

## **Penmanship Instructions for Riggs**

This is a simplified guide for forming the letters in the manner set out in the *Writing and Spelling Road to Reading and Thinking* by the Riggs Institute. It is probably a little different from the way most adults were taught to form their letters. It is helpful to familiarize yourself with the method, so that you can encourage correct procedures during homework. Unless otherwise indicated, the letters are formed in one stroke, without lifting the pencil from the paper. The numbers in the directions below refer to positions on a clock face. Round letters are formed in a counter-clockwise direction.

Correct posture is important for neat penmanship. The child should sit with both feet on the floor, spine straight, with both arms resting on the table or desk. The paper should lie parallel to the writing arm. There should be a little space between the child's body and the desk. This position will provide the most comfort and foster the best performance.

I encourage a three-fingered pencil grip, although a four-fingered grip is not unacceptable. Unusual grips will be gently discouraged as they impede performance and lead to discomfort.

Your child should pronounce the phonograms aloud as they write them during homework. This practice will help to form an engram in your child's neural tissue encouraging long-term memory. It is important that homework be completed in pencil. Homework completed in pen or crayon will be redone during recess. You can help your child by providing a quiet workplace, the appropriate tools, and dispassionate encouragement.

### **Forming the Letters**

/a/ start at 3; go up to touch the dots and round toward the circle hand; touch 10, and go down past 8 to set your letter on the base line; curve up past 4 to 3, pull a line down to the base line.

/c/ start at 2; go up and around to touch the dots, keep going toward the circle hand; go past 10 and curve down past 8 to set your letter on the base line; circle up to 4 and stop.

/d/ start at 3; go up to touch the middle dotted line; curve past 10 and 8 to set your letter on the base line; curve up past 4 and straight past 3 to just below the top line, continue pulling a line down on the same line to the base line.

/f/ begin at 2; go up and around without touching the top line; round to 10 and down, straight past 8 to stop at the base line; pick up your pencil to make a cross from left to right just above the dotted line.

/g/ begin at 3; curve up to the dotted line toward the circle hand; pass 10 and 8 to set the letter on the base line; curve up past 4 to 3, then pull a line straight down below the base line and round from 4 to 8 without touching the lower dotted line.

/o/ follow directions for /a/, but stop at 2.

/s/ start at 2; go up and around toward the circle hand, just touching the dots; go to 10, slide across to 4 and round down and back to 8 resting your letter on the base line.

/qu/ follow directions for /g/, but make a little flag slanting from left to right at the bottom of the straight line. Start the second letter comfortably close to the first letter at the middle dotted line above 10. Pull a line down to 8, curve around touching the base line; go up past 4 and 2 to the middle dotted line; without lifting the pencil, pull a line straight down to the base line.

/b/ start above 10, just below the top line; pull a line straight down to the base line, and go back up on the same line; round clockwise from 10 to the dotted line and then curve to 2 and 4, touching the bottom line, and up to 8.

/e/ start at 9; from left to right, go straight across to 3; go up to 2 touching the dotted line, and continue round past 10 and 8; touch the bottom line, and go up to 4.

/h/ follow directions for /b/, but from 2, pull a line straight down to the bottom line.

/i/ start at the middle dotted line; pull a straight short line to the base line. Pick up your pencil, and dot your letter just above the middle line.

/j/ start above 2 at the dotted line, and pull a line straight down past the base line about halfway to the lower dotted line; curve from 4 to 8. Lift your pencil, and make a dot just above the middle dotted line.

/k/ start above 10, just below the top line, and pull a line straight down to the bottom line. Pick up your pencil; start at the dotted line above 2 to make a slanted line back and down to the left; stop at your straight line at a point halfway between the middle dotted line and the bottom line, then slant back from left to right past 4 to the bottom line.

/l/ follow directions for the first line of /k/.

/m/ start above 10 at the dotted line; pull a line to the bottom line; continue straight back up the same line rounding from 10 to 2, just touching the dotted line. Go straight down to the base line and repeat.

/n/ follow directions for the first hump of /m/.

/p/ start above 10 at the dotted line, and pull a line straight down past the bottom line to a point just above the lower dotted line. Continue straight back up the same line to 10 below the dotted line; round up to the dots and down past 2 and 4, continue around to 8, making your letter sit on the base line.

/r/ start above 10 at the dotted line; pull a line straight down to the base line; go back up the same line, and round from 10 to touch the dots, and down to 2.

/t/ start at 12 just below the top line and pull a line straight down to the bottom line. Finish as for /f/.

/v/ start at the middle dotted line just above 10; make a slanted line from left to right down to 6 on the bottom line; continue with a slanted line up, past 2, to the dotted line.

/w/ follow the directions for /v/ and repeat.

/x/ begin above 10 at the dotted line, and make a slanted line from left to right past 4, stopping on the bottom line. Start again at the dotted line above 2, crossing the first line at its center, and continuing to the bottom line.

/y/ start at the dotted line above 10; pull a line toward the bottom line, round from 8 to 4, touching the bottom line, continue pulling a line straight down past the bottom line, and round from 4 to 8 just above the lower dotted line.

/z/ start a 10 above the dotted line; make a straight line from left to right to a point above 2; slant a line back to the left below 8 to the bottom line; go back from left to right on the bottom line to a point below 4.