



Penmanship Instruction for Riggs

This is a simplified guide for forming the capital letters in the manner taught in our Riggs program. Keep in mind the descriptions here are for parents (not students) to help parents know how to demonstrate in the same way learned in school. Forming the capital letters is much the same as forming many lower case letters. All capital letters are “tall” letters which begin just below the top base line. (Insist they start capital letters from the top.) They are somewhat oval in shape compared to lower case letters.

Correct posture is important for neat penmanship. The child should sit with both feet on the floor, spine straight, with both arms resting on the table or desk. The paper should lie parallel to the writing arm. There should be a little space between the child’s body and the desk. This position will provide the most comfort and foster the best performance.

We encourage a three-fingered pencil grip. Unusual grips will be gently discouraged as they impede performance and lead to discomfort.

You can help your child by providing a quiet workplace, the appropriate tools, and encouragement.



Forming the Letters

(Listed in the order learned in kindergarten)

/C/ start at '2 on the clock' just below the top base line; go up toward the 10 and pass it, down to 8, set your letter on the base line and come up to 4.

/G/ begin at '2 on the clock' just below the top base line, go up toward 12 and then toward 10, pass 10, down to 8; set your letter on the base line and round, past 4, up to 3. Without lifting your pencil, make a line – *in the direction we do not read and write* – from right to left, halfway to 9.

/O/ begin at '2 on the clock' just below the top base line, go up toward 12 and then toward 10, pass 10, down to 8; set your letter on the base line and round up, past 4 to 2. Notice that the capital O is more rounded than the zero (0), which is oval in shape. This distinction is an important one we expect from students.

/Q/ begin at '2 on the clock' just below the top base line, go up toward 12 and then toward 10, pass 10, down to 8; set your letter on the base line and round up, past 4 to 2. Pick up your pencil and make a small diagonal line, from left to right, at 5 on the clock.

/S/ begin just below the top base line; go up and around toward 10, slide down from 10 to 4 and round to 8 making your letter sit on the base line.

/A/ begin just below 12 on the clock, and slant down to the left past 8, stopping on the base line. Pick up your pencil, start just below 12 again, slant down past 4 and stop at the base line. Make a line across from 8 to 4 *in the direction we read and write*.

/B/ begin just below the top base line at 10 on the clock; draw a line straight down past 8, down to the base line; stop; lift your pencil. Begin again at 10, make a line over to about 1; round down to 3 and over to 9; retrace back to 3, round out a bit and go down to the base line and back along the base line to meet your vertical line just below 8.

/D/ begin just below the top base line at 10; draw a line straight down past 8 stopping at the base line; stop; lift your pencil. Begin again in the same place and round over to 2, down past 4, on around and back along the base line to meet the vertical line just below 8.



/E/ begin just below the top base line at 10; draw a vertical line straight down, past 8, stopping at the base line. Begin again in the same place and draw a line straight over to 2. Lift your pencil. Beginning at 9 on the vertical line, draw a line two-thirds of the way to 3. Lift your pencil. Beginning where the vertical line ends, draw a line straight along the base line and stop at a point below 4 on the clock.

/F/ Make capital F exactly like /E/ except omit the bottom line.

/P/ begin at 10 just below the top base line and pull a line straight down, past 8, to the base line. Stop; lift your pencil. Begin again at the same point and draw a line straight over to 1; round down to 3 and straight back to 9 on the vertical line.

/H/ begin just below the top base line at 10; draw a straight down, past 8, stopping at the base line; stop, lift your pencil. Begin again just below the top base line at 2 and draw a parallel line straight down, past 4, stopping at the base line. Lift your pencil. Beginning at 9 on the first vertical line, draw a line straight over, *in the direction we read and write*, to 3 stopping at the second vertical line.

/I/ begin at 12 just below the top base line; draw a line straight down to 6 at the base line. Make small cross lines on either end *in the direction we read and write*.

/J/ begin at 2 on the clock just below the top base line; draw a line straight down to 4 and round from 4 to 8, setting your letter on the base line. Pick up your pencil and make a small, horizontal line at the top of the vertical line, *in the direction we read and write*.

/K/ begin at 10 just below the top base line; draw a line straight down, past 8, and stop at the base line. Begin at 2, across from your vertical line, and slant a line left down to 9 on the vertical line; continue *in the direction we read and write* down past 4, stopping at the base line.

/L/ begin at 10 just below the top base line; draw a line straight down, past 8 to the base line; continue on the base line, *in the direction we read and write*, to a point below 4.

/M/ begin at 10 just below the top base line and pull a line straight down, past 8, to the base line. Stop. Lift your pencil. Begin again at the beginning point and slant down to the right, stopping in the middle of the clock (where the hands connect); continue with an upward slant to the right to 2, and pull a vertical line straight down, past 4, to the base line.



/N/ begin at 10 just below the top base line and pull a line straight down, past 8, to the base line. Stop. Lift your pencil. Begin again at the same point and draw a line to the right to the base line below 4, go straight up to 2.

/R/ begin at 10 just below the top base line and pull a line straight down, past 8, to the base line. Stop. Lift your pencil. Begin again at the same point and draw a line straight over to 1; round down to 3 and straight back to 9 on the vertical line, retrace back to the right and round past 3, down past 4, to the base line.

/T/ begin at 12 just below the top base line, pull a line straight down to 6 at the base line; stop; lift your pencil. Beginning at 10, pull a line straight across to 2, just touching the vertical line in the middle.

/U/ begin at 10 just below the top base line; pull a line down to 8, round down to set your letter on the base line, and round up to 4 and straight up to 2, without lifting your pencil, pull a line straight down to the base line.

/V/ begin at 10 just below the top base line; angle a slanted line straight down to 6 on the base line; make a line straight back up to 2 just below the base line.

/W/ begin at 10 just below the top base line pull a slanted line down past 7 to the base line; go up to just below 12 and repeat doing down to the base line below 5 and up again to 2 just below the top base line.

/X/ begin at 10 just below the top base line pull a slanted line down past 4 to the base line; pick up your pencil; start again at 2, just below the top base line and pull a straight line down past 8 to the base line.

/Y/ begin just below the top base line; pull a line down to 8, round to 4, making your letter sit on the base line, go up to 2, *without lifting your pencil*, pull a line straight down base the base line and round from 4 to 8 (Y is the only capital letter which goes below the base line).

/Z/ begin at 10 just below the top base line; make a line to the left over to 2; then pull a diagonal line straight down past 8 to the base line; then back on the base line, *in the direction we read and write*, to stop just below 4.