

To be added to the Utah Core Standards, Appendix A, page 30:

DEVELOPMENT OF HANDWRITING SKILLS

Handwriting—the actual act of writing—should be taught in a systematic and explicit way, beginning with early literacy instruction in kindergarten and continuing through the development of fluent handwriting. In handwriting, fluency is defined as legibility, speed, and accuracy. Fluency in handwriting is an integral foundation skill in literacy development; it is also critical in creating students who are career and college ready. The Utah Core Standards require students to produce coherent and meaningful writing in a variety of genres and for a variety of audiences. Fluent handwriting and handwriting instruction have been directly linked to improved writing quality, quantity, and speed, all essential for effective composition (Berninger, 2012).

Fluent handwriting is critical to the production of high quality, creative, and well-structured text. Developing handwriting fluency reduces the cognitive load of getting letters and words down on a page; students who struggle with handwriting will not have sufficient cognitive resources to effectively and efficiently focus on ideation, pragmatic awareness, and sensitivity to genre (Christensen, 2009). Writing is an integrated skill, combining both motor skills and orthographic memory. Orthographic-motor integration refers to the ability to recall and produce groups of letters and words (Berninger, 1994). This skill cannot be duplicated by other methods of written communication, as handwriting requires the writer to mentally code and rehearse the visual representation of patterns of letter in words and to integrate these patterns with motor activities (Berninger, 1994; Christensen, 2009).

Handwriting has a place in a computer-based society; many children who struggle with fluent handwriting may also have difficulty composing on a keyboard (Connelly, Gee, & Walsh, 2007). While keyboarding may be the answer for some students, most students will benefit academically from the process of handwriting. Cunningham and Stanovich (1990) found that handwriting may improve spelling. Explicit instruction in handwriting has been linked to improved word reading for young students (Berninger et al., 2006). Educators supporting struggling writers may start by helping them to improve their handwriting (Cahill, 2009).

While handwriting is practiced daily as students write in classrooms, instruction about the formation of letters to ensure efficiency and correctness is necessary to help students build fluency. However, this should not be an onerous part of the day, but rather built into short periods of instruction during the critical introduction phases. Between 50-100 minutes per week of distributed daily practice using handwriting should occur, with a portion of that time being explicit instructional in the efficient and correct formation of letters and the remaining time being contextual, grade-appropriate application and practice. Students can continue to practice their writing with encouragement to submit final drafts in their best writing or by having opportunities to turn in grade-appropriate work in manuscript or cursive writing.

Proposed LOCATIONS and LANGUAGE

Language Standards K-5

Pages 28 and 30

CONVENTIONS OF STANDARD ENGLISH		
Kindergarten:	Grade 1:	Grade 2:
1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. With guidance and support, identify and write many upper- and lowercase letters, including those in the student's name. b. Use frequently occurring... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Independently identify and legibly write all upper- and lowercase letters (legibility is defined as the letter being recognizable to readers in isolation from other letters in a word). b. Produce grade-appropriate text using legible writing. c. Use common, proper, and... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Fluently, independently, and legibly write all upper- and lowercase letters. b. Produce grade-appropriate text using legible writing. c. Understand that cursive is different from manuscript. d. Use collective nouns...
Grade 3:	Grade 4:	Grade 5:
1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Independently and legibly write all upper- and lowercase cursive letters. b. Produce grade-appropriate text using legible cursive writing. c. Explain the function... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Fluently, independently, and legibly write all upper and lower case cursive letters. b. Produce grade-appropriate text using legible cursive writing. c. Use relative pronouns... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Maintain legible and fluent cursive writing. b. Explain the function of...

Reading Standards K-5

Page 12, CCR Anchor Standards for Reading page under the “Note on range and content of student Reading”

The Utah Core Standards include an expectation that students will be introduced to cursive letters and words no later than grade three in order to develop sufficient recognition and reading fluency of cursive text by the end of grade five.

Pages 13 and 14: Reading Standards for Literature K-5

RANGE OF READING AND LEVEL OF TEXT COMPLEXITY		
Kindergartners:	Grade 1 students:	Grade 2 students:
10. Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.	10. With prompting and support, read prose and poetry of appropriate complexity for grade 1.	10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories and poetry, in the grade 2-3 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.
Grade 3 students:	Grade 4 students:	Grade 5 students:
10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, at the high end of the grade 2-3 text complexity band independently and proficiently. Recognize and begin to read documents written in cursive.	10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, in the grade 4-5 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. Continue to develop fluency when reading documents written in cursive.	10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, at the high end of the grade 4-5 text complexity band independently and proficiently. Continue to develop fluency when reading documents written in cursive.

Pages 15 and 16: Reading Standards for Informational Text K-5

RANGE OF READING AND LEVEL OF TEXT COMPLEXITY		
Kindergartners:	Grade 1 students:	Grade 2 students:
10. Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.	10. With prompting and support, read informational text appropriately complex for grade 1.	10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, in the grade 2-3 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.
Grade 3 students:	Grade 4 students:	Grade 5 students:
10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, at the high end of the grade 2-3 text complexity band independently and proficiently. Recognize and begin to read documents written in cursive.	10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, in the grade 4-5 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. Continue to develop fluency when reading documents written in cursive.	10. By the end of the year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, at the high end of the grade 4-5 text complexity band independently and proficiently. Continue to develop fluency when reading documents written in cursive.

References

Appendix A, page 39

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