

## Kinetic Letters®: Programme overview

Kinetic Letters® is a handwriting programme for use in primary and secondary schools.

Using four main threads of

- Making bodies stronger,
- Holding the pencil,
- Learning the letters, and
- Flow and fluency,

it enables children to develop legible handwriting that is produced quickly and automatically. With the development of automaticity, handwriting becomes a valuable tool and not a hindrance to learning.

The Kinetic Letters® font covers all the letters in the alphabet and is based on a set of rules that have been made as simple as possible to enable fast learning. The order in which letters are taught recognizes the cognitive and physical development of children (and so may differ from the phonics letter-learning order).

The programme can be used with any reading programme including phonics. Initially reading and writing are taught separately (as recommended by phonics programmes); later on, reading and writing are combined.

*Strength:* Writing is a fine finger operation; children must have core body and arm strength to be able to control their fingers precisely.

*Pencil hold:* The pencil/pen grip must be comfortable to allow writing for long periods (eg exams often last for hours). Pens and pencils with a triangular cross-section assist in developing the correct hold.

*Letter formation:* The movements to form the letters begin with whole body movements and progress through writing in sand trays to writing on whiteboards and finally writing on paper. In Kinetic Letters®, all the letters and numbers are formed by one of two monkeys, a brave one (Bounce) who goes to the top branch of the tree, and a scared one (Skip) who goes to the lower branch.



*Flow and fluency:* Letter movements are minimized to help a fast writing style to develop. There are no lead-in strokes (a waste of time and effort).

There are resources available for parent to purchase from Kinetic Letters® ([sales@kineticletters.com](mailto:sales@kineticletters.com)). These include:


- Whiteboards with the Kinetic Letters® tree logo and lines
- Pencils and whiteboard pens with a triangular cross-section
- Playing cards with all the letters and their method of formation
- Pupil books with exercises
- Story books explaining how each of the letter groups is formed.

# Kinetic Letters® - Helping your child – exercises and pencil hold

## Making bodies stronger


- Use the Animal Positions to help your child build the physical strength for writing  
Eg Lizard position to read, write, colour or for screen time  
Eg Meerkat position for reciting times-tables
- Build strength with floor/chair push-ups, pull-ups on monkey bars, the plank
- Develop dexterity and manipulation using knives & forks, scissors, playdough, plasticine

★ Animal Positions build strength for writing




Meerkat position

How? Kneel upright.  
Arms by sides.




Bear position

How? Legs crossed. Sit upright.  
Hands rest on knees.




Penguin position

How? Feet hip-distance apart.  
Arms by sides.



Lizard position

How? Legs straight and together.  
Arms support upper body  
(elbows under shoulders).



Bare Lion position

How? Back horizontal.  
Arms/thighs vertical.

## Holding the pencil

- Use the Pencil Song to practise Pencil Pick-up and the Pencil Checks
- Use slim, triangular shape pencils and crayons (they help correctly position the 3 Friends and suit the size of children's hands)
- Remind your child to keep checking their 3 Friends Pencil Hold

### The Pencil Song

*To the tune of the Hokey Cokey*



You get your Hol-ding Fin-gers rea-dy and pick your pen - cil up.

You tip it back to lay a-cross your hand.

You put your pil-low fin-ger un-der to keep poor Cur-ly safe

That's your 3 Friends Hold

Whoa! Hol - ding fin-gers op-po-site Can you see some green leaf?

Pil - low fin-ger on-der Pen back, wrist bent, hand rests down

# Kinetic Letters® - Helping your child

## Letter Family groups and their Family Features



<i>Family</i>	<i>Letters</i>	<i>Family Feature</i>
<i>Lower-case letters</i>		
Jumper Family	h n m r b p	Down-bump. Back up. Push over.
Abacadabra Family	c a o d g s q	Pull around and Push, Abacadabra.
Window Cleaner Family	l t i u	Down-bump. Flick (the water off).
Fisher Family	j g y f	Down, on-down and Pull around (to catch the fish).
Special Squirter	e	Push across. Up. Pull around and Push (along the ground).
Slider family	v w x z k	Slide
<i>Upper-case letters</i>		
Straight lined group	I L E F H T	Start with Down-bump.
Curved line group	C O S G Q	Start with Pull around
Lines with Curves group	D P B R J U	Combine Straight lines with Curves
Sliding lines group	A M N W V X Z K Y	Involve Diagonal lines
<i>Numbers</i>		
Pushing numbers	2 3 5 7	Push move helps orientation
Pulling numbers	0 6 9 8 1 4	Pull move helps orientation

**The Tree symbol:** When practising writing, use a writing line and the tree symbol to give a guide for both where the letters start and their proportions and how they sit on / go below the ground line.



## Kinetic Letters<sup>®</sup> - Learning joined writing

Preparation:	3 Friends Pencil Hold Writing position (supported forearm) Position of work (sloped uphill/downhill)
The 7 Fluency Targets that prepare for Joining	Use the strong Animal Positions Correct formation of unjoined letters Correct spacing within/between words Know all the Letter Families by heart

### The Joining programme

- Letters are either Joiners or Breakers (so that joined writing is legible and fast).  
(Breakers are b f g j p s x y and q z r. The rest are Joiners.)
- There are 3 types of letter-joins:
  - Flick-joins (to join from letters that have a Flick-finish e.g. h).
  - Ground-joins (to join from letters that finish on the Ground-line e.g. k).
  - Top-joins (to join from letters that finish at the top of it e.g. w).
- Each weekly focus uses one of the joins with two specific Letter Families:  
e.g. 'Flick-joins from Window Cleaner letters (i, t, l, u) into Jumper letters (h, n, m, r, b, p)'
- Pupils work through 3 levels of Targets:
  1. Join letters into pairs, e.g. in
  2. Join pairs into words, e.g. tin
  3. Join words into sentences, e.g. Put it in a tin.
- For each target, the way to practise it is the same, whether it is a pair, word or sentence:
  - Prepare- Write it *unjoined* (to rehearse letter formation and letter snuggling).
  - Overwrite- Write over the top of these prepared letters several times (to practise movement).
  - Freewrite- Write the joined letters independently (to test if you can, but if not-  
return to Overwrite and try again).

TOP TIP: for Automaticity, repeat Overwrite-Freewrite many times!

