

Handwriting Without Tears®

Putting Thoughts on Paper Word & Sentence Skills

Read this first

Have you ever noticed how children who haven't been taught sentence-writing skills try to put their thoughts on paper? They mix up capitals and lowercase letters. They run words together. They do not use ending punctuation. Do you know why they do that? They are simply writing the way they think or speak. Verbal language does not need or use capitals, spacing, or punctuation. But, all three are essential to written language.

Why was that hard to read?

That is hard because you can't tell where one word or sentence ends and another begins. What is missing? Capitals, spacing, and ending punctuation!

Have you ever noticed how children who haven't been taught sentence-writing skills try to put their thoughts on paper? They mix up capitals and lowercase letters. They run words together. They do not use ending punctuation. Do you know why they do that? They are simply writing the way they think or speak. Verbal language does not need or use capitals, spacing, or punctuation. But, all three are essential to written language.

Three skills to teach

1. **Capitalization** rules for starting sentences
2. **Spacing** between words and sentences
3. **Ending punctuation including** periods, question marks, and exclamation points

You may be thinking that children can learn these skills just by reading. Well, it's possible, but very unlikely. When children read, they aren't thinking about how the words are written. They are just trying to read. So you must deliberately teach these skills to your budding writers.

Then they and you will be able to read what they write!



Check sentence

Teachers: Help children ✓ their sentence for correct Capitalization, Word Spacing, and Ending Punctuation.

1. Start with a capital.

2. Put space between words.

3. End with . ? or !

