

Dear Family:

A new school year has been launched! This year, I will be using a program called Foundations® to teach some important basics of reading and spelling. However, I am going to ***need your help***.

We know that when a child has a “**Coach**” in addition to a classroom teacher, the child makes significant progress. We will work together as a “**team**” – I shall be the teacher, and you the coach.

I will do my best to provide you with the necessary tools to take on that role. I shall keep you informed of “what is happening” in the classroom and provide suggestions and a guide as to “what can be happening” at home.

I look forward to a very successful year as we work together with your child in **Foundations**. We will have fun teaching and helping your child build a strong foundation for literacy!

In the next letter, I shall share with you Unit 1 and its related activities.

Once again ***thank you*** for your interest and cooperation.

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 up-dates, 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.

Dear Family:

We are now ready for you to be your child's Coach. If your child had Foundations® in Kindergarten, Unit 1 is mostly review and will go quickly. If your child did not have Foundations in Kindergarten, do not become discouraged with the pace of the progress. It may appear to be slow moving, but it is laying the necessary foundations for your child to be a fluent, independent reader.

During the next few weeks, I will be reviewing:

- The sequence of the alphabet.
- Letter formation from **a** to **z**.
- The letter name, a keyword and sound for the consonants:
b c d f g h j k l m n p q r s t v w x y z
- The letter name, a keyword and sound for the short vowels:
a e i o u

The keyword is a specific word which we will use to help your child master each sound. Notice the letter **y** is not included as a vowel. This comes later. If **y** begins a word it is considered a consonant and for now, it will only begin words.

Please work with your child to reinforce the above concepts. See the attached activity suggestions in order to do this. If you have any questions, please write them down and I shall get back to you.
WE ARE OFF!

Sincerely,





Review the Sequence of the Alphabet

Your child needs to be able to **say or sing the alphabet from A to Z**. Sing or say the alphabet whenever you can – in the car, bath time, bedtime, etc.

Make sure your child is aware of each letter! So often “**l m n o p**” is lumped together and the child does not separate them.

If you have **magnetized plastic letters**, have your child place them on your refrigerator in sequence as he or she says the letter name.

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

You will find the **suggested books** listed below helpful at this time. They should be available at your local library.

Following this page, you will find the **alphabet order squares**. Have your child lightly color the vowels (**a e i o u**) orange. Keep one of the groups of squares uncut to use as the base and cut the second group into individual squares.

Have your child place the letters onto the matching letters on the uncut squares. Make sure your child says the name of the letter as it is placed. Keep these letters in a baggie to do this again and for other activities.

If you enjoy crafts, you could make a place mat and decorate it with one of the letter squares. Have your child place the cut letters on the place mat while waiting for supper.

Title	Author	Publisher / Date
<i>A-B-C-ing: An Action Alphabet</i>	Beller, J.	Crown; 1984
<i>Alligators All Around: An Alphabet</i>	Sendak, M.	Harper Trophy; 1990
<i>Alphabears</i>	Hasue, K.	Henry Holt & Co.; 1984
<i>City Seen From A to Z</i>	Isadora, R.	Greenwillow; 1983
<i>Dr. Seuss's ABC (2nd edition)</i>	Seuss, Dr.	Random House; 1991
<i>The Guinea Pig ABC</i>	Duke, K.	Dutton; 1983
<i>Zoophabets</i>	Tallon, R.	Scholastic; 1979
<i>The Z Was Zapped</i>	Van Allsburg, C.	Houghton Mifflin; 1987

Foundations® **Alphabet Order Squares**

a	b	c	d	e	f	
g	h	i	j	k	l	
m	n	o	p	qu	r	s
t	u	v	w	x	y	z

Have your child lightly color the vowels (**a e i o u**) orange. Keep **this group of squares uncut** to use as the base. Have your child place the cut letters (from below) onto the matching letters on the uncut squares. Make sure your child says the name of the letter as it is placed.

Have your child lightly color the vowels (**a e i o u**) orange. **Cut this group into individual squares.** Keep these letters in a baggie to do this again and for other activities.

a	b	c	d	e	f	
g	h	i	j	k	l	
m	n	o	p	qu	r	s
t	u	v	w	x	y	z

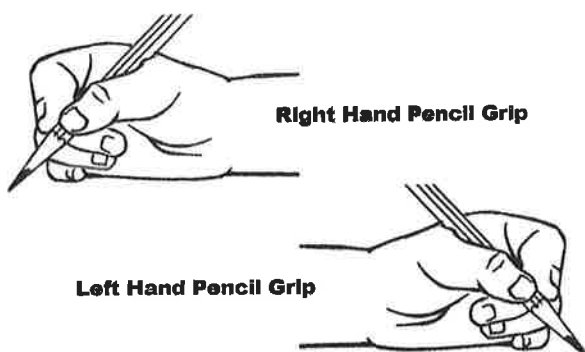


Review Letter Formations With Your Child

For the next three weeks, your child will practice writing the letters in **lower-case**.

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, as indicated below. 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.

	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3
Day 1	t b f	a g	l h k
Day 2	n m	d s	v w
Day 3	i u	e r	y x
Day 4	c o	p j	z q

Foundations® Letter Formation



t



b



f



n



m



Foundations® Letter Formation



i



u



c



o



Name: _____ Date: _____

UNIT
1

WEEK 2

Fundations® Letter Formation



d



g



d



s



e



r

Foundations® Letter Formation



P



J



Name: _____

Date: _____

UNIT
1

WEEK 3

Fundations® Letter Formation



I



h



k



v



w



y

Name: _____

Date: _____

UNIT
1

WEEK 3

Fundations® Letter Formation



x



z



q



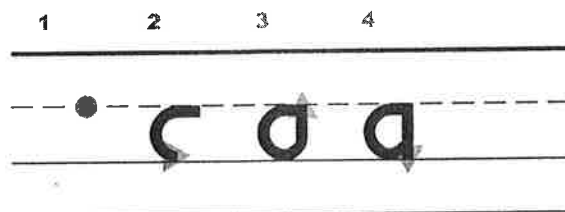
Foundations® Letter Formation Guide

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).

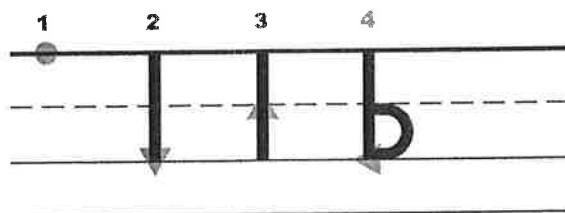


1. Point to the plane line.
2. Go back on the plane line then down and around on the grass line,
3. and up to the plane line.
4. Trace back down to the grass line.
5. Say a - apple - /ă/, have students repeat.

Letter Formation for b

b is a sky line letter.

It starts on the (sky line).

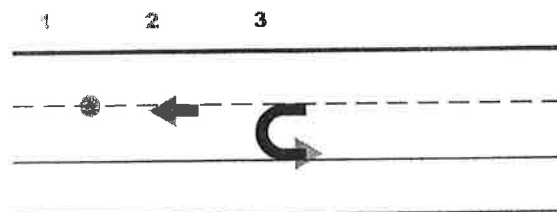


1. Point to the sky line.
2. Go down to the grass line.
3. Trace up to the plane line,
4. and around to the grass line.
5. Say b - bat - /b/, have students repeat.

Letter Formation for c

c is a plane line round letter.

It starts on the (plane line).

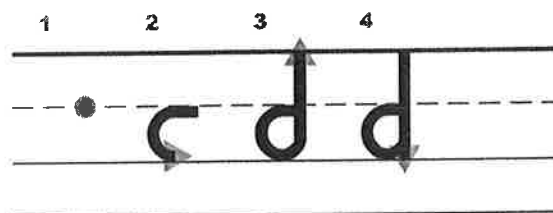


1. Point to the plane line.
2. Start to fly backwards,
3. and go down and around to the grass line.
4. Say c - cat - /k/, have students repeat.

Letter Formation for d

d is a plane line round letter.

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



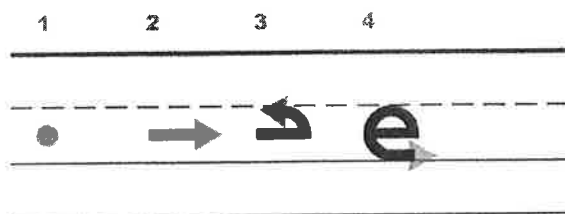
1. Point to the plane line.
2. Go back, down and around to the grass line,
3. all the way back up to the sky line.
4. Trace back down to the grass line.
5. Say d - dog - /d/, have students repeat.

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.

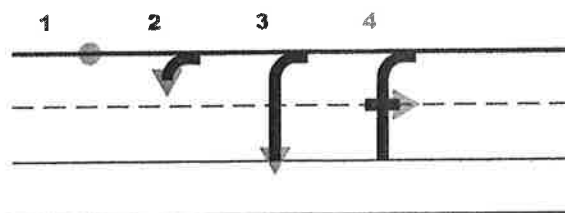


1. Point between the plane line and the grass line.
2. Fly under the plane line.
3. Then go up to the plane line,
4. and around to the grass line.
5. Say e - Ed - /ě/, have students repeat.

Letter Formation for f

f is a sky line letter.

It starts on the (sky line).

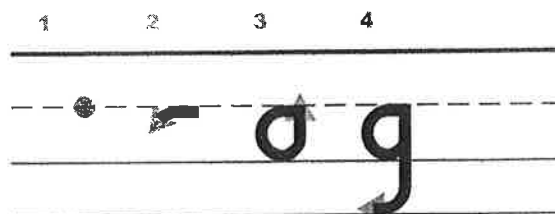


1. Point to the sky line.
2. Trace back on the sky line,
3. and then way down to the grass line.
4. Cross it on the plane line.
5. Say f - fun - /f/, have students repeat.

Letter Formation for g

g is a plane line round letter.

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

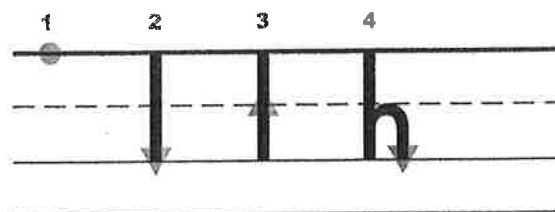


1. Point to the plane line.
2. Trace back on the plane line,
3. down and around all the way back to the plane line.
4. Trace back down all the way to the worm line and make a curve.
5. Say g - game - /g/, have students repeat.

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.
5. Say h - hat - /h/, have students repeat.

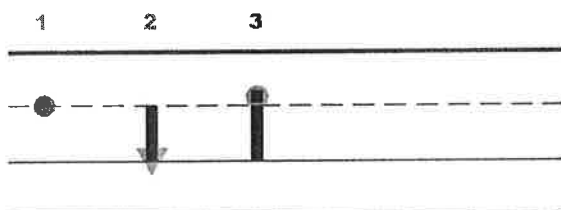
Foundations® Letter Formation Guide

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).

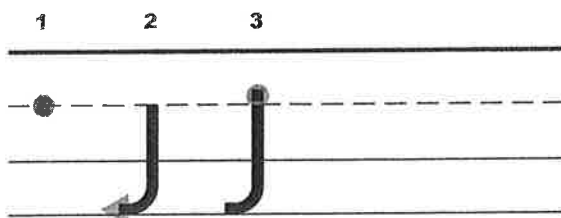


1. Point to the plane line.
2. Go down to the grass line.
3. Add a dot.
4. Say i - itch - /i/, have students repeat.

Letter Formation for j

j is a plane line letter.

It starts on the (plane line).

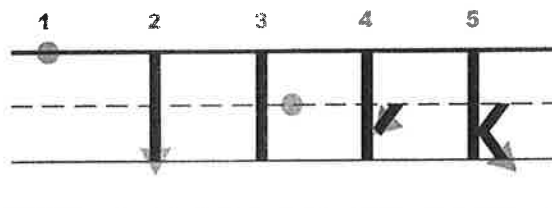


1. Point to the plane line.
2. Go all the way down to the worm line, and make a curve.
3. Add a dot.
4. Say j - jug - /j/, have students repeat.

Letter Formation for k

k is a sky line letter.

It starts on the (sky line).

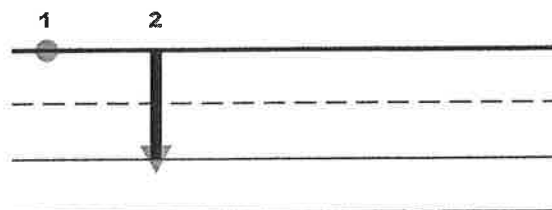


1. Point to the sky line.
2. Go all the way down to the grass line.
3. Point to the plane line and leave a space.
4. Slide over and touch your tall line,
5. and slide back to the grass line.
6. Say k - kite - /k/, have students repeat.

Letter Formation for l

l is a sky line letter.

It starts on the (sky line).



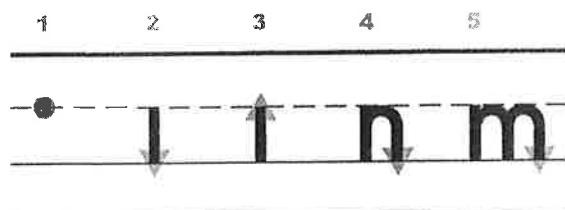
1. Point to the sky line.
2. Go down to the grass line and stop.
3. Say l - lamp - /l/, have students repeat.

Foundations® Letter Formation Guide

Letter Formation for m

m is a plane line letter.

It starts on the (plane line).

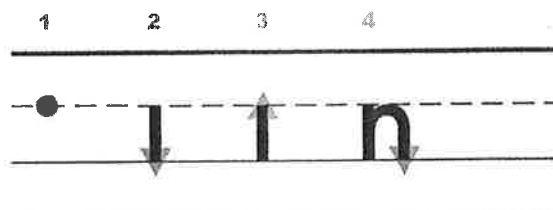


1. Point to the plane line.
2. Go down to the grass line.
3. Trace back up to the plane line,
4. and make a hump,
5. and then back up to the plane line and make another hump.
6. Say m - man - /m/, have students repeat.

Letter Formation for n

n is a plane line letter.

It starts on the (plane line).

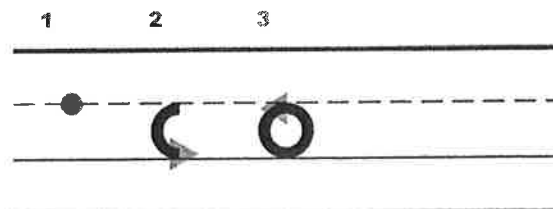


1. Point to the plane line.
2. Go down to the grass line.
3. Trace back up to the plane line,
4. and make a hump.
5. Say n - nut - /n/, have students repeat.

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.
4. Say o - octopus - /o/, have students repeat.

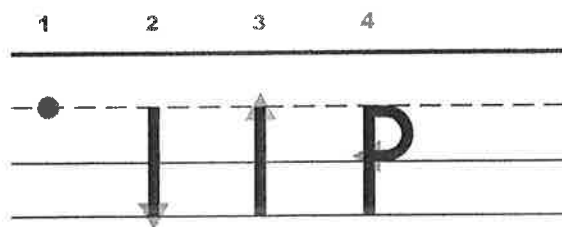
Foundations® Letter Formation Guide

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

Letter Formation for p

p is a plane line letter.

It starts on the (plane line).



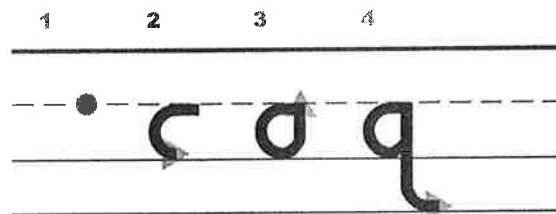
1. Point to the plane line.
2. Go down to the worm line.
3. Trace back up to the plane line,
4. and curve all the way around to the grass line.
5. Say p - pan - /p/, have students repeat.

Letter Formation for q

q is a plane line round letter.

It starts on the (plane line).

Remember that q is the buddy letter so in the end it wants to point up to its "buddy," u.

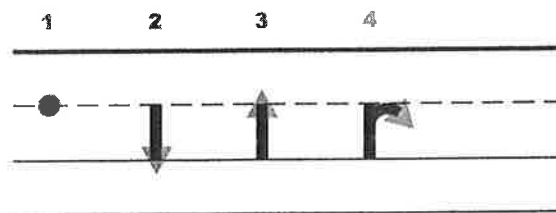


1. Point to the plane line.
2. Trace back and go down to the grass line around, back to the plane line.
3. Trace back down to the worm line,
4. and point up to his "buddy," u.
5. Say qu - queen - /kw/, have students repeat.

Letter Formation for r

r 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 little curve.
5. Say r - rat - /r/, have students repeat.

Foundations® Letter Formation Guide

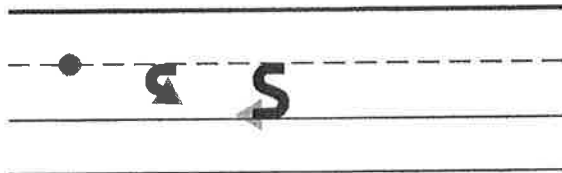
Use the following verbalization to direct students in proper letter formation.

Letter Formation for S

s is a plane line round letter.

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

1 2 3



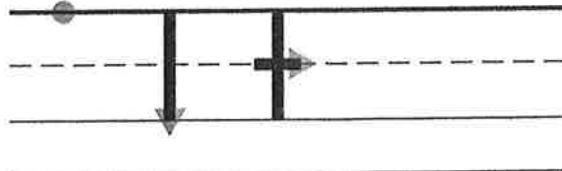
1. Point to the plane line.
2. Trace back and it curves in,
3. and goes back again and lands on the grass line.
4. Say s - snake - /s/, have students repeat.

Letter Formation for t

t is a sky line letter.

It starts on the (sky line).

1 2 3



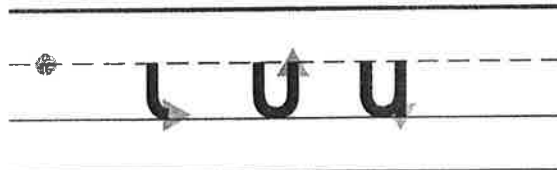
1. Point to the sky line.
2. Go down to the grass line.
3. Cross it on the plane line.
4. Say t - top - /t/, have students repeat.

Letter Formation for u

u is a plane line letter.

It starts on the (plane line).

1 2 3 4



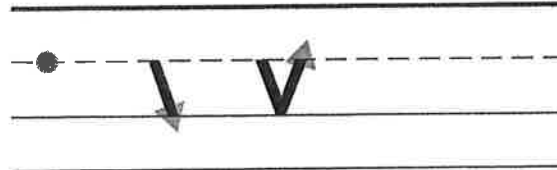
1. Point to the plane line.
2. Go down to the grass line.
3. Curve up to the plane line,
4. and trace straight down to the grass line.
5. Say u - up - /ü/, have students repeat.

Letter Formation for v

v is a plane line slide letter.

It starts on the (plane line) and (slides).

1 2 3



1. Point to the plane line.
2. Slide down to the grass line.
3. Slide up to the plane line.
4. Say v - van - /v/, have students repeat.

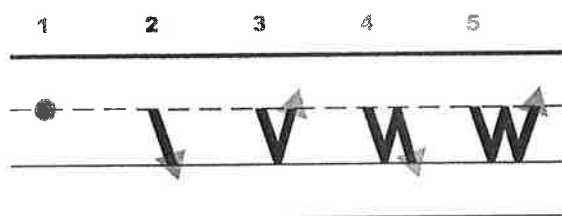
Fundations® Letter Formation Guide

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

Letter Formation for W

w is a plane line slide letter.

It starts on the (plane line) and (slides).

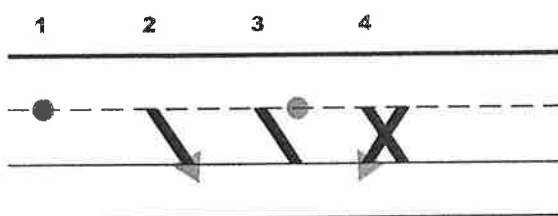


1. Point to the plane line.
2. Slide down to the grass line.
3. Slide up to the plane line.
4. Slide down to the grass line.
5. Slide up to the plane line.
6. Say w – wind - /w/, have students repeat.

Letter Formation for X

x is a plane line slide letter.

It starts on the (plane line) and (slides).

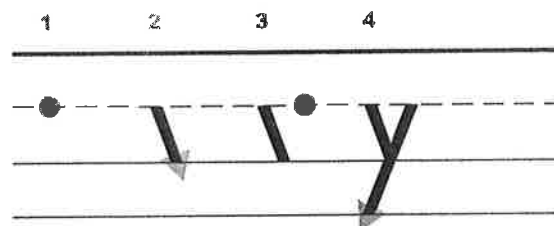


1. Point to the plane line.
2. Slide down to the grass line.
3. Leave a space and point to the plane line.
4. Slide back to the grass line.
5. Say x - fox - /ks/, have students repeat.

Letter Formation for y

y is a plane line slide letter.

It starts on the (plane line) and (slides).



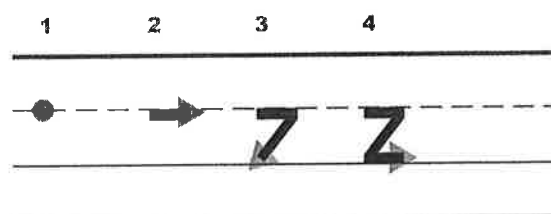
1. Point to the plane line.
2. Slide down to the grass line.
3. Pick up your pencil (finger) and leave a space and point to the plane line.
4. Slide back - all the way to the worm line.
5. Say y - yellow - /y/, have students repeat.

Letter Formation for Z

z is a plane line slide letter, but it doesn't slide right away.

Where does it start? (On the plane line).

Before it slides, the z goes on the plane line.



1. Point to the plane line.
2. Go on the plane line.
3. Slide back to the grass line.
4. Then go on the grass line.
5. Say z - zebra - /z/, have students repeat.