

180 DAYS™

Lessons and Activities

Cursive: Beginning

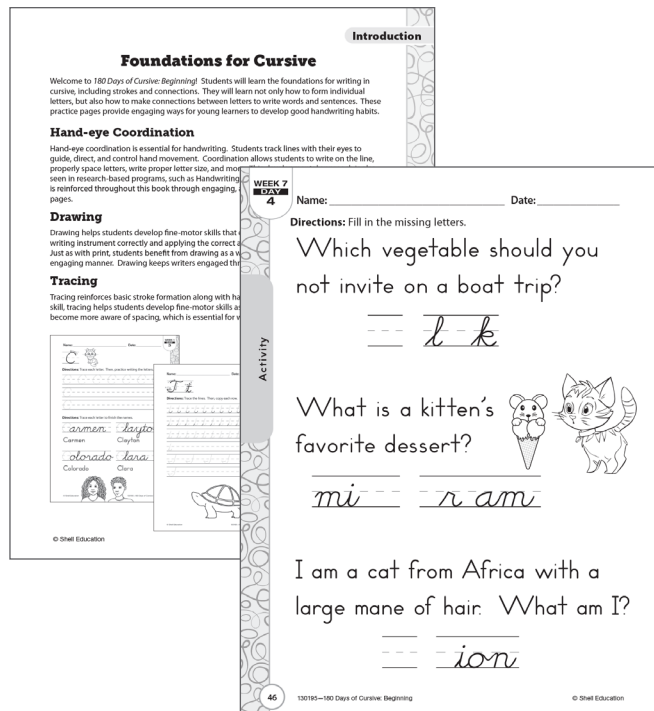
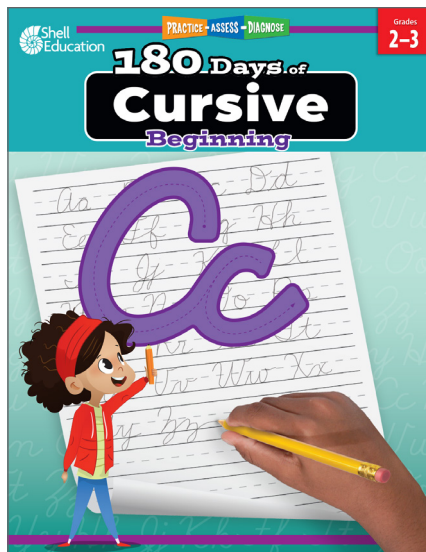
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180 Days of Cursive Beginning



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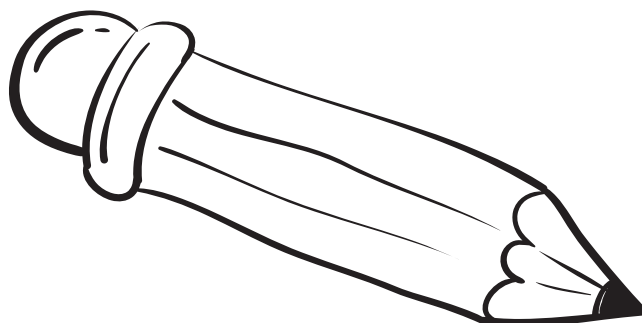
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Foundations for Cursive

Welcome to *180 Days of Cursive: Beginning!* Students will learn the foundations for writing in cursive, including strokes and connections. They will learn not only how to form individual letters, but also how to make connections between letters to write words and sentences. These practice pages provide engaging ways for young learners to develop good handwriting habits.

Hand-eye Coordination

Hand-eye coordination is essential for handwriting. Students track lines with their eyes to guide, direct, and control hand movement. Coordination allows students to write on the line, properly space letters, write proper letter size, and more. This developmental approach is also seen in research-based programs, such as Handwriting Without Tears. Hand-eye coordination is reinforced throughout this book through engaging, age-appropriate activities and practice pages.

Drawing

Drawing helps students develop fine-motor skills that extend to handwriting, such as holding a writing instrument correctly and applying the correct amount of force and speed to mark paper. Just as with print, students benefit from drawing as a way to build motor control in a fun and engaging manner. Drawing keeps writers engaged through fun activities and practice pages.

Tracing

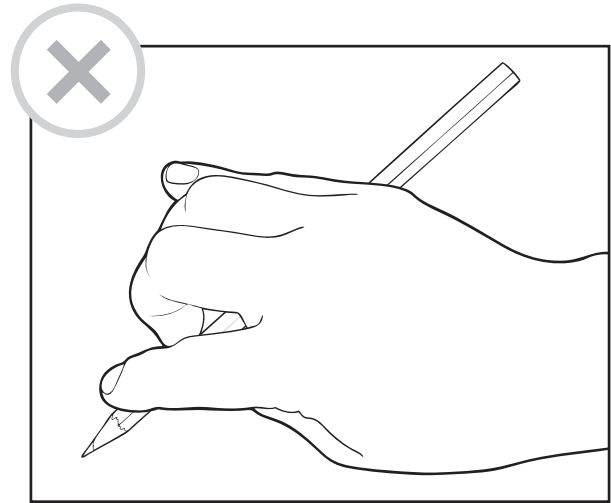
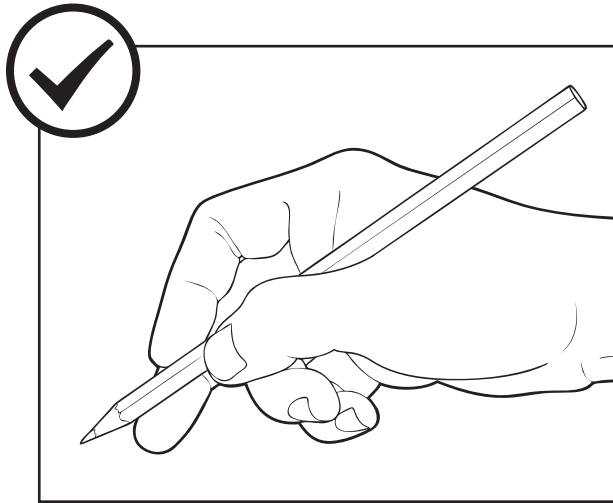
Tracing reinforces basic stroke formation along with hand-eye coordination. As a fine-tuning skill, tracing helps students develop fine-motor skills as they practice cursive. Students also become more aware of spacing, which is essential for writing well in cursive.

[illegible]

Getting Ready to Write

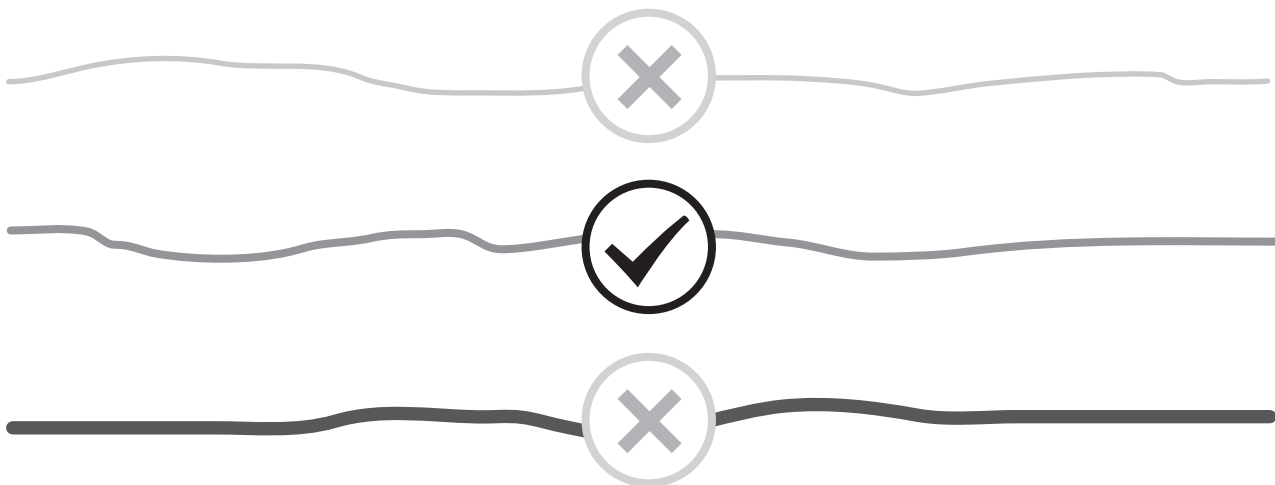
Pencil Grip

Students will naturally find their dominant hand as they learn to properly grip writing instruments. Help students decide which hand is more comfortable to write with, and guide them to alternate hands if they show no clear preference. Teach students a pencil grip with their pointer finger on the top, thumb on the side, and three fingers below the pencil to support the grip. Encourage students to use this pencil grip as they work through the pages of the book.



Pencil Weight (Writing Too Hard or Too Soft)

Students should press down on the pencil with medium weight. Demonstrate the proper pressure to use when writing—not too hard and not too soft. Bring students' attention to the color of the line when the correct weight is used.



Letter Spacing

Teach students proper letter spacing within a word and between words in a sentence. While cursive letters within a word connect, each letter should be defined and each connecting stroke should form a cohesive transition. As students grasp spacing within words, demonstrate the required spacing between words. Remind students that there should be no connecting strokes between words, and that there should be a space just like when printing. Reinforce letter spacing as students practice writing sentences on the review pages.



Letter Angle

Cursive should be written at a slight angle. Demonstrate writing at a slope for students to observe and encourage them to match the angle of the letters. Show students how to hold the page at an angle with their nondominant hand to help create the proper letter shapes. Encourage students to try different ways of holding the page to find the most comfortable position for writing—left-handed and right-handed students may benefit from holding the book at different angles as they write.



Letter Presentation Order

To give students a strong foundation in handwriting, this book builds off the smallest handwriting units—strokes. By presenting letters by strokes used for cursive letters instead of alphabetical order, students can more easily make connections on how to write them. The letter presentation order also takes into account whether the letter is formed with a stroke from the top or bottom. Presenting letters by stroke also gives students ample practice time to create and refine motor control when creating letter strokes. The use of repetition in presenting strokes across multiple weeks provides the practice young learners need to increase proficiency.

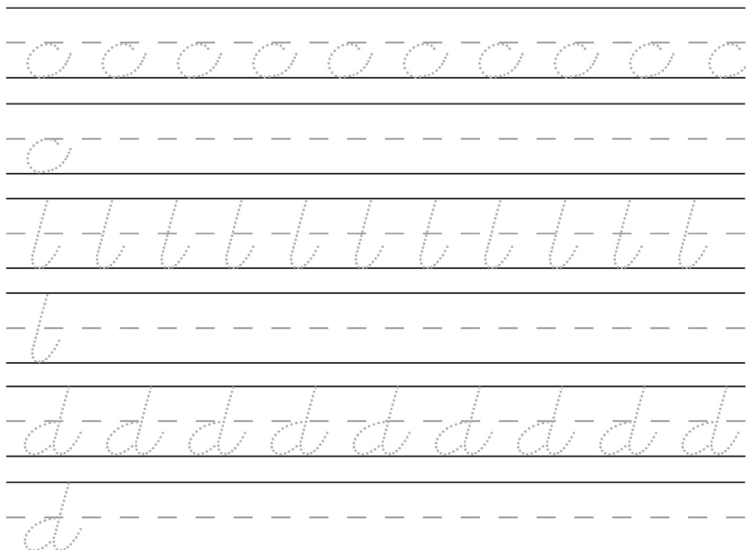
WEEK 3
DAY
1

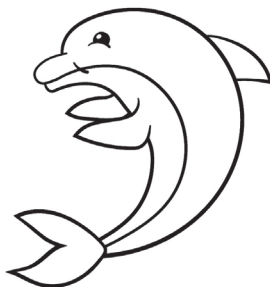
Name: _____ Date: _____



Helpful hint:
 The cursive *d* starts like the *a*. Go higher, then down. That's the way!

Directions: Trace each line. Then, copy the line.





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Directionality and Strokes

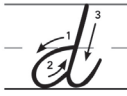
Sight Words

This program takes a holistic approach to handwriting, teaching not only individual letters but also how they fit into words and sentences. High-frequency words pulled from Dr. Edward Fry's Instant Words list and Dr. Edward Dolch's Most Common Words list allow students to practice words they will see and write frequently. The use of these sight words to practice handwriting increases letter awareness as students are exposed to these letters and words in other age-appropriate learning materials.

Cursive Lowercase

WEEK 3
DAY
2

Name: _____ Date: _____




Directions: Trace each letter. Then, practice writing and connecting the letters.

Tracing practice for cursive 'd' on ruled lines: a row of ten connected 'd's, followed by three rows of individual 'd's for tracing.

Directions: Trace each letter to finish the words.

does does	found found
draw draw	hold hold

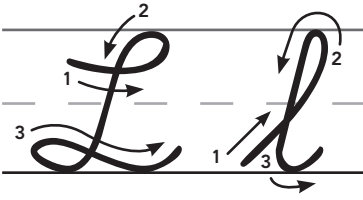


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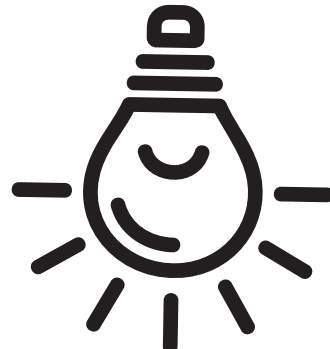
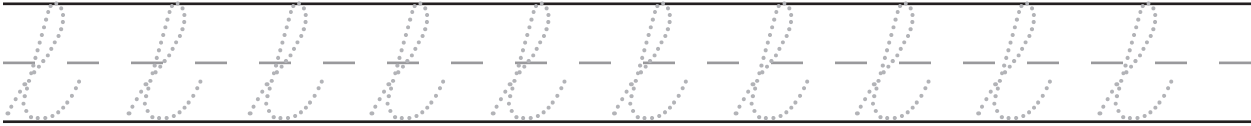
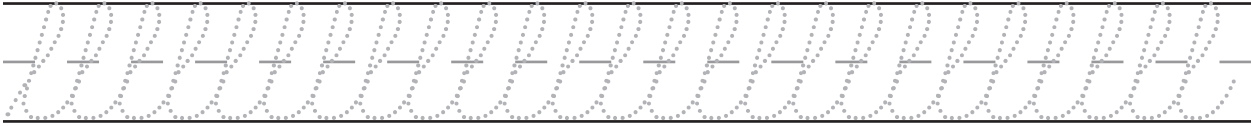
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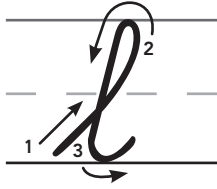
Name: _____ Date: _____



Directions: Trace the loops. Then, copy each row twice.



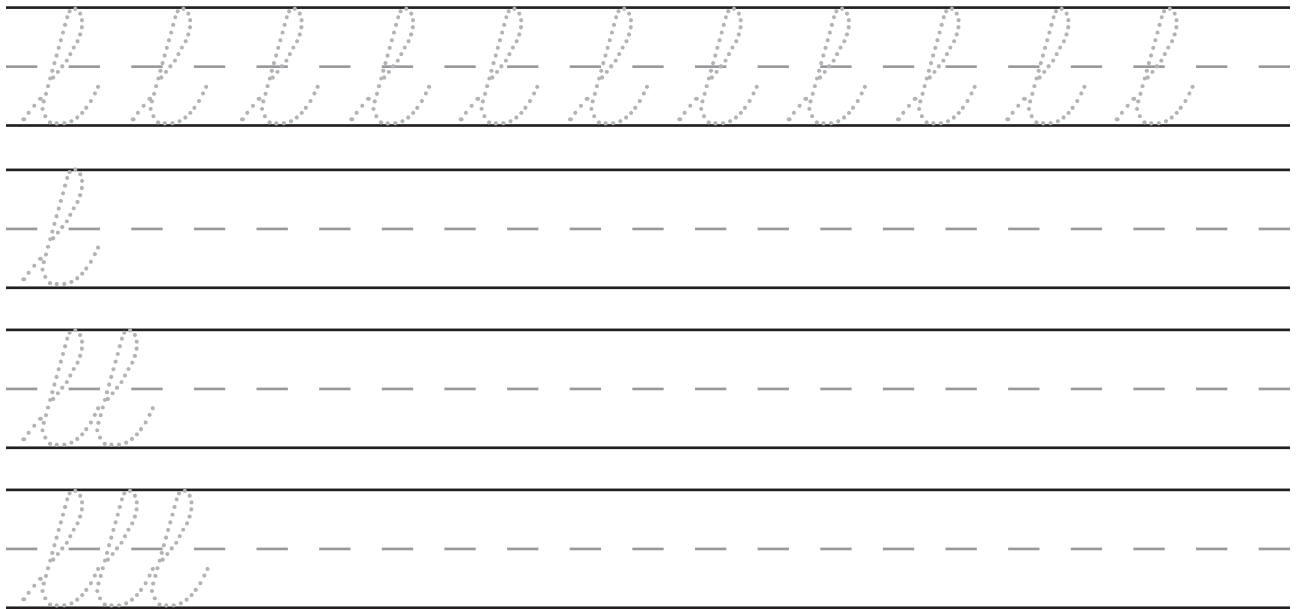
Name: _____ Date: _____



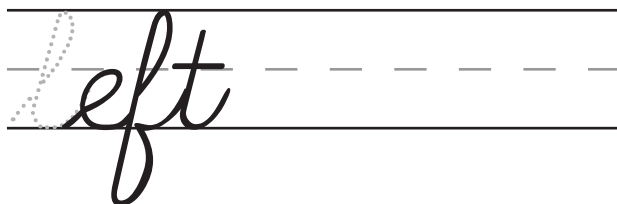
Helpful hint:

Taller loops are super swell. That's how we write the cursive *l*.

Directions: Trace each letter. Then, practice writing and connecting the letters.



Directions: Trace each letter to finish the words.



left



small

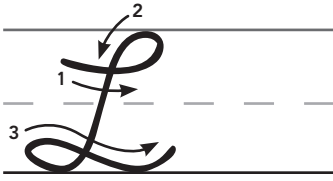
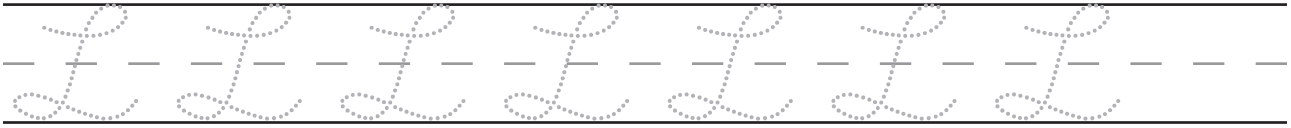


light



only

Name: _____ Date: _____

**Directions:** Trace each letter. Then, practice writing the letter.**Directions:** Trace each letter to finish the names.

Lana



Leti



Leo



Leroy



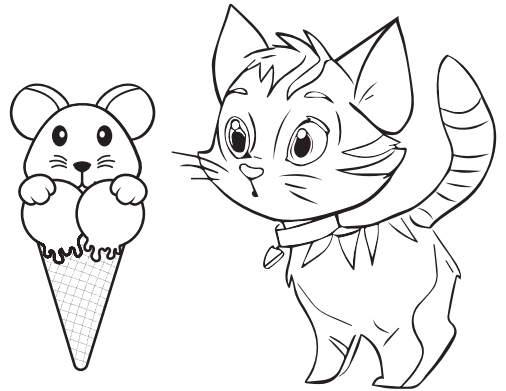
Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Fill in the missing letters.

Which vegetable should you
not invite on a boat trip?

_____ *l k*

What is a kitten's
favorite dessert?



_____ *mi r am*

I am a cat from Africa with a
large mane of hair. What am I?

_____ *ion*

Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Trace each letter. Then, write the letters to fill the lines.

l

L

a

A

g

G

Directions: Trace each letter. Then, write the missing letters to complete the words.

once

on e

always

lwarys

good

ood