

Looking at handwriting

Rationale

It is important to encourage learners to take responsibility for the legibility and regularity of their own handwriting. Legible handwriting creates a good impression in formal and social situations, and particularly in non-electronic job applications. Writing cursive script (joined-up letters) is much quicker and more efficient in the long run.

Aim: To improve learners' handwriting

Can be used: at any point in the course

Activity: Individual work

Focus: Letter formation

Materials: One copy of Worksheet 3.1 per learner

Estimated time: 15–20 minutes

Worksheet 3.1

- 1 Before handing out the worksheet, ask learners to write between five and ten lines on the topic you are studying at the moment. If the worksheet is being used as a stand-alone task, ask learners to write about the perfect meal: describing food, surroundings, company, thoughts and feelings. This could be a meal in the past, or a meal using future forms or conditional sentences.
- 2 Hand out copies of the worksheet and ask learners to look at samples of learners' handwriting A–D and read Exercise 1. They discuss in groups which handwriting is the clearest and why.
- 3 Review adverbs of frequency, if necessary. Check learners understand the criteria in column 1 of the table. Ask them to complete Exercise 2 individually or in pairs or groups. They might notice the following:
Text A: capital and lower-case letters not always used correctly.
Text B: spaces between words are missing.
Text C: some letters are below the line.
Text D: easy to read, but letters are not joined.

It is worth emphasising that Text D is legible, but this is not the most efficient way of writing. The reason for mastering cursive script is to be able to write more quickly.
- 4 Ask learners to look back at the writing which they did in step 1 and use the same criteria to think about their own handwriting. They record the assessment of their own handwriting in the column for Text E. Learners who are confident with their partners could then analyse their partner's text for Text F. Alternatively, a teacher could provide a piece of text in his/her own writing – good or bad! In the latter case, it would be good to include an example of excellent handwriting as well.
- 5 Ask learners to discuss their handwriting with a partner and see if there are any changes they would like to make to improve the legibility. Learners write one or two sentences to record their resolutions in the following format:
I think my handwriting is ... I would like to ...
- 6 Learners rewrite the text they wrote in step 1, using the criteria they would like to develop.

Extension

Put learners into groups. Give each group a sample of handwritten texts and ask them to grade them according to the same criteria – or to generate their own criteria. Learners can use Worksheets 1.1 and 1.2 to help them to improve their handwriting, developing cursive writing, regular letter formation, etc.

Worksheet 3.1 Looking at handwriting

1 Look at texts A–D. What do you think about the handwriting?

A *I wAs lAtE foR Work toDAy.*

B *I was late for work today.*

C *I was late for work today.*

D *I was late for work today.*

2 Look at the texts again and decide which is the easiest to read. Complete the table using these words or numbers.

1 never 2 sometimes 3 usually 4 always

	Text A	Text B	Text C	Text D	Text E	Text F
The letters are the correct size.						
The letters are in the right place on the line.						
Capital and lower-case letters are used correctly.						
All the letters slant in the same direction.						
The letters are joined together.						
There are spaces between words.						
The handwriting is clear and easy to read.						