

Dear Family:

A new school year has been launched! This year, I shall be using a program called **Fundations® Level 2**. (You can learn more about it online at www.fundations.com.) Fundations provides a systematic and explicit approach to reading and spelling with phonics. Research indicates that systematic and explicit phonics instruction is effective for all children. We will combine this phonics instruction with the reading of good literature, which is just as important for your child's development.

Research also proves that when a child has a "Coach" in addition to a classroom teacher, the child makes significant progress. Let's be a "team" - I shall be the teacher, and you the Coach.

In order to take on that role, I will send you the necessary tools. You shall be kept informed of what is happening in the classroom and you shall be given suggestions and a guide as to what can be happening at home.

Please read the Fundations letters that I send home. These letters will contain updates, program information, and activity suggestions. Set aside time to do the home activities with your child. Monitor your child's progress and share successes as well as concerns with me. (This pack includes reference material which you will need for upcoming lessons.)

I look forward to a very successful year as we work together with your child!

Sincerely,





You are likely wondering, “What is Foundations®?”

Research indicates that **systematic** and **explicit phonics instruction** is effective for all children. Foundations provides a systematic and explicit approach to reading and spelling with phonics. We will combine this instruction with the **reading of good literature**, which is just as important for your child’s development.

Foundations is systematic

because it follows a very definite sequence for teaching and it follows a very definite procedure to teach those concepts.

Foundations is explicit

because this program does not leave room for guessing. It teaches all concepts directly. The children will review letters and how to form these letters. They will learn sounds using keywords to help them remember. They will soon move on to blend the sounds into words.

As the year progresses, Foundations introduces many aspects of word structure and sentence structure. I shall be sending home guides and activities for all of this.

You are also probably wondering, “How can I become a successful ‘Coach’ in this reading program?”

As a “Coach” you can:

- 1.** Read the Foundations letters that I send home. These letters will contain updates, program information, and activity suggestions.
- 2.** Set aside time to do the home activities with your child.
- 3.** Monitor your child’s progress and share successes as well as concerns with me.

I feel certain that you will find working with your child in Foundations very rewarding. Your child will treasure your involvement!



Help Develop Oral Expression And Vocabulary

You can help your child develop **oral language** (the spoken word) with the following ideas. Do these anytime you are with your child:

1. Encourage your child to answer “wonder” statements.

Say such things as “I wonder why a dog barks.” Or say, “I wonder if Grandpa likes spinach.”

2. Help your child expand his / her vocabulary by rephrasing.

When your child says something such as, “He’s scared,” you could say, “Yes, the dog barks because he is frightened, you are correct!”

3. Ask open-ended questions.

Do not ask, “Are you raking leaves?” (The child would simply answer, “yes.”) Instead, ask, “What are you doing with your rake?” The child will answer you and then you can rephrase the answer to further develop vocabulary (see # 2).

4. Limit the amount of TV

However, if your child watches a children’s program, talk about it (see #'s 1, 2, 3).

5. Provide household props that encourage pretend play.

Use spoons/ pans in the bathtub; cups/ teapots /dolls; small rakes/ shovels. While playing, be sure to talk through your actions (see #'s 1, 2, 3).

Verbally interacting with your child simply means taking every opportunity to talk with your child. With our busy lives, interactions between adults and children are often directive (“do this,” “do that,”) or negative (“stop hitting,” “don’t run.”) Try to break this pattern whenever possible. Both you and the child will have pleasant experiences and you will be helping to develop oral expression and vocabulary.

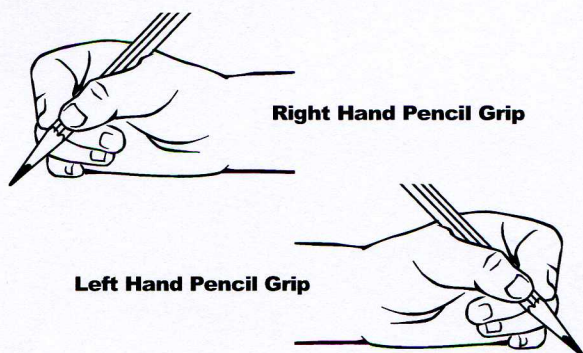


Review Letter Formations With Your Child

Throughout the upcoming year, please encourage your child to write neatly, with proper letter formation and spacing between letters.

Encourage correct pencil grip

Be sure your child has the pencil between the index finger and the thumb and then rests it on the other fingers.



When your child writes, both elbows should be on the table and feet should be on the floor, if possible. You can use an old box under the table if the table is too high. Also, have your child hold the paper with the non-writing hand.

Practice the letter formations

You can practice the letter formations at home just like we are practicing them in school. See the attached writing paper with pictures. We call this our **Writing Grid**. The pictures indicate the names of the lines: the **sky line**, **plane line**, **grass line** and **worm line**.

Say the verbal step-by-step guidelines while your child makes each letter.

As your child writes the letter, guide him or her by reading the directions on the enclosed **Letter Formation Guide**.

Practice some letters each night. Have your child write each of these letters five times on the Writing Grid. Each time, be sure that you read the step-by-step directions to guide the correct letter formation.

Fundations® Six Types of Syllables in English

This year, I will review closed and v-e syllables and teach the six types of syllables in English.

Closed Syllable

- 1 This syllable can only have **one vowel**.
- 2 The vowel is followed by **one or more consonants** (closed in).
- 3 The vowel sound is **short**, marked with a breve (˘).
- 4 This syllable can be combined with other syllables to make **multisyllabic** words.

Examples

up hat ship last

Mark-up Sample

l[˘]ast
C

Vowel-Consonant-e Syllable

- 1 This syllable has a **vowel**, then a **consonant**, then an **e**.
- 2 The first vowel has a **long** sound, marked with a macron (¯).
- 3 The **e** is silent.
- 4 This syllable can be combined with other syllables to make **multisyllabic** words.

Examples

bike ape stove

Mark-up Sample

st[¯]ov[˘]e
v-e

Open Syllable

- 1 This syllable has only **one vowel** which is the last letter in the syllable.
- 2 The vowel sound is **long**, marked with a macron (¯).
- 3 This syllable can be combined with other syllables to make **multisyllabic** words.

Examples

I be shy hi

Mark-up Sample

h[¯]i
O

R-Controlled Syllable

- 1 This syllable contains a single vowel followed by an **r** (**ar, er, ir, or, ur**).
- 2 The vowel is neither **long** nor **short**; it is controlled by the **r**.
- 3 This syllable can be combined with other syllables to make **multisyllabic** words.

Examples

start fir hurt art

Mark-up Sample

art
r

Double Vowel - "D" Syllable

- 1 This syllable contains a **vowel digraph** or a **diphthong**. These are vowel teams.
- 2 This syllable can be combined with other syllables to make **multisyllabic** words.

Vowel Digraph: Two vowels together that represent one sound (ee).

Diphthong: A sound that begins with one vowel sound and glides into another (oi).

Examples

beat feel eight new

Mark-up Sample

new
d

Consonant-le Syllable

- 1 This syllable has only three letters: a **consonant**, an **l**, and an **e**.
- 2 The **e** is silent. It is the vowel. Every syllable needs at least one vowel. The consonant and the l are sounded like a blend.
- 3 This syllable must be the last syllable in a **multisyllabic** word.

Examples

cradle little bubble

Mark-up Sample

bub bl[˘]e
-le

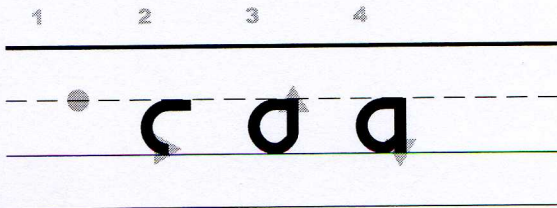
Fundations® Letter Formation Guide

Use the following verbalization to direct students in proper letter formation.

Letter Formation for a

a is a plane line round letter.

It starts on the (plane line).

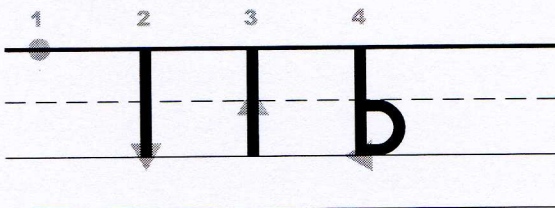


1. Point to the plane line.
2. Go back on the plane line then down and around on the grass line,
3. and up to the plane line.
4. Trace back down to the grass.

Letter Formation for b

b is a sky line letter.

It starts on the (sky line).

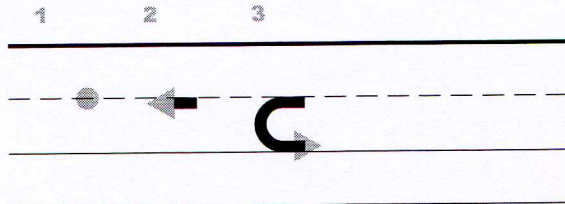


1. Point to the sky line.
2. Go down to the grass line.
3. Trace up to the plane line,
4. and around to the grass line.

Letter Formation for c

c is a plane line round letter.

It starts on the (plane line).

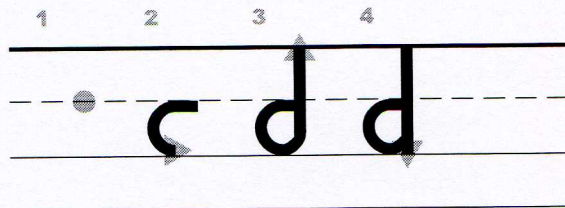


1. Point to the plane line.
2. Start to fly backwards,
3. and go down and around to the grass line.

Letter Formation for d

d is a plane line round letter.

It starts on the (plane line) just like a c.



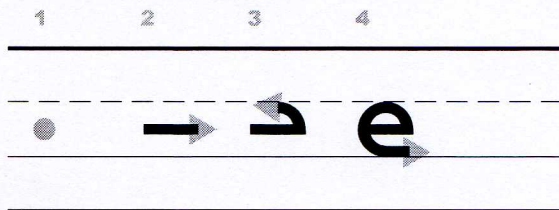
1. Point to the plane line.
2. Go back, down and around to the grass line,
3. all the way back up to the sky line.
4. Trace back down to the grass line.

Fundations® Letter Formation Guide

Use the following verbalization to direct students in proper letter formation.

Letter Formation for e

e is a plane line round letter, but it is special. e starts below the plane line.

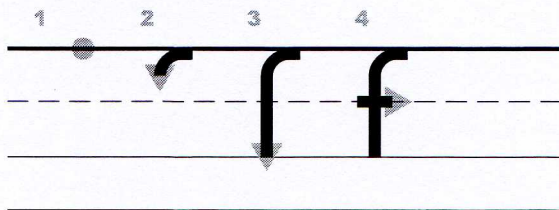


1. Point between the plane line and the grass line.
2. Fly under the plane line.
3. Then go up to the plane line,
4. and around to the grass.

Letter Formation for f

f is a sky line letter.

It starts on the (sky line).

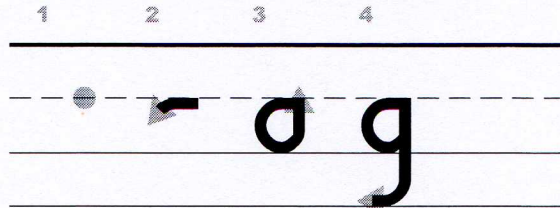


1. Point to the sky line.
2. Trace back on the sky line,
3. and then way down to the grass line.
4. Cross it on the plane line.

Letter Formation for g

g is a plane line round letter.

It starts on the (plane line) just like a c.

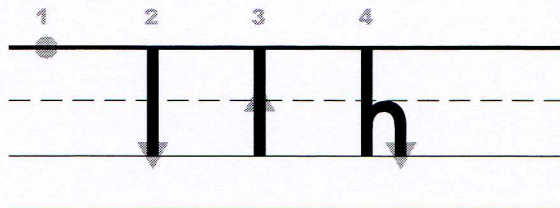


1. Point to the plane line.
2. Trace back on the plane line,
3. down and around all the way back to the plane line.
4. Trace back down all the way to the worm line and make a curve.

Letter Formation for h

h is a sky line letter.

It starts on the (sky line).



1. Point to the sky line.
2. Go down to the grass line.
3. Trace back up to the plane line,
4. and make a hump.

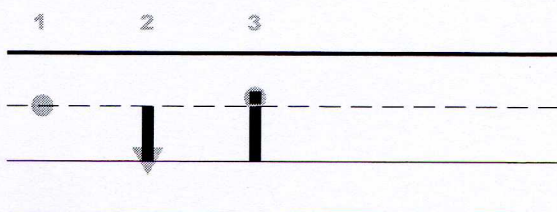
Fundations® Letter Formation Guide

Use the following verbalization to direct students in proper letter formation.

Letter Formation for i

i is a plane line letter.

It starts on the (plane line).

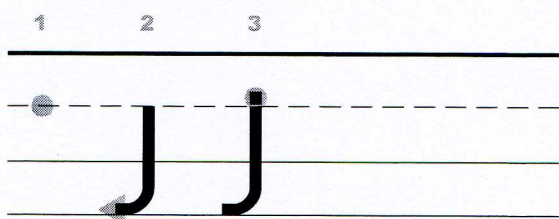


1. Point to the plane line.
2. Go down to the grass line.
3. Add a dot.

Letter Formation for j

j is a plane line letter.

It starts on the (plane line).

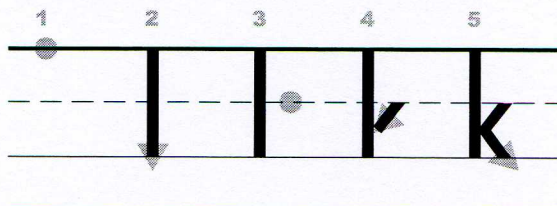


1. Point to the plane line.
2. Go all the way down to the worm line, and make a curve.
3. Add a dot.

Letter Formation for k

k is a sky line letter.

It starts on the (sky line).

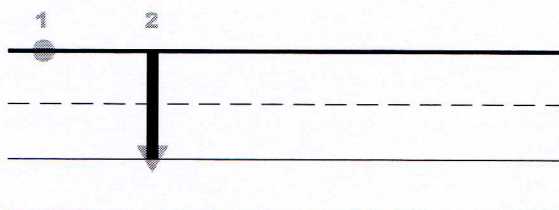


1. Point to the sky line.
2. Go all the way down to the grass line.
3. Point to the plane line and leave a space.
4. Slide over and touch your tall line,
5. and slide back to the grass.

Letter Formation for l

l is a sky line letter.

It starts on the (sky line).



1. Point to the sky line.
2. Go down to the grass and stop.

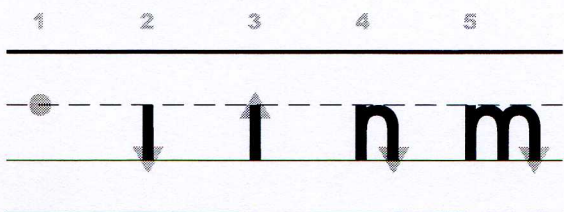
Fundations® Letter Formation Guide

Use the following verbalization to direct students in proper letter formation.

Letter Formation for m

m is a plane line letter.

It starts on the (plane line).

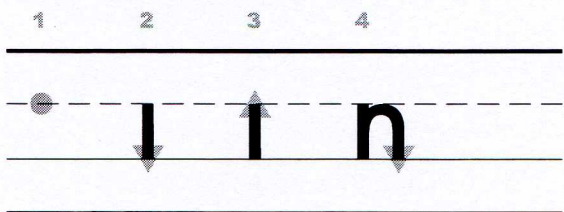


1. Point to the plane line.
2. Go down to the grass line.
3. Trace back up to the plane line,
4. and make a hump,
5. and then back up to the plane line and make another hump.

Letter Formation for n

n is a plane line letter.

It starts on the (plane line).

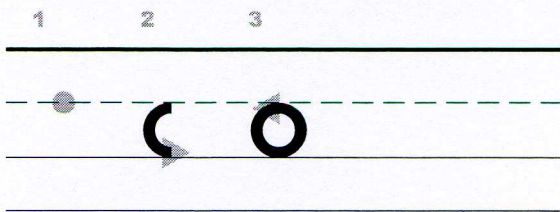


1. Point to the plane line.
2. Go down to the grass line.
3. Trace back up to the plane line,
4. and make a hump.

Letter Formation for o

o is a plane line round letter.

It starts on the (plane line) just like a c.

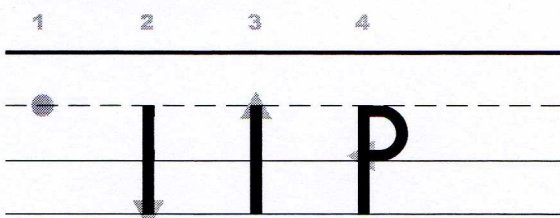


1. Point to the plane line.
2. Trace back, then down to the grass line,
3. and around back up to the plane line.

Letter Formation for p

p is a plane line round letter.

It starts on the (plane line).



1. Point to the plane line.
2. Go down to the worm line.
3. Trace back up to the plane line,
4. and curve all the way around to the grass line.

