

- [Make a Sensory Bottle | YouTube Video](#)
- [Voice Typing \(Speech to Text\): A Step by Step Guide!](#)

Hello New Field Families!

I hope you are doing well and are having a good start to the week! Please know I am thinking of you and sending warm thoughts and wishes your way!

This week, I would like to share a little bit about **ways to make handwriting easier to read!** I understand that students might be doing a lot of work online right now, and that's great! If they are also doing some handwriting, there are a few "rules" that can go a long way in making handwriting more readable - even if letter formation is a bit "messy" or unconventional. Today, let's look at the first (and my favorite!) rule.

1. Letters touch the LINE.



Letters love to hang out on the line, with their letter friends! That's where they live! This is how we make the concept interesting, understandable, and relatable. We live in homes; birds might live in trees; letters live on the line!

It can help to think of letters saying "BOOM" when they touch the line! Saying "BOOM" and firmly touching pencil/crayon to the line gives extra sensory feedback to help students recognize when a letter actually makes contact with the line.

Letters feel sad when they're floating off the line - I hope they don't float into outer space! This helps students feel motivated to place those letters better back on the line! It also gives us a framework for visually labeling floating/touching letters - see below for more.

- **Letters feel happy when they're touching the line! They're with their friends!** This helps positively reinforce letter placement on the line. It also supports an understandable way to visually label floating/touching letters using sad or smiley faces.

What kind of paper or lines? For teaching this concept and early practice, I like wide ruled, single-lined paper. I often use a marker or crayon to draw over the line, making it thick and dark. Samples are attached, but it's easy to draw your own lines on blank paper! Early practice can also include tactile lines - made of painter's tape, masking tape, string, etc. - and magnetic or play-doh letters, with students manipulating the materials so they can *see and feel* when letters touch the line!

What about those smiley/sad faces? Early practice checking work includes *moving letter by letter and assigning each letter a smiley or sad face*; we draw a sad face above a floating letter, and a happy face above a letter that touches the line. Then students have a chance to try again! *Later, we focus on checking larger segments of work (single or multiple sentences) and fixing the floating letters*, so a single smiley face can be earned for whole writing chunk. Older students often prefer assigning a check mark or star instead of a smiley face.

What about letters like g or p? Early practice does not usually emphasize correct placement of descending lower case letters (gjpqy). However, once students understand and begin carrying over letter placement on the line, we talk about these "diver" letters. I've had some success introducing these letters as "worm letters." *Worm letters like to dig down, underground (below the line) to hang out with the worms!* We usually draw some worm letters and illustrate above/below ground. Then we talk about how the top part of worm letters still has to touch the line - that's a tricky concept that usually takes some extra practice!

How do we remember this rule? We usually use a *physical/movement symbol* for this rule (which can help students remember the rule, regardless of their reading level): point one index finger down onto the palm of the other hand. The finger is the letter and the palm is the line. Letters touch the line! *We also sometimes use a written symbol, such as an arrow or small vertical line pointing down to a line across.* Please see attachments for details.

[Examples Letters touch the line](#)

[Paper single line wide rule](#)

ACTIVITY 1 – For students with early writing skills. Write your child's name, making some letters touch the line and some letters float above or below the line. Then ask your child to "find the floating letters," circling them in crayon or marker. Now ask your child to write their name, placing all letters on the line. Feel free to make the lines thicker/darker for your child. Check work, with your child assigning smiley/sad faces to each letter (smiley for a letter that touches line, sad for a letter that floats).

[Activity 1 letters touch line-name example](#)

[Letters Touch Line – Handwriting Rule & Checklist](#)

ACTIVITY 2 – For students with later writing skills. Ask your child to correct my sample sentences, circling all floating letters. Then ask your child to copy the sample sentences, placing all letters on the line. Check work, starting at the beginning of each sentence, and helping your child fix any floaters as needed. A sentence with letters that touch line earns a smiley!

[Activity 2. Letters Touch Line. Find Floating Letters](#)

Please feel free to reach out any time with questions, for additional resources or information, or to talk more via email or phone. I'm looking forward to sharing more handwriting "rules" and strategies soon!

Sincerely,

Erin Palmer



Occupational Therapist

[Picture. Letters Touch Line Movement](#)