



Dear Families,

In our classroom, we spend time practicing lines and strokes before and alongside learning to form complete letters. You may see your child practicing movements such as down, up, over, around, curve, and slant and wonder why we practice these simple movements instead of moving straight to letters. These strokes are actually the building blocks children use again and again as they learn to write.

Writing a letter requires many skills to work together at once. A child has to remember what the letter looks like, where to begin, which direction to move, how to control the pencil, and the sequence of movements needed to form it. When children become comfortable with individual strokes first, forming letters becomes much more manageable.

Think about a lowercase a. Instead of learning one completely new shape and movement, children can put together familiar strokes such as over, around, and down. As they learn more letters, they begin recognizing these same movements again and again.

Practicing lines and strokes helps children:

- Learn the direction and movement used to form letters
- Develop motor planning and pencil control
- Become familiar with common handwriting movements
- Connect movement words like down, over, around, curve, and slant
- Build toward more confident and automatic handwriting

These movements do not always need to begin with a pencil. Children can practice by skywriting, making large movements on paper, using chalk, tracing in sensory materials, or even drawing with a finger. Starting with larger movements allows children to learn the motion before gradually making it smaller and transferring it to paper and pencil.

At home, simple and playful practice is perfect. Invite your child to make lines, curves, circles, and other strokes with crayons, markers, chalk, paint, or a finger in sand or shaving cream. The goal is not perfect lines. We want children to understand and become comfortable making the movements.

Those simple lines and strokes may not look like handwriting yet, but they are building the movement, control, and confidence children need to become successful writers!



Access the editable version **[HERE](#)**.