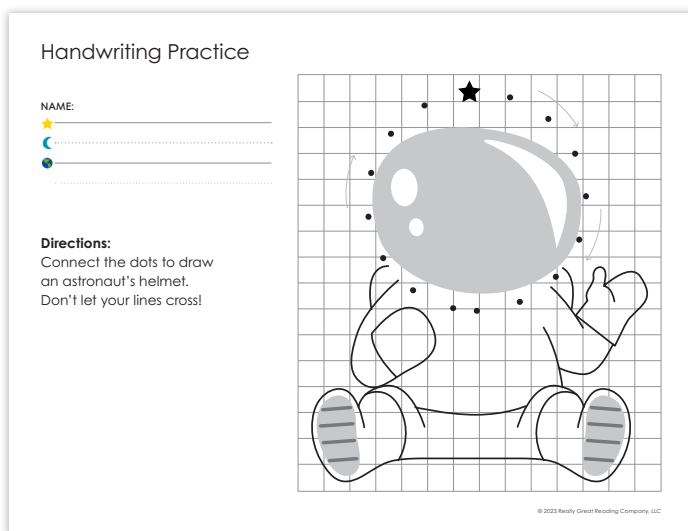


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# Space Walk: Building Fine Motor Skills

## Rationale

Connecting dots is a great activity to help students build fine motor skills. It allows students to practice their pencil grip, posture, and paper placement before learning letter formation. This also allows students to practice having pencil control during writing, practice different handwriting strokes, and practice following directional words and handwriting vocabulary terms. This is also a good opportunity for students to understand how much pressure to use with their pencil during writing. Students can complete the activity by coloring in the picture using crayons. This gives students one more opportunity to build their fine motor skills.



## Sample Directions

### Space Walk

#### Say:

- "We are going to work together to practice controlling our pencils."
- Let's open our workbooks to pg. 15. We will practice our Planet O line as we follow directions to complete the astronaut's helmet."
- When we play Space Walk, don't move your pencil unless I tell you!
- It's like playing Simon Says, except it's led by Mission Control and if we don't follow their directions we may not make it back to Earth!
- Ready? Let's play!"

### Space Walk Directions:

#### Say:

- "Mission Control says, "Move two dots."
- Move one dot. (*Didn't say Mission Control so don't move!*)
- Mission Control says, "Move one dot."
- Mission Control says, "Move three dots."
- Move two dots. (*Didn't say Mission Control so don't move!*)
- Mission Control says, "Move one dot."
- Mission Control says, "Move four dots."
- Mission Control says, "Move one dot."
- Move three dots. (*Didn't say Mission Control so don't move!*)
- Mission Control says, "Move three dots."
- Mission Control says, "Move to the star."

**Say** "Let's reflect on our game!"

#### Ask:

- "What did you think about this game?"
- Was it easy to control your pencil? Was it hard?"
- What was hard about it?"
- What would have made it easier?"

# Orbital Pathways: Preparing for Letter Formation

## Rationale

Really Great Handwriting features scripts (verbal paths) for formation of each lowercase and uppercase letter, as well as for the numbers 0-9. Verbal pathways use distinctive directional words to help students remember how to form the letters correctly. Really Great Handwriting uses consistent vocabulary in the verbal pathway for each letter. The vocabulary in this activity will allow students to practice using the vocabulary in the verbal pathways before they are asked to apply it to letter formation. In Really Great Handwriting, handwriting instruction is an opportunity to not only teach students how to form letters, but also as a pathway to spelling and writing success.

### Sample Glossary of the Pathways:

**Zoom:** move diagonally

**Land:** move straight down

**Thrust:** move straight (or around) to the left or to the right

**Take Off:** move straight up

**Lift Off:** pick up the pencil

**Touch Down:** put down the pencil

**Plunge:** move down past the Earth line

**Fall:** move down toward the Earth line, but not straight

**Orbit:** move counter-clockwise around

**Thump:** hit a line and stop or continue on

**Curve:** move clockwise around

**Tilt:** zoom back

## Sample Directions

### Orbital Pathways

#### Say:

- "We are going to work together to continue practicing the words we use to form our letters.
- Let's open our workbooks to page 18.
- We are going to follow directions to outline the stars.
- When we play, we will only move by using the same words we use to form our letters.
- Ready? Let's play!"

### Orbital Pathways Directions:

#### Say:

1. "Zoom to the first dot.
2. Thrust backward to the second dot.
3. Zoom to the next dot.
4. Land the rocket.
5. Zoom up.
6. Zoom down.
7. Take off.
8. Zoom.
9. Thrust backward.
10. Take off to the star."

**Say** "Let's reflect on our game!"

#### Ask:

- "What did you think about this game?"
- Were you able to remember what the different words mean?
- Was it hard to follow the directions? What was hard about it? What would have made it easier?
- Why do you think we played this game?
- What did you learn from playing?
- How could you 'play' better next time?
- Was your writing neat?"

# Orbital Pathways: Preparing for Letter Formation

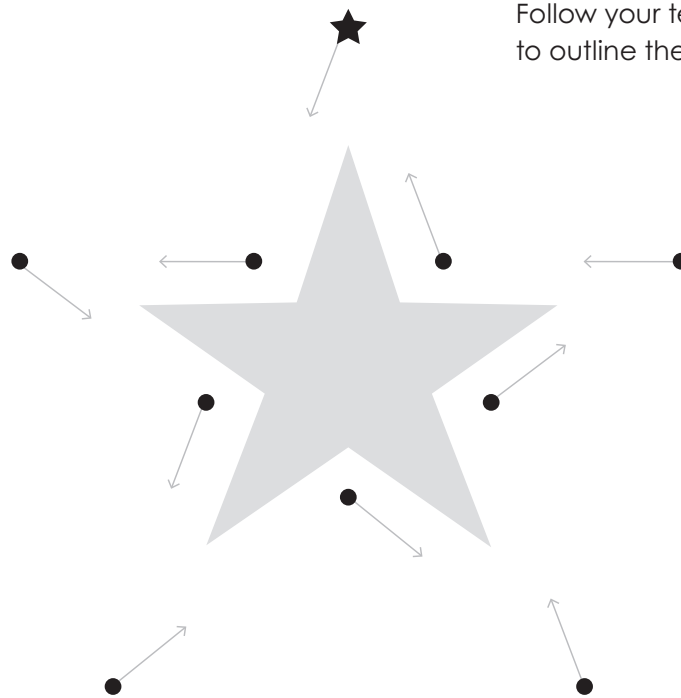


unit 3

Orbital Pathways

## Directions:

Follow your teacher's directions to outline the star.



# Preparing for Countdown to Really Great Handwriting's Mission

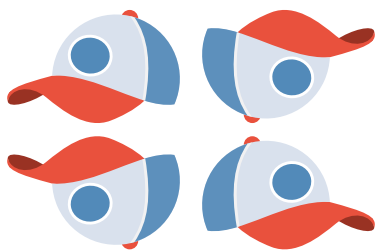
## Getting Ready to Teach Letter Formation

### Compare and Contrast

#### What You Need to Know

The skills of comparing and contrasting are valuable for learning to write letters and numbers correctly. In handwriting, they can help students distinguish between different letters, help them choose the correct letter to write and how to write it. This can help students avoid reversals in reading and writing.

For the first time, students are having to identify shapes (letters) that when placed in a different direction (or even upside down) become a new shape (letter). For example, this cap, when turned to the left is a cap. When it's turned to the right, it's still a cap. When it is turned upside down, it is still..... a cap! This is known as mirror invariance.



Try one of these optional activities with your students. Have fun with it!

1. Hold something in your hand (marker, pen, stapler, pencil, etc). Move it with your hand into different positions (up high, down low, upside down, flip it around in your hand, behind your back, etc). Every time you change the position, direction, or orientation of it, ask the students what it is. They should obviously always respond with the name of the object. As students continue to identify the object, ask the students how the object has been moved (flipped left, upside down, etc).
2. Ask students to quickly sketch out the outline of an object with their pencil that is easy to draw and easy for other students to identify (heart, house, water bottle, etc). Once students all draw their object, ask them to turn to a buddy and have their buddy identify the object. After the student has identified the object

correctly, have the students draw the same outline of the object upside down. Have students present that to the same buddy to identify. Finally, have the students draw their outline on its side to the left or the right. Have students turn to the same buddy again to identify it.

Continue to encourage healthy class discussion about how the identity of the object is not changed. A good question to ask is if they can think of an object that becomes something else when it has been flipped or moved into a different direction or orientation.

Obviously, each time the students identify the object or the sketch of the object, the object remains the same. The object's name and formation do not change. Students have been able to rely on motor memory or a mental image to recreate or identify an object. However, it is not the case with letters. Students are not able to rely on the brain's mental images for the letter formations. Our brains are pattern seekers and for the first time our brain is not able to use the same pattern and mental imagery to identify an object. Students are now, for the first time, having to focus on formation and specific imagery to be able to form the letters and identify them correctly. Students must inhibit their skill of mirror invariance when it comes to forming and identifying letters and numbers.

For example, when students are given the letter **b**, and the **b** is flipped, it becomes a **d**. Or when the **b** is flipped upside down, it becomes a **p**. Or when the **d** is flipped upside down, it becomes a **q**. Even consider how similar **g** is to **p**, **d**, and **b** is. Or what about **n** and **u**? It's no wonder students really struggle with reversals and formations. Even the starting point of a letter can be the difference between a capital or lowercase letter. So not only does it affect the formation of the letter, but for the first time, the name of the shape is changed based on the position of the shape. Students have to understand that the position of the letter can change the identity of it. Students are not able to rely as heavily on their mental image or their motor memory to form the letter as they can with drawing objects or participating in other activities.

bdu  
pqn

This is a great opportunity to support students and help them understand that reversing letters is natural and why it happens. It helps students realize they are not the only ones doing it, why it happens, and what they can focus their attention on to prevent it.

It is important for students to understand how to compare and contrast different objects, especially letters. When students are able to distinguish the similarities and differences between the letters, it will help them identify the letters in print and help them choose the correct letter to write. The most important reason for students to understand the skills of comparing and contrasting within handwriting is to help students determine the differences between similar letters like **b**, **d**, and **p** between **m** and **n**.

We want students to be able to use this knowledge to be able to recognize and remember different letters. We will frequently use a Venn diagram to compare and contrast letters to help students hold on to the different letters and give them something tangible to connect it to. The diagrams can be used during whole group or small group instruction and teachers are encouraged to have students truly think about the letters they are looking at to create strong and healthy conversation. These conversations will be powerful in helping students remember letter formation and can also help prevent reversals. The Venn diagrams from each lesson can be found within Countdown's Online Tools.

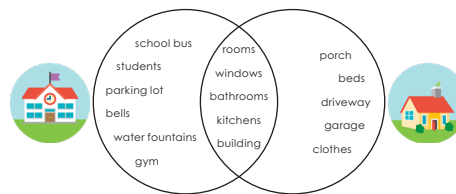
## Compare and Contrast Warm-Up (Optional)

*This activity is ideal in small groups for students who need more practice with same and different.*

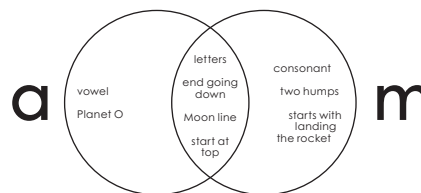
**Say:** "Today, we are going to compare and contrast the letters **a** and **m**. This means we will look for things that are the same and things that are different. We are going to use a Venn diagram to help us compare and contrast the letters. When we compare and contrast two different things, we look for attributes that are the same or different. A Venn diagram uses two overlapping circles. The section in the middle contains the common attributes of the letters. The areas outside of the overlapped section

are reserved for the differences between the letters. (As you explain the Venn diagram, be sure to identify each section). Let's practice using a Venn diagram by comparing and contrasting a school and a house.

### Compare and Contrast Practice



### Compare and Contrast Letters



**Say:** "Now we are going to compare and contrast the letters **a** and **m**. I will give you just a little bit of time to look at both letters. I want you to find things that are the same or different about the two different letters. Let's talk about the different things you discovered. I want you to tell me the different things you noticed and where we should write them in the Venn diagram. Being letter investigators will help you remember the uniqueness of each letter to help you read and write."

## Unit 2 | Lesson 1

### Capital Letter M

Objective	Description	Materials
Students will trace and learn the proper formation of capital <b>M</b> .	Teachers will review pencil grip and provide direct instruction for writing capital M using the verbal pathways. Students will be able to trace and practice the strokes needed to build capital M before tracing and writing capital <b>M</b> .	RGH Student Workbook <b>page 7</b>

### LETTER INTRO AND PATHWAYS PREP

**Say** “Astronauts, Rockets Ready? Let’s Countdown to launch.”

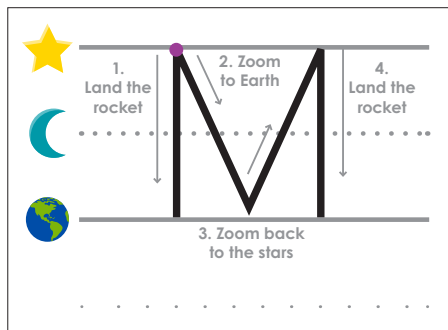
**Open** *Countdown Online to Unit 2 Lesson 1, RGH, Letter M animation.*

**Click to display** the capital **M** and lowercase **m** tiles.

**Say:**

- “Today, we are going to learn how to write the letter **M**. We learned in our last lesson that “**A**” can be written in two different ways! Do you remember what they are? (**A**: *capital and lowercase*).
- Yes! We can write it as a capital letter AND as a lowercase letter.”

**Click to display** the [Capital M Letter Formation](#) image (with arrows).



**Say** “Look at the capital letter M. Let’s describe it. Remember, when we describe something, we use words to tell about it.” (**A**: *four lines, 3 points, etc.*)

**Ask** Does this letter remind you of something familiar?” (**A**: *e.g., mountain range; answers may vary*)

**Review** the verbal pathways vocabulary for capital **M**:

**Say** “In our space missions, we have already learned all the words and strokes to form the letter M.”

**Trace the strokes of the letter as you ask:**

- What do we say to make our rockets (pencils) travel down in a straight line? (**A:** *land*)
- What do we say to pick up our rockets (pencils) off the paper? (**A:** *lift off*)
- Perfect! And to travel in a diagonal line? (**A:** *zoom*)

**Say** Super! Now let's put it all together and start our next mission with the training video on capital M."

## ANIMATION ROUTINE



### REMINDER

All animations (trainings) are in *Countdown Online*. Students will see the letter traced three different times: in yellow, purple, and black. *(Pause as needed as the animation plays.)*

**Play** the **Capital M Letter formation animation** (training) straight through:

1. First time (yellow): point to the different starting lines (launch points) and say the pathways vocabulary as students watch and listen: **"Star line, Land the rocket. Lift off to the stars. Zoom to Earth. Zoom to the stars. Land the rocket."**
2. Second time (purple): point to each line as the animation plays and name the strokes with students. *(Students can air write with their fingers along with the animation.)*
3. Third time (black): all students say the pathway aloud with the animations (training) as they air write the letter with their fingers.



### REMINDER

Your motions will be backward to them. Make sure to 'write' backwards when skywriting with your students.



### OPTIONAL

Use one of the multisensory strategies or games (found on pp. XX-XX) to further prepare students to write the letter.



### CHECK FOR MASTERY

Point to the beginning of each line and ask students to identify the starting line (launch point) and stroke as you trace the letter on the screen with your finger. (**A:** *Star line, Land, Lift off, Zoom, Zoom, Land*).

## Optional Telescope (Editing) Routine

Self-checking and peer editing both play an important role in the handwriting process. It is valuable for students to understand the importance of self-reflection and how their work can impact or affect others and their ability to complete tasks. Editing helps hold students accountable, enabling them to take responsibility for their work. Peer editing is also beneficial during handwriting. It teaches students how to look at things with an investigative eye. It also begins to teach students how to properly communicate feedback to others in an appropriate manner.

### Self-Checking Routine:

- **Say:** "Editing is an important part of handwriting and writing. We should always strive to do our best in everything that we do, but, remember your best does not always look like everyone else's best. We have all been given strengths and talents in different areas. When you are writing, there are a couple of key characteristics that will help you determine if your handwriting (and writing) is your best. Your papers will always have a checklist to help you remember the important parts of handwriting. This checklist can be used to determine if you did your best on your paper. Your letters should all be the same size, have good spacing, lined up correctly, readable, and as always, you should take your time! These skills are not just important for handwriting, but also for anything you do during the school day!"
- Can you think of another activity during the day that would require you to have good spacing and everything lined up nicely?  
**Possible Answers:** completing math problems; lining up for lunch to make sure we don't accidentally step on our friends' heels; staying in a nice line to make sure we leave space for other classes to walk past.
- What about something that needs to be easy for someone else to read and requires you to take your time? Can you think of something that requires that?  
**Possible Answers:** solving a math problem, reading a book, climbing on the playground

### Editing Checklist:

**Say:** "The editing checklist is important to use during

and after your writing. It can help you make sure you are always doing your best work! These are questions you can ask yourself as you write to make sure you are on the 'write' track!"

**Sizing:** Are my letters the appropriate size and do they touch the necessary lines?

**Spacing:** Are my letters spaced apart appropriately?

**Lined Up?** Do all of my letters touch the correct lines? Do I go back to the far left side of the paper when I start on a new line?

**Readable?** Is my work readable? Am I able to read everything that I wrote? Can I identify all the letters in the words? Is my teacher able to read it? Can my friend read my letters and my words?

**Did I take my time?** Did I write my letters neatly? Did I use proper pencil grip, correct posture, correct paper placement? Did I do my best? Am I proud of my work?

### Telescope Routine:

#### Telescope Option 1:

- **Say:** "Scientists use telescopes to be able to view things that are far away with a clear view and to see things in detail. Editing requires us to look at our work closely and with great detail to make sure we did not make any mistakes and to make sure we did our best. We are going to use our telescopes to help us with see all the details in our writing. This will help us edit our handwriting and, later, our writing."
- Today, we are going to make our telescopes before we start our editing. You each have a \_\_\_\_\_. I am going to give you a piece of paper that has our editing checklist on it. You can take the next \_\_\_\_\_ minutes to decorate the rest of the paper with \_\_\_\_\_. But, do not color over the editing checklist. We will be using this all year. I am going to walk around and tape the paper around your roll after you finish. We will keep our rolls \_\_\_\_\_.

**\*Examples:** toilet tissue roll, half of a piece of cardstock rolled up and taped, paper towel roll cut in half, wrapping paper roll cut in thirds or fourths depending on length, cut off bottom of Dixie cups.

**\*\*Examples:** star stickers, planet stickers, students can draw stars/sun, the sky, comets, or any other space themed image.

**\*\*\*Examples:** Velcro it to the desk to use as a pencil

holder so they don't get lost or roll around.

### **Telescope Option 2:**

Option 2 does not require any prior prep other than printing and cutting the included bookmark pages. Students can add different space themed drawings, stickers, etc to their bookmark. Just make sure they do not color over the editing checklist. The bookmarks can be easily stored. The bookmarks can be laminated so students can use the checklist each time they edit their work. Bookmark can be used to track reading.

### **Telescope Option 3:**

Option 3 requires printing and cutting of a small editing checklist. This can be quickly taped down on their desk to refer to frequently. They can also be given several blank copies that students can use to check off as they complete the different editing steps. Students can also use their hand to form a telescope over their eye while they edit.

### **Spot On:**

We are going to use our telescopes to look across the entire sky... I mean our writing! We are going to use it to search through our writing to find our best letter and one that needs some improvement. I want you to look for the best letter that is the correct size, with good spacing, lined up correctly, readable, and that you are proud of. I want you to mark it with a smile, star sticker, heart, etc. I want you to now tell yourself why you marked it as your best letter. Now, I want you to find the worst letter that is not the correct size, has poor spacing, lined up incorrectly, not readable, and not proud of. After you find this letter, I want you to mark it with a frowny face or use some other form of identification. I want you to now tell yourself why you marked it as your worst letter and what you would do to take it from your worst letter to your best letter. Do not erase it! Now, I want you to rewrite your letter next to it so that your worst letter can become your best letter!

### **Teacher Jottings**

- Laminate the handwriting paper to use as you walk across the classroom. This allows you to provide one on one support with students struggling to form the letters as you walk around the room. This gives you a place to write without having to write on their paper and taking away a practice opportunity for the student.
- Give students glitter star stickers to identify their best letter to stay in the space theme!

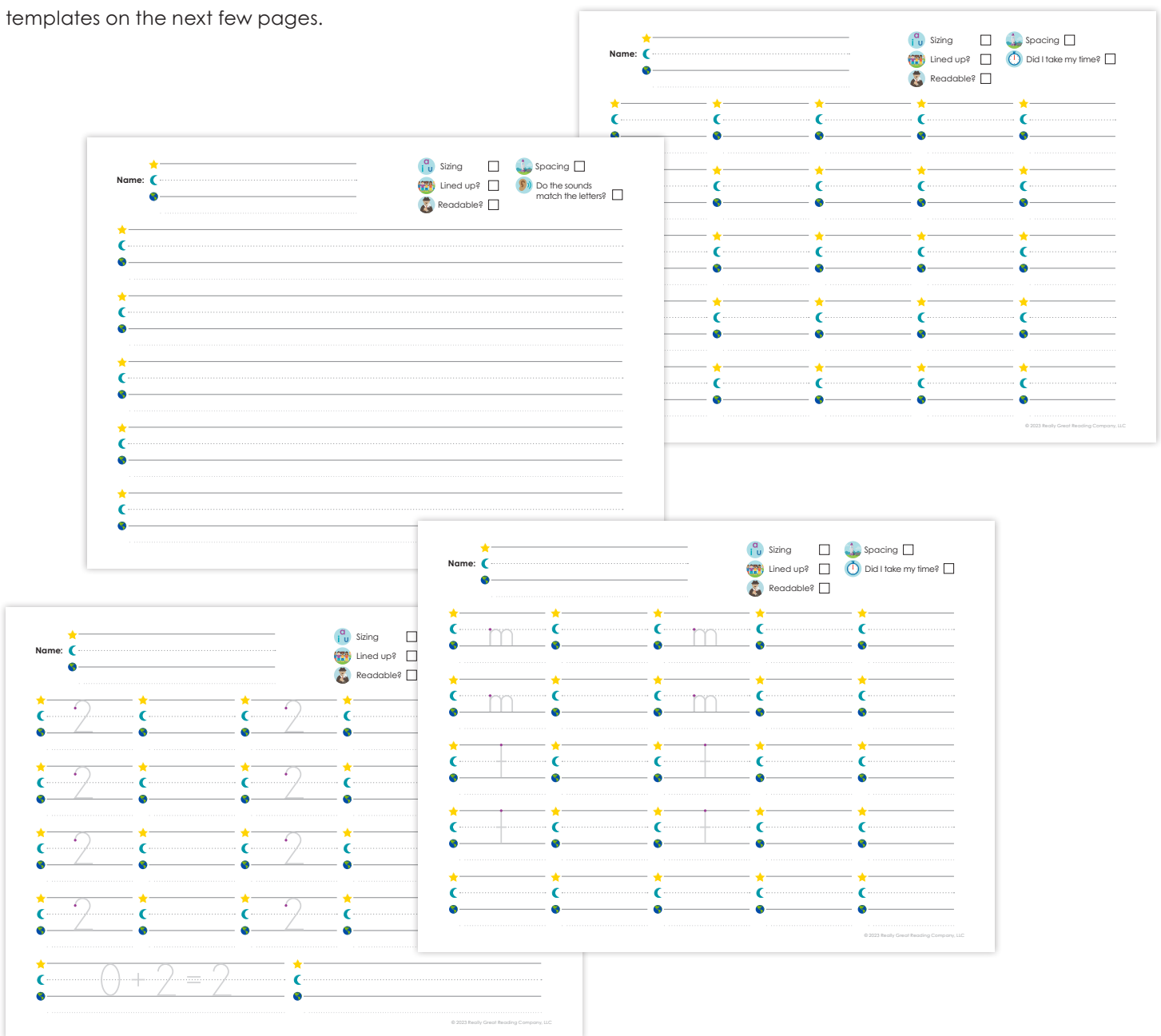



# Printable Materials

## Rationale

The printable materials are designed to align with the verbal pathways of the letters. Students will quickly become comfortable with the language and applying it on the handwriting paper.


There will be a variety of printable materials for letter formation practice (capital and lowercase), numeral formation practice, dictation, and spelling tests. You can see a sample of several of these handwriting practice templates on the next few pages.






Sizing

☐




Lined up?

☐




Readable?

☐



Spacing

☐





Do the sounds match the letters?

☐




Name:








1









6










2










7










3










8










4










9










5













10












Name: \_\_\_\_\_




\_\_\_\_\_





\_\_\_\_\_





\_\_\_\_\_



























































































 Sizing ☐

 Lined up? ☐


 Readable? ☐

 Spacing ☐

 Did I take my time? ☐


  	  	  	  	  	  
  	  	  	  	  	  
  	  	  	  	  	  
  	  	  	  	  	  
  	  	  	  	  	  

# Sample Spelling Test with Dictation Option Page




Sizing

☐




Lined up?

☐




Readable?

☐




Spacing

☐





Do the sounds match the letters?




☐






Name:











1




6




2




7




3




8




4




9




5




10




dictation

dictation

dictation

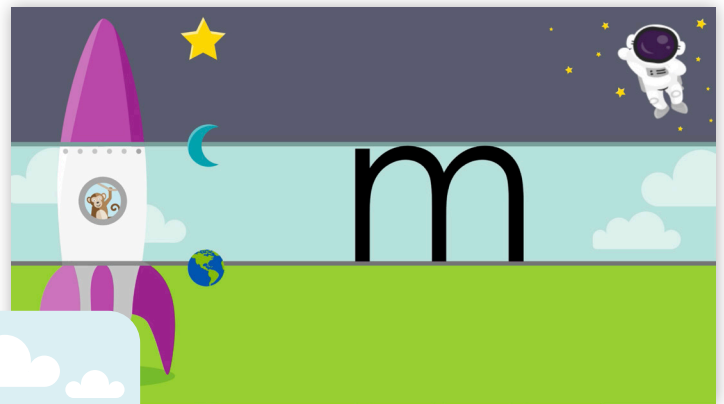
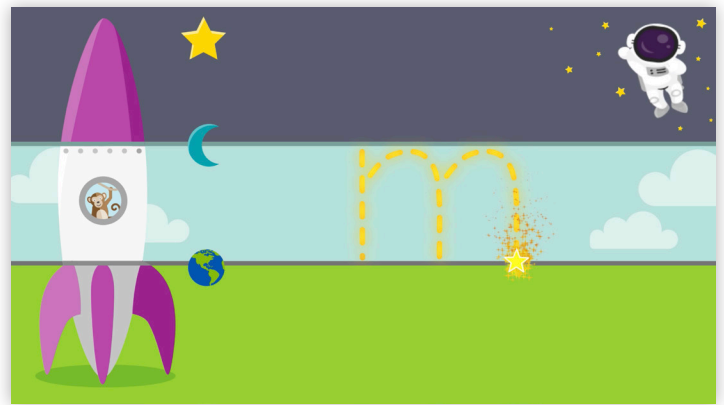
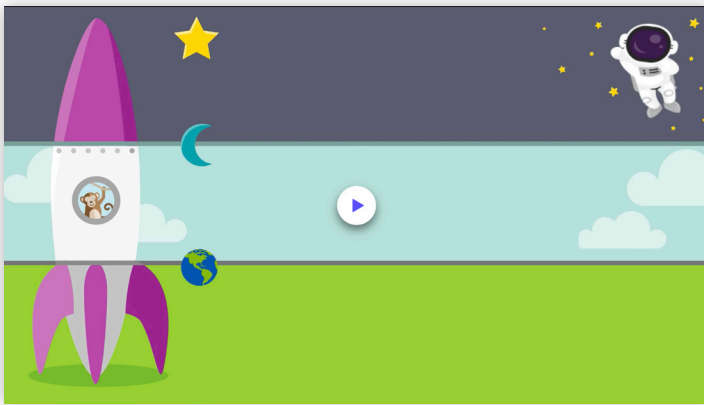




dictation

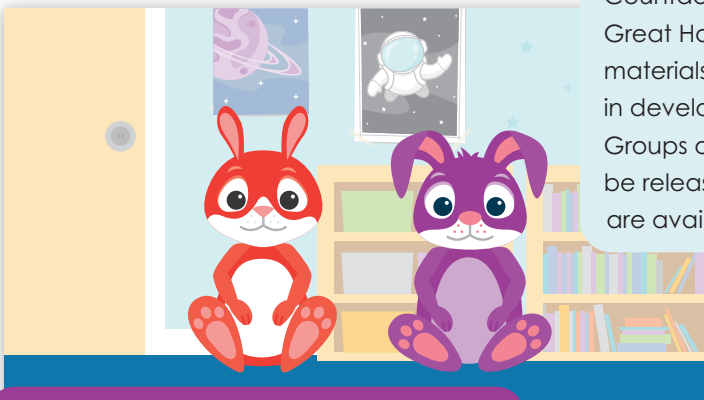
# Digital Materials

Housed in Countdown Online are animations that teach students how to form letters and numerals in a fun and engaging way. The animations provide students with the visual support along with the verbal pathways to understand how to form each letter. Animations will be embedded within Countdown Online in Supplemental Resources. There will be animations for lowercase letters, capital letters, digraphs, and numerals.

Click here to view a sample animation for the lowercase letter m.



Countdown's Really Great Handwriting materials are still in development. Groups of lessons will be released as they are available.



Proper Posture with Floppy and Perky

Fine Motor Skills Practice

