

# Cursive Handwriting Evaluation For Skill Development



## Looking for a way to motivate handwriting improvement for applied work?

- A. Review the rubric form (page 2) with your student discussing and clarifying the listed terms, categories, and achievement levels.
- B. Have each student apply the form to a chosen handwritten paper, selecting his/her level of proficiency in all categories, sign and hand in.
- C. Teacher then reviews the sample to compare with the student evaluation.
  1. If they agree, the evaluation stands and a grade may be derived from it.
  2. If they don't agree a teacher-student conference should be held to help improve the student's understanding and objectivity.

## Definition:

A rubric is a scaled set of criteria that clearly defines a range of acceptable and unacceptable performance for the student and teacher.

## Criteria should include:

- A. A definition of the evaluation task setting forth the content to be covered, knowledge or skills to be demonstrated, and context in which they are to occur.
- B. Making public what is being judged, and standards of acceptable performance.
- C. Defining what the outcome of the task will look like.
- D. Establishing anchors for performance with these four common elements:
  1. Dimensions or traits that identify the essential attributes of the desired performance.
  2. Definitions which clarify the meaning of each dimension.
  3. Scale - numbers, objectives or both to characterize student performance.
  4. Standards to define the level of performance required on the scale.

# Handwriting Legibility - Cursive

5 = Advanced, 4 = Proficient, 3 = Basic, 2 = Below Basic, 1 = Off Task

## FORM - Subskill # 1

- 5 All letters are easy to read
- 4 Most letters are easy to read
- 3 Many letters are easy to read
- 2 Some letters are easy to read
- 1 Few letters are easy to read

## SLANT - Subskill # 2

- 5 All letters slant forward evenly
- 4 Most letters slant forward evenly
- 3 Many letters slant forward evenly
- 2 Some letters slant forward evenly
- 1 Few letters slant forward evenly

## SIZE - Subskill # 3

- 5 All letters show good size and proportion
- 4 Most letters show good size and proportion
- 3 Many letters show good size and proportion
- 2 Some letters show good size and proportion
- 1 Few letters show good size and proportion

## SPACING - Subskill # 4

- 5 All letters and words are spaced evenly
- 4 Most letters and words are spaced evenly
- 3 Many letters and words are spaced evenly
- 2 Some letters and words are spaced evenly
- 1 Few letters and words are spaced evenly

## Smooth Rhythm - Subskill # 5

- 5 All letters show smooth traces without patching or erasing
- 4 Most letters show smooth traces without patching or erasing
- 3 Many letters show smooth traces without patching or erasing
- 2 Some letters show smooth traces without patching or erasing
- 1 Few letters show smooth traces without patching or erasing

## Control - Subskill # 6

- 5 Control points are consistent for all letters
- 4 Control points are consistent for most letters
- 3 Control points are consistent for many letters
- 2 Control points are consistent for some letters
- 1 Control points are consistent for few letters

## SPELLING

- 5 All words are spelled correctly
- 4 Most words are spelled correctly
- 3 Many words are spelled correctly
- 2 Some words are spelled correctly
- 1 Few words are spelled correctly

## FLUENCY - Letters per minute

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

## A Handwriting Scale and Demonstration

Cover the bottoms of the letters to focus upon Form, Slant, Size and Spacing. On the rubric form, circle the number that represents your assessment of each skill. Teach the student to use this approach and self-evaluations will likely begin to match yours more closely.

Grade 6  
December 14, 2006

Pietro	Robert	Brenda	Linda
Steven	Greece	India	Amice
driven	dowel	power	speak
trouble	break	broken	bubble
ellect	except	lather	human

Our Evaluation of the sample shown above:

4 Form   4 Slant   3 Size   4 Spacing   4 Rhythm   4 Control   5 Spelling

'Some people think ~~that~~ that only rules can lead you to right thinking, no matter what the results are, from the other hand there are people who judge actions only by the results no matter what the intentions of the action were.  
If we try to find the golden passage between those extremes we should try and see if there are examples for the right way of seeing things ethically.

Our Evaluation of the sample shown above:

2 Form   4 Slant   2 Size   2 Spacing   2 Rhythm   2 Control   4 Spelling\*

\*Please note that legibility makes it difficult at best to judge spelling on this sample. Here we have allowed the student quite a bit of wiggle room since we did not present the writing task.

## **FLUENCY:**

Fluency relates to all subskills listed in the rubric. At what rate can the student write and still maintain acceptable control for legibility? Spelling and vocabulary words offer a great opportunity for this type of assessment. And, the challenge to output the word sequence fluently will enhance internalization.

Choose one or several words from your list. If using several, establish a sequence for the writing. The students will write the word or sequence of words over and over during the time allotted. Start and stop the activity on command in sync with your clock to establish the writing time in minutes. Instruct the pupils to finish the word when you call stop.

Letters Per Minute - a fluency quotient.

Record the start time and the end time.

1. Count to determine the number of letters written.
2. Evaluate to identify letters that are not legible.
3. Count miscues and subtract from the total of letters written.
4. Subtract start time from end time to establish the number of minutes used for the exercise.
5. Divide the number of legible letters by the number of minutes to establish a letters/minute score which can be compared with the result from subsequent timed exercises.

Please Note:

The word-writing task above is a bit limited. Given that the spelling of the target word or words is known and simply repeated, the demand for transcription (guide the pencil or pen to produce the letters) is fairly easy. Changing the task to include a simultaneous text generation challenge would offer a different sort of measure more in line with the long term goal of instruction.

For example:

You might ask the student to use each of the target words in a sentence to illustrate meaning. The demand for choosing words to support the idea, spelling them and composing the sentence adds an additional level of difficulty. A comparison of the scores for the two types of activities might also prove interesting over time.

A special set of reproducibles is available free for use with students in grade four or above. High frequency words are presented with count on each of 12 work sheets. Complete instructions are included in the pdf file also. The tool is provided only by email attachment. Again, the material is free on request. Send an email request to Rand Nelson <mrpencil@peterson-handwriting.com> to request the "Fluency Project" material. The file will be attached to a reply. Please put Word Masters or Fluency Project in the subject line to assure it stands out. You must have Acrobat Reader to open the file and print the pages. Acrobat Reader is available free from adobe.com if you don't have the program.