

Mastering Handwriting with Max the Monkey

Learning objective: To understand the rules of joined handwriting (cursive) and letter formation as per the Year 3 National Curriculum.

Read each card to learn about handwriting techniques. Max the Monkey has broken down these puzzles to help you write neatly and consistently.

What is an ascender?

A part of a letter that rises above the x-height, such as in the letters 'h', 'k', or 'l'.

What is a descender?

A part of a letter that hangs below the baseline, such as in the letters 'g', 'p', or 'y'.

What is cursive handwriting?

A style of writing where letters are joined together in a continuous flow without lifting the pen.

Why do we use a baseline?

It is the invisible line that all letters sit on to keep writing straight and consistent.

What is a 'flick' in handwriting?

A small lead-in or exit stroke used to help join one letter to the next.

Why is 'consistency' important?

It means keeping your letter sizes and slopes the same, which makes your work easier to read.

What are the four 'f-letter' joins?

These are joins that happen from the letters f, g, j, p, and q, often using a specific exit stroke.

How much space should be between words?

A good rule is to leave enough space to fit the letter 'o' between your words.

Which letters are 'x-height' letters?

Letters that do not have ascenders or descenders, such as 'a', 'c', 'e', 'm', 'n', 'o', 'r', 's', 'u', 'v', 'w', 'x', 'z'.

What does 'letter formation' mean?

The specific sequence of strokes and movements used to create a clear and accurate letter shape.

How does posture help handwriting?

Sitting up straight with feet flat helps you control your pen and write more comfortably.

Max asks: Why should we not join capitals?

Capital letters are stand-alone characters and are never joined to the lowercase letters that follow them.