

# TRICKS AND TIPS TO SUPPORT HANDWRITING DEVELOPMENT

## Letter Formation:

- Try letter formation apps like iWriteWords and Little Writer.
- Make “starting points” for each letter using a crayon, marker, or small sticker.
- Use consistent terminology.

## Sizing:

- Provide a visual and tactile cue by cutting a long rectangular “window” (the same width as the writing lines on the page) out of a strip of cardboard and placing it where the child should write.
- Handwriting paper with raised lines.
- Draw boxes for individual letters and gradually move to larger boxes to contain words and then sentences.

## Speed and Fluency:

- Have kids compete against themselves to beat their time on writing or copying a passage.
- Copy written work from a model.
- Fill-in-the-blank format for journals and note taking in the classroom.
- Try cursive.
- Try a visual timer on the child’s desk to help keep the student focused and on task.

## Alignment:

- Teach kids the concepts of top, middle, and bottom with movement games.
- Using a highlighter, trace the baseline of letters on written work.
- Try handwriting paper with raised lines or sticking Wikki Stix to the baseline of the handwriting paper.

## Spacing:

- Teach the child to place something down in between each word as he is writing.  
Try popsicle sticks, pennies, small toys or manipulatives.
- The Finger Spacer tool and astronaut spacing tools.
- Draw smiley faces or place small stickers in each space to see how many “points” they can get (1 point for each smiley face).
- Read their writing out loud to them.
- Try the “Spaghetti and Meatball” handwriting trick.

# TEN TIPS TO ENGAGE THE RELUCTANT WRITER

1. Keep calm and don't worry!
2. Avoid calling it handwriting practice.
3. Incorporate games which require an element of writing.
4. Follow the child's lead.
5. Prioritize the skill to be focused on – don't try working on everything at once!
6. Ensure sensory breaks before and during writing tasks as required.
7. Give plenty of fun choices!
8. Encourage self correction.
9. Provide opportunities for "incidental" writing.
10. Develop writing skills while playing with a friend.