

Handwriting

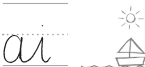
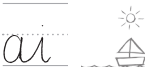




Stage 3

Follow the guidance on pp.25–28 of *Phonics Handbook 2* and use the checklists below to teach joined-up handwriting.

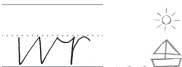
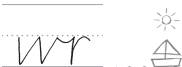




Explain to children that there are two basic joins:

- the arm join (diagonal)
- the washing line join (horizontal).

The arm join has three variations:

- **a.** arm to boat  
- **b.** arm to sun  
- **c.** arm to sister.  

The washing line join has three variations:

- **d.** washing line to boat  
- **e.** washing line to sun  
- **f.** washing line to sister.  

a. The arm to boat join

The arm join should not be too straight or too curly.
(This depends on the school's adopted style.)

Phrase: 'Sweep up your arm to touch... (say letter).'

Checklist

- ✓ write the first letter carefully
- ✓ make the curl gentle – not too round, not too spiky
- ✓ make the 'arm' sweep up in a gentle curve
- ✓ write the downstroke of the second letter very straight

Use for joining:

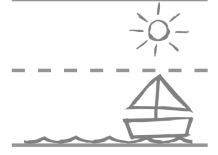
a c d e h i k l m n t u

to:

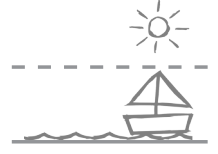
e i j m n p r u v w x y z

See examples on the following pages.

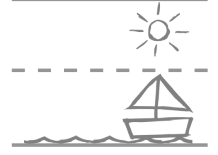
ai ae aj am ar



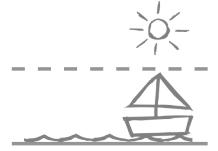
ci ce cu cy



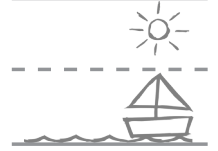
di dr dy de



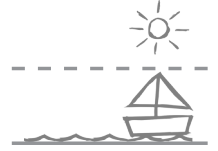
ee ei em er



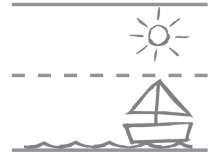
he hu hi hy



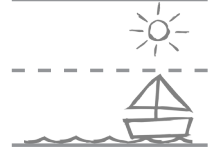
ie ir ip iw iy



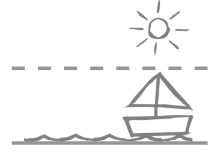
ke ki kn ky



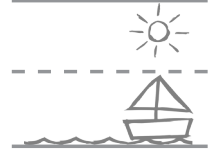
le lm lu ly



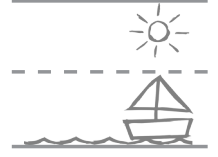
me mi mm mu



ne ni nu ny



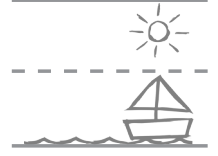
te ti tu ty tw



ui ue up



uw uy



b. The arm to sun join

The arm should meet the next letter just over halfway up. It should sweep smoothly into the sun letter.

Phrase: 'Sweep up your arm to touch... (say letter) and shoot up to the top.'

Checklist

- ✓ write the first letter carefully
- ✓ make the join like an arm – not too straight, not too round
- ✓ continue the line up to the top of the next letter
- ✓ write the second letter carefully

Use for joining:

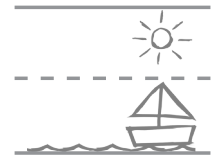
a e i d h k l m n t u c

to:

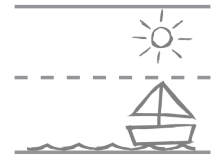
b h k l t

Examples:

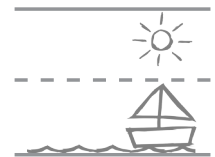
ab ah ak al



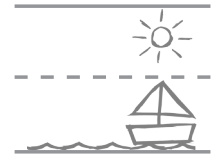
at eb eh ek el



et ib ik il it



al ch mb th da



c. The arm to sister join

The arm should touch the sister letter's forehead and then go to the back of the head as though resting a hand.

Phrase: 'Sweep up your arm to touch... (say letter) and stroke the sister's head.'

Checklist

- ✓ write the first letter carefully
- ✓ make the join like an arm – not too straight, not too round
- ✓ continue the arm join over the head of the 'sister' letter – as though a hand is stroking back her hair
- ✓ go back along the head
- ✓ write the second letter carefully

Use for joining:

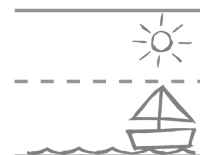
a c d e h i k l m n t u

to:

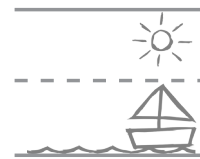
a d g c o q

Examples:

ic ka ko la



ld lo



d. The washing line to boat join

The washing line should not be too droopy (the clothes get dirty) or too tight (the line breaks in the wind).

Phrase: 'Not too droopy, not too tight.'

Checklist

- ✓ write the first letter carefully
- ✓ make the join like a washing line – not too droopy or too tight
- ✓ write the second letter carefully

Use for joining:

v w r f o

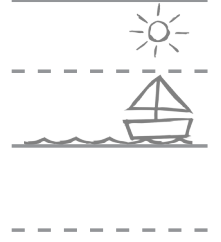
to:

i j m n p r u v w x y z e

Examples:

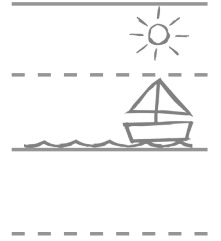
The handwriting practice sheet consists of three rows of four-letter words on a four-line grid (top, middle-dotted, bottom, and descender). The words are: *vi* *vu*, *wi* *wr* *wy* *we*, and *ri* *rr* *ry* *re*. The first row shows the letters written in a simple, slightly droopy style. The second row shows the letters written in a more balanced, 'washing line' style. The third row shows the letters written in a more balanced, 'washing line' style. A circular callout with the text 'drop further' and an arrow points to the top of the 'e' in the second row. Another circular callout with the text 'drop further' and an arrow points to the top of the 'e' in the third row. To the right of each row is a small illustration of a boat on water with a sun above it, representing the 'washing line to boat join'.

fi fr fn fu fy



oi or ow ou oy

start



e. The washing line to sun join

The washing line should meet the next letter just over halfway up. It should sweep smoothly into the tall letter.

Phrase: 'Not too droopy, not too tight – and shoot up the next letter.'

Checklist

- ✓ write the first letter carefully
- ✓ make the join like a washing line – not too droopy or too tight
- ✓ continue the washing line up to the top of the next letter
- ✓ write the second letter carefully

Use for joining:

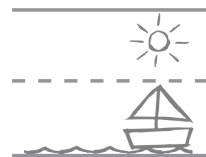
v w r f o

to:

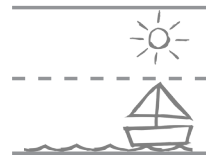
b h k l t

Examples:

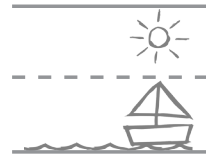
wh wl rb



rh rl fl ob



oh ol ot



f. The washing line to sister join

The washing line should touch the sister letter's forehead and then go to the back of the head – as though stroking back the sister's hair.

Phrase: 'Not too droopy, not too tight – and stroke the sister's head.'

Checklist

- ✓ write the first letter carefully
- ✓ make the join like a washing line – not too droopy or too tight
- ✓ stroke back the sister's hair
- ✓ write the second letter carefully

Use for joining:

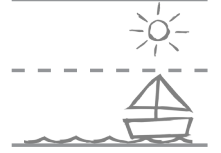
v w r f o

to:

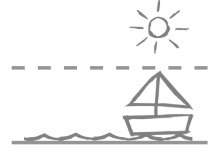
a d g c o q

See examples on the following page.

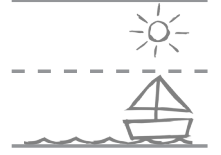
va vo



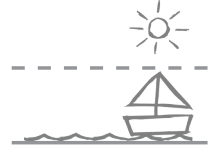
wa wo



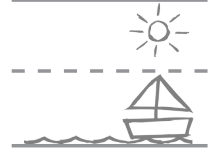
ra ro rd rg



fa fo



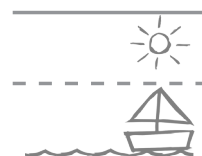
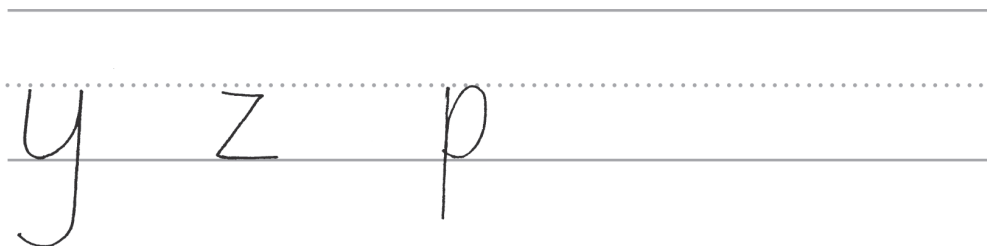
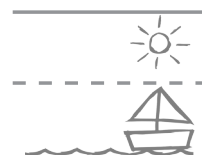
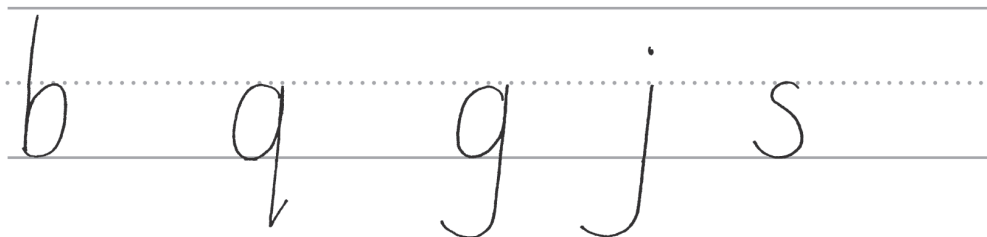
oa oo od og



Letters that do not join to others (if using a non-curly style)

Schools need to decide whether or not to join the following letters: **b q g j s y z** onto the next letter. (Some schools only teach 'bi' and 'si' joined.)

It is not a statutory requirement of the 2014 National Curriculum that children use joined-up handwriting until Year 3, although it notes that children 'should be taught to write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation'.



If you decide to teach children to join these letters, here are examples of the joins:

