

BETTER UNDERSTANDING YOUR CHILD THROUGH HANDWRITING

The size of the Puma is about 8 feet long measured from its nose to the tip of his tail. It averages about 200 pounds. The heaviest puma found weighed 276 pounds. Females are about one third smaller than males.

The adult Puma is always a solid color. The baby Puma, a cub has black spots. Pumas have yellow eyes with white fur on their chest, throat and belly. The tip of the Puma's tail is black. Also, the Puma has the heaviest tail of all the cats.

Its favorite food is White-tailed Deer or

BY DAVID GRAYSON When the Puma gets close to its prey, it will jump at them, knocking the animal down and then will

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Grayson, author of *BETTER UNDERSTANDING YOUR CHILD THROUGH HANDWRITING*, is both an Educator and Graphoanalyst. Both skills are used to help his students everyday. As the assistant principal of a grade school in Oak Park, Illinois, children frequently visit his office. When they enter they are handed a sheet of paper. It's not punishment, it's understanding. David Grayson knows that handwriting is the window to your personality.



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- Educator/Administrator
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YOUR CHILD
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By David Grayson

**GBC PUBLISHING
La Grange, Illinois**

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Dedication . . .

to my mother and in memory
of my father.

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Jack Schultz who first introduced me to the interesting study of Graphoanalysis. It was his teaching expertise that instilled in me a desire to further my study of handwriting;

The International Graphoanalysis Society for it was through their excellent course and study material that I gained the knowledge necessary to begin my independent study of handwriting;

Edna Wade whose enthusiasm in the field of handwriting analysis has given me the desire to continue learning the intricacies of handwriting analysis;

Marlene Slavin for editing my manuscript and helping to make it understandable and readable;

Matt Marino for permitting his handwriting to be used on the front cover of the book;

Dr. Marguerite Bloch for graciously writing the Foreward to this book and for giving me insight and support toward working effectively with children . . .

And a **very special thanks** to the hundreds upon hundreds of youngsters who have had their handwriting scrutinized by me; they enabled me to further my knowledge of not only handwriting but also of the youngsters themselves.

Publisher's Note

You will notice throughout the book that the pronoun **he** is used. It is understood that the child could be a female, but for simplicity of reading and grammatical uniformity, the masculine pronoun is used throughout the book. Also, the handwriting samples used throughout the book are of actual size. We have kept the correct size of writing in order to make it easier for the reader to compare their sample against the samples in the book. The exception is the chapter on Squiggles. Because of large motor movements of the pre-school youngsters we have had to reduce the size of the samples in this chapter.

Preparing for the Analysis

Before you begin to read the chapters, a written copy must be made on which you intend to base your analyses. The writing should be done in pencil on an 8½ x 11 inch sheet of unlined paper. The reason for the unlined paper is to permit the writer to use the style and form that fits him best. Lines on a paper can put restraints on the writer. The writing should be several paragraphs long, and just about fill one page. It is best if the copy contains all the letters of the alphabet. It may also help if the writer is able to have several samples of his writings done over a period of time. This will permit the comparisons from one sample to another.

As you read through the book, write down notes from what you find in the book that match your written copy. When you have completed the book, through these notes you will have an outline of your analysis. Be sure to record only what you can see in the writing, not what you think should be there. By going over the analysis you should then get a picture of the individual.

Foreword

An abundance of lip-service to understanding one's child has been presented in clever and superficial rhetoric, through many artists, talk shows, lectures, workshops, and books. Parents, educators, and anyone working with children seem to continually search for words of wisdom that will help them understand the children they encounter. How many times have you heard, “. . . but you don't understand”?

Dave Grayson has written a book that gives practical suggestions for ways to understand a child through the child's handwriting. However, *Better Understanding Your Child Through Handwriting*, is much more comprehensive than the title leads you to believe. The book is refreshing because the author does not try to impress you with the theoretical basis for his recommendations, but rather goes to practical and realistic suggestions for understanding one's child by actually analyzing children's handwriting.

This book will appeal to a variety of readers because of the diversity of its content—I.Q., fears and defenses, slant, and the letter *t*.

The presentation is unified and comprehensive, but yet the author permits each chapter to stand alone.

The final chapter is addressed to children. Although it is written for them, it is equally valuable for adults. Too often adults become so concerned about seeking solutions to understanding children that they forget to encourage children to understand themselves.

I recommend *Better Understanding Your Child Through Handwriting*, because it recognizes that printed symbols have always

been a means of communication. It's now time to use handwriting as another means of understanding your child.

Dr. Marguerite Bloch, Ed.D.

Dr. Bloch has spent her entire adult life in the field of education. She received her doctoral degree from Northern Illinois University. Besides being a teacher and administrator, she held the position of Project Facilitator for Individually Guided Education funded by the Charles Kettering Foundation, Vice-President of Educational Programs for the Educational Facilities Center in Chicago, Illinois, and a member of the Department of Early Childhood Education at Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago, Illinois. Throughout her career Dr. Bloch has received many awards. In 1979, she was named "Principal of the Year" for the state of Illinois. In 1980, she was the recipient of the St. Francis Award to Distinguished Alumni from Mount St. Clare College, Clinton, Iowa. In 1981, she was honored by Phi Delta Kappa as one of 75 "Outstanding Young American Educators." Dr. Bloch is currently Superintendent for Butler Elementary Schools, District 53, Oak Brook, Ill.

Introduction

The first known book written on handwriting was published in Italy in 1624, and was written by Camillo Baldi, a professor of philosophy at the University of Bologna. Since then, much research and study in the area of graphology has been done in European countries, and teachers attending universities in many of these countries are taught to analyze handwriting. Graphology is now slowly beginning to be accepted in America.

Handwriting analysis is being used and accepted more widely in the United States every year. It has been used in the counseling field for some time. Now business and industry is beginning to use it in the area of employment and placement. Not just for hiring or not hiring a person, but also for placing that individual in the best position within the company for the maximum success of both the individual and the company. Credit departments at banks and lending institutions are quick to use handwriting analysis as a check on the risk factor of potential clients. One of the more recent fields of endeavor for the analyst is working with attorneys for selecting members of a jury in trial cases.

Graphology is the study of handwriting to determine the personality of the individual. This book will follow the methods of study set forth by the International Graphoanalysis Society, a society founded in 1929, by Milton N. Bunker, at the time a teacher of various shorthand systems. Graphoanalysis is taught by the International Graphoanalysis Society based in Chicago, Illinois.

Graphoanalysis is not an occult, but a scientific method of study. It reveals a person's present state; it does not predict the

future. Writing changes. As we grow, our handwriting reflects this growth.

Handwriting should be called brainwriting. The writing impulse originates in the cortex of the brain, and it then travels through the nervous system of the body to the muscles in the fingers. It is an unconscious act controlled by the brain. Handwriting is much like a fingerprint in that it is uniquely individual. What writing offers is a fuller picture of oneself. Much of our personality is like an iceberg, the majority of it beneath the surface. We can discover this hidden area of our personality by analyzing the handwriting.

This book is only an introduction into the study of handwriting analysis, it is not written as a text. The primary purpose of the book is to help parents and teachers better understand the child through the child's writing. The key in doing a successful analysis is evaluation. Evaluation is the comparison of the various traits found in the writing in order to come up with the individual's personality. We know that no two people are exactly alike. To say that specific strokes in the writing have an absolute meaning is invalid. This book was written so that parents can work with their child to help the child better understand himself, and, in turn, to help the parent better understand their child.

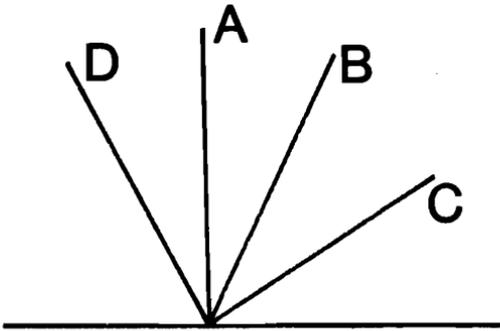
Handwriting is only one part of the total personality. However, we certainly can use handwriting to help us better understand the individual, but, to obtain the complete picture, we must fit other items into the picture; things such as, his attitudes toward himself, how the child relates to other people, how he performs his school work, his I.Q. score, and various test results.

All of this information will help us put together the personality of the child. And since the child is made up of many complex parts, we must accept the child where he is at and then work from that point. The child is important for being who he is. It is hoped that we can help the child find success, so that he can then become a complete person. Graphoanalysis is one piece of the pie.

The Writing Slant

When we look at handwriting, the first thing that we take into consideration is the slant of the writing. The slant gives us the basic emotional make-up of the individual. We can define emotion as a strong feeling or impulse. It is a physical reaction to an invisible inner feeling which transforms into a visible behavior.

When something sad happens to an individual the inner feelings of that person can be expressed in an external way. That expression might be crying, some visible sign of anger, or body language



SLANTS

- D is backhand.
- A is vertical.
- B is expressive writing.
- C is extreme expressiveness.

all of which can tell us that the person is feeling sad. However, there are some individuals who do not show their feelings; these persons can receive good or bad news without showing any form of emotion. In fact, to many, they appear unconcerned or stoic. This is a situation where they still have emotion but no visible sign of emotion to let others know their feelings. We cannot say that these individuals have no emotion; it is just that we cannot see it in action. Again, it is the slant of the writing that gives us the emotional composition of the child.

There are various degrees of slant that we as Graphoanalysts look for in the writing, but for simplicity we will have four major slants. The chart on page one shows us the four slants.

That store to open
is very helpful.
Happy today. I love

This Specimen is backhand. Notice how the writing seems to lean toward the left.

I am going to
open up. Everyone is in
people are happy too
thing. We are grateful
We are going to enjoy

The vertical writing of this ten-year-old child appears to be straight up and down.

ready for that store
is very helpful,
y today. I like

This Specimen leans toward the right showing an expressive individual.

to be ready for
to open up. We
helpful. Many pe

This Specimen, slanting far to the right, is the writing of a teenage girl, and is classified as extreme expressiveness.

Vertical Writing

First we will look at the vertical writer, the writing that appears to be up and down.

ready for that store to
elpful. Many people are
ind of thing. We are
We are going to enjoy

to be ready for that
Everyone is very
people are happy

The child who will write in this manner will be objective in his judgments. He will be careful not to jump to conclusions, and he will work hard at interpreting the facts and their results. He will meet emergency situations calmly and unemotionally. This child is mild of temperament and rarely out of sorts. He can work well under pressure and withstand emotional storms without becoming ruffled. Straightforward in what he says, he has no desire to talk in circles. These children enjoy sharing themselves and their possessions with others. They are very sincere and have a solid sense of justice.

Often these children can be misunderstood because of their composure and calmness. They will stand off by themselves in a group of people. Others might think that they are unconcerned about what is happening around them and judge them to be aloof or distant. Actually, they are sizing up a situation and deciding what would be best for them.

I am going to be
open up. Everyone is very
people are happy today. I
thing. We are grateful
We are going to enjoy

This is the writing of a seven-year-old girl. She brought dolls to school and would play with the dolls during recess rather than have to face the other children during that period of time. She was using her doll as a security hold against the unknown. However, during the school day she

would share her school supplies with children that needed something: paper, pencils, glue. She was well-liked by the children and related well with the teachers.

store to open up.
people are happy
thing. We are
are going to enjoy

This ten-year-old boy was a very good baseball player. His vertical writing tells us that many of his emotions are kept inside. Although he knew everything that was going on in the ball game, his coach would yell at him because he appeared to be uninterested in the game. The coach thought that his mind was elsewhere, but nothing was further from the truth. The coach kept badgering him to yell and scream during the game. The boy couldn't, so he became much more withdrawn until he quit the baseball team, grew depressed, and had serious emotional problems. If the coach had been aware of the boy's emotional makeup, he could have given the youngster a pencil and clip-board, had him put the information in his head down as statistics on paper, and most of the child's problems probably would not have surfaced.

I am going
that store to
is very helpful.
are happy to
kind of thing.
for our friend
to enjoy our

Fifteen years of age is a difficult time for any adolescent. This particular fifteen-year-old young lady had a boy friend that liked to be at all the school activities, and he decided to run for student council. He hoped that this girl would campaign for and with him, but she found that being

expressive was most difficult. She just wanted to work behind the scenes, lay out strategy, and plan the campaign. He insisted that she was needed to be seen with him, since she was one of the more popular girls in the school. She tried, but her emotions could not take it. She became irritable and angry at home, creating many problems between her and her parents. Finally, she ran away. The next day she was found by the police and was brought home. When word got around school, her boy friend dropped her because he felt that she was bad for his campaign.

Children who write vertically need to have a feeling of security at all times. They need to know that they are useful and are accepted in their own way of doing things. We need to give them support. They need assurances that they are loved, and they are doing well. Whenever possible, we need to give them a chance to express themselves and to allow them to express their feelings without putting value judgments on what they have said or done.

Right Slanting Writing

Next, we will look at the writer who slants his writing a little to the right, the expressive writers.

*for that store to open
ful. Many people are
kind of thing. We are
vacation.*

I am going to
that store to
is very helpful.
happy today.

These children face problems with a level head as well as a sympathetic heart. They use good judgment and can respond readily to their various emotional feelings. They neither get carried away nor lose their natural objectivity, because their feelings do not influence their judgment. They show kindness, understanding, and love. In fact, these individuals usually get along with someone when no one else can. They tend to be much more considerate than those of other writing slants. Because of their moderate temperament and their affection, they are fair and loving.

At times, these writers do have difficulty remaining calm; therefore, after the fact, they might fall apart. Still, these children are usually practical and predictable persons. We know ahead of time how they will react to a given situation, because it will be the same reaction each time. They become glad on occasions and sad on occasions, but they never get too carried away with their emotions.

ry today. I like
thing. We are
joy our summer

This writing belongs to a fourth-grade girl who enjoys greeting new children that come to her school. She is the first person to "reach out"

and become a friend to the new child and help this child adapt to the new environment. She gives of herself in helping the new children.

to open up. Every
 Many people are
 like that kind of
 to enjoy our

When someone gets injured on the playground and needs help, it is this sixth-grade girl who is the first upon the scene to extend a helping hand. She will bring the child into the school, clean him up and, if necessary, bring him to the nurse. She will stay with him until he is better. She just enjoys giving herself to the service of others.

to be ready for that
 one is very helpful.
 us today. I like that
 eteful for our friends
 to enjoy our vacation.

Playing basketball was not his desire. However, being the manager of the team allowed him to be of service not only to the coach but also to the players. Anyone involved with the basketball team would feel free to ask this fifteen-year old young man to do something for them, and they would be assured of a prompt reply. He took a big load off the coach and helped to make the scheduled games and practices go more smoothly. Members of the team felt that he was as important as any of the playing members.

Children with handwriting that slants toward the right should be encouraged to express themselves through action and affec-

tion. These traits are inside of the children, but often it becomes difficult for them to express what they are feeling inside. These children enjoy helping others and receive personal satisfaction from doing so. Still, they also need to have love and affection shown to them by close family members and friends.

Far Right Slant

As you can see, the writings below are slanted far to the right. The letters appear to be almost falling down and appear to be written very fast.

I am going to be
to open up. Everyone is
people are happy
kind of thing. We

very helpful. Many
I like that kind of
ful for our friends
my our summer

These children will often paint themselves into a corner because they act before they think. Their actions are guided by their emotions; therefore, they get themselves caught in the middle. Frequently, these children will jump to conclusions and make quick decisions before all the facts are in, thereby prejudicing the outcome. Their response in a given situation will be immediate and

often presented in a negative manner. They often say things that they do not mean to say. It is a quick and thoughtless response in a given situation. Their haste often causes them to lose control over their emotions.

However, these writers have warmth and abundant affection and are able to understand the feelings of others. They have strong convictions and will be the type of children who will join a cause or a group for a strong philosophical or emotional reason. They have strong likes and dislikes for persons, places, and things. Some of the most popular and successful politicians, writers, preachers, salespersons and executives are of this particular far right slant.

to be ready for that
up. Everyone is very
people are happy

Always with a comeback, ready with an argument, and must have the last word, is this eleven-year old boy that drives the teacher figuratively up the wall. But, at the same time, he has a personality that gets him through these difficult moments with his teacher. He is able to zero in on how his teacher will react to a given statement by him, and then he will push just so far; that is, far enough to get the last word. In classroom discussions he is able to sway many of the children to his side which often changes the course of the classroom discussion.

I am going to be ready
 open up. Everyone is very
 people are happy today.
 kind of thing. We are

No one is able to tell if this child is injured badly, or if his emotions just get away from him for the time being. He may just scrape a knee, but he comes crawling into the nurse at school and no one can tell at the time the extent of his injuries. When he has calmed down, a clear assessment of the situation can be made. In the meantime, he has convinced those around him that he is injured badly and has created a commotion which causes everyone to worry about the extent of his injuries. Yet, he is a loving child and has many friends.

I like that kind of
 fun got our friends.
 joy our summer

This fourth-grade girl also has strong emotional needs. However, she does not express them externally, but expresses them in writing. She keeps a daily diary that contains several pages of information per day. She also enjoys writing stories about things that happen to her. She has a good imagination which allows her to write very creative and interesting stories. She has very strong feelings about many things, but upon first contact with her, one would think that she is unaware of what is going on around her. She expresses herself on paper rather than in words.

Children who write with the far right slant need to develop controls over themselves. These children also have a strong need for people. A good direction for them to flow is into a helping situation, since they relate well to others.

Backhand Slant

I am going to
open up. Everyone
people are happy
thing. We are
we are going to

Many people are
that kind of
grateful for our

The writing samples above are what we call backhand writing.

At first glance, many individuals will equate this writing with left handers, and certainly there are left-handed people who write with a back hand slant. However, we cannot assume that with backhand writing, the writer must be left-handed. Five of the samples below are backhand writing, with each sample being done by a right-handed person; the sixth sample is backhand writing done by a left-handed person. As you can see, we are unable to tell from the writing whether a person is left or right-handed.

read for that store to
is very helpful.

To be ready for
up. Everyone

is very helpful.
Today. I like that

eady for that store
y helpful. Many

Many people an
today. I like

for that store to
up. Everyone is help

With backhand writers their perception in life is somewhat narrowed toward themselves. They view most situations from a vantage point of what they can learn and gain from any given situation. They strive to improve their standard of life and enjoy setting goals for themselves in order for personal advancement. Sometimes this can be carried to an extreme, and these writers may become all wrapped up in themselves.

Since emotions are not strong in these individuals, they base most of their decisions on logic, can be very friendly as a means of survival, and are truly generous because they want to be. Backhand writers may be better adjusted than their right-slanted counterparts because of the non-emotional setting they are in.

Backhand writers sometimes will have a difficult time being involved in loving situations. They may feel insecure and unappreciated. Their emotions are not allowed to get involved. Their world seems to revolve around themselves rather than allowing friends and loved ones to hop aboard.

Especially in children, the backhand writer is often non-communicative and unreachable. They feel that they are not loved enough and have basic feelings of insecurity.

I am going to be ready
open up. Everyone
people are happy
of thing. We are

This is the writing of a ten-year old girl who is right-handed. She is a very quiet child, never saying anything in class unless requested to respond. She keeps to herself at lunchtime and does not involve herself in school functions. She has a close relationship with one other girl in her grade, but keeps her distance from all others. She is an honor student, quietly

setting her own goals and achieving them. She gets her personal satisfaction from doing well in her school work.

to be ready for that store to
is very helpful. Many people
& like that kind of thing.
for our friends.
enjoy our friends.

This boy is right-handed and is in fifth grade. He is also a very quiet, non-communicative young man. His school work is not up to grade level, and he must be constantly reassured that he is doing a good job in his work. He has the mental power to achieve above his level, but his feelings of insecurity come out in the fact that he is afraid to raise his hand in class fearing the children might laugh at him if he makes a mistake. Also, he thinks that the children are constantly staring at him in school. However, he does get his frustration out in sports. He enjoys playing all sports and this is one area in which he does have success.

be ready for that
Everyone is very helpful
appy today. I like that
We are going to en-

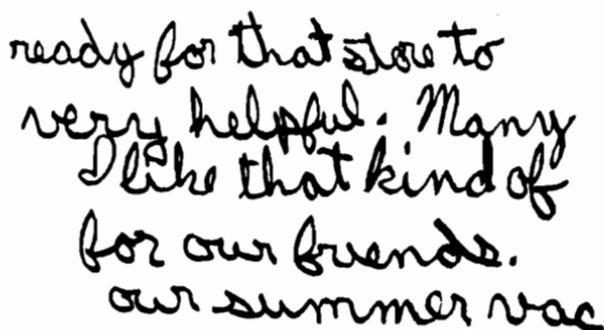
This high school student builds up his personal security by belonging to several different clubs sponsored by the high school he attends. By doing this, he has a feeling of belonging and that others depend upon his participation. He occasionally dates, but he is not secure in dealing with a close relationship at this time. He uses his participation in the clubs as excuses for not having the time to go out in the evenings. He uses the clubs for security as a child uses a blanket for security.

Children whose writing slants toward the left need to be reminded over and over that they are loved. Their feelings of insecurity must be addressed, and parents and teachers would do well to be sensitive to them. These feelings of insecurity may come and go whenever difficulties arise for the child; it is at this point that the child builds up a protective shell, and convinces himself that he is not understood and that no one really cares for him. Understanding, love, and attention can bring about a strong support level for the child.

Variable Slant

Due to the fears the child experiences during his adolescent years, the slant often becomes vertical or turns to the left or may vary within the page of writing. Once the adolescent has become understanding of, or comfortable with sexual feelings, the slant will return to the original slant or the variance will have left the writing.

How would we determine the slant of the sample below?



ready for that *secure* to
very helpful. Many
I like that kind of
for our friends.
our summer vac

One can see that letters within the word have a variance of slant, from backhand to vertical to far right slant. We will encounter writing that is just as variable in slant. The usual cause of this variance is that the individual is coming in and out of insecurity. At one moment the child feels secure, but a short time later,

he doubts it. As the writing vacillates in slant, the child vacillates in his feelings of security or insecurity. This type of child will react according to the mood that he is in at the time. However, if the child knows how to use various moods at the proper time, it can be an advantage.

We often will not know in advance how these children will react to a given situation. If we punish them, on one particular day they may cry or throw a tantrum, on another day for the same offense and punishment, they may sulk or refuse to do or say anything. This makes it difficult to know how to help the child.

These children can be outgoing one moment and become withdrawn the next. We don't know how they will act during a given day. So, when we see writing with a slant that varies, we must be able to understand that the children will also develop different techniques to deal with situations that will arise during the day.

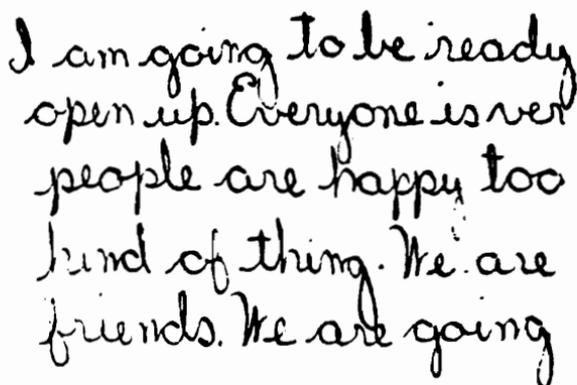
be ready for that store to open
helpful. Many people are happy
that kind of thing. We are
summer vacation.

for that store to open
helpful. Many people
I like that kind of

Pressure

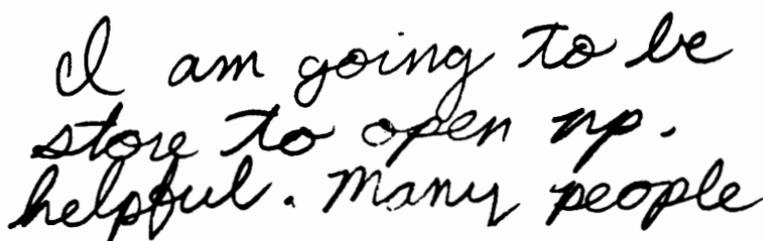
After we have determined the writing slant which indicates the individual's emotional make-up, we should then turn our attention to the pressure of the pen or pencil upon the paper.

At first, pressure might seem difficult to determine, but a quick and effective way is to have the child use a Number 2 lead pencil. After the child has written on the paper, turn it over. If one can feel the writing on the back of the paper, this is a guide which indicates that the pressure is medium to hard. The rougher the back of the paper, the heavier the writing. If there happens to be little or no feeling of writing on the back of the paper, it is an indication that the writing is light pressure.



I am going to be ready
open up. Everyone is very
people are happy too
kind of thing. We are
friends. We are going

This is a sample of light writing.



I am going to be
strong to open up.
helpful. Many people

This is a sample of medium writing.

ready for that store to
helpful. Many people
like that kind of thing.
friends. We are going to

This is a sample of heavy writing.

If you determine that the writing is light, we can make several generalizations concerning this type of writer. This writer can change moods rather easily, going from a happy to a rather concerned or worrisome person. He can quickly change activity and likes to try new and different things. Emotional experiences are quickly forgotten and do not leave lasting impressions. We cannot assume the absence of outstanding emotional things happening to him. He just doesn't retain these feelings. This individual remembers trips he took and places he has seen, but details and emotions connected with the trip are unable to be played back after a period of time.

On the other hand, the heavy writer is much like an elephant, standing firm and strong. This type does not change moods easily and tends to hold grudges. He gets frustrated easily because he stands firm. Because of built-up fears about given situations, this writer's feelings are released, they can lead to strong and possibly violent action. It is very much like a pressure cooker, building up the pressure. If the pressure is not released a little at a time, it can create an explosion. The heavy writer needs 'time out' breaks during the school day.

Heavy writers enjoy life. They are keenly aware of their senses; color, taste, smell, touch, and sight, all play a vital part in the day-to-day living of this individual. They draw from past experiences

and use this to add insight into decisions that they must make. These heavy writers are the active 'on the go' individuals. They seldom sit still, always moving on to new and different experiences.

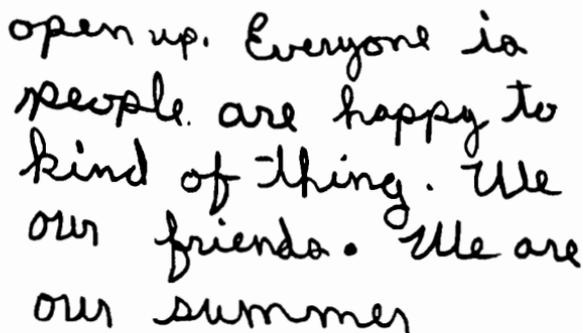
However, a large percentage of writing is done in moderate depth, with the light or heavy writers being the minority. The moderate writer experiences many memories, sets aside the unpleasant ones, and retains the happier moments. This individual adjusts moods to a given situation. Like a pendulum which at times swings to the heavy side and at other times swings to the light side, this writer, for the most part, remains somewhat in the middle of the two.

Size

The size of the writing also has a reflection upon the make-up of the child. In this physical aspect we have three sizes: if the writing is $1/16$ of an inch or less, we consider this small writing; standard writing is defined as $3/16$ to $1/8$ of an inch; and large writing is $1/4$ of an inch or larger.

We measure the size of the writing by measuring the letters that do not have any extenders, that is, upper loops or lower loops. The letters that are measurable are *a, c, e, i, m, n, o, r, s, u, v, w*, and *x*.

How we measure—



open up. Everyone is
people are happy to
kind of thing. We
our friends. We are
our summer

Small writing

I am going to be
that store to open
is very helpful.

Standard writing

I am goin
for that stor
Everyone is r

Large writing

The child that writes very small, is able to block out all distractions and concentrate only upon what he is doing at the moment. This is the child that you might call to dinner several times before he hears you, and you can get very upset thinking that he is ignoring you. Quite the contrary, he is able to block out all sounds around him and concentrate upon what he is doing. This child can frustrate us very easily, but if we understand that he is concentrating on what he is doing and not ignoring us, we can have a livable situation.

The small writers are often introverted, using this concentration as an escape from having to deal with others, thus being able to create their own little world. They tend to enjoy working alone and they put all their attention on what they are doing. They do not have their mind occupied with many different things.

Below are samples of children that write small.

Age 9

happy today. I like that kind of
are grateful for our friends.
ing to enjoy our summer vacation.

Age 13

open up. Everyone is very
people are happy today.
thing. We are grateful
We are going to enjoy our

Age 15

I am going to be ready to
open up. Everyone is very happy
people are happy today. I like that
We are grateful for our friends
to enjoy our summer vacation

The writers with letters 1/4 to 1/2 inch in size are usually extroverted persons. They enjoy people and prefer being around other people. The more people at a party the better for them. Disliking to be tied down to things, they would rather move about freely. They like to be involved in activities; here the human element is playing an important factor. The large writer has a need to show themselves to others and to be noticed.

Age 6

store to open up.
helpful. We
happy today
thing. We are
summer wa

Age 11

are happy tod
kind of thing.
going to enjoy
vacation.

Age 14

I am going to
 that store t
 Everyone is
 Many people

The writers of standard size show a good balance of ego and reality. They don't have to withdraw to find satisfaction, nor do they have to be outgoing and prove their worth to other individuals. They know themselves and can deal with their problems.

Age 8

I am going to
 that store to
 its very helpfu
 people are happy

Age 9

I am going to
open up. Everyone is
are happy today. I

Age 12

I am going to
store to open up. We
helpful. Many peop
I like that kind of

Summary

It is the slant that plays the major factor in determining the character of the person. It is upon this emotional make-up that we base all the rest of the findings in the writing. Can the person handle the problems? Can he cope with success? Can he deal with himself? These questions are answered in the slant of the writing. From there we move into the other aspects of the writing keeping in mind, at all times, the emotional characteristics of the child. Then we begin to look at the drives of the individuals as seen in the pressure that they write with. We can look at the physical size of the writing which helps us to understand how the child deals with himself in given situations.

SAMPLES OF WRITINGS

I am going to be ready
that store to open up.

Vertical Slant

I am going to be ready
open up. Everyone is very

Right Slant

I am going to be
store to open up

Far Right Slant

I am going to be
for that store to

Backhand Slant

going to be ready for that store
Everyone is very helpful. Many

Variable Slant

I am going to be ready
open up. Everyone is very

Light Pressure

I am going to be ready
open up. Everyone is very

Heavy Pressure

I am going to be ready
for the store to open up

Small Writing

I am going to
that store to

Large Writing

I am going to be
open up. Everyone is very

Standard Size Writing

Thinking Patterns

One of the strongest concerns of the parent is the question of the mental ability of the child. “Will my child do well in school?”, “Will my child be able to learn to succeed in life?”, “Will my child be able to go to college?” These are questions often asked by parents.

Intelligence is the ability to see into a problem and work out a solution by applying what one has learned through past experiences. Its measurement is called the Intelligence Quotient or I.Q. Graphoanalysts are unable to obtain an I.Q. score from the writing of the person, but we are able to look at the ways in which a person uses his brain in order to learn a given topic.

The Intelligence Quotient is found by a mathematical formula: it is dividing the student’s mental age, which is obtained from an Intelligence Test, by the student’s chronological age, and this is multiplied by 100. The set normal I.Q. would be 100, but due to a variance in testing scores and procedures and a reliability factor we have ‘give’ on both sides of that 100 score so we could say 93 to 108 would be the proper I.Q. score for an individual.

The I.Q. of a child can change from year to year because of many variables: a child is not feeling well on the day of the test; there could have been a problem at home that has upset the child for the day; the test itself might have scared the child; or, possibly, the directions were not clear. If a drastic point change takes place, such as a score one year of 110 and the next year the test results would show 148, it would tend to tell us that something has given an invalid test result. We would need to retest in order to find the correct I.Q. level.

In this chapter we will look at the various mental patterns that a child uses to learn. In order to find the thinking patterns of the child, we look at the letters *m* and *n*.

Cumulative Thinking

While learning handwriting in the primary grades, children are shown an alphabet in cursive to copy. We call this copy book writing.

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 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

Sample of Copy Book Writing

You can see that the tops of the *m*'s and *n*'s are rounded. The child is instructed to form his letters carefully, slowly, over and over again, while working under the watchful eye of the teacher. The child is taking his time trying to do a careful job and also to have his writing look like the copy book writing that has been shown to him.

The child or adult who continues to make his *m*'s and *n*'s rounded as in the copy book writing above, is an individual who is a steady-paced, methodical, logical thinking person.

going to enjoy
our summer
vacation

We are going
store to open up.
Many people are

A sample of cumulative writing, with well rounded *m*'s and *n*'s.

I am going to
open up. Everyone
people are happy
kind of thing. We

This writing also has *m*'s and *n*'s that are well rounded, supporting this trait we can also see the letter *h* which has its hump well rounded.

The cumulative writer learns one fact and from that point builds slowly adding fact upon fact, one new thing at a time.

A child who is a cumulative thinker is often a little behind the other students at his grade level. This student is not likely to raise

his hand in class very often. In his mind he must sort through many facts before he comes up with an answer. The other students may have already reached their conclusions while the cumulative thinker is still sifting the facts through his mind. However, this is especially important for teachers. When this child does raise his hand in class, an observant teacher would call upon the student because he would most likely have the correct answer. If the answer would be wrong, the child would have a logical explanation for the answer that was given.

I might also add that once this type of learner does understand something, he remembers it over a longer period of time than many of the other thinkers. In high school and college courses the cumulative thinker does well when taking a final exam which covers the entire length of the course. They have learned their subject well, and they keep that knowledge.

Think of the cumulative thinker in relation to a bricklayer building a wall. It is a slow, tedious process and may take a long time to complete, but once the wall is up, it is firm and strong. This is the way the cumulative thinker works, one layer at a time; one lesson at a time; but once something is learned it is substantial. It is a slow process but a sure one.

The writing below is that of a cumulative thinker. Notice the well-rounded *m*'s and *n*'s.

Mary had a little lambe its
preece was white as snow
and everywhere that Mary went
the lame was sure to go

This writer was a slow, methodical person who took many days to complete a task. His teachers felt he was beyond help, and they told him that he would never amount to anything. It is the writing of Thomas Edison. Edison wanted to know the reason for everything, always asking, "Why?". The teachers thought that he must be dumb, but he was building a strong foundation for himself.

How do you get that now? Hello! Hello!

Thomas A Edison

If a cumulative-writing child is pushed too fast or ridiculed because of his slowness, he may stop trying and retreat into his own thoughts and ideas. This type of child might be called "dumb," and his actions may then make him appear so. This label may stay with the child throughout his school years. It is most important to build up the child's self-confidence and assure him that working at his pace is good, but that he must keep trying. Don't let him get discouraged. Keep stressing his positive forces.

Cumulative thinker

I am going to be
to open up. Everyone
Many people are

Cumulative thinker

I am going to.
store to open up.
helpful. Many people
today. I like that
We are grateful
We are going to

Cumulative thinker

be ready for that
Everyone is very helpful.
happy today. I like
we are grateful

The cumulative thinker can learn all that is necessary, but he requires repetition. The cumulative thinker also finds a time deadline to be most frustrating. This type of thinking slows you down before you begin.

Analytical Thinking

The analytical thinker makes *m*'s and *n*'s that might look like hills with valleys. The sharper the bottom point of the *m* or *n* is, the sharper the individual is in looking for new and additional information.

I am going to be
to open. Everyone is

Analytical thinking

Just as we use a spade to dig into the ground and turn up something new, the mind digs into facts to learn new things.

This child can be frustrating for parents in that he learns what he wants to learn and lets the other things slide by him. It might be that he is interested in history; therefore history will be his best subject, while science and math may be left out in the cold. This is

the student that wants to read a book only if the subject is of interest to him. The child's school grades may be erratic; some grades will be low, some average, with the rest being high.

Analytical thinker

kind of thing. We are
friends. We are going
summer vacation.

Analytical thinker

people are happy today.
thing. We are grateful
We are going to enjoy
vacation.

Analytical thinker

Kind of thing. We
our friends. We

We want to encourage these children to broaden their horizon and their sphere of interests, trying to get them interested in new and different things. These thinkers are creative and they know what they think and why, but they can become critical of others and find fault with those around them.

Investigative Thinking

If wedges are located in the upper portion of the *m*'s and *n*'s, this is a sign of the investigative thinker. The *m* and *n* will often appear to be the letter *u*. The upswing of the letter will be curved.

A sample of handwriting in cursive script. The text reads "Summer of thing vacation. friends". The letters are somewhat loose and lack depth, consistent with the "Investigative Thinker" style described in the text. The word "thing" is misspelled as "thing".

Investigative Thinker

This is the child who must find out for himself. If a sign says, "Wet Paint," he will come up and touch the painted area to see if it is wet. In school this type of thinking child will keep up with all of his studies but will not learn anything in depth. They have a surface knowledge of many things rather than an in-depth understanding of a particular area of knowledge. They are highly conversant on a variety of subjects, have an awareness of all things going on in the world around them, are up-to-date on current events, but they don't sink their teeth deeply into any one area.

They will fail to think through a given situation. They just want to look and then go on, not spending much time in any one particular area. This is the child who likes to explore new things and moves rapidly from one particular hobby to another. He will

focus on one particular hobby for a period of time, and then, as he gets tired of it, will move onto another area. He is an experimenter.

Investigative thinker

Is very helpful. Many today. I like that kind grateful for our going to enjoy our

Investigative thinker

store to open up.
people are happy today.
thing. We are grateful

Academic Thinking

M's and *n*'s that are made to look like saw-teeth are the academic thinkers. These two letters appear to be very rigid.

Academic Thinker

Many people are that kind of thing going to enjoy our

Academic thinker

open up. Everyone
people are happy to
kind of thing.

Academic thinker

I am going to be
to open up. Everyone
Many people are happy
kind of thing. We are
friends.

These individuals are quick thinkers. They grasp all of the information given to them, quickly sort through that information, and then rapidly come to a conclusion. They can read a book once and obtain the main thoughts and ideas from that book. They are quick to make decisions, but since they grasp only the present information, the decision may not always be correct. They are quick to form opinions, although they might change their minds often because of additional information coming to them. They welcome new challenges.

These students are generally achieving at a high level, often quite a bit ahead of their grade norm. They do well in I.Q. tests because they tend to be abstract thinkers. They do not like to have other people tell them what to do nor how to do it. Often, in

school, these children have difficulty with their teacher because the rules and regulations of the class or school may not be to their liking. Difficulties arise at home because of the same situation; they perceive something to be one way and have a difficult time allowing other points of view to enter into their thinking pattern.

These academic thinkers need enrichment programs in school and a lot of direction in order to fulfill their intellectual needs.

Manual Dexterity

Manual dexterity enters the picture in the cumulative thinker. They have the rounded *m*'s and *n*'s.

Again, the roundness shows us that they are the slow, logical thinkers who punctuate their actions with caution. With these children, we need to find a focus upon which we can show them that they can succeed in something. This success will inspire them to increase their self-esteem.

Sample—cumulative thinker

I am going to be ready
open up. Everyone is very

If we look at the letter *r* in conjunction with the well rounded *m*'s and *n*'s we can come up with an additional dimension. If the *r* in the writing has a flat top (I like to call these *r*'s tree stumps), we then have an individual who is coordinated in the use of his hands.

Manual Dexterity

is very helpful. Many
like that kind of
to enjoy our summer

Manual Dexterity

to be ready
start to open up.
is very helpful,
people are happy

Manual Dexterity

very helpful. Many
like that kind of thing,
our summer

Here is the child who likes to be around tools and will use them properly to fix things. In the field of art, this child prefers to work on projects dealing with the use of his hands. He likes to take apart things to see how they work, often much to the chagrin of the parents.

You might encourage this child by giving him building blocks as they will permit the child not only to use his hands, but to increase his powers of imagination, lengthen his attention span, and increase his powers of concentration. You might enroll this child in an art course that would help stimulate his needs of creativity, and also help to increase his personal self-image.

Mixed Patterns

It is possible that a parent might find that his child's writing contains many or all of the mental patterns we have so far dis-

cussed. If this is so, breathe a sigh of relief, as this is a sign of a healthy mind. This is the child who is adaptable and can readjust his thinking patterns to fit the particular situation.

If he is in school and comes upon a new or different subject area or problem, he can slow down his process and drop into his cumulative thinking pattern. If he needs to analyze or re-read to check something, he can move to the analytical and investigative thinking mode.

Sample mixed patterns

Everyone is very helpful.
I am going
store to open up.
Many people are

Sample mixed patterns

I am going to be ready
to enjoy our summer vacation.

Sample mixed patterns

summer vacation.
I am going to be
open up. Everyone is

These students generally enjoy going to school and thrive on taking many different and varied subject in school. Anything new is a challenge, and they do well in most situations.

Summary

The thinking patterns of children will vary throughout their school years. No one pattern is better than another, as they all have plus factors as well as a few negative ones. Once we see which method the child is using at a particular stage in his life, we want to address that method and help the child get the most from himself. For self confidence, it is most important that the child understands that he has a supportive home environment and that he has room to achieve at his level and pace.

The I.Q. is not knowledge, but the ability to build from what one has already learned. I.Q. is only one part of the puzzle that helps us to better understand the thinking child. Putting the mental process into action is another step, and it is this step we will cover in the next chapter.

SAMPLES OF WRITINGS

I am going to see
that store to open up.

Cumulative thinking

I am going to be ready
open up. Everyone is very

Analytical thinking

I am going to be
open up. Everyone

Investigative thinking

I am going to be
store to open up.

Academic thinking

I am going to be ready
Everyone is very helpful.

Manual Dexterity

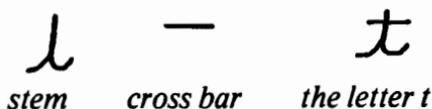
I like that kind of
our summer vacation,

Mixed Patterns

The Telling T's

When analyzing a child's handwriting, first we look at the slant of the writing, and then how heavy or light the writing may be. All of this gives us a fuller/more complete view of the basic ingredients of the child. Next, we begin looking at the letters *m* and *n* to discover the thinking patterns of the child, and from there we proceed to the letter *t*.

The *t* is an important letter in that it tells us a great deal about the will power and goal setting level of the child. There are two strokes in making a *t*: first, we have the stem, the part that is perpendicular to the ground; then, we have the cross bar which is made horizontally.



Goal Setting

Let us first look at the position of the cross bar upon the stem. We will consider it in one of four places:



The placement of the bar on the stem shows us the goal-setting strength of the child. Specimen 1 which has the bar crossing at a

very low level, lets us know that this is a child that underestimates his ability to perform successfully. Specimen 2 is a child who will set practical goals for himself, Specimen 3 shows a long-range planner, while Specimen 4 has the cross bar above the stem indicating a child who is a day-dreamer and, most likely, unable to achieve what he sets out to do.

The child we will first talk about is the one who makes his *t* cross bar low on the stem as in Specimen 5.

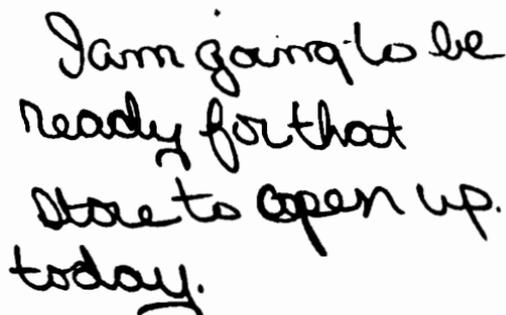
A sample of cursive handwriting. The text is written in a single line across five lines of paper. The words are: 'ready for that', 'everyone is very', 'we are happy', 'we of thing.', 'We by our summer'. The letter 't' in 'that' has a crossbar that is significantly lower than the top of the letter 'a' in 'happy'.

Specimen 5

We can see that the cross bar on the *t* in the word 'that' is at a lower level than the top of the letter *a* within the word.

This is the child that does not give his all, possibly he is unsure of himself, or he just does not try. You see, he thinks he can't do it. He does not do as well as he can in school, frequently doing the basic minimum required to pass and, possibly, not even doing that. He then begins to get down on himself. He feels that no matter how hard he tries, he won't succeed, so why try at all. These children don't like to be pushed into doing things, and often find

school intolerable and would rather be doing something that is easier and more fun for them.

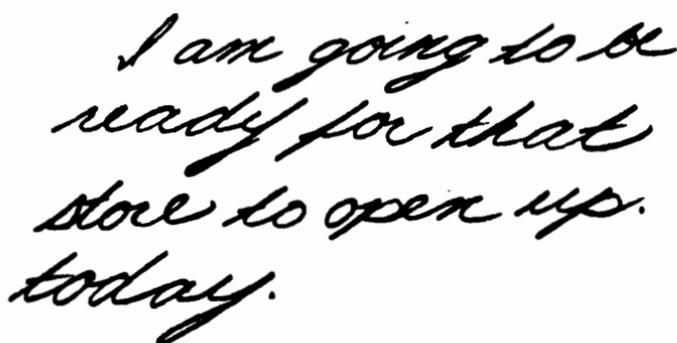


I am going to be
ready for that
store to open up.
today.

Specimen 6

We find in Specimen 6 a cumulative mental pattern, rounded *m*'s and *n*'s, along with the low cross *t* bar. This transmits to us that he can improve, but to improve he must work hard, and he has to be assured along the way that he is doing a good job. We, as parents and educators, must build the feeling in this child that he can do it for himself. This child needs a lot of help in beginning to understand that he can do the work and that he can do a good job if he will only try.

We can also find a child with a quick mind, but who is setting low goals for himself, as shown in Specimen 7.



I am going to be
ready for that
store to open up.
today.

Specimen 7

The *m*'s and *n*'s in the above sample are sharply pointed, but the *t* crossing is placed low on the stem. We know that this child is

not working up to his full ability; he is refusing to try things that will improve his standing. If this is the situation, we must try to find out the reason. There is probably a lack of personal satisfaction in doing what is expected. The child is afraid of biting off more than he thinks he can chew.

ready for that store to open
 many people are happy
 up. We are grateful for
 going our summer vacation.

Specimen 8

Specimen 8 is a writer who makes long-range plans and sets his goals high. He usually knows, or has a good idea, of what he wants to be when he is grown up, although this may change from year to year.

He is constantly planning for the future. These are the children planning what they will do during the summer and what teacher they might like to have for the following year. They are our futuristic thinkers.

"Out of sight, Out of mind," is what we can quote for the sample in Specimen 9.

ie to open up.
 people are happy today.
 going to enjoy

Specimen 9

These are children who fantasize and have dreams which they most likely will not achieve. It can be dangerous only if the child really believes that he can achieve these things in his dreams. When he finally finds out he cannot achieve what he wants, he falls apart. It is often these children that turn to drugs or alcohol in order to escape from the reality that they are unable to reach their high expectations. These expectations might be forced upon them by parents, teachers, or themselves. Since they cannot achieve these heights, they have a low self-esteem, and they have to protect themselves from this lack of good feeling about themselves.

This can also be the child in school that is looking out the window and has his mind a thousand miles away. Walt Disney was a dreamer with *t*'s crossed at or above the top. He achieved most of his dreams, so accomplishment can be there, but the student must understand that it takes a lot of fortitude and persistence.

WALT DISNEY

Walt Disney

Specimen 10 is that of the practical goal setter.

dy for that store
 very helpful.
 today, I like that
 grateful for our

Specimen 10

This individual makes goals that can be achieved and are obtainable. He will not go out beyond his means, nor will he lower his sights just to make it easier. As a parent, you should feel secure if your child writes this type of *t*.

to be ready for t
up. Everyone is W
ople are happy tod
d of thing. We are
friends. We are go
summer vacation.

Specimen 11 (various *t* crossings)

You look at the writing of your child and you find that his *t*'s are crossed at different levels within the writing. Specimen 11 shows us this. This is a person who adapts very well and will be able to go far, because when it is necessary for long-range plans to work, he will set up intermediate goals to achieve, take careful, calculated steps and finally reach what he dreams of reaching. He knows the many days, weeks, and years of planning that are needed to achieve success.

Will Power

After we have the goal-setting understood, we want to look at his ability to begin a job. For this we look again at the cross bar on the *t*, but we look at the pressure used to cross the *t*.

Specimen 12
Specimen 13
Specimen 14
Specimen 15

If, as in Specimen 12, the stem and cross bar have approximately the same weight, this child will work at achieving what he wants to achieve.

Specimen 13 is from a child using a heavy cross bar which takes extra effort and strength to make. It shows us a child with a strong will and that he wants to achieve. This child could also place his cross bar higher on the stem and achieve and set long-range goals for himself because of the strong will that permits him to achieve more things.

Specimen 14 won't get much of anything done. Although he sets practical goals for himself, he will sit next to a job to be completed and never get started at it. Specimen 14 has the *t* bar made very weak, almost impossible to see. His lack of will power is shown by the weakness of the cross stem, as it is much lighter in pressure than the *t* stem.

If the *t* crossing has a long, sweeping stroke as in Specimen 15, the child gets turned on by new challenges and opportunities. His enthusiasm gets carried away, and all he desires to do is to work at his new-found interest. These children are usually self-directed, and they will lock into something that will interest them. It might be stamps, baseball, scouts, but whatever it is, they spend most of their time thinking about and working in their new found love. I might add that this enthusiasm can leave the individual just as quickly as it came.

that store to open up.
ple are happy today.

We are grateful
ing to enjoy our summer

Moderate will power

be ready for that
up. Everyone is
Many people are
I like that kind
re grateful for
We are going to
summer vacation.

Strong will power

ady for that store to
 e is very helpful Manny
 ay I like that kind of thing.

This child, a fifth-grade boy, is setting his sights too high. It is not that he could not achieve what he wants; it's that he won't get around to working up to his capacity to finish the project. We must help him to increase his will power in order to help him get things started and to be able to complete things once he has begun them.

I am going to be
 store to open up.
 helpful. Manny to
 I like that kind
 vacation

Enthusiastic

Determination

Once a job is begun, seeing it to a completion is termed determination. We see determination in the downstrokes of the letter g. Looking at the Specimens below, we will see various degrees of follow-through or determination.

Specimen 16

Specimen 17

Specimen 18

To measure the degree of determination in the child, we want to look at the downstroke below the base line; this will tell us if the child will tend to see things through to an end or stop shortly after beginning a project. In trying to determine the length of the downstroke, we look only at the portion of the letter *g* that is going in a downward movement, we ignore the loop portion of the upstroke, the dotted line.

Specimen 16a

Specimen 17a

Specimen 18a

Specimen 17 with the *g* downstroke going a fair distance below the base line, shows us a good degree of determination, while Specimen 16 which has a short downstroke, shows a lack of follow through. Specimen 18 shows us an individual that will stay with something for a long time and will see it to a final conclusion.

I am going to
be ready for
re going to my
vacation.

Little determination

I am going to be
 open up. Everyone is
 people are happy too
 thing. We are grateful
 e going to enjoy our su

Moderate determination

m going to be ready
 en up. Everyone is
 ple are happy today
 ng. We are grateful
 ng to enjoy our sum

Strong determination

There are times we look at the downstroke of the letter g and we will see a feathered ending on the downstroke. Specimen 19 is a good example.

The word "being" is written in a cursive script. The final letter, 'g', has a long, sweeping downstroke that curves to the left and then back up, creating a feathered effect.

Specimen 19
feathered stroke

A feathered ending on a downstroke is someone who will start a project but will get tired of it and not follow it through to an end. These are the great beginners and poor finishers. They want to stop in mid-stream and go onto something new. It would be best to have a child that does this begin with smaller projects and see those few things to a conclusion.

The phrase "we got the" is written in a cursive script. The 'g' in "got" has a downstroke that curves sharply to the left, failing to complete its downward path.

Specimen 20

The *g* in Specimen 20 does not seem to go down at all, but turns toward the left. If a parent does much of the work for the child and never gives the child credit for being able to do something himself, the child's *g* will look like Specimen 20. Here the child does not have to worry about completing anything, if he gets tired, someone will do it for him. Although it is often easier for the parent to do it for the child, it is best for the child to give himself the encouragement and the time to work on the task and to complete it himself. Specimen 20 is that of a child that has no desire to finish what needs to be completed, because someone else will do it for him. This type of *g* is quite prevalent in the writings of fourth, fifth, and sixth graders.

I am going to
 be to open u
 very helpful.
 kind of thing.
 Yay our sum

4th grade girl

I am going to be ready for
 open up. Everyone is very help
 people are happy today and like to
 if thing. We are grateful for
 We are going to enjoy our

5th grade boy

I am going to be
 to open up. Everyone
 people are happy
 kind of thing. We

6th grade boy

Summary

This is an important chapter of the book. It includes the broad information about our children which enables us to determine their ability to complete what is necessary for advancement. They may have the mental ability to do something, but if they do not have the will power or determination to see it through to a completion, it does not do much good.

We all need to set goals in order for us to achieve something. Goals are just as important to a ten-year old as they are to an adult. A strong will or purpose encourages us to strive harder and it builds up our strength to make decisions. It increases our faith in ourselves. Determination is an important part in the building up of a strong character, a factor that promotes personal achievement and satisfaction.

SAMPLES OF WRITINGS

Goal Setting

I am going to
 for that store to
 everyone is very
 many people
 today. I like that
 thing. We are gr

Low Goals

I am going to
 store to open up.
 helpful. Many see
 I like that kind
 grateful for our

Practical Goals

ready for that
 e is very helpful.
 ay. I like that
 ng to enjoy our

Future Thinking

Will Power

ong to be
that store to
kind of
re grateful for

Weak Will Power

dy for that store to
helpful. Many
summer vacation.

Moderate Will Power

eady for that store to
is very helpful. Many
today. I like that
are going to enjoy
cation.

Strong Will Power

Determination

I am going to be
store to open up
kind of thing.

Weak Determination

I like that kind
grateful for our
of thing. We are

Moderate Determination

I am going to be rec
up. Everyone is very h
happy today. I like t
are grateful for our fri

Strong Determination

Enthusiasm

I am going
that store to
is very helpful
are happy to
kind of thin
grateful for o

Communication

The important word for raising a child successfully from early years through teens is **communication**. A relationship of trust must be built between you and your child, and in this way, you will help your child to grow and improve himself.

Communication must start from the day the child is born, and possibly even before birth. Babies are often talked to and held, and this is important to the well being of the child, but during the age of two and three, we may become involved with other things both in and out of family life as the baby is growing up. We don't always have enough time for the child. Less time talking to the child may be due to a new brother or sister arriving, or because both parents must work, leaving less time for the child and having the child spend many hours away from the home. It is important that we explain to the older child the reason that he is not given as much attention as before. Explain that the younger child needs more direct care and supervision, but the love for each member of the family is equal and that love is shown in various ways. It may not make him feel better at the moment, but he will have time to think about it, and, most importantly, you have kept the lines of communication open between you and your child. Also, take time to ask your child's opinion and feelings on this matter, and discuss with him his thoughts and how things might be worked out in order to keep the lines of communications open.

The communication between child and parent should be natural. The dinner table is about the best place for the family to convey feelings and thoughts. Do not correct or criticize what they say, but feel free to express your feelings and thoughts on the mat-

ter being discussed. Just as you expect them to respect your ideas and decisions, you must respect theirs; to correct and criticize whatever they say will eventually cause them to stop expressing themselves. When something is said that goes against beliefs or morals of the parents, parents usually want to tell the child how it should be done; but much more can be gained if you firmly present your point of view. Then try to get them to talk more about their feelings which possibly can result in a compromise or mutual understanding.

We don't want to lose the fact that communication must be a two-way street. There must be this give and take, so that a channel remains open. All too often the parents' idea of communication is telling the child what to do and not to do, forgetting that the child also must have a part in the dialogue. Give the child every opportunity to express his concerns and ideas.

Be sure to listen to what they are saying. Frequently a child will give what can be referred to as a "surface" statement. A "surface" statement is one that the child presents as a problem, but the real problem is much deeper than the basic statement. One form of "surface" statement is given through a third person. The child might relate to you that one of his friends is having a problem, when it's your own child that is having the difficulty. When a child who normally enjoys playing with friends outside makes a statement such as, "I don't want to go out to play today," it may mean that the child is tired and would rather stay in, or it could have a much deeper meaning. He might be having trouble getting along with his friends, some are trying to beat him up; he might be losing his friends because they found someone else to play with; or there might be some other personal problem at the moment. Listen carefully to what the child is saying and try to hear beyond the question. If you do leave that channel open for the child, he will be able to get off his mind what is bothering him and will probably feel very relieved. Listen. Listen. Listen.

When your child's view is contrary to your own, it is difficult to have patience. You have given your views, told your child what to do, but still he does not seem to listen or to adjust his sights, in fact he stalks out of the room. What should you do? Be patient

for if you have kept a line of communication open between you and the child, you can then talk with him concerning the issues at a later time when both of you have cooled off. The reason the child stalks away is that he needs a quiet place for concentration to think through his feelings. Give him and yourself time to think, and then approach the child to discuss the problem in a calm manner, possibly using a different approach. In doing this, you have given yourself time to modify your thoughts and, most importantly, your child has been given time to modify his. When a child with a good school attendance record begins to miss quite a bit of school, this usually signals that something more is happening, something that he cannot handle by himself. Stomach aches, sore throats, headaches or fever will be frequent complaints. Difficulties may have developed at home between parents or other siblings; in school the teacher may be putting more pressure on him which is becoming uncomfortable, or trouble may have developed between him and his friends. Watch the health of your child and begin to read it as you would the written word since much information can be garnered from it.

A pitfall for many of us is comparing one child with another child in or out of the family circle. Each of us is an individual with individual needs, desires, and drives. The same is true of any child. He is unique, and we should concentrate on building his strengths. Comparisons, although well-meaning, will only make your child seem inferior and unable to cope. There is nothing wrong, in fact it is a good idea to hold up models for the child to emulate. However, don't compare that model with your child. Allow the child to see the good traits in the role model, traits that may appeal to your child. A child will find a model to follow which may or may not be good for him, so directing the child toward the good models permit him to adopt a positive attitude.

A child may also bring up a specific question concerning sex, drugs, or alcohol. Answer the question directly and honestly on a level that the child can understand. Answer it freely enough so that at a future time the child will be encouraged to ask other questions that are on his mind. If his question comes at an inappropriate time, such as on a bus or in the supermarket, tell the

child that it is a good question, and just as soon as you get home you will answer it, that later would be a better time.

We see the desire for communication in the circle letter, specifically the letter *o*.

Specimen 1

Specimen 2

Specimen 3

Note Specimen 1 and Specimen 2. The difference is the opening or lack of opening at the top of the letter. Specimen 1 is closed at the top while Specimen 2 is open. We can say that Specimen 1 with its top closed is parallel to an individual with a closed mouth. This is not to say that the child does not talk, but he does not communicate freely and usually will not offer much insight into himself. Although this child does not offer information freely, constant communication lines built up will allow him to express what is on his mind when he feels comfortable with someone.

Specimen 2 and Specimen 3 have the top of the letter *o* open to a differing degree. The larger the opening, as in Specimen 2 compared to a smaller opening as in Specimen 3, shows the various stages of being communicative. Writers such as Specimen 2 will pour their heart out to anyone and everyone often without being asked. They are highly communicative and enjoy talking with others.

today, I like that
are grateful for our
are going to enjoy
vacation.

Reticent

open up. Everyone in
 people are happy today
 thing. We are grateful
 we are going to enjoy

Communicative

grateful for our
 going to enjoy our

Communicative

Next we will look at the letter *o* which may contain loops.



Specimen 4



Specimen 5



Specimen 6

We might see a letter *o* as made in Specimen 4, Specimen 5, and Specimen 6. These *o*'s contain loops on the right side. Children that keep their thoughts and ideas inside of themselves write their *o*'s in this manner. The larger the right-hand circle the more secretive they become. See Specimen 6. These are often the children that will tell you stories about their friends, when it is really themselves they are speaking about. They do not want others to know their private thoughts, so they keep their thoughts locked

up. Children with these secretive loops do not care to enter into conversation with those in authority. They will look at the person speaking, but will say little. It is very difficult to know how they feel on a given topic because they say nothing. When talking with these children, give them the opportunity to converse and to express their point of view, but do not force the issue or you might create additional difficulties. However, it is very important that you communicate with them just as you would with anyone. Remember they will respond when they are inclined to do so, if the door has been left open for them. Even though this child may not answer your questions, keep asking them as you would normally because at the right time or the right moment when the child feels secure with you, or feels intensely on a particular matter, he will reveal his thoughts. You must remember to keep his thoughts in confidence, because if he discovers you have told another person this private information, he may never again open up to you.

These secretive writers will discuss their problems with someone who is open and willing to listen and will not belittle them or react strongly to what they say. This individual might be a teacher, relative, or older friend of the family. If your child does not express his feelings freely, and you have a concern that something is bothering him, set up a meeting for the child with someone you know he thinks highly of and enjoys being around. These children need someone to listen, someone they have faith and trust in. These children need a strong bond of trust in their confidant.

I am going to be
open up. Everyone
people are happy
thing. We are get

gratebeel for our
going to enjoy our

I am going to be
to open up. Everyone
Many people are

Samples above show secretiveness

When we see the loop on the letter *o* placed at the left side of the letter, we see something that can be a cause for concern.



Specimen 7



Specimen 8

Specimen 7 has one loop on the left side, with no loop showing on the right side. This is the child that has to convince himself to do something. It could be building up a truth or building up a lie, but he makes things appear to himself not as they really are but as he wishes them to be. Once he has convinced himself, he can then carry on and do what he set out to do.

Specimen 8 is a child who might turn to making up stories. I must stress that it does not mean the child cannot be trusted, but it does mean that when he is in trouble, there is a constant input into the mind to lie in order to get out of the difficulty. The child might be very capable of overcoming these temptations because of in-

fluences of his family and friends, but the temptation will be there as long as we see loops on the left side of the letter *o*. When I have dealt with children and I have seen this in their writings, I tell them what I see: that their first inclination is to avoid the truth in order to get out of the circumstance. I encourage them to develop self-support in order to keep from falling into this habit, which is a difficult one to overcome. If your child is caught not telling the truth, let him know that you know he lied, tell him how you feel, and ask him for an explanation. Be careful not to be overbearing, thereby forcing him to tell another lie. Faith, understanding and love will help guide the child through this path and will help you to cope with things going on within him.

ready for that store to open
shopful. Many people are

I am going to be
store to open up.

people are happy today.

Imagination

In the letter *o* we see the way a person communicates. We have talked about how the method of communicating changes when we see loops enter into the letter *o*. As we are communicating, the addition of these loops broaden the input and use of the imagination. In the secretive *o*, looped on the right side, the imagination brings fear into the picture, so the child wants to keep things hid-

den. When loops are introduced on the left side of the letter, the imagination enjoys freedom to bring many ideas into the picture that need not be there.

Loops, then, are a sign of imagination. We also have upper loops and lower loops. The upper loop letter we will look at is the letter *l*; the lower loop letter we will discuss is the letter *g*.

We connect the upper loops to the philosophical imagination and the lower loops are the material day-to-day imagination.

Specimen 9

Specimen 10

Specimen 11

The broader the loop in the *l* the larger the amount of imagination that is introduced in the spiritual thinking process. Specimen 9 would have a very narrow religious standard around which he will work. He does not deviate from his beliefs and has a tight reign on himself. Specimen 10 has a moderate level of belief with an understanding toward other points of view. Specimen 11 suggests the child that broadens his base, accepts anything and everything, and can bend it to his liking. Anything is acceptable and proper by his standards. He likes to do something, he can rationalize it and then proceed to go ahead and do as he wishes. The writer of Specimen 9 sets rigid standards for himself, and he works hard at living up to those ideals. He has firm beliefs.

helpful. many
today. I like that

is very helpful.
today I like that of

The lower loops denote the amount of material imagination a person has.

Specimen 12

Specimen 13

Specimen 14

The narrow loops as in Specimen 12 indicate an imagination that is not very active, while the large loop of Specimen 14 shows a great deal of imagination. We can see this type of g in many of the great fiction writers as they use their broad imagination to come up with new and unusual ideas.

"⁷Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal."

Great Writer's Sample

The large looped g is also seen in many of our great artists, whatever their field, as imagination is an important ingredient to creativity.

"⁷Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal."

Great Artist's Sample

that store to open
 is very happy,
 happy today. I
 of thing. We are going
 summer vacation.

I am going to be
 to open up. Everyone
 Many people are

It is important that we hook up the imagination trait with the communicative letter *o*. If we have the broad imagination as in Specimen 14 along with the double looped *o* as in Specimen 8, we can be quite sure that the ideas thought up by this child can begin to sound quite truthful. Also a large lower loop with the open *o* as in Specimen 2 or Specimen 3, suggests someone that loves to talk and talk and cannot only tell you everything that happened on their vacation but can express themselves in very colorful terms. They can make you almost believe that you were with them on the trip. The narrow upper loop, in the letter *l*, Specimen 9, included in the writing of the secretive individual, as shown in the letter *o*, Specimen 4, Specimen 5, and Specimen 6, informs us that this child has very firm beliefs and will not talk out his feelings.

He will just attempt to live up to his own personal standards. You can also be assured that the narrow upper loop with the double looped *o*, Specimen 8, will indicate a person who will be able to control his lying because of his own personal beliefs, since he

knows right from wrong, and will constantly fight to keep on the correct side.

Summary

Communication is most important for a healthy environment between child and adult. It builds a bond of trust that permits both individuals to cope with difficulties that may come along on the child's road to adulthood. It takes a lot of patience for true communication to be meaningful. This communication does not have to be verbal. There are many non-verbal forms of communication: body language, eye movement, health, and eating habits. All of these forms communicate feelings to another individual, but it is necessary to understand that some of these communicative forms are done unconsciously. Silence can also be a form of communication.

Allow for growth in the art of communication. Avoid the temptation to cut off all talk because what the child is saying is not in accord with your values or beliefs.

SAMPLES OF WRITINGS

I am going to

Non-communicative

I am going to be ready

Communicative

I am going to be ready

Secretive

I am going to be ready

Possible deceit

very helpful.

Active Philosophical Imagination

am going to be ready

Active Material Imagination

Childhood Fears

Fear is another term for emotional insecurity. Fears stem from physical, emotional, and spiritual deprivations, and they prevent the natural development of a well integrated person. There are two broad areas of fears: fears of self preservation, being able to survive in today's complex world, and unconscious fears expressed as anxieties. Often fears are unknown to the child or his family. The handwriting uncovers fears that he is carrying inside of himself.

In my many years of dealing with children from kindergarten through high school, I have come to realize that there are two important needs that a child has. One is a need for love, and the other need is for a positive self image.

A question that parents should ask of themselves is, "Does my child know that I love him?" We must remember that children want and need to be loved. It is so important that parents put their arms around their child, squeeze him, and say, "I love you," or "Mommy and Daddy sure love you." It is such a simple task and it pays such high dividends. I also want to emphasize how important it is for the father to give his loving approval to the child. In the family where there is only one parent, it is important that there be a substitute to take the part of the missing adult. This substitute could be an aunt, uncle, friend, or teacher, but someone is necessary to fill in for the missing parent. The father that can say, "I love you," to his child is a much stronger individual in the child's eyes. Boys especially are proud when their father can express his love for them. This strengthens the bond between child and parent. One is certainly not going to make a sissy out of a

youngster by saying, "I love you." Quite the contrary, it will make him a much stronger individual; one that is better able to cope with difficulties in his personal life. Inside, the youngster knows that there is someone who cares.

Timing is important. If the child is in the middle of watching his favorite television program, the statement, "I love you," has little value, and could have a negative influence. Also the way in which it is said is important, by this I mean the tone of voice. Children can see through insincerity. When things are calm, and you are alone with the child, which could be at home or in a public place such as a restaurant, it is a good time to say honestly, "Bill, I love you!" or "Sue, I love you!" Say no more. Give the child time to reflect on what you have just said.

Love should be a gift shared with others. The opposite of love is not hate, but indifference.

It is important that a child have a good self concept. If this is strong, it enables him to ride the crest of the many difficulties that he will encounter throughout his childhood and adult life.

We all have an image of ourselves. If it is good we have few fears; however, if we have a poor image we look to others for support. The same thing is true of a child. If he does not get the needed support, the child turns to outside influences that may be harmful to him. Fear becomes a crutch which causes him to lose much of his personal self-image.

Teenagers, especially, have problems stemming from a poor self-image. To have a good self-image, we need three ingredients, being loved, being needed, and having confidence in ourselves. With these three qualities a child can accomplish most anything that he sets out to do, and his writing will reflect a strong character. If we are missing one of the ingredients, we have to work at building up our self concept.

Repression

Psychologists say that we have an innate need for self-expression. In times of stress our feelings become more intense, and, to control these strong feelings, we restrain or repress our

feelings. This is the emergence of repression or lack of expression. Repression means to contain or to go over and over those feelings, while expression means to exit our feelings. If we want to eliminate unwanted thoughts, ideas, or feelings, we subconsciously repress them.

We try to repress things that can hurt us. We try to forget about anything that may bother us. Occasionally, we are able to block out completely the things we don't want to remember, but most often, we are only building a protective wall around our thoughts. This protective wall of repressing our thoughts will appear in the handwriting. This repression shows up as crowded or pinched writing.

I am going to be ready
open up. Everyone is very
people are happy today.
kind of thing. We are

very helpful. Many
day. I like that kind of
helpful for our friends.
enjoy our summer vacation

I am going to be ready
open up - everyone is very
people are happy today

We all have a few things that we would like to forget, so we all have a small amount of repression evident in our writing. However, if repression appears throughout the copy, it is then something to watch because it indicates that the child is having a problem coping with his worries and fears. If you see this crowded writing, try to give your child every opportunity to talk with you and to express his feelings openly with you. Ask him open-ended questions that will permit him to answer freely. The goal is to help him eliminate these repressed feelings, thoughts, or experiences.

Lack of Love

Our greatest need in life is to experience love. When we do not experience love, our world shatters. This fear of not being loved is shown in the writing by little loops at the beginning of capital letters.



The loops must be small, and they must be closed. They are usually flat on the bottom.

This can be a very serious fear because when one has a worry of being unloved, many emotional problems can develop. The child becomes insecure which leads to an unstable situation in his life. The beginning of the fear of not being loved is often found in early childhood. It can develop even before the child can talk.

A survival skill for a child is the need for approval from those around him and those close to him. This need for approval will cause the child to try to force himself on others. Unfortunately, his behavior can be obnoxious to others, and he becomes a bore or a showoff. He, then, becomes disliked and shunned by those around him and this increases the lack of love shown to him.

The other possibility is that the child may develop a negative or depressed outlook. He finds negativism everywhere he looks. He

is down on himself, which can lead to hating himself as a person and wanting to do harm to himself or those around him.

If this fear is not deleted in childhood, it carries over into adulthood and often causes the adult to act very immaturely.

If your child has these loops in his writing, there are things that one can do to help the child feel more secure and loved. One way is to verbalize that the child is loved, and reassure him that he is an important part of the family center. Put a note in his lunchbox so that when the child gets to school he will find it in his lunch and feel good about himself. Take one day a month and spend some extra personal time with the child, go somewhere or just doing something special with the child, but be careful not to exclude other children in the family. Each one deserves a *special* day.

Physical contact is most important also. A pat on the back, or the head, a handshake, a hug and a kiss, all will do as much as words. Make yourself physically present around the child, and you will see an improvement take place.

thing. We are grateful
We are going to enjoy

Many are happy today.
thing. We are grateful

Need for Attention

Fighting, being sent to the principal's office, constant arguing at home are signals that your child is asking for more attention

from you. If it is truly an emotional need, we can see it in the writing by the long upstrokes at the end of a word.

are train

It is as if the child is raising his hand and saying, "Mom, Dad, Look at me. I'm here!" What they are really doing is calling out for help. "Here I am. Help me." If this goes unchecked, it may lead to the child blaming himself for things that happen which leads to a poor self-image. Because of his poor self-image, his social life will change, his school work will suffer, and his behavior will be drastically altered. If we can notice the first signs of this need for attention, there are many outlets to help him. Dramatics, leadership and participation in an organization, playing a sport, joining a club at school, are all excellent ways of building his feeling of being a part of something. The child can be given more responsibility around the house, be assigned certain jobs that are exclusively his. He might resist at first, but in the long run the feeling of being truly needed and a part of the family will become apparent to the child.

up - Everyone is very
Many people

for that store to
Everyone is

Fear of Failure

This leads us to the child that has a fear of failure. This child does not try his best because he believes that he is inferior to those around him. He has many difficulties in dealing with himself and with others.

We often push a child into this fear by setting unrealistic goals for him. Parents and teachers can sometimes share the blame. They expect more from the child than the child is ready or willing to produce at a given time. We must look at the particular child and make sure that the goals we set for him and that he sets for himself are realistic and can be obtained without serious setbacks along the way. I must underline, though, that high standards should always be maintained. Some prodding of the child to do more and to do better are important to his well being.

There are times that we all fail. These failures are important because they enable us to appreciate our successes in life all the more. When a child fails, he needs support from parents and the school system so that he can learn from his mistakes and then proceed to achieve his goals.

The fear of failure is seen by *t* crossings that are low. This has been discussed in Chapter 3. You might want to review that chapter to see the traits that lead to failure.

the three

Fear of failure is the one trait that I see most in the handwriting of children from grades three through the junior high. The teachers are usually the first ones to notice this lack of self-esteem. It is evident in one of two ways: either the child does not raise his hand in school and often sits near the back of the class room, slumping down when the teacher is asking questions, or on the day of his test or his oral report, he is not in class because he is home ill. And he is truly ill, as this fear can affect the health of a child. Also, he may become a behavior problem since this is an escape trick that gets him sent to the office and out of the room

away from the pressure. His behavior gets the center spotlight on him and, where he lacked self-image before, his ego is now expanded because the teacher begins to recognize him and his peers observe his antics.

For this child, a parent-teacher conference is important. A good conference can give you new insight into your child which is a key factor. However, for a conference to be successful it involves the active participation of all those concerned: child, parent, and teacher. All participants need to share ideas to find out the child's needs and strengths. Ask what the teacher is doing to help the child overcome any difficulties he might be having. The parent can receive hints that will help in becoming a more observant parent. Don't hesitate to talk with other adults in or out of the school setting who may have a relationship with your child. Fitting all the information together helps the parent to understand the puzzle a little better.

*ready for that
is very helpful.
today. I like that*

*like that kind of
grateful for our
be ready for that store*

Ridicule

The same children that have a low self-esteem, also are afraid that people will make fun of them. They have a fear of ridicule.

This trait is seen in the writing by looking at the last hump in the letter *m*. When that last hump is extended higher than the first hump, we have an individual that has this fear. It is a feeling of being inferior to others around him.



The higher the hump, the stronger the fear.

This same trait can be seen when we have a double letter within a word, *ee*, *ll*, *ff*, and we see the second of the double letters is higher than the first one.



We all have personal pride. Humiliation is difficult for anyone, and the spoken word can be the most humiliating. Frequently, the person doing the talking is unaware that he has humiliated someone.

Children with physical difficulties and handicaps, things that are not changeable, are in need of much support. If the handicap is something that will not go away, we must help them to accept their situation and emphasize their strengths.

All children need a sense of success and accomplishment. A hobby that will increase their self-awareness and self-worth is beneficial. This not only expands their knowledge in a given area but enables them to share with others the facts and skills they now possess. The youngsters can take pride in something they have done. Any type of collection, some form of model building, or, possibly, art work, will aid in attaining a better feeling of self-worth.

Fear of ridicule often is evident in the writing of junior high and high school students. There is great peer pressure to belong to the group. If the child is not welcome into the group and is considered an outcast, additional problems are created for the child. The teenager is neither a child nor an adult. He can't behave like a child or he is ridiculed. On the other hand, if he acts too much like

an adult he is told that he should not behave in that particular manner since he is only a teenager.

*friends. We are going
vacation.*

I am going to be

*I am going to be ready
Everyone is very helpful.
I like that kind of thing.*

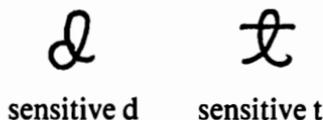
Sensitivity

A child's pride is often injured by thoughtless criticism. Children often hear criticism but not nearly as often do they hear praise. In school the teacher is certain to correct the child who errs, but when the child does a good job, it often goes unnoticed. Likewise at home, the child receives criticism, but the compliments are too few and far between.

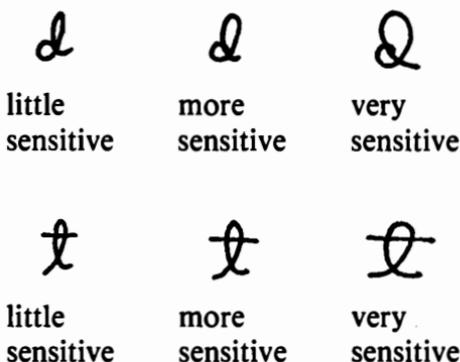
These repeated slights increase the severity of the child's sensitiveness. As this sensitivity increases, a fear builds, and before the child realizes it, he begins to read personal criticism into statements, and he now believes that everything said seems negative.

A fear of disapproval is found in children who are insecure. It comes as a result of repeated hurts and rejections. We are all sensitive to a certain degree, but there are some of us bothered by it more than others.

We see sensitiveness in the letter *d* and the letter *t*. We look at the upstroke. If we see a loop in the upstrokes of the letter *d* or in the letter *t*, we have the trait of sensitivity.



The size of the loop will indicate the intensity of the hurt.



If the sensitiveness is seen in just the letter *d*, the sensitivity is in reference to the personal aspects of the child's life: his way of conducting himself and his personal appearance. If it is the letter *t* that is looped, this relates to his plans of action, his personal accomplishments, or his standards of performance.

These sensitive writers simply imagine reasons for others to disapprove their way of life. They want approval, but because of insecurities developed from previous experiences, they fear additional disapproval.

The insecure or sensitive writer will select his friends carefully. This is his way of assuring himself that his friends conform to his way of thinking, rather than have a friend that may criticize him.

A lot of love and moral support will help this child deal with the insecurities that he sees in his life.

ready for that
 Everyone is very
 people are happy
 that kind of

happy today.
 kind of thing.

Sensitive d

I am going to
 be ready for that

that store so
 is very helpful
 happy today.
 as thing. we
 our summer

Sensitive t

Teen years

Teenagers have many immediate problems facing them, the first of which is their own bodies. They are experiencing drastic and quick physical changes, changes that are often difficult for them to handle. They are feeling awkward, often literally falling over their own two feet. Some teenagers can go through this rapid growth with little negative effect upon them; however, the majority of teens find this period to be difficult. If a teenager is being bothered by this rapid growth, we can see it in the handwriting. The writing has blotches, scratches, and erasures that are not cleanly done. We also may see wavy baselines or writing that is going up and down. All of these things are related to the uneasiness of puberty.

ing to be ready for that store
 Everyone is very helpful. Many
 happy today I like that kind of
 e are grateful for our friend
 ing to enjoy ~~of~~ our summer.

I am going to be ready go
 open up. Everyone is very
 people are happy today. I
 thing. We are grateful for
 We are going to enjoy our

Teenagers face adjustment problems. No longer children and becoming aware of the pitfalls and difficulties of adult life, teens are easily frustrated. They try to live up to their expectations and the expectations of their parents, but often they fall short. The parents expect one thing, their peers another and, inside, their consciences are sending them messages. They have to sort all of these items and make a personal decision. Although we may disagree with their decision, we, as adults, must be supportive of that decision. We must help the teen live with the decision that he makes.

Three of the strongest pressures that teenagers face are alcohol, drugs, and sex. Often the code words are, "Everyone else is doing it, so I'll do it." The teenager that gets into alcohol, drugs, or sex is showing the symptoms of a bigger problem. The use of alcohol and drugs is not limited to the teen years; today's society is experiencing an increase in the use of drugs at the elementary school level. Ten, eleven, and twelve-year-old youngsters are exposed to much more than children of their age just a generation ago. Alcohol and drugs are available, and these youngsters know where to get them if they want to experiment. We fool ourselves if we think our child is unaware of these things.

This is another reason why it is so important that adults who deal with youngsters of any age, keep the channels of communication open and establish a bond of trust so that the child can feel comfortable in discussing the difficulties and conflicts that may arise in his life. Youngsters are also quite aware of their sexual feelings. Temptations are constantly bombarding them. Strong family relationships and good role models will help them in dealing with these feelings.

A teenager needs to feel that he is a contributing member of his family, and his opinions are considered, and decisions are made after he has taken part in the discussion. The teenager also must be allowed to make his own decisions, because it is from these decisions that he grows as a person.

Close friendships, whether these friendships are with relatives, peers, or neighbors, help the teenager become an adult and an adjusted teen. Above all, privacy is most important for the teen. A

teen needs a place to be by himself when making a decision, a place to get away from all peer and family pressures, or simply a place to relax and be alone. He also needs a source of outside direction and support. This source of counsel could be a teacher or an adult friend.

Summary

Most fears can be overcome through building a youngster's self-confidence.

1. Set up small tasks for the child that can be accomplished in a reasonable period of time. The tasks should be ones that can be performed well.
2. Give the child positive strokes both in words and in actions. Remember that physical touching to many children is most important.
3. Permit the child to talk about and to express his feelings openly. We don't need to agree with him, but we must provide him with the opportunity to discuss things freely.
4. Give the child encouragement to do his best but, avoid ridiculing him if he does not fully succeed.
5. Develop in your child the ability to set practical goals and standards for himself. The idea of one step at a time builds self-confidence.
6. Offer the child the opportunity to become involved in an outside activity, an activity that will keep his mind and hands busy.
7. Give your child Love and Understanding.

SAMPLES OF WRITINGS

I am going to be ready for
open up. Everyone is very

Repression

helpful. Many people
I like that kind

Lack of Love

I am going to be
open up. Everyone is

Need for Attention

I am going to
start to open up.

Fear of Failure

I am going to be ready

Ridicule

I am going to be ready

Sensitive d

I am going to be

Sensitive t

Defenses Against Fears

When fears occur, we need to have a defense mechanism to cope with them. In this chapter we will discuss the various methods that children have of dealing with their fears. This chapter does not follow a particular study of psychology; however, the conclusions are drawn from many years of observing children and their reaction to fears.

Somehow an individual uses his mental powers to wrestle with his fears. There are various methods that one uses: resisting the fear and fighting back, whereby we often become hostile and place our problems on others; escaping, particularly emotionally, and hiding from those persons and things that we think cause our fear; and, finally, adjusting to and coping with our fears.

ESCAPE

We will first focus upon the child that tries to escape from his fears. Rather than deal with the fear this child tries to block it out of his mind. Although he tries to run from the fear, he can't hide. This escape method is a very unhealthy one. This is usually the child that has a difficult time sleeping at night, has nightmares, and complains of many stomach and head aches.

Clannishness

In order not to have to deal with many different personalities and people, some children are very selective in their choice of

friends. They tend to have only one or two extremely close friends. They are very loyal to their friends, but they become extremely possessive and do not like to share their friends with others. We look for clannishness in the letter *y*.

Specimen 1
Clannishness

Specimen 2
Selective

Specimen 3
Many friends

When we see a letter *y* that has a small loop at the end of the lower stem, we find the trait of clannishness. Specimen 1 shows us an example of clannishness. The *y* in Specimen 3 has a large broad loop. The width of the *y* tells us that this person has many friends. In fact everyone to him is a friend. Note, also, that the loop in Specimen 3 returns to the base line. The writer of Specimen 2 is selective in choosing his friends, usually preferring someone that has the same likes and dislikes as he does. It is the small loop at the bottom of the *y* in Specimen 1 that shows us an individual that clings to one person. This child likes to sit by himself in class, or we find him in the back of the room. He prefers small group work rather than large groups. He often prefers to go to a show by himself. His activities usually do not require a lot of participants. He does not enjoy functions that have lots of people in attendance. Being a loner in and of itself is not bad. However, when clannishness is coupled with fear traits, we can then see that instead of being a life style, it is used as an escape.

Although this trait of clannishness can be well hidden from others, we find it in the handwriting. A child might appear to be an excellent mixer, interested in many people, even be called the life of the party, but if we see this clannishness we should be aware of the fears that the child has preying on his mind. He is attempting to escape from his feelings rather than dealing with them.

up. Everyone is very
happy today. I like
going to enjoy our

Clannishness

I am going to be
store to open up.
Everyone is helpful.
happy today. I

Selective

is very helpful,
are happy today's
thing. We are

Many friends

Concentration

Very small writing 1/16 of an inch or smaller, measured in the middle zone of the writing, indicates the person who concentrates.

that boy has a big like

A person who concentrates can make himself focus exclusively on his particular interest. Intellectual ability is not necessarily involved.

This child often is unaware of things going on around him because his scope is very narrow. If this individual develops emotional difficulties, he may well use his powers of concentration to shut out the world of reality thereby cutting off all ideas or thoughts that might conflict with his emotional needs. This can be a very serious escape method.

This trait can also be very frustrating for the parent or the teacher.

This child can be told three or four times to do something such as turn off the television or come to the dinner table before he responds. The parent then feels hostility because he thinks his child is ignoring him. A similar situation can exist in the classroom. A teacher feels frustration when the child has to be called several times before responding. Actually the child with this small writing is not ignoring anyone, but he has skillfully learned to block out all unwanted sounds and he absorbs only what he is focusing upon.

*open up. Everyone is
people are happy today
thing. We are grateful
We are going to enjoy*

*that kind of thing. We are grateful for
are going to enjoy our summer vacation.*

Daydreaming

When the *t* crossing is above the stem of the letter, we have a child that daydreams. We have discussed the letter *t* in Chapter 3.



Daydreaming

Daydreaming solves no problems for the child, but it does serve as a temporary escape from an unhappy reality. If the daydreaming *t* crossing is found only occasionally throughout the writing, there is no reason for concern. But, if that high *t* crossing is consistent throughout the writing, we have a child that uses this daydreaming escape to build a fantasy world. By daydreaming he does not have to cope with the current problems. He uses these dreams to escape reality, often confusing his fantasies with facts.

These children develop problems at home and problems in school.

Again, we must look at the consistency of the *t* crossings. One or two daydreaming *t*'s are not unusual. It is when we see a majority of *t*'s made in this manner, we must seriously look at things that are disturbing the child.

as things we are
 friends we are
 summer vacation

going to be ready
 today.

Procrastination



Procrastination

We see procrastination when the *t* crossing is made to the left of the *t* stem. It makes no difference if the writing is done with the right or left hand, the crossing at the left indicates procrastination. If the *t* crossing appears in any length on the right of the *t* stem, we do not have procrastination.



to open up. Everyone is
people are happy today. I
thing. We are grateful

Above samples are not procrastination

Some of us tend to put off tasks that are unpleasant. This is a natural way of life for many, waiting until the last minute to complete an unpleasant task. However, if we do this with all aspects of life, then we have a serious problem. The procrastinator is an individual who fears criticism and lacks self-confidence in his abilities to achieve. Therefore, he avoids failure or ridicule by not doing it. The biggest difficulty for the procrastinator is that sooner or later he will have to face the job and complete it. These people worry much more than is really necessary. Procrastination is usually only one symptom of a much bigger problem. Once this bigger problem is dealt with and resolved, the procrastination will disappear.

On the surface children who procrastinate appear to be lazy, not wanting to do what is asked of them. Their school assignments are not completed on time or may not even be turned in. We try to force them into becoming responsible, but the problem is deeper than lethargy. They are feeling insecure.

*I am going to be
ready for that store*

*I am going to be ready
kind of thing.
our friends.*

Shallowness

t t t

Shallowness is seen in the letter *t*. We must look at the cross bar of the *t*. If we see that it is dish-shaped, we call this trait shallowness. The *t* crossing must be well curved; a slight curve will lessen the problem, but a sharp-curved cross bar is a sign of shallowness.

t

slight curve

t

strong curve

Shallow individuals have little desire for true achievement. They work at taking the easy way out of things. When there is work to be done, they will always find a way of avoiding it. These

individuals are not dependable. Responsibility is scary to them. If pressure is put upon these individuals, they will want to run from the situation. When pressure is put upon them at home, these are often the children that run away, and when pressure is put upon them at school, they will ditch class. It is a fact of life that they cannot accept responsibility, so the easiest way for these individuals is to physically escape from the problem.

We are grateful
We are going
summer vacation

ready for that store to
helpful. Many
like that kind of

Variety

A form of escape that is used by many individuals is to avoid staying in one place for a given length of time, or, as handwriting analysts say, variety. The more variety, the easier it is to escape from unwanted pressures.

For these peripatetic individuals the pressures cannot become too strong for they can never be found in one place for any length of time. The desire for change usually occurs when they have to face a very unpleasant task that is at hand.

your jumping with

We see the need for variety when the letters *g*, *j*, *q*, *y*, have long lower loops, longer in proportion to the rest of the writing. Notice the long down strokes of the *g* and *y* in the above writing, then compare them to the upstrokes of the *h* and *t*. The lower stems are in greater proportion than the upper stems.

This need for change can be a very healthy characteristic, but if it becomes excessive, confusion results, and tasks are not accomplished. This child hides from his fears by meaningless changes and activities. Too much variety then becomes an escape.

I am going to be
open up. Everyone is very
people are happy today
of thing. We are grateful
We are going to enjoy
vacation.

to open up.
Many people are
kind of thing. We are
We are going to enjoy

Variety

be ready for
up. Everyone
Many people
I like that

Confusion of Interests

RESISTANCE

Instead of dealing with their fears, some children fight off their fears. They stand up and fight, but they lack the proper ammunition, because they are fighting with their emotions and not with their minds. These children become very hostile and negative, and adults often will have a hard time dealing with them or even liking them.

Defiance

The dictionary defines defiance as being bold or insolent. In order to find defiance in the writing, we look at the letter *k*. The letter *k* is made with an upper loop and then a buckle.

When looking at the buckle, if we find that it is out of proportion to the copy book example, that is when we find defiance.

Copy book model

defiance

The defiant child is always ready to resist anything that he is questioned about or is asked of him. Anything that he feels will infringe upon his personal freedom will cause him to become defiant. This personal infringement could be a situation at school where the teacher gives him an assignment that the child does not like. He becomes very bold and belligerent. Or the problem might be one of having to deal with parents that the child feels are unfair. Therefore, anything that the parents will say or ask will receive a tart answer. These children become defiant toward all those in authority. In his mind the child believes that all authority figures are out to get him, so he is ready at every moment to protect and defend himself against this injustice.

I like that kind
we are grateful
friends. We are

Many people
that kind of
to enjoy our

Irritability

In order to find irritability in the writing we look at the dot of a lower case *i*. The *i* dot is not made round. It is made with a quick motion in one direction. It is as if the child was irritated by having to go back and dot the letter *i*.

ì î ï î

Irritability

Irritability is not a strong defense mechanism, but it is a method that is usually triggered by tension in the life of the child. One method of getting feelings out is by becoming irritable at those around them. It is mild by comparison to the other resistance traits, but it does affect members of the family causing conflicts within the family unit. Irritability is seen in nervous individuals and in those who have built up tensions.

Everyone is very
 are, happy
 kind of thing.
 enjoy our summer
 for our friends.
 enjoy our summer

Resentment

One place that we look for resentment is at the beginning of a word. We need to look for a straight, rigid beginning stroke of a letter.

↓ come ↓ man ↓ a

Resentment

Notice at the beginning of the word 'come,' the first stroke of the letter c is a straight and rigid one. This is resentment. We find it throughout the above writing. This indicates an individual who has built up a lot of bad feelings over a long period of time.

The strong rigid stroke is as if the child is bracing himself against outside intrusion into his life. He feels that he has been taken advantage of or fooled in the past, and he will not allow it to happen again. He dons his protective shield to ward off outside hurts. His fears may be real or imaginary, but the fact remains that his guard is up.

Resentment does not offer a positive solution to problems. It is hard to deal with because it has its roots in the past.

We must look to the past to ferret out the causes of resentment. Since it has built up over a period of years, we must remember that it will take time to overcome the child's feelings of resentment.

*you title at
appreciate it if
it as soon as*

*I am going to be
to open up. Everyone
are happy today.
thing. We are grateful
We are going to
vacation.*

Sarcasm

To be sarcastic is akin to slicing with a sharp knife. The cross bar of the letter *t* indicates sarcasm. We look for a cross bar that is feathered at the right end. It almost resembles a knife or a spear.

Sarcasm

With sarcasm the individual uses caustic language to retaliate on those that hurt him. The sarcastic child desires to punish others by using his sharp tongue as a weapon.

He makes fun of and ridicules others. If he feels they are above him, he uses sarcasm to put them down. If he feels they are beneath him he uses sarcasm to expose their weaknesses and, at the same time, emphasize his personal worth. The sarcastic child loses friends easily because there is no one that is free from his caustic remarks. As a result, no one trusts him enough to be a friend. Sarcastic children cannot build a trusting relationship.

are happy today, I
of thing. We are
friends. We are going to
summer vacation

I am going to
that store to
is very helpful
happy today,
of thing.

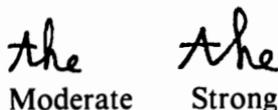
Stubbornness

As you are discovering in this book, the letter *t* is a very important letter in analyzing handwriting. The letter *t* also informs us of the individual who is stubborn. When the letter *t* is made in the fashion of an Indian tepee, it indicates stubbornness.



Stubborn

The broader and more rigid tepee indicates a strong trait of stubbornness.



The stubborn individual makes up his mind and adheres to his decision. He rejects any outside attempt to change his mind, refusing to change even when presented with facts and logic. He remains inflexible. His way of saving face in a difficult situation is to remain adamant in his position. Stubbornness varies in duration and in intensity. In writing, the duration is measured by the broadness of the stem (or width of the tepee), while the intensity is measured by the height of the *t* formation.



Stubborn children frustrate adults rather quickly. Adults see the stubbornness as foolish; the child sees it as logical. However, as adults we have a much broader base to reach a decision, while the child makes his decision within a narrow scope. Arguing does not help; reason and time may ease the situation for the future.

Many people are
 I like that kind
 we are grateful
 we are going to
 vacation.

to open up. Everyone is very
 people are happy today
 kind of thing. We are

Temper

We look for the trait of temper in the letter *t*. Again we focus upon the cross bar of the *t*. If the *t* is crossed *only* on the right side of the stem, it indicates temper.

<i>t</i>	<i>t</i>
temper	not temper

Temper is not an emotion, but it is motion. It is not the anger itself, but an outpouring of that angry feeling. A display of temper does not help to overcome fear, but it is a method of resisting that fear. It is usually, but not always, a quick reaction to an emotional feeling of fear. Like the other defense methods temper is a symptom of frustration in an individual.

The heaviness of the cross bar will indicate to us the intensity of the frustration.

light

Specimen 1

moderate

Specimen 2

heavy

Specimen 3

Specimen 2 is the writing of a person with a moderate temper. This person will not have a strong, violent reaction to a difficult situation. On the other hand, Specimen 3 shows us a writer that has a very difficult time accepting pressure, and will react strongly to a situation. Note that the cross bar is much stronger and heavier than the stem of the *t*.

The length of time that the person will retain this hostility is evidenced by the length of the cross bar.

short time

Specimen 4

moderate

Specimen 5

long time

Specimen 6

Specimen 4 shows us a person that will react quickly, but he will soon forget what his annoyances were. Specimen 6 suggests a person that has an enduring temper; his hostility will fester many hours or even days after encountering a pressure situation.

When will temper be shown? Often a person wants to react to a given situation, but he contains himself for a period of time. This is the child who is very upset with the teacher, but, instead of showing the temper at school, he displays it at home. He lacks control at the slightest pressure from the home. We can see when temper will be shown by again looking at the *t* crossing and seeing how close it is to the stem.

Specimen 7
Specimen 8
Specimen 9

Specimen 7 has the cross bar touching the t stem. This shows a child that reacts at the time he feels the pressure building up. He vents his feeling to the person that is upsetting him. In Specimen 8 there is some space between the cross bar and the stem, indicating that the temper will be shown at a later time, often minutes or hours after the pressure has been exerted. Specimen 9 shows us the person who will explode at a much later time, victimizing a person who had nothing to do with the original incident.

The child with an explosive temper needs other channels to vent his feelings. Frequently, this child does not communicate his feelings. Frequently, this child does not communicate with those close to him. His frustrations are bottled up, and, when he released these frustrations, it is in an explosive manner.

to enjoy our
to be ready
open up.

ready for that stone to
is very helpful. Many
py today. I like that

ADJUSTMENT

Fear is an external force, while defenses against those fears are cultivated in the inner-self. These defense mechanisms may endure and prove to be more harmful to the child than the original fear.

However, there are mechanisms for coping with fears; ways of adjusting our thought patterns and actions to lessen fears. These are adjustment traits, and there are many of them. We will look at some of the traits of children that enable them to adjust to difficulties.

Caution

Long final strokes at the end of a written line of writing, or a line drawn to fill in the rest of the margin, indicates caution.

are gain against —
 em. The most

Caution

Caution does not inhibit action, but it does cause the individual to be careful when performing a task.

If we see the cautious stroke at the end of his signature, we can be sure that this individual exercises extreme caution in personal matters.




Signatures of Presidents Johnson and Truman

A cautious person minimizes the possibility of risk by preparing himself before hand. He makes a big decision only after scrutinizing the alternatives to that decision. He wants to avoid trouble, and, at the same time, make the best possible decision.

that kind
are grateful
inds. We are
of our summer

up. Everyone is
many people are
I like that kind
are grateful for

Decisiveness

Decisiveness is the quality of being able to integrate facts and make a firm decision. When the final stroke of the word ends in a blunt or abrupt ending, it indicates decisiveness.

car

Specimen 1

Decisiveness

note blunt ending

car

Specimen 2

Indecisiveness

endings seem to feather

Specimen 1 has a blunt ending that shows decisiveness; if the ending is feathered as in Specimen 2, it reveals indecisiveness.

Specimen 1 is the child that makes a decision and does not waver from that decision. When confronted with an important decision, he considers the alternatives before making his choice. This child will say, *yes* or *no*, but never *maybe*. Decisiveness fosters courage in an individual because he does make choices, thereby setting his own course of action. They are strong individuals in that they know what their course of action will be.

Many people are happy
that kind of thing. We
for our friends. We are
our summer vacation.

open up. Everyone is very
happy today. I like that
grateful for our friends.
Summer vacation.

Decisive

store to open up. Every
 Many people are happy
 kind of thing. We are
 We are going to enjoy

many people are very
 I like that kind of
 are grateful for our
 We are going to enjoy
 summer vacation

Indecisive

Dignity

We find dignity in retraced *d* stems, the stem being the upper part of the *d*. We should see no daylight between the upstroke and the downstroke.

Dignity

Dignity

Dignity is an inner quality. When an individual understands his needs, knows his level of frustration and is in control of each, we

say that the person has dignity. Dignity is an inner possession which results in a personal code of conduct that is within a socially acceptable norm. The child whose writing indicates the trait of dignity tends to conform to socially-accepted behavior patterns. He sets his level and tone of operation and he lives within those limits.

Dignity nurtures success because it spurs an individual to higher achievement and higher goal setting. It also sustains the child through difficulties that he may encounter.

that kind of thing
for our friends

very helpful. Many
happy today. I like
of things. We are grate
friends. We are

Diplomacy

When the writing tapers down in size from left to right, it indicates diplomacy. The tapering can be in a letter or the word itself may taper.



Diplomacy

The diplomatic person skillfully deals with people. Usually good-natured, well-mannered and gregarious, he influences situations without creating ill feelings or ill will. Although it may be a difficult situation, he manages to put others at ease. He possesses the ability to influence and to spur others to action and success.

Diplomacy is an important quality for leadership and social acceptance. The diplomatic person shares true and lasting friendships.

I am going to be ready for that
 Everyone is very helpful. Many
 I like that kind of thing, we are
 We are going to enjoy our

I am going to be
 Everyone is very
 I like that kind of
 We are going to

Fluidity

Fluidity comes from the word *flowing*, which indicates movement in an easy manner. In handwriting fluidity pertains to the thinking or thought patterns.

If a letter *g* appears as the number 8 we find fluidity. Also when the letter *f* is made as a free flowing letter, we have fluidity.

going family

g - fluidity f - fluidity

The child with fluidity traits in his handwriting has a mind that projects his thoughts with ease. He expresses himself very well either on paper or verbally.

The fluid letter *f* indicates that the person has the ability to express his thoughts well.



fluid letter *f*

With the fluid letter *f* the words simply seem to flow. The fluid person can be a good speaker or writer. He is able to get his frustrations out by the spoken word or the written word. A key to his success is the ability to promptly assess the situation and come up with just the appropriate word, comment, or statement.

We may also have the letter *g* made like the number 8.

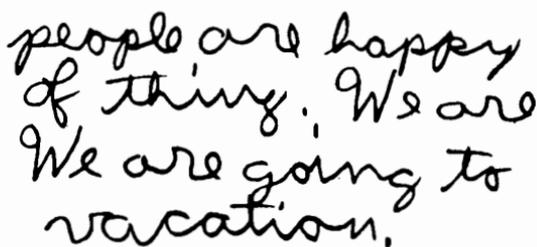


open *g*



closed *g*

If we see that the top of the *g* is open, we find an individual who expresses himself through speech patterns; if the top of the *g* tends to be closed, it indicates a person who prefers writing his thoughts.



are happy today,
of thing. We are
friends. We are
out summer, vaca-

fluid g

ready for that store is
very helpful. Many
I like that kind of

ready for that store to
very helpful. Many
today. I like that

fluid f

Humor

The trait of humor is found in the free flowing initial stroke of a letter, usually in a capital letter. We can see an indication of a sense of humor if the cross bar of the *t* is a free flowing, wavy line.



Humor



wavy cross bar
humor in the letter *t*

Humor is a valuable social trait. It is one of the human qualities that is desired by most everyone, but not everyone possesses. It builds a good mental attitude in that when difficult situations occur, the person with a sense of humor can best weather the storm and smile through difficult times. Humor also fosters personal relationships. When we have a friend that has a sense of humor, we enjoy being around him. He is able to lift our spirits when we are feeling low. A good sense of humor is an admirable and useful character trait.

I am going to
that store to open
very helpful. Many
happy today I like
to be ready for that
up. Everyone is very

Independent Thinking

To discover the independent thinker we look for very short *d* stems. They may be written in any manner, but it is important that they are short.

dog don't

Independent thinker

The independent thinker neither needs nor seeks approval. His sense of personal worth is inner directed. He sets his own stan-

dards, whether or not they conform to his surroundings. This can result in conflicts with his parents who view the child's strict adherence to his personal standards as stubbornness. To avoid conflict, parents must keep in mind this child's disregard for external approval.

The ideas and activities of his peers do not influence the independent thinker.

He believes that he is correct, and it is next to impossible for anyone to alter his decisions.

going to be ready for that store to
 Everyone is very helpful,
 are happy today I like

helpful. Many
 I like that kind of
 for our friends.
 our summer vacation.

Loyalty

Loyalty is indicated in the writing when we have the letter *i* or *j* dotted with a round dot. The child has taken the time to carefully dot the *i* or the *j*.

i j

Loyalty

The child that shows loyalty in his writing will be a true and faithful friend. This loyalty becomes evident to those around him.

If this child joins a club at school or becomes a member of a sports team, the club monitor or the coach can rely on his attendance at each meeting or practice. Once he decides to belong to something, in order to keep up his self-esteem, he remains loyal to the organization. Of course, we must recognize there is the potential to be loyal to the wrong person or the wrong ideals.

*is very helpful
I like that kind*

*Kind of thing. We care
for our friends. We are
enjoy our summer too*

This is an appropriate time to incorporate the question that most everyone seems to ask when speaking of the letter *i*. What does it mean when there is a circle above the *i*?

i

Need for personal attention

In the writing of children up to the age of 18, it is normal to see the circle *i* dot in the handwriting. All that it tells us about the individual is that he likes to call attention to himself. He likes to be noticed. It is not uncommon to see this in the writing of children.

Many people are happy
kind of thing. We
for friends we are

is very helpful, many
happy today. I like that kind
and grateful for our friends
to enjoy our summer vacatio

circle *i* dot

Pride

Pride is seen by tall *d* stems 2 or 2-1/2 times as tall as the lower-case letters.

day day

Pride

A proud child sets a standard to live by, one that allows him to achieve. What he says and how he says it, how he conducts his business and relates to friends are important factors toward a feeling of self-esteem.

Pride provides an inner source of strength. However, pride can lead to vanity. We discover vanity in handwriting when we see the height of the *d* stem increasing. Specimen 1 is pride, while Specimen 2 denotes vanity.

d

Pride

Specimen 1

d

Vanity

Specimen 2

A proud person does his very best at all times. Pride may also instill loyalty and honesty in an individual.

today. I like
kind of thing.
grateful for our

be ready for that
Everyone is very

Pride

going to be ready for
Everyone is very helpful
happy today. I like that

people are happy
that kind of
are grateful for

Vanity

Reticence

When the letter *o* is closed and has no loop, it indicates reticence.

o come

Reticence

A reticent child is a child who speaks only when he has something to say and does so with very few words. He is concise and avoids flowery phrases. This child rarely gets in trouble for what he says because his carefully chosen words do not leave him open for scorn. People cannot criticize you for what you don't say. Although he can appear to be rather cold, once the reticent person is understood he forms lasting friendships.

In school, the teacher may think this child has a learning disability. If the writer is truly reticent, which the letter *o* closed and without loops indicates, then there is not a learning difficulty, but rather a case of a "man of few words." A reticent child does not volunteer unless he truly wants to express himself. The advantage is that when he does speak those around him usually listen, because the other children have found out that what he says is usually worthwhile.

store to open up.
ful. Many people are
that kind of thing.

open up. Everyone is very
people are happy today. I
thing. We are grateful for

Selective

By selective we mean that the child is careful in his choice of friends. We see this trait in the letter y. We must look for the narrow lower loop on the letter y.

y family

narrow loop

Selective

The selective child surrounds himself with friends and associates that have the same likes and dislikes as he does. He chooses friends who do not have opposing ideas. Security is obtained by careful selection of his friends.

be ready for that store to
lful. Many people are happy

re wants to help. Many
happy today. I like

Summary

Defense mechanisms are used to fight off the fears that a child has. We have covered several methods of defense. If the child uses an escape or resistance method it does not help solve the underlying problem. If the child adjusts, then he can establish an adequate defense against a problem. By properly adjusting to the fear, a child can cope and build a positive self-image.

You can provide your child with a positive experience by encouraging him to adjust to the problems of life rather than running away from them. We cannot escape difficulties, but we can successfully learn to cope with them, using them to improve ourselves.

SAMPLES OF WRITINGS

ESCAPE

I am going to be ready

Clannishness

*I am going to be ready for that
Everyone is very helpful. Many people*

Concentration

to enjoy our store to

Daydreaming

going to be ready for that store

Procrastination

ready for that store to

Shallowness

is very helpful.
today. I like
grateful for

Variety

is very helpful.
are happy today.
kind of thing. We

Confusion of interests

RESISTANCE

people are hap
like that kind

Defiance

I am going to

Irritability

I am going to be
for that store to open

Resentment

I am going to be
ready for that store

Sarcasm

going to be ready
Store to open up.

Stubbornness

to be ready for that store

Temper

ADJUSTMENT

to enjoy our summer vacation.

Caution

I am going to be ready

Decisiveness

I am going to be ready

Indecisiveness

be ready for today.

Dignity

*of thing. We are going
summer vacation.*

Diplomacy

going to enjoy

Fluid g

four that store to

Fluid f

to be that kind

Humor

going to be ready today.

Independent thinking

I am going to be ready

Loyalty

I am going to be

Personal Attention Necessary

going to be ready for

Pride

to be ready for that

Vanity

I am going to be ready

Reticent

I am ready for the

Selective

The School Setting

The key to a successful school year is communication between the teacher and the parent regarding the child. If the parent can approach the teacher and the teacher can approach the parent, then the child will be the center, knowing that his actions will be recognized and taken into account by both the parent and the teacher. On the other hand, if there is little communication between parent and teacher, the child figures either correctly or incorrectly, that his actions are not that important. Success for the child depends upon a good parent-teacher relationship.

The initial meeting between the parent and teacher is most important as it sets the stage for the school year. The first meeting may be at an open house. Granted the open house is usually an artificial setting in which parents and teachers want to impress one another; still, it is an introduction to the school. However, when attending the open house with your child, be observant of the places the child wants you to see and the persons he wants you to meet as this will indicate your child's likes and dislikes at school. Permit your child to direct you during the open house.

It is his time for giving you the tour and, of course, he will go where he feels comfortable, avoiding places that may cause him concern. If the school your child attends does not have an open house scheduled, I suggest that after the first month or so of school, make an appointment to visit in order to tour the physical plant and take a few minutes to meet the teacher. Neither at the open house nor during the personal visit should there be serious discussions taking place; this is the time for informal, friendly meetings to be used to acquaint you with the school, the administration, and the staff. This meeting also gives the school per-

sonnel a chance to meet you. It shows the child that both of you are interested in his well being.

Sometime during the year a conference should be set for you to meet with your child's teacher and discuss how the child is doing in school. The conference should be a sharing of ideas and information; there should be give and take on both sides, and the conference should be neither teacher nor parent dominated.

I wish that it was called a Parent-Teacher-Child Conference because the child is the center of the discussion. I'm sorry to say that the child is often excluded. Children have input that they would like to give and every opportunity should be afforded the child so that he will be permitted to express his thoughts and feelings. For us to exclude the input of the child leaves the main ingredient out; the conference without the child limits the possibility of the child's growth.

The best conferences that I have had have been when the parents have come into the meeting with a written list of questions and have used the list as a reference guide so that they will not forget some pertinent information. Often, the conference spins off on a tangent and many of the questions that should have been raised are either forgotten or the time has run out and the conference is over. The list of questions help keep the conference on track. The questions also make the teacher aware of the parents' serious concerns about the child and his school experience and about what is expected of the child and what the parents hope the teacher can realistically provide.

Ask about the weaknesses and strengths of your child; use his grades, standardized test scores, and his school papers. You might also bring to the conference some of your child's papers that have been brought home and refer to the work done on the papers. If the child is an underachiever, ask what is being done or can be done to help the child improve. Don't take it for granted that all the help your child needs is being given to him. Ask in what areas more help might be obtained and how this help can be gotten. Let the teacher know what your expectations are for your child.

Don't be threatening to the teacher since this will not help you, and it will not necessarily improve things for your child. Discuss

all items with the teacher in a firm, supportive and cooperative manner but also listen to the teacher's perception of your child. Teaching a child is a joint effort between the teacher and the parent, but the child has to take the initiative to grasp the knowledge being presented.

Be sure to give any information that you feel is important about your child to the teacher, as this will help the teacher understand your child better. Any information about the health of the child that might affect his school work or his capacity to fulfill the school requirements should be shared with the teacher. One might also let the teacher know what approach seems to work best in reaching your child since you and others have dealt with the child before. This information can put the teacher steps ahead in using successful techniques that may best motivate your child to achieve in school. If there are fears your child is expressing that may block his progress in school, inform the teacher. It could mean the difference between a fair school experience or a successful one.

Look beyond your child's classroom teacher in order to lay a good foundation for your child. Not only have a conference with his teacher, but also make it a point to visit the principal, the nurse, special area teachers such as gym, art, music, and the librarian. If your child is seeing a support staff such as speech therapist, school counselor, or reading specialist, don't leave these persons out. They see your child in a different setting and can make some valuable comments about your child which you can take advantage of. If you have the opportunity, meet with the lunchroom supervisors or the playground supervisor and ask how your child gets along with other children. You may discover additional successes or additional needs of your child. Communicating with all these people will give you a better indication of how well your child is performing in school.

Save part of the teacher conference to ask what you as the parent might be able to do to help the teacher. Volunteers are often needed by the school and contribute to a better educational program for children which directly or indirectly helps your child. Helping in the school can give your child a feeling of importance. One way in which the school could use help is working with small groups of children during the school day. Possibly your child's

teacher does not need help, but there are opportunities to assist elsewhere in the school. Many schools offer mini-courses dealing in special areas of study, so if you have a hobby or some speciality, you might want to share your ideas and knowledge with a group of children. You might offer your services as a group leader for field trips since, frequently, adult help is needed to assist the teacher while the children are on their trip. If assistance during the school day is impossible because of a work or time schedule, there are other ways in which you could assist the school. There is often a need for art materials or items for some special project, and you might be capable of heading a drive for obtaining the necessary items. Assistance is always needed in filling an office for the school PTA organization. But above all, ask the teacher if help is needed because each individual teacher has specific goals and activities and appreciates the help from parents. Often, teachers are reluctant to ask. Helping will give you and your child a good feeling; it will also help the child attach more importance to the school and, possibly, instill in the child a desire to do better.

Let's suppose your child is having difficulties at school. One of the first signs is a change in attitude toward the teacher or the school. The change in attitude could be for the better or for the worse, but most likely the reason for an attitudinal change is one of bad feelings toward the teacher or school. If the child becomes disinterested in school, his grades will drop and he will be more difficult to handle both in school and at home. Discipline problems may begin to appear. Listen carefully to what your child is saying about the school or the teacher. If the child begins to frequently criticize his teacher, it is usually one of two problems: the teacher and your child are not getting along; or your child is not meeting the requirements of the class and is, therefore, putting his guilt upon the teacher rather than upon himself. When the child begins to dislike school or the teacher, be careful that you do not fall into the trap. Be careful not to jump to conclusions before getting as much information as possible from both the child and the teacher. If necessary, make an appointment for you and the child to discuss with the teacher what is really happening to cause the difficulties.

If things at school seem to be going well, but the child is still complaining, peer difficulties are usually the cause. Either new individuals that the child may be uncomfortable with have come into the group, or one or more of his former friends have dropped him and have found new friends. If the problem happens to be

I am going to be ready for
that store to open up.

Everyone is very helpful.
Many people are happy
today. I like that kind
of thing. We are going to
enjoy our summer vacation.

I am going to be ready for that store
to open up. Everyone is very helpful. Many
people are happy today. I like that
kind of thing. We are grateful for
our friends. We are going to enjoy our
summer vacation.

The writing above was done by a fifth grade boy. The top copy was written ten months before the bottom. His best and only friend moved away and he became withdrawn, unable to find a new friend. There were also difficulties at home, not only between his parents, but also among his brothers. He created no problems at school, however, his grades dropped and his work was of poor quality. He has become a loner, not wanting to participate with the other children in his class. He is going for counseling.

peer difficulties, it is much more difficult to resolve because emotions are affected. If difficulties are building, watch the handwriting for changes.

Help the child to express his feelings about the given situation, and try to get the child active in some outside activity to keep his mind busy. Be careful neither to force him back onto his old friends, nor try to force feed him new friends. Children have to work out their feelings themselves and adjust their own lifestyle.

If school is the problem, try to understand from all the interested parties just where the problem lies. Material that is too difficult or lazy work habits are often at fault. If work in school becomes difficult for the child, there are several things that I feel should be looked at. A regular scheduled time for homework every day should be set aside; an example would be from 7:30 to 8:30. The time makes little difference, but it should be on a regular basis, and it should involve the whole family. During that scheduled time any school age child in the family should be working on his school work, and if there is none to do, they should spend that hour reading a book or engaged in a profitable activity. Parents should also use that scheduled work time for them to either read, work a puzzle, or practice on a hobby, but the parents should do something special during that time. Any pre-school child or an older child that is out of school should also have something to do during that time. Pre-schoolers could have a story read to them, or they may color, or they may play quietly with blocks; the older children who are out of school could find an activity to keep them occupied during this time.

The idea is that the entire household sets aside a specific amount of time for some sort of study. This can inspire the pre-school child into knowing that school work is something special, and everyone in the family can participate in it. It provides a foundation for good study habits. It is also important that a specific place for each member of the family be set aside. Each family member has his own special room or corner so as not to disturb others which helps the children learn that this is a *special* time set aside each day.

Set a regular time schedule for going to bed and for getting up in the morning. Many families do this for bedtime, but it is just as

important to set the time for rising in the morning. Consistency is the rule. If the child gets up late and is rushed in the morning, the whole day can be ruined. When things start off on the wrong foot, we seem to continue on the same bad footing the rest of the day; so, too, with the school child. Being rushed in the morning, trying to find books, clothes, possibly skipping breakfast, and the bus outside waiting, all will have an upsetting tempo for the young child. This may cause the school day to be a total loss, and it may be the day that a special test or a report is to be given. A regular time will make it much easier on everyone in the family, and chances are the days will be much more successful because of the regular schedule.

The problem could be that the child is lazy, has no interest in school, and nothing seems to inspire him. This attitude is difficult to deal with and cannot be changed overnight. However, there are things that can be done that may help. Praise any completed work being brought home or willingly help the child finish incomplete assignments. Make sure the child is not skipping lunch thereby being robbed of necessary energy. Check with your physician to see if there could be a physical problem. Discuss the problem in a realistic fashion. Each week find a few hours when you can spend some private time with your child. Even if it is just riding in the car or going shopping, that personal private time with your child can instill love and help build a lasting relationship between you and your child. If at all possible, take your child to a special place, a museum, a concert, a play, an ice cream shop, somewhere to make him feel *special* for a while.

We often read to our pre-school and primary children but we tend to think that the middle-school children are too big to be read to. How far from the truth that is! I have found in counseling children that even at the junior high level they enjoy being read to. I don't mean Mother Goose type readings, but articles in the newspapers or magazines that might be of interest to them and provoke a sharing of ideas. It is also important for any child between the ages of 1 and 18 to see you reading, whether it is a book, magazine, or a newspaper, since it shows them the value of reading. Besides, when they see you reading, you won't be preaching to them, but your actions will speak louder than your words.

Get library cards for your children and encourage them to use the library. Rather than pick out the books, allow them to discover the thrill of finding books that they would like to read. Don't worry; they will soon find their reading level. If a fourth grader picks out a book written for primary children don't discourage him; it was his choice, and it might just be the level at which he can read successfully. Through this newly found success in reading, you might see an improvement in his reading skills and he may unknowingly begin to increase his reading level in the books that he selects. On the other hand, if the primary child picks out a book that is way beyond his grasp, don't discourage him, as he will soon find out on his own that it is much too difficult; or he may not realize the difficulty of the book, and he will be able to read beyond his present level. Some children grasp new ideas from pictures in books if the book deals with a particular interest to him. Don't worry about developing taste in the reading your child does; he will develop his own tastes.

Children love to get mail. One good suggestion is to get each one of your children a subscription to a child's magazine that would appeal to his interest. It will instill an importance in reading because you got him a subscription to a magazine, and it will be his own personal mail. He will soon know on what date the magazine comes, and he will be looking for the postman to deliver it. Along with the toys, be sure to give your child books on birthdays and other special occasions, and they will soon discover your underlying reason—the importance of reading. Your child will soon regard reading as being fun.

Summary

There are certain expectations that both the parent and the teacher have regarding the conference.

The parents expect the teacher to give them an accurate picture of the academic growth of the child, and how the child interacts with the other children. The teacher should have on hand the folder that contains your child's information concerning his academic work, and the teacher should establish a working relationship between you and herself. There is a strong need for co-

operation, and you and the teacher should solicit help from one another in trying to analyze the work that is being done in school. The teacher is a professional, one who has a knowledge of the growth and development of children. However, it might be wise to offer any personal information about your child that could be of help to the teacher understanding, of course, that the information will not be repeated. Likewise the teacher will suggest ways in which you may help your child become a better student.

The teacher expects that you will be present at the scheduled parent-teacher conference, and that you will arrive on time. You should inform the teacher of any special problems that the child has. The parent needs to be emotionally ready to accept both positive and negative information concerning the behavior of the child. The teacher will expect you to follow through on any methods that were agreed upon to help your child improve himself. You should suggest special courses of action that may enable your child to become a better student since you know your child best.

The parent-teacher conference gives the parent and the teacher and, we hope, the child, an immediate feedback on how the child is doing in school, where progress is being made, and what skills need to be improved. Please, don't attend a conference only when your child is having difficulty in school. It is most important that the child who is doing well receives positive information from the teacher to inspire him to continue working well and making progress.

We tend to lose sight that, along with our child, there are hundreds of additional children in the school, and each child has special needs and talents and abilities. Most teachers are genuinely interested in each child in their class, and they normally have twenty-four to thirty children in the class; therefore, the time that the teacher spends with each child during the day is necessarily limited. The teachers and the administrators must try to find a special notch for each child. By understanding the school situation, it will give you a much better feel for the vast responsibilities that are involved in running a school. By understanding the various aspects of the school setting, you can help your child to get the most out of his school years.

Aptitude Extra-curricular Careers

This chapter is designed to help ferret out areas of interest to your child. It is not meant to limit your child's selection of a particular interest, nor to exclude others that are of interest to him.

As is often the case, the child that is an underachiever or one that tends to be shy and quiet often has the need for an outside activity or interest. This gives him a feeling of achievement or accomplishment and builds self-confidence when he experiences success in a given activity. We will look at various activities to see what areas may be of interest to your child.

The saying goes, "If you want something done, give it to a busy person." Likewise we can say that a busy child does not have time for mischief. Many a child has stayed out of trouble by actively engaging himself in a hobby. It not only keeps his mind and hands active, but it gives him a release valve when tension and difficulties build up. For the child who is an underachiever, it gives him an outlet in which he can find success at his own level and possibly increase his self knowledge.

Often it is the self respect that a child gains on his own, that helps him to decide to work harder to achieve. When he makes that decision himself, it will be longer lasting and have a much stronger impact.

Music

We will divide music into two sections: one will be for those who enjoy listening to music in order to relax and to escape from worries, while the other will be for those who have a potential for playing a musical instrument.

The listener of music has good rhythm in his writing that correlates to the enjoyed musical rhythms. Some examples of this writing rhythm are evenly spaced letters in the writing, even spaces between the words, and similar heights of the taller letters *l*, *b*, *f*, *h*, and *k*. We look for consistency in the writing and, if it was written on unlined paper, it should appear as if the writer used lined paper because the words have an even base line.

come

even base line

come

uneven base line

below the

same heights

below the

various heights

These children can also learn to play a musical instrument. However, they will have to spend many hours of practice and work diligently to improve their skill.

*I am going to be
open up. Everyone is very
are happy today. I like
grateful for our friends.
our summer vacation.*

*stose to open up. Everyone
people are happy to do any
thing. We are grateful for
going to enjoy our summer*

Take all of the above traits for those who enjoy listening to music, incorporate breaks within the words of the writing, and we have a person who can readily play a musical instrument.

have those
breaks within words

These are often the individuals that can pick out a tune by ear or learn very rapidly with few lessons. They seem to have an inner department for music, so playing one or more musical instruments comes easy for them. The breaks in the writing must come in places between words where they normally are not seen or taught.

*very helpful. many
are happy today.
that kind of thing.*

*be ready for that
everyone is very helpful.
happy today. I like
we are grateful*

Arts and Crafts

We find the talent for arts and crafts in several areas of writing. For work such as needlepoint, handicraft, and model building, we should look for well-rounded *m*'s and *n*'s (cumulative thinking) along with *r*'s that are flat topped.



rounded m and n



flat-topped r

The *r* may be slanted in any direction, but it must have that tree trunk look. If these two things are evident, rounded *m* and *n*'s and flat topped *r*'s, working with their hands will be a good release for them.

*open up. Everyone is very
people are happy to day
thing. We are grateful
We are going to enjoy*

In the writing below, along with the rounded *m*'s and flat topped *r*'s, you see a carefully dotted *i* with a *p* that has its stem carefully retraced. This is a child who likes to do a lot of detail work in building his model or designing his handiwork.

i

i dot

p

retraced *p* stem

very helpful. Many
happy today I like

I am going to be really
open up. Everyone is very
people are happy today. D

What about the child that might like to paint, draw, or sketch? We need to see the same traits as above, but we must add a good imagination. We find the type of imagination needed for creativity in the lower loops of the letter *g*.

creative imagination—wide loops in the letter *g*

Specimen 1

Specimen 2

Specimen 1 would indicate someone with a good active imagination, while Specimen 2 would indicate someone unable to come up with the ideas as easily as Specimen 1. Specimen 1 would create color patterns and designs and have little difficulty putting them on canvas or paper. The writer of Specimen 2 might attempt the same things but would simply lack the originality.

is very helpful.
today. I like that
going to enjoy our

people are happy today. &
thing. We are grateful
We are going to enjoy.

Collecting

Collecting bottle caps, statues, stamps, and coins takes time and effort by a child, and it keeps his mind actively engaged. There are two things to look for in the writing that indicate a child might find collections to be of interest. We look for hooks at the beginning of words and at the end of words.

↓
come
acquisitive hooks

come ↓
tenacity hooks

Hooks at the beginning of a word are called acquisitive hooks, meaning that this writer wants to obtain more than he has. Tenacity hooks which appear at the end of the word indicate a person who wants to hold on to what he has.

We, of course, cannot tell what the person would like to collect, but the desire for a collection is there.

So, remember, that if hooks are found in both the beginning and the end of a word, we can be reasonably sure that a type of collecting hobby will be of interest.

up. Everyone is very
are happy today. I like
We are going to
vacation.

I am going
for that store
Everyone is we
people are ha

Sports

Sports activities range from card playing to football, from swimming to skateboarding. It is impossible to classify particular traits that would indicate interest in a specific sport. If your child shows an interest in a sport, evaluate both the personal and phy-

sical skills necessary to participate. If he possesses the necessary qualities, encourage him to become involved, however, don't discourage him because he is lacking in some area. If he has a strong desire, help him to know and understand his weaknesses, so that he can work toward overcoming them. Provide him with the opportunity to develop the skills necessary to participate.

Whether it be a team sport or an individual sport, the area of games will greatly help your child become a well-rounded individual. However, please do not force a sport upon your child. Give him the encouragement and opportunity to participate if he has the desire to do so.

CAREERS

Now we look at career-oriented aptitudes. Often during the junior or senior year in high school the student begins to spend many hours thinking about what career he wants to follow. Most jobs can be classified in four major areas: business, fine arts, mechanics, and science. We will explore these areas to see which aptitudes are best suited to a career choice.

Business

Force, drive and the ability to deal with people are strong requisites in the field of business. We find force and drive in the crossing of the *t*'s. If the *t*'s are crossed toward the top of the stem and are crossed with a firm cross bar, they indicate personal drive. If a letter *t* at the end of a word appears uncrossed as in the Specimen below, it indicates the drive necessary to spur on achievement.

t t | v that
 Strong force Strong drive

The ability to deal with people can in part be seen in the size and slant of the writing. Medium or large writing shows people that

have a tendency to be at ease with others. Writing that slants to the right often belongs to someone who understands the feelings of others.

medium *big* *small*

medium writing

large writing

small writing

mer vacation
large writing

summer vacation.
small writing

summer vacation.
medium writing

right slanted
right-slanted

*Many people are
kind of thing.*
saw-toothed

We also want to look for saw-toothed shaped *m*'s and *n*'s to show the mental drive that is necessary to accomplish set goals. If few or no fears are found in the writing, this will tell us that the writer has a great deal of self-confidence. This self-confidence will help the individual to achieve in the business world.

Fine arts

Talents in fine arts could lead to success in the fields of theatrical endeavors, performing for others; or producing art work within the various methods of art media. We would want a logical thought pattern as seen in the rounded *m*'s and *n*'s.

man

logical thinking

If the writing is heavy and forceful on the paper, it denotes strong sensual feelings. One can tell the forcefulness of the writing by turning over the paper and feeling the back of the sheet; if one can feel the writing through the paper, the writing is forceful. In this person the senses become more intense; consequently, he is better able to appeal to the sense of others such as sight in performing and hearing in acting.

heavy

heavy writing

*to be ready for that store to
is very helpful. Many people
I like that kind of thing.*

A good imagination also helps to give a person an added incentive to come up with new and unusual ideas. Imagination is found in the lower loops of the letter *g*.

imagination

thing. We are grateful
We are going to

We are going to enjoy
that kind of thing.

Mechanics

Does your child love to take a clock apart and put it back together? These people are the mainstays of our society. Items that are purchased from an automobile to a watch, will be in need of repair, and these mechanical individuals are the specialists that keep these items in top working condition. Your youngster might be able to feel good about himself by working on projects around the house, such as woodwork repair, plumbing, electrical or mechanical repairs. We need to look at several items in the writing traits to see if your child would be mechanically inclined. We need the well-rounded *m*'s and *n*'s along with the tree stump *r*'s.

rounded *m*'s and *n*'s

flat *r*'s

Combining these traits gives us an individual that has a good mechanical mind and an aptitude to use his hands for this type of work. We should also look for two additional traits, a precision *p*, one that has the stem retraced, and an *i* dot that is dotted close to the stem of the *i*. Both of these traits will give us an individual that is careful about doing work that requires precision.

pie

precision

pie

not precision

open up. Everyone is
ful. Many people

I am going to be ready
open up. Everyone is very
people are happy today.

Science

The person who seems to do well in the scientific areas of study has a mind that works in many different ways. Therefore, we hope to see *m*'s and *n*'s made in a variety of ways. The rounded *m*'s and *n*'s give us the logic for making scientific breakthroughs, and the analytical *m*'s and *n*'s, which seem to have a *v* shape give us the fortitude to search for more and more information leaving nothing unturned and then taking the findings to analyze them. Also included are the saw-tooth looking *m*'s and *n*'s, which are

the investigative thinkers. This thinking pattern will make up the characteristic that will create a need and a desire within the individual to explore and try new things.



logical *m*'s and *n*'s



analytical *m*'s and *n*'s



investigative *m*'s and *n*'s

These people are not completely happy with the status quo because they want to learn and explore new and unusual things. The various thinking patterns help to fulfill this need. A good imagination and the determination to complete a project also help immeasurably. Imagination is seen in the lower loops of the letter *g*, while determination is seen in the straight downstroke in the lower case letter *g*.



strong imagination



determination

Summary

We have covered just a few of the hundreds of categories that can be listed in this chapter. Mainly, the umbrella activities that may interest your child are covered, but there is no intent to limit your child's selection to just the few areas included in this chapter. The intent was to offer the parent a stepping stone to help the child who needs to be engaged in an additional activity, or the child who seems to have little or no interest in anything outside of

himself. We cannot force the child into a hobby or an extra-curricular activity, but we can provide the avenues for the child's experimental process. In so doing, the child can then select the activity or activities that suit his personal desires and best contribute to his self-esteem.

SAMPLES OF WRITINGS

MUSIC

I am going to be ready

Rhythm

I am going to be

Lack of rhythm

I am going to be

Musical talent

ARTS AND CRAFTS

I am going to be ready

Handiwork

I am going to be ready

Paint, sketch, draw

COLLECTING

I am going to be ready for

The Pre-Adolescent and Adolescent Years

Pre-adolescence and adolescence is a difficult time for parents and children alike. During this stage of development the youngster is attempting to establish his own identity and to develop his personal ideals. It is a time of rapid change in the child: he has new feelings; he develops many doubts about himself and about others that are close to him; his frustration level is low; there is an increase in personal fears; and his body is undergoing many changes. Amidst all of this turmoil, he sees new horizons opening up to him. And, although he senses new freedoms, he knows he needs guidance along the way.

Teenagers present a dilemma: how does one give them the freedom they need, and still give them the guidance that is required during this period? Again, we must return to that key word, **communication**. Keep this basic formula in mind: $L + T = C$ (Listening plus Talking equals Communication). Listening is basic because it signals that you, as a parent, really do care and place value on the opinion of your teenager. Talking with, a sharing of opinions and ideas, is crucial because it builds trust and understanding while keeping the channels open for the time when real problems arise. Just remember: $L + T = C$.

Peer pressure is very strong at this age. The child begins to look outside of the family setting for companionship. Often the child chooses companions that are not acceptable to his parents. This causes a conflict of values. Still, basic values are developed early in a child's life even though your youngster, at this point, wants to try out new values. Sometimes, he does this just to "test the water." However, if those early values were important and well

founded in your youngster, although he may get off the track for a while, he will eventually return to his original values. If his values remain foreign to you, try to find out where he got them, and, from there, you might discover why he developed this new value system. Above all, keep listening and talking. You may not agree, but at least you are in communication with him. Try to be flexible and avoid over reacting, keeping in mind the importance of the peer group at this stage. Most likely his actions are due to the fact that everyone in his group is doing it, and not because it is his moral commitment.

Occasionally, a teenager will get involved with a peer group only to discover how cruel the peer group can be. He then cannot retreat because he would lose face, but he does need an outlet for these difficult feelings. If you have kept the lines of communication open, your teen will feel comfortable in discussing these difficulties with you.

Pre-Adolescence

The most difficult stage of development for both the youngster and the parent is the pre-adolescent age which encompasses grades five through eight, or the ages of nine through thirteen. These are the most difficult years; it is the most baffling of all the age groups. It is at this stage that counseling can prove beneficial. If a parent encounters difficulties the school counselor, if one is available, should be contacted.

They are neither children nor adults. Frequently they are difficult to live with, they can be very temperamental, and often their school work drops. Moreover, they insist that they have nothing to talk over with adults; no problems and no worries.

Parents and teachers tend to think that the pre-adolescent will soon snap out of this state, but don't hold your breath; this period of growth can last several years. Attempts to communicate with pre-adolescents can be frustrating. They are experts at hiding whatever is bothering them, and although they may do a lot of talking, they are doing just that: talking and not really revealing their inner thoughts.

The pre-teen is constantly active. They cannot sit still. They have to be outside playing, running, always participating in something. In school they drive the teachers crazy because they can't sit still, something is always moving: their hands, their feet, their mouth! Also, they love to fantasize, dreaming of being the superhero whether it be in sports or in some other setting.

Even though the pre-teen still loves his parents, he begins to draw away from them. These youngsters feel that adults don't understand them. They show little or no gratitude for what is done for them, and it seems they actually enjoy acting silly and doing things to embarrass others. They seem to have thrown out all manners that they learned, and attempting to reason with them is impossible.

At this age, they begin to notice the opposite sex. They enjoy the boy talk or the girl talk, but only in the safety of their peer group. This talk is just that—all talk. When they are with a member of the opposite sex, they will still treat them as one of the boys or one of the girls.

Parents can avoid many conflicts with these pre-adolescents. First of all, remember that this is only a growth stage, so give your youngster room to grow. Unfortunately, adults worry about the youngsters, while the youngsters do little worrying. Don't fight their actions, but attempt to find out why they are acting the way they are. They are testing, trying to find out how far you will let them go; do you really love them or can they do whatever they please? They will give you a fight when you place restriction on them, but they know these restrictions give them an out for many situations. Although they criticize your actions, they can use your rules as an escape from difficult tasks put to them by their peers. You see, they don't always like what their friends are doing, but they must have a peer group in order to get through the adolescent years.

The important thing we must remember as parents or teachers is not to panic. Give the youngster room to grow. Give him new and added responsibilities. He might not always succeed, but present him with the opportunity to continue working at gaining more responsibility. New and added activities will help keep him busy and happy. Consequently, there is less of a chance for him to get into

trouble. Showing interest, providing ground rules, valuing his opinion are major factors in his personal growth. So often, just "being there" when he is in need furnishes a security that the peer group cannot offer.

The Adolescent

High school is a new plateau. In many ways, the teenager is rapidly gaining a sense of independence and must confront the added responsibilities that accompany this independence. At times, he feels his parents are interfering. Therefore, parents must, concurrently, keep a certain distance from his affairs and still exhibit interest and support for him. If he has trouble of any kind, his parents must be in the background, always there, ready to help and support him.

If he participates in school functions such as a play or a particular sport, his parents must be in attendance to show their interest. It is through such actions, that parents strengthen the bond of trust and love with their teenager.

Alcohol—Drugs

In the past years there has been a rapid rise in the use of alcohol and drugs by teenagers. We even find the use of alcohol and drugs on the part of young teens and, occasionally, pre-teens.

Alcohol and drugs are not just problems for the user; the entire family setting is affected. If you suspect that your teen is involved with alcohol or drugs, you must question why. There are many reasons for using drugs, and, working with teenagers, I have found that there are several reasons that outweigh others. Most frequently, a poor self-image is the culprit.

To build up his ego and escape his feeling of inadequacy, he uses a crutch. Drugs, alcohol or both seem to temporarily alleviate his fears. Peer pressure is also a major factor in why a youngster turns to drugs. If the group is taking drugs, the teen may feel compelled to do the same in order to belong. Unfortunately, in some instances, it is an adult that provides the role model for the use of drugs or alcohol. Possibly their parents use drugs and therefore, by example, the youngster will also use them.

How can parents tell if their youngster is using drugs? Drugs affect individuals differently. It depends upon how the person's body reacts to the drug and also upon the amount of the drug taken in by the body. If the person uses it once in a while and in light dosage, there is little visible effect. However, with heavy use there will be drastic behavior and attitude changes. Not that every change in behavior is related to drugs, but be aware of drastic changes. If a sudden change appears in the living patterns of the teen, it could signal that something is going on. For example, he may become withdrawn.

Also, if various items are missing from the home, or he begins to ask you for more money; if you find blank prescription forms, or empty pill bottles, you may have uncovered signs of drug use. Be aware of an obvious physical change in the teen, such as poor speech, loss or gain of weight, and eyes that appear glossy.

If any of the above signs do appear, be sure that you are not jumping to conclusions; there are other reasons that could cause any of the above things to happen. However, do confront your youngster about your observations and don't condemn him if he is using alcohol or drugs. Instead show him your concern and your desire to help him. And try to direct him to outside help.

The best prevention is education. There are hundreds of books and pamphlets available at your local library that can help you and your family. Each community has agencies that are willing to help not only the user but the rest of the family as well.

Take some time to discuss with your youngster present information from various sources about the use of drugs and alcohol and its dangers; then ask him what he knows about the use of alcohol and drugs. Exchange ideas rather than impose your viewpoints. Don't be a hypocrite. It does little good to lecture your teenager about using drugs to escape problems if he sees you popping pills or having several drinks with every difficulty that comes your way.

If you find it difficult to talk with your youngster, try to locate someone that he would feel free to talk with: perhaps a teacher, school counselor, or an adult friend of the family. If you're quite certain that your child is a drug-user, find a local drug rehabilita-

tion program and ask for help. In this instance, helping the child cannot be done by you alone.

Can the use of drugs be seen in the handwriting? Yes, it can. Any form of drug affects the mind, and handwriting is really brainwriting. Therefore, if there is a drastic change in the writing form, or if the writing usually is readable and then it becomes unreadable, possibly we can attribute this to a drug in the body.

We must compare several samples of writing from the youngster involved.

The three samples below are samples of writing that was done while under the influence of a drug.

stomato

I am going to be ready for that, ~~that~~
 open up, Everyone is very helpful, ~~that~~
 Many people are happy, ~~that~~
~~that~~

I like that kind
 of things we are grateful
 for our friends,
 We are going to
~~that~~ enjoy our
 vacation.

16 year old high school student written while under the influence of a strong drug.

I am going to be ready for that store to open up. Everyone is very helpful. Many people are happy today. I like that kind of thing. We are grateful for our friends. We are going to enjoy our summer vacation.

A second year high school girl shortly after taking a drug.

open up. Everyone is very helpful. Many people are happy today. I like that kind of thing. We are grateful for our friends.

Junior high school student — 13 years old.

Keep in mind that the brain is affected by coffee, aspirin, or any medication that might be prescribed by a doctor. Sickness may also cause a change in the writing. So, to rush in and say that the youngster is on drugs without first looking at other reasons for the change in the writing is not only irrational but also invalid.

Sexual Feelings

Youngsters today are bombarded by media that expose sexual ideas to them. Even popular songs of the day are full of sexual innuendoes. Naturally, the more a child hears, the more curious he becomes about these sexual experiences.

The pre-adolescent likes to talk about and think about sex. His sex talk is mostly with members of the same sex, and it is usually just that—talk. His thoughts turn just as quickly to other topics. He is not ready for philosophical attitudes about sex. The adolescent, on the other hand, will ask questions with a sincere

desire to fully understand the facts since he is in the process of forming his moral attitudes about it.

Attitudes concerning sex and sexuality, should be taught early in a child's development. Therein, by the time the youngster is a teen, it won't all be a big mystery.

When discussing sex with your child, do not go over just the physical aspects but do bring out the responsibilities that go along with sexual situations. Have an interest in what he is asking, and answer him to the best of your ability. Don't lecture your child about sex, but discuss it with him. Explain to him the reason for the changes in the body, and don't put your child down for any question or word that he might use, as this may be the only way he has of expressing his questions. Allow the child his say, and frankly answer his question.

Understandably, many parents do have a difficult time talking to their children about sex. The reverse is also true. If this is the case, it is advisable to find a friend that will sit down with your child and go over the questions he has regarding sex. The school is another place that an adult can be found to talk with your youngster. If you simply cannot find anyone to talk with your youngster, there are many books in the library that will help you. However, do not give your youngster a book unless you have reviewed it yourself to determine that it follows your moral philosophy. You will compound your problem by presenting your child with information that you may not want him to receive.

Summary

Living with pre-adolescent or adolescent youngsters can be difficult but rewarding. There will be times when they tax your patience and other times when their assistance and judgment is greatly appreciated. Pre-adolescents and adolescents don't like to be told what to do; you can get much more from your youngster and have a much better relationship with him if you ask rather than tell him what to do. Give your youngsters the respect that is due them. Courtesy is important.

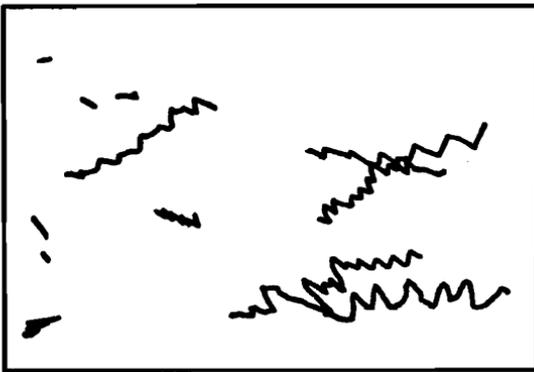
In his book *Civilization*, Kenneth Clark states: "I believe in

courtesy, the ritual by which we avoid hurting other people's feelings by satisfying our own egos." What a fine concept to instill in our children as well as ourselves.

By giving an appropriate latitude of freedom, an added amount of personal and family responsibility, and an open line for present and future communication, you can then continue to learn, work and grow together.

Squiggles & Primary Printing

We can begin to analyze writing as soon as a child is capable of holding a pencil in his hand and make marks on a sheet of paper. Even at age two, the child has a complicated thinking pattern, can show moods and temper, and is developing his personality. Since it is the brain that controls the markings on the paper, some of the developing personality is evident in the squiggles on the paper. Marks on a paper before the child is able to make the letters of the alphabet are called squiggles. Below is a sample of a squiggle. This was done by a three-and-a-half year old girl.



When preparing to analyze a pre-school child, we should give him a pencil and a piece of paper without lines upon it; then permit him to draw whatever he pleases. We do not get a vast amount of information from the simplistic markings on the paper, but we

do obtain an overview as to the child's thinking patterns and underlying emotional make-up.

Ages Three to Four

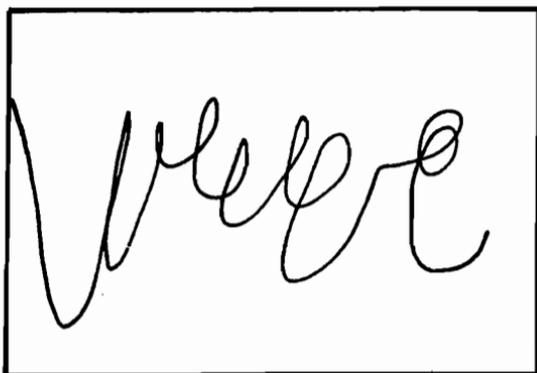
Up to the age of four, the majority of children have a very narrow view of their world. They see themselves as the center and view others as trespassers. Possessive of both family members and of their own possessions, they live in an "I-Me" environment. Their work is very simplistic; it is based on their limited observations.

When looking at their squiggles, it is important to see in which directions the marks are going. At this age, most of the markings tend to move from the right to the left . . . in a direction toward themselves. This right to left direction shows us that the child still views a world where he belongs in the center. If you are watching the child make the squiggles, you can see the direction in which the lines are made. However, if you do not observe the child while writing, it is still possible to tell the direction of the lines by looking carefully at the pencil marks on the paper. You can see where the child started and where he lifted his pencil from the paper.

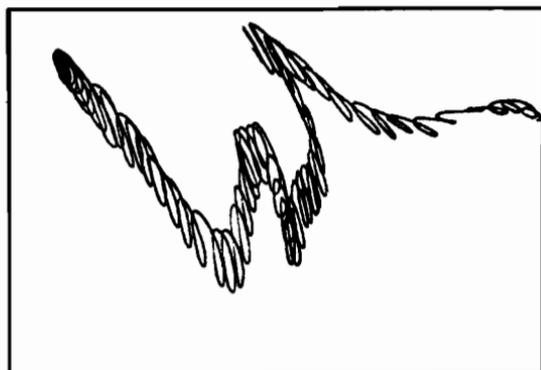
I suggest a pencil because with pencil lines, one can readily see the direction of the markings upon the paper.



3 year old girl
right to left movement



4 year old boy
large motor movements



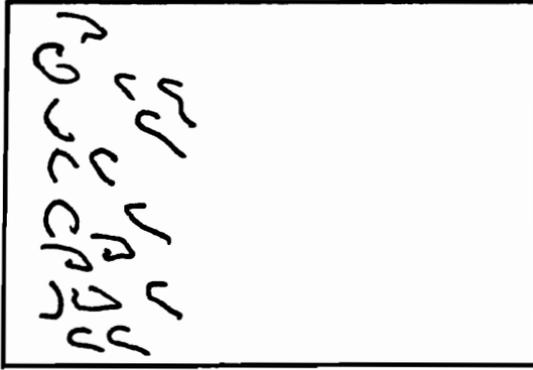
4 year old boy
smooth rhythm

Ages Four to Five

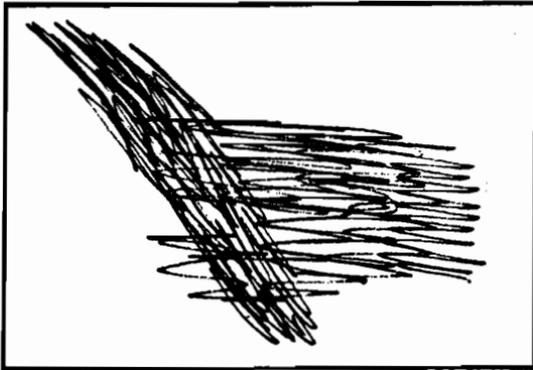
During this period of growth, the child is beginning to extend himself. He is now realizing that he is not the center, but that the world contains many different parts, and he is discovering the various parts. This is the age when he usually begins to share with others. His words now begin to include *we* and *you*. He begins to experience outside influences. The child wants to have more

freedom. Not only does he want to play in his yard, but also he wants to play in the yard down the block or across the street.

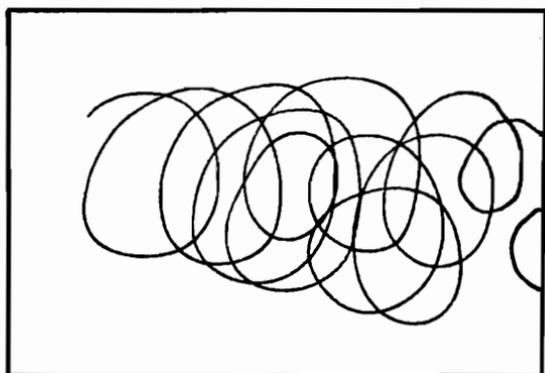
The squiggles made during this period will begin to move in a left to right direction, indicating that he is now beginning to extend himself toward others; he can now freely share himself and his possessions with others.



4 year old girl
left to right movement

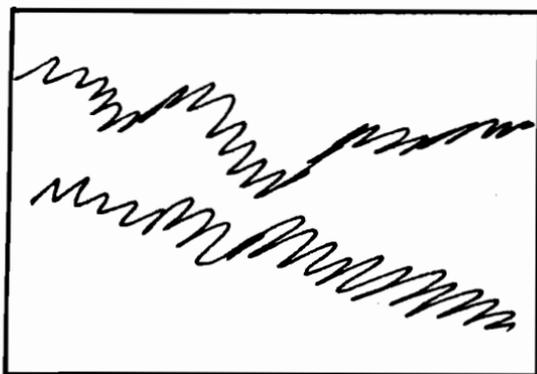


5 year old boy
strong forceful movement, lots of energy

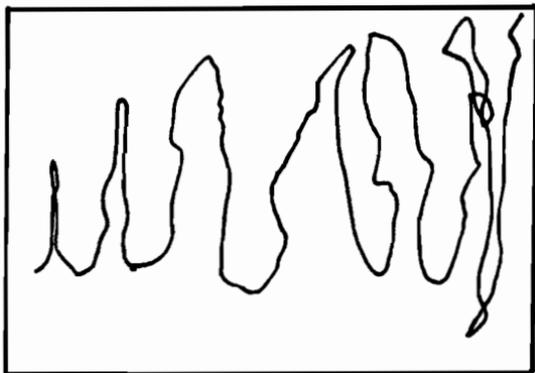


5½ year old boy
with a lot of imagination

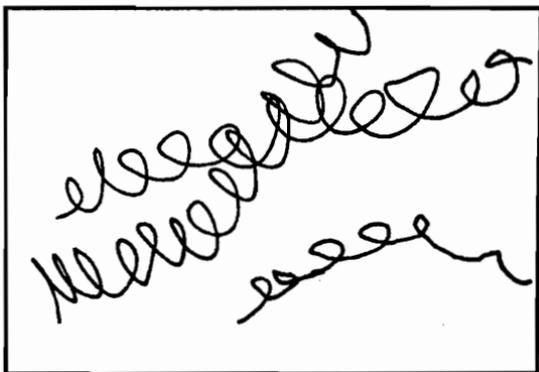
Once we know the direction of the writing, we then look at the slant of the writing. Sometimes it can be determined immediately because all the markings will seem to slant in one direction, but there are times when the slant cannot be readily seen and it appears to go in all directions. This indicates a child who is very unpredictable in his reactions.



3 year old girl
slant toward the right

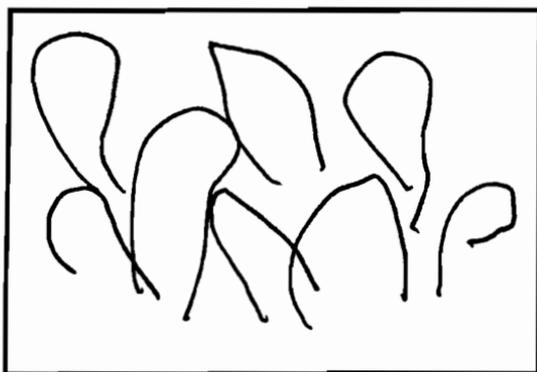


2½ year old girl
a vertical squiggle

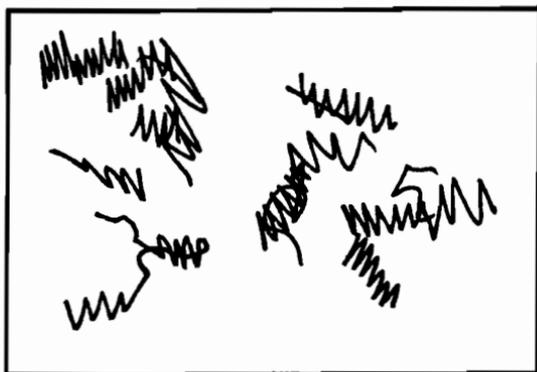


4 year old boy
with a back slant

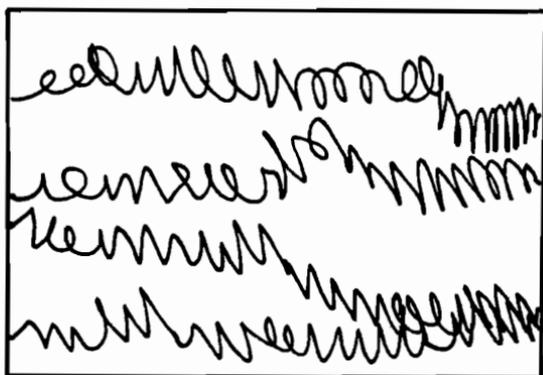
We can also look for the beginning of mental patterns in the child. In cursive writing we look for the *m*'s and *n*'s to tell us how the child thinks; in squiggles, we look at whether the writing is wavy or angular. The wavy markings are the markings of a logical cumulative thinker, while the sharper break-aways are the markings of a child who thinks more quickly and whose thoughts branch out in many directions.



2½ year old girl
cumulative thinking patterns



5 year old boy
investigative and academic thinking patterns



4 year old boy
with a variety of thinking processes

Primary Printing

When the child enters kindergarten or first grade, depending upon the development of the child and the curriculum of the school system, he begins to learn to print the letters of the alphabet. The manuscript alphabet consists of circles and sticks.

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	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	

It is possible to analyze even this basic primary alphabet, understanding that with printing we are somewhat limited, but we can gain much understanding of the child from his printing.

The slant of the writing can be picked up by observing the printing. One can notice whether the printing is leaning toward the right, the left, or straight up and down. The slant gives us the emotional make up of the child.

That
happy. Cd
The trai

I am going to be
storopen up Everyo
Very helpful ma

Back slant

Many people are
like that kind of
going to enjoy our

I am going
ready for

Vertical printing

good child.
is a funny
cat. See

good child
is a funny

Right slant

The mental pattern can also be seen in the primary printing of the child. If we see rounded *m*'s and *n*'s, it gives us the logical cumulative thinking pattern.

I am a good child
We are having fun
That dog is happy
Can you see the train?

I am a good child.
we are having fun. That dog
is happy. can you see the train?

If the tops of the *m*'s and *n*'s are pointed, we have the investigative thinker, the one that likes to learn new and different things. This child will get very excited about learning and will enjoy the school setting.

I am a good child. That is a
 funny white cat.
 See the man and lady.

I am a good child.
 That is a funny white cat.
 See the man and lady.

We can also see the level of expectations of the child by looking at the *t* crossings. The higher the cross bar on the *t* stem, the higher are the expectations of the child.

are happy
that kind of
going to en

That is a
funny white

In the primary printing, we can also begin to see some of the difficulties that the child might have. If the writing is overly large and seems to spread all over the paper with no regard for spacings, it possibly indicates a lack of coordination in the body of the child. He may have poor motor coordination, and he needs to be exposed to physical activities that will help him to increase his motor skills, or the movement of the eye is irregular and it is difficult to observe a concept of line and space within the narrow confines of the piece of paper.

I am a good
 child. That
 is a funny
 white cat
 see the name
 y.

first grade girl
 she cannot jump rope
 because of her lack of coordination

I am going to be red
for that store to
~~be~~ everyone
is very helpful
many people feel
are happy today
I like that kind
of thing we
are happy
grateful for our
friends we are to
enjoy our summer

3rd grade boy
poor coordination
stands around watching other youngsters participating
in playground activities

I am going to be
ready for that store
to open up. Everyone
is very helpful.
Many people are
happy today. I like
that kind of thing.
We are grateful
for our friends. We
are going to enter our summer

4th grade boy
very intelligent
poor skills in sporting events

Beginning Cursive

The majority of school districts introduce cursive writing at the second grade level, although some schools wait until the third grade. During the time that the child is being introduced to the cursive alphabet, it is very difficult to analyze the writing properly. Success at cursive writing depends a great deal upon the coordination of the child. The child spends a lot of time looking at his copy book style which shows him the correct way to make the

letters of the alphabet. Therefore, he is concentrating on the physical aspects of the letters which does not permit his brain to freely control the cursive writing. We can gather much more information from the writing of a child when we know that he is no longer trying to think of how a certain letter is made, but is concentrating on the material he is writing. Some children learn the mechanics of writing more quickly than others.

To show how the analysis of printing compares to the analysis of cursive, I have included several samples of printing and of writing each done by the same child on the same day. Notice the similarities between the cursive and the printed copy.

I am a good child. That is a funny white
cat. See the man and lady

I am a good child. That
is a funny white cat.
See the man and lady.

child 1

I am a good child.
That is a funny white
cat. See the man and
lady..

I Am a good child.

That is a funny white cat.

See the man and lady.

child 2

I am a good child.

That is a funny

White Cat. see the man
and Lady

I am a good child.

That is a funny white

cat. See the man and
lady.

child 3

I am going to be ready for that store to
open up. Everyone is very helpful. Many
people are happy today. I like that kind of
thing. We are grateful for our friends.
We are going to enjoy our ☺

I am going to be ready for that store to
open up. Everyone is very helpful. Many
people are happy today. I like that kind of
thing. We are grateful for our friends.
We are going to enjoy our summer vacation.

child 4-5th grade

I am going to be
ready for that store to OPEN
UP Everyone is very helpful. many
people are going to enjoy our
SUMMER VACATION

Cursive and manuscript

Sometimes a child that is in seventh grade or above prefers to print rather than write in cursive. Often I am asked what that means, and its meaning depends upon the form of the writing. If the printing is neat and orderly as in the sample below, it usually shows an individual that is traditional in nature, practical in just needing the simple things of life, and is often artistic in one form or another.

I am going to be ready
for that store to open up.
Everyone is very helpful. Many
people are happy today. I like
that kind of thing. We are
grateful for our friends. We
are going to enjoy our summer
vacation.

If the printing is unorganized and seems to be bouncing all around, as in the following sample, it shows someone that has still not matured properly and possibly is having a hard time conforming to standards imposed upon him by the school and by his parents.

I am going to be ready
for that store to open up. everyone
is very helpful. many people are happy
today. I like that kind of thing.
We are grateful for our friends.
We are going to enjoy summer
vacation.

Often this type of printing shows someone who is unable to coordinate his body well enough to begin the physical task of writing in cursive. Remember that manuscript is a series of sticks and circles which can be fairly easily mastered by a youngster; however, cursive writing is a much more detailed skill that takes a finer level of coordination.

Summary

One need not wait until the child is in school to analyze the handwriting. When the pre-school youngster takes a pencil in hand and moves it around on paper, we can begin to see the inner complexities of the child. Because there is only a minimum of copy, it certainly does not give us a complete picture, but it does give us a glimpse of the total child. There are many studies being done with preschool children and the significance of their squiggles. This is a relatively new area of study.

Personal Comminiqué to the Teenager

Although this book was written for parents to help them to understand their child, it can also be used as a guide by the child to help him better understand himself. We have an idea of what we are like, but analyzing our handwriting enables us to look at ourselves more objectively.

I have spoken with many teenagers asking them what they feel should be included in this chapter, what they feel could be of use to them. I have attempted to incorporate their answers, and so, this chapter will be directed exclusively to them.

If we have a good feeling about ourselves, we are ahead of the game. Each of us can find, if not many, at least one thing that we do well. Concentrate on this. Use it to build a positive feeling about ourselves. It is also important to know our areas of weaknesses and to work at polishing the edges. However it is too easy to find fault with ourselves and others. First, we must assess and build upon our strengths.

How to Use the Book

I hope this book will prove valuable for your personal growth. Each chapter is intended to include something that will help you to better understand yourself. To do a self-analysis of your handwriting, find a sheet of 8½ x 11, unlined paper; then, using a pencil, write a paragraph or two trying to concentrate on what you are writing and not on how you are making the letters. Relax as you write. Just write as you do normally. Don't attempt to fake the writing since this paragraph is for **you** to compare with the samples included in the book. If you don't know what to write,

you might copy the first paragraph of this chapter. After you have completed your sample, keep it handy as you read the book. While reading through the chapters, compare your sample to the samples in the book, jotting down the information about yourself as you find it. Write this information on a separate sheet of paper or in a notebook, keeping this log up-to-date in order to do an accurate self-analysis. When you finish the book, these notes will be important to you. Through these notes you should be able to analyze your handwriting and reach a better understanding of yourself.

Put your analysis away for a week or so; then reread it and decide what area you want to improve in. When you experience difficulties or problems, return to your analysis and see if you can find a cause for these difficulties.

If you notice a change in the appearance of your handwriting, go through the book and find the reason you are now making a letter different. Also, find out what it means, and adjust that portion of your original analysis. I would suggest that every six months to a year you do this since your writing changes as you develop. This is natural because, we fortunately, are constantly changing.

Chapter four was written to help you and your parents keep the lines of communication open. Understandably there are times that you prefer to avoid discussions with your parents; however, there will be other times that you will want or need to talk with your parents.

Keeping open the lines of communication will make it easier for you to approach your parents when you need to do so. Don't be surprised at how receptive your parents are if you do go to them with a problem. Parents want to help you. However, if you honestly cannot talk with parents, find another adult that you have faith in. The adult could be a teacher, a counselor, a relative, or a close family friend. Above all, keep the channel open with the adult world.

Possibly you have a problem with the school. Chapter seven is designed to help with school conflicts. It offers help in dealing with teachers and others that you encounter at school. It is my

hope that you will attend the conferences and gain needed information from the conference to enable you to work more smoothly with your parents and with the school.

Carefully evaluate the chapters on fears and defenses. Record the fears that you see in your writing and the ways that you defend yourself against those fears. We all have fears whether we are three years old or fifty years old. But once we recognize these fears we can deal with them. It is another major step to becoming a well-rounded, mature person.

Most of us have aspirations of doing something special in the world of sports, in the field of art, or in the development of an interesting hobby. After reading chapter eight, you should have a better idea of what you might be capable of doing for extra-curricular activity. High school students might want to use this chapter as an aid to determining where their success might be found. Chapter eight was intended to broaden your experience not to limit them. Don't approach this chapter from the idea of "What can I do?", but rather "What would I like to do?" Go over the personal analysis you made and assemble the information to help you decide. If you do not have any of the skills necessary, but you still have a desire for a particular endeavor, then use this chapter as a guide. Find out what skills are essential, and then begin working on acquiring them. The underlying message is that success is not measured by where you are now; but rather by how far you have traveled to get there. If you want to achieve something, begin and don't let anything stop you.

Helping Yourself

In *The Wizard of Oz*, we had the Scarecrow looking for a brain, the Tin Man looking for a heart, and the Lion looking for courage. These three characters went through life trying to find the Wizard so that they could acquire what they desired. But when they reached the Wizard they found that what they had wanted had always been inside of themselves. They had hoped their needs could be met by someone giving them what they wanted, but real success, as they found out, is gotten only from within. The nice thing about analyzing your own handwriting is that you can see

the successes already inside of you.

First, set your standards and goals. Decide what you want to achieve most and then list the items necessary to reach that goal. Don't do a lot of worrying about how things might be. Worry uses energy. Save your energy for improving yourself. Begin each day anew. Decide each day what you hope to accomplish; then set out to do just that. If you don't reach your goal, thinking back on your failures won't help, so decide what went wrong and start over again.

Use the failure as a stepping-stone for self-improvement. Though difficult to understand, frequently our best learned lessons come through failure and not through success.

Give yourself private time, time that you set aside for yourself to do what you want to do. Your personal life is important. Put prayer into your life, and when things get difficult or problems arise, go off by yourself and use the form of prayer that feels most comfortable to you. But do find a private place where you can think things through. At school, join organizations or clubs. Work at promoting yourself, not to be a showoff, but to develop your self-pride. Being friendly shows others that you care about them. And if you don't understand something, ask questions. People appreciate an individual who will ask questions. It shows that one is willing to learn. If success does not seem to come fast enough for you, remember the fable of the Tortoise and the Hare. The hare thought that he would win the race, and he could lolligag all along the way. He took time to play and did not stick with the task at hand. On the other hand, the tortoise was persistent; he had to overcome obstacles and often ran into difficulties, but he would pick himself up and continue on his venture. And we all know who won that race! Success will come, maybe not overnight, but it will come if you are persistent. When it does arrive, think of how proud you will be.

Helping Others

The best way to help yourself is by helping others. Often we are too busy to notice others around us. There is great personal reward in giving of ourselves. When we know we have helped an-

other person in need, we have a good feeling about ourselves. Extending a helping hand toward others enables us to build our self-worth and gain the esteem of our friends.

To work out our difficulties, learn to deal with your inner feelings. When there is a problem, tell others how you feel, but say it in a constructive way. Instead of saying, "That's stupid," or "How dumb," if we phrase it something like, "You may be right, but I feel that it should be done in a different way," we leave the channels open for discussion.

You may not get what you want, but you will have earned the respect of others. We don't want to destroy; we want to build. Constructive speech will increase our chances for success.

Please take time to read the chapter on adolescence. It was written so that adults would have a better understanding of the development of the pre-adolescent and the adolescent youngster. It is my hope that adults who read Chapter nine, will have more patience and understanding in dealing with your age group. It is also my hope that you, having read the chapter on adolescence, will have a better understanding of how adults view your development. If you can understand the parents' point of view, and the parents can relate to your growth and development, then at least there is a foundation for understanding.

Summary

Don't attempt to solve all your problems at once. Zero-in on one at a time and develop ways of overcoming it. But, always be yourself. Put faith in yourself and faith in God. If you are positive about yourself, success will come. There are many people cheering for you.

It is my desire that this book will be of benefit to you. This book was intended to be used as a guide to better understand ourselves and others. We all have good points, and not one of us is exempt from bad points. But it is what we do with what we have that determines how we feel about ourselves.

After you have recorded your analysis, read it over, assess your status, and then look at yourself in the mirror, and be proud. You are unique. Good Luck!

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