



# Contents

Using This Book . . . . . 4

Letter Formation Rhymes to Remember . . . . . 6

## **Lessons**

**1** A Drumroll Please . . . . . 8

**2** The Cursive Tree . . . . . 10

**3** Lowercase Match-Up . . . . . 12

**4** Uppercase Match-Up . . . . . 14

**5** Height Chart . . . . . 16

**6** Climbing Cursive Mountain . . . . . 18

**7** Loop-de-Loop! . . . . . 20

**8** Sign Up! . . . . . 22

**9** The Race is On . . . . . 24

**10** Handwriting Hospital . . . . . 26

**11** Capital Communication . . . . . 28

**12** Capital Cursive Café . . . . . 30



# Using This Book

Welcome to *Overhead Teaching Kit: Cursive Handwriting Lessons*! These lessons and accompanying overlays are designed to enrich and enliven your cursive handwriting instruction—and make the most of whole-group learning.

Teaching with the overhead projector is a great way to bring the whole class together and engage them in learning. Children can watch you as you model the formation of each letter in an engaging, whole-class activity. Each transparency has a companion page in the book, so you can copy the sheets onto regular paper and have children work along with you at their desks.

Almost all of the step-by-step lessons in this book can be used to teach or reinforce any letter of the alphabet, lower- or uppercase, and they're open-ended enough for you to tailor them to the needs of your group. You'll also find suggestions for extending each lesson.

## Helpful Hints

- ✓ Before presenting each lesson, distribute copies of the overhead sheet to each child so they can work along with you. Each child will need a pencil with an eraser.
- ✓ Try using different color markers to get kids to focus on different letters, or different strokes within a letter.
- ✓ Children should have a model of the cursive alphabet at their desk (such as a sticker-strip), or a cursive alphabet frieze should be visible. If none are available, copy pages 6 and 7 for each child.



- ✓ Present letters by similarity of formation, lowercase before uppercase.  
A suggested sequence is:

### Lowercase

Undercurves (“Mountain Climbers”) have uphill beginnings:

*i, t, u, w, e, l, b, h, k, r, s, f, p, j* (Lesson 6)

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Downcurves (“Downhill Daredevils”) have downhill beginnings:

*a, d, g, q, o, c* (Lesson 9)

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Overcurves (“Bumpy Riders”) have over-the-hill “lumps”:

*n, m, v, x, y, z* (Lesson 9)

### Uppercase (Lessons 11 & 12)

Backward Ovals (“Backward Balloons”) have round,  
right-to-left downhill beginnings:

*A, O, D, C, E*

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Overcurve Loops (“Lefties”) start with a swing to the left:

*L, J*

---

Loop Curves (“Curly Qs”) have “fancy” beginnings:

*N, M, W, H, K, X, U, Y, V, Q, Z*

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Forward Ovals (“Kickstarts”) are named for their little beginning stroke:

*P, R, B*

---

Doublecurve Loops (“Tabletops”) have flat tops:

*T, F*

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Undercurve Loops (“Capital Mountain”) share the same  
formation as lowercase “Mountain Climbers”:

*G, S, L*



# Letter Formation Rhymes to Remember

## Lowercase Letters

As you present each lowercase letter, a mnemonic rhyme will help children, especially auditory learners, remember its formation. “Narrate” as you demonstrate each letter for the group.

*a* Attention **a**ll autos!  
Loop back **a**ll the way.  
Now you’re ready  
to close up **a**.

*b* Climb up to the top,  
loop down and tuck in.  
Hold out your hand,  
and words can **b**egin!

*c* Cars **c**ruise backwards  
down **c**urvy **c**.  
They **c**limb back up,  
then **c** is free.

*d* Dash down **d**,  
then up a bit.  
Drop **d**own to the ground,  
and make a **d**ip!

*e* Climb up **e**,  
and loop around.  
Swoop down and up  
and graze the ground.

*f* Climb up **f**,  
the longest of all.  
The higher the climb,  
the deeper the **f**all.

*g* Slide down and close,  
then down you **g**o.  
Gain some speed,  
and watch **g** grow!

*h* Climb up and climb down,  
the whole **h**eight you’ll fill.  
Then add a **h**ump,  
because **h** has a **h**ill.

*i* Climb up halfway,  
then slide down.  
Dot your **i**  
with something round.

*j* Climb up **j**,  
then **j**ourney down.  
Jump on out,  
the dot’s my crown.

*k* Climb up the **k**,  
and drop straight down.  
**k** has a tummy,  
and a little ball gown.

*l* Climb up **l**ong,  
and loop down **l**ow.  
Lovely **l**,  
lean and narrow.



*m* Lump up and  
over, **m** is **me**.  
n has 2 lumps,  
I have 3.

*n* Lump up and over,  
down again.  
Repeat that and  
you've got an **n**.

*o* Slide down little **o**,  
sitting neatly on land.  
**o** needs someone  
to hold her hand.

*p* Climb up **p**,  
**p** peak up and down.  
Make a loop,  
**p**op off the ground.

*q* Slide down **q**,  
close it tight.  
Dive down **q**uite deep,  
then tuck him in right!

*r* Climb up **r**,  
stop halfway.  
**R**un to the **r**ight,  
then **r**ace away!

*s* Climb up **s**,  
stop halfway.  
Tuck in and under,  
and **s**ail away!

*t* Climb uphill,  
close to the **top**.  
Slide back down,  
but don't you stop.  
You're not quite done,  
as you can see,  
**t**ill you put a cross  
across your **t**!

*u* Climb up **u**  
to the halfway line.  
Slide back down  
and **u**p one more time.

*v* A bumpy start,  
that's little **v**.  
Make a **v**alley  
and hold hands with me.

*w* Climb up **w**,  
just like u.  
But dip down twice  
like a u times two!

*x* Lump up and  
over, up again.  
Cross your **x**, and  
that's the end.

*y* **y** is a u  
with a tail of a g.  
Pour in the top  
**y**ummy cocoa for me!

*z* **z** looks like  
a funny three,  
**z**ipping and **z**ooming  
and very **z**any!

## Uppercase Letters

*A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M,*

*N, O, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, X, Y, Z*

# A Drumroll Please . . .

Use this lesson to introduce any letter! This is a great way to get children excited about practicing rows of letters.

## Skills

- ✓ Letter Identification
- ✓ Visual Discrimination
- ✓ Writing Practice

## Materials

- \* Overlay Sheet #1
- \* Dry-erase markers
- \* Reproducible (page 9) for each child

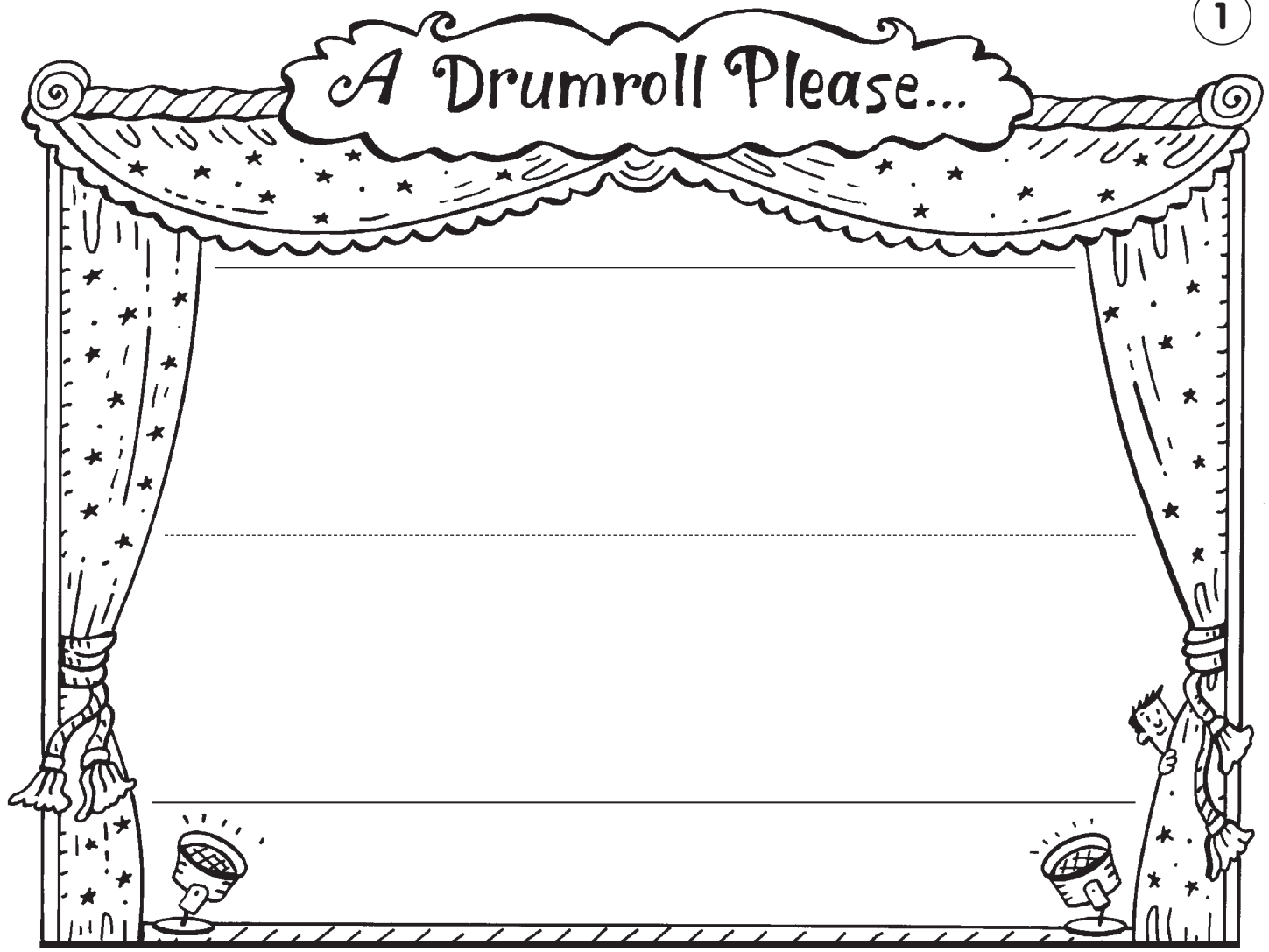
## Directions

- 1 Place the “A Drumroll Please . . .” overlay on the overhead. Ask children what they see, and what they think you might write on the “stage.” You might even invite children to make a soft drumroll sound on their desks, using their fingers!
- 2 Introduce a letter. In the very beginning of your cursive unit, you’ll want to begin with the simplest lowercase letters (see page 5). Write the letter on the lines within the curtains and ask children which letter they think it is you’ve written.
- 3 Once children have guessed correctly, erase the letter and write it again, this time using the “rhyme to remember” mnemonic (see page 6). Invite them to write the letter on their own papers.
- 4 Have children practice the letter on the write-on lines on their reproducible pages. After children seem comfortable with forming the letter, invite volunteers to come to the overhead and make “their best letter” until the first practice line is filled with the target letter. You might choose children whose names contain that letter.
- 5 On the second and third write-on practice lines, write words beginning with the target letter (ask children to provide the words).



## To Extend the Lesson

- Play “Who Am I?” by writing the letter you are introducing very slowly on the lines. Stop at various points and invite children to guess which letter it is you’re forming.
- Invite children to write the letters in the air before they write on their pages.
- For more advanced children, use this overlay to practice the more difficult letters. Or, have a child introduce a letter to the group.



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**Words with this letter:**

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# The Cursive Tree

Give kids an overview of the entire cursive alphabet, at the very beginning of your cursive instruction.

## Skills

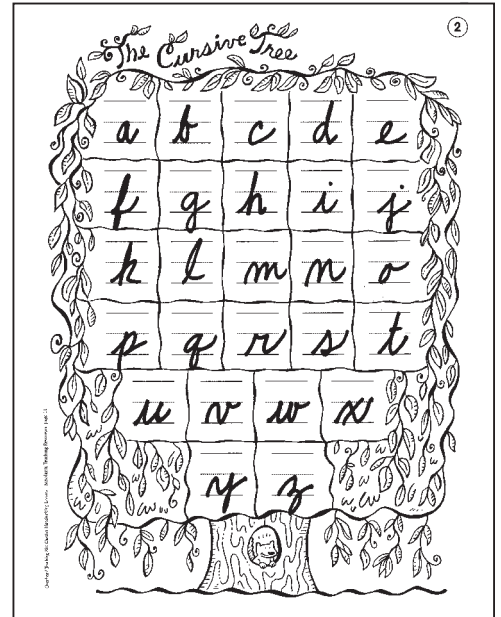
- ✓ Letter Recognition
- ✓ Alphabetizing
- ✓ Writing Practice

## Materials

- \* Overlay Sheet #2
- \* Dry-erase markers
- \* Reproducible (page 11) for each child

## Directions

- 1 Place “The Cursive Tree” overlay on the overhead and ask children, “What do you suppose we will put in these boxes?” Once they guess “letters,” ask children why they think the tree has so many vines. Guide them to understand that cursive writing uses one continuous line, as opposed to printing.
- 2 Beginning with the first box, ask children to name the first letter in the alphabet. Once the letter has been named, write its lowercase cursive form in the box.
- 3 Continue pointing to boxes and having children provide the letters. Depending on your children’s levels, you might invite one child at a time to come to the overhead and write the letter. Children can write the letters themselves on their reproducible pages.
- 4 Once the tree is complete, point to letters randomly and have children name each letter. Or, have a child come to the overhead and be the “pointer.” How fast can kids recognize each letter?
- 5 Repeat with uppercase letters.



## To Extend the Lesson

- ✿ Erase some of the letters and ask children which are missing. Invite a volunteer to come to the overhead and rewrite the missing letters.
- ✿ Give kids jump ropes or red vine licorice and invite them to form letters with the “vines.”

