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A Study of the Uniformity of Manuscript Handwriting of the First and Second Grade Teachers of Collinsville Unit # 10

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A Study of the Uniformity of Manuscript Handwriting

of the First and Second Grade Teachers

of Collinsville Unit # 10

(TITLE)

BY

Wilda L. Shepherd

THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF

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1968

YEAR

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THIS THESIS BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING
THIS PART OF THE GRADUATE DEGREE CITED ABOVE

May 15, 1968
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INTRODUCTION

It is important that the elementary student in the United States be given a more inclusive education than the kind received by his forefathers. One of the major purposes of going to school in those days was to learn enough of the communication skills to become capable of educating oneself in religion, and there was little value in an education for the purpose of learning occupational skills. Goals of education have changed considerably since colonial days. As the country grew and changed from an agricultural to an industrial society, the educational system was forced to change with the times.

Today the objective of elementary schools is to teach basic skills that can be built upon in the years of higher education. The youth of today who has not obtained a firm educational background in the elementary grades is unlikely to succeed in the years of technical training in a specialized occupation. The effectiveness with which these skills are taught is vital.

The basis of instruction in these skills is language. Most pupils will already have the language skills of speaking and listening upon their entrance to the elementary grades. From this point, it is the teacher's task to further develop these skills, and to teach the language skills of reading and writing. The child must learn that when he is reading, he is finding out what someone else has to say to him. He must also learn that he can communicate his ideas to other people by writing.

One of the rewards of teaching is the satisfaction that results from helping a child grow in his ability to communicate ideas in speech and writing. Just as a parent proudly reports the first word the child speaks, so a teacher shares the child's development of a new vocabulary, his first written story, and his achievement when a degree of reading skill has been mastered. And just as a parent worries about the child's future, so are teachers concerned when a child is not competent in his use of language. A student who fails to achieve competence in language faces life with an unfair handicap for which the school must accept responsibility.¹

The communication skill of manuscript handwriting will be of value to the child throughout his school years and even into adulthood. Thelma G. Voorhis reports some conclusions of experts with regard to the value of teaching manuscript writing.

1. Manuscript writing is found to be significantly more legible than cursive writing.
2. Manuscript writing is easier for children to learn.
3. Manuscript writing is more rhythmical to write.
4. Manuscript writing is more pleasing to read.
5. The neatness and legibility of manuscript writing tend to carry over to other written work.
6. For certain groups, manuscript writing appears to be as rapid as cursive, different investigations reporting conflicting results.
7. Use of manuscript writing reduces physical strain and eyestrain.
8. Manuscript writing facilitates learning to read and spell.
9. Manuscript writing is as individualistic as cursive writing.
10. The simple letter forms used in manuscript writing constitute an excellent basis for cursive writing, if such a transition is desired.
11. Manuscript writing is favored by all individuals for writing legends, poems, names and so forth.

¹ Paul S. Anderson, Language Skills in Elementary Education, (MacMillan Company, New York, 1964) pp. 1,2.

As with the teaching of other skills, the teaching of handwriting is most effective when both the teacher and the children have attitudes which are favorable to its learning. Handwriting must be regarded as an important skill--one that is necessary for effective expression and one which must be learned. The teacher can help instill this attitude in the children by setting a good example and applying the following suggestions:

1. Making certain that letters are formed correctly and neatly.
2. Showing good posture while writing at the desk or at the chalkboard.
3. Writing smoothly and rhythmically.
4. Holding the pen, pencil or chalk correctly.⁴

It is important that the teacher's handwriting be firm, bold, and exact. Teachers who lack certainty and ease in manuscript writing should practice to perfect their skills.⁵

Her ability to write manuscript beautifully and easily will be a guide and an inspiration to her children. Her knowledge of the fundamentals of manuscript writing, and her knowledge of the learning process, will influence the success of this development.⁶

Individuals who have adopted manuscript for consistent use naturally tend to write in a personalized style. The primary teacher, however, cannot afford such idiosyncrasies, for her writing must be a constant example for the children.⁷

4

Ibid. p. 291.

5

Paul C. Burns and Alberta L. Lowe, The Language Arts in Childhood Education (Rand McNally & Company, Chicago, 1966) p. 295.

6

Emma Harrison Myers, The Whys and Hows of Teaching Handwriting (Zaner-Bloser Company, Columbus 15, Ohio, 1963) p. 54.

7

Edith M. Leonard, Dorothy D. Van Deman and Lillian E. Miles, Basic Learning in the Language Arts (Scott Foreman and Company, Chicago, Illinois, 1965) p. 165.

Dr. E. A. Enstrom, the Director of Research and Instruction for Peterson Handwriting at Greensburg, Pennsylvania, states a strong case for teachers' uniformity in presentation of letter forms to their students. He has spent the last twenty-five years attempting to improve instruction in handwriting, and is now even more convinced of the necessity of proper handwriting instruction.

The central purpose of writing by hand remains the easy communication on paper, and educators must never lose sight of this goal. Such script should be easily written and easily read. It should have secure legibility produced at a fairly rapid rate. It, along with reading, should serve the use as an effective school learning tool so necessary for easy academic progress.⁸

Those who would demand that the child have the right to express his individuality in handwriting will not be deprived of this privilege, as individuality will show through even in the most carefully imitated writing. Teaching written communication that allows individuals to read readily and easily the written communication of others is the ultimate goal of handwriting instruction.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

Because manuscript writing is an important tool learned by the primary child, it is of essence that the teachers within one school system present a manuscript form that complies with the particular manuscript style used in that system. Authorities

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E. A. Enstrom, "The Quest For Individuality", Kappa Delta Pi Record, (December 1967), p. 57-58.

agree that the teachers provide a model which will influence the learning of handwriting on the part of the youngster. There is need to evaluate manuscript writing of first and second grade teachers who teach manuscript writing to determine the degree of manuscript uniformity among the group.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Realizing the importance of manuscript writing and the importance of the teacher's own model of manuscript writing, it is the purpose of this paper to collect and analyze samples of manuscript writing. Samples from first and second grade teachers, all within one school system, had to be collected and studied to determine the degree of conformity of their letter forms, as judged by the handwriting program used in the system.

LIMITATIONS

Numerous factors often combine to limit the validity and reliability of a study of this nature. Following are several such limiting factors.

The sample used in this study consisted of the first and second grade teachers of one school system using one of several widely used handwriting programs.

Due to various circumstances, seven first grade teachers and three second grade teachers were not able to participate at the grade meeting when the data was collected. Eleven of the twenty-two participating second grade teachers were unable to complete the writing sample due to a limited time factor.

The teachers wrote the sample as a group in their respective grade meetings; for this reason there was no attempt to verify whether or not the proper stroke sequences were followed on each individual letter.

The selected school system used in this study does not administer standardized writing tests to evaluate pupil progress. Schools that do use them might show more letter uniformity in that such tests could motivate teachers to place more emphasis upon letter form.

This system does provide for handwriting evaluation on report cards. Evaluation of manuscript by means of report cards in some systems and lack of evaluation in others might also effect the emphasis upon handwriting.

Six first and eleven second grade teachers indicated they had learned manuscript form in college courses. It is not known, however, if these courses were workshops, or correspondence courses, undergraduate or graduate writing methods courses.

It is also not known whether any of the teachers had been given inservice training; were such training available, teacher performance on the handwriting sample might be perceptibly altered.

This writer was unable to find a standardized test that would permit evaluation of all lower and upper case manuscript letters, so a short story was written which included every lower case letter twice and each upper case letter once. This story, written cursively, was to be copied in manuscript by each participating teacher. These manuscript copies were the writing samples to

be compared to the model letter forms that were set forth in the E. C. Seale first and second grade manuals.⁹ Therefore, the lack of sophistication and standardization of the sampling tool might limit the value of the data collected.

Although there are numerous limitations, this writer feels that they will not detract from the significance of the study and the information in the analysis and summary chapters.

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Ethelyn Davidson and Rosa Veal, I Learn to Write, (E. C. Seale and Company, Indianapolis, 1963).

CHAPTER II

DATA

Collection of Data

It seemed advisable to select for this study a school system which was large enough to provide an adequate sampling of teachers, had teachers who were willing to cooperate, had a standard manuscript form for the unit, and would provide a uniform opportunity for obtaining writing samples.

Taking all of these factors into consideration, Collinsville Unit #10 was the school system chosen for this study.

Lester Bickel, Assistant Superintendent of Unit #10, gave permission to use the first and second grade teaching faculty for this study, with the understanding that the participating teachers not be required to submit their names. Therefore, for identification purposes, each sample was arbitrarily numbered as it was received. First grade teachers were identified by 1A through 1R, and second grade teachers by 2A through 2V.

Selecting the Population

In both grades, the E. C. Seale writing program was used.¹⁰ The children in both first and second grades have handwriting workbooks which are supplemented by instructions from the teachers, using the teaching suggestions in the accompanying manuals for the series.

Uniform conditions for gathering data were available through the system's monthly grade meetings where the teachers in each grade meet for one hour to discuss curriculum revision and current teaching methods.

¹⁰Op. cit., Davidson and Veal

Permission was given to use twenty minutes of each grade meeting in order to secure writing samples. While twenty minutes were used to obtain writing samples at the first grade teacher's meeting, only fifteen minutes were allotted for the second grade teachers, as the group had several important matters to discuss.

Before the teachers started writing the sample story on manuscript paper, they were instructed to indicate in the upper left hand corner their total years of teaching, the years taught in first and second grades, and from what source they had learned manuscript form. All of the eighteen first grade and twenty-two second grade teachers willingly participated by writing the prescribed sample.

Characteristics of the Population

The total years of teaching experience for the 40 teachers was 572 years. The range of total teaching experience was 1 to 40 years, with 14.3 as the average number of years taught in the elementary grades.

The teachers participating in the study had taught first or second grade for a total of 394 years. The range of the number of years taught in first or second grade was 1 to 27 with 9.9 as the average.

The information from the top of the samples indicated that 17 first and second grade teachers had learned manuscript in college courses or 42.5 per cent. Eighteen teachers, or 45 per cent, had learned manuscript form from the manual, and 5 teachers, or 12.5 per cent, had learned the prescribed manuscript form from other teachers.

Sampling Tool

A mimeographed sample story was distributed to every participating teacher, a copy of which is included in the Appendix, along with the type of manuscript paper used by the teachers.

The sample story was composed to include each lower case letter at least twice and each upper case letter once. To prevent any conscious or unconscious attempt to copy this writer's form of manuscript writing, the sample was written cursively on unlined paper.

CHAPTER III
ANALYSIS OF DATA

The samples were evaluated in order to determine if the first and second grade teachers present uniform lower and upper case letters as prescribed in their respective E. C. Seale teacher's manuals.¹¹ Also lower and upper case letters in all samples were evaluated in regard to form, size, slant, alignment and spacing.

The first and second grade manuals give specific instructions in regard to only two of the five elements of handwriting. These two elements, formation and spacing, were evaluated according to manual instructions, and the other three elements, size, slant, and alignment, were evaluated by comparing the samples collected with sample letters, words, and sentences in the workbooks accompanying the series.

Formation

The second grade manual, I Learn to Write Book 2, stresses the importance of form.¹² The teacher is asked to follow closely the letter patterns in the writing text. The letters are to be composed of circles, part circles, and lines; this prescribed pattern is included in the appendix. Although it is acceptable for an adult to make a manuscript letter in one stroke, for instructional purposes, it is necessary to lift the pencil between strokes.

Table I shows for the teachers the years taught in first and second grade, total years teaching, and where they learned to teach manuscript form. Each teacher indicated the number of years taught in first grade

¹¹Op. cit., Davidson and Veal

¹²Op. cit., Book 2, Davidson and Veal, p. 6.

ANALYSIS OF PERSONAL DATA

Teacher	Experience			Where Learned Manuscript
	First Grade	Second Grade	Total (All Grades)	
1A	27	12	39	C.C.
1B	1	1	4	O.T.
1C	3	0	3	C.C.
1D	1	3	10	M.
1E	3	0	3	C.T.
1F	14	12	21 *	C.C.
1G	3	0	3	M.
1H	23	1	23 *	M.
1I	2	0	2	C.C.
1J	7	0	7	M.
1K	4	1	5	M.
1L	1	3	7	M.
1M	9	2	15	C.C.
1N	4	7	32	M.
1O	1	0	1	C.C.
1P	11	2	21	M.
1Q	7	0	28	M.
1R	10	0	10	O.T.
2A	4	27	31	M.
2B	2	20	20 *	M.
2C	13	2	21	C.C.
2D	0	1	1	C.C.
2E	0	1	2	C.C.
2F	0	14	16	C.C.
2G	0	1	3	M.
2H	0	1	1	C.C.
2I	0	5	5	C.C.
2J	1	2	2	C.C.
2K	7	3	7 *	C.C.
2L	3	7	20	M.
2M	0	20	40	M.
2N	1	1	1 *	C.C.
2O	0	5	6 *	M.
2P	0	10	25	C.C.
2Q	0	3	3	C.C.
2R	10	10	31	M.
2S	6	14	24	O.T.
2T	0	5	38	M.
2U	5	14	37	O.P.
2V	0	1	5	M.

* Split grade

and second grade. The total number of years of first and second grade experience were added for each teacher and they were grouped into the following three categories: one year, two to five years, and six years and over. The reason for setting up these dividing lines is that the first year of teaching should be significant because the individual probably has just completed college and perhaps the methods of handwriting instructions are still fresh on the mind while the period from two to five years would seem to be a formative one in adapting manuscript form. There would probably be little change from six years and over in the formation of manuscript letters. These categories will be used consistently throughout this study.

The reasons for distinguishing between those teachers who learned from a college course rather than other sources is that a longer period of time and a higher caliber of presentation should be available to the prospective teacher. Those who learned from the manual should be more familiar with the prescribed manual form. Those teachers who learned manuscript style from their associates should have the benefit of the experience of one already familiar with the prescribed form.

Table II shows lower case inconsistencies for teachers in the first and second grades while Table III shows the upper case inconsistencies.

The one first grade teacher who had taught for one year, had one lower case error and no upper case errors. The second grade teachers who had taught for one year had a total of 10 lower case errors with an average of .2 errors per teacher. Upper case letter errors for second grade teachers totaled 18, with an average of 3.6 errors per teacher.

TABLE II

ANALYSIS OF LOWER CASE FORMATION INCONSISTENCIES

1A		1J		2A	a	2L	a e f g h m o
1B	d	1K	q d	2B	q m	2M	q
1C	d	1L	e k m n q y	2C	a b d g h m n o q y	2N	b d v
1D	a b d	1M	a d e f k q r t	2D	d u	2O	a e h m g t a
1E		1N	d k m n q t	2E	d q	2P	d
1F	d	1O	d	2F	a d e	2Q	a
1G	a e q u y	1P	d m n	2G	q d k t	2R	q t
1H	a c d f q	1Q	q d g q	2H	q	2S	q q
1I	d k q	1R	d f j o q t	2I	a	2T	
				2J	d	2U	a e h k a
				2K	a	2V	e

TABLE III
ANALYSIS OF UPPER CASE INCONSISTENCIES

1A	G	1J		2A	G Q	2L	Q U
1B	B Q	1K		2B	A Q	2M	
1C	C M	1L	A F K Q Y	2C	A G K M Q R U Y	2N	G J Q
1D	K M Q	1M	A E G	2D	A J Q	2O	A G J K L Q U Z
1E		1N		2E	A G K Q	2P	
1F	A B K Q U	1O		2F	Q	2Q	A B G J K
1G	A E F M	1P	E G K Q U	2G	A E F Q U Y	2R	G L
1H	A E L M Q Y	1Q	E G M Q U	2H	A G Q U	2S	
1I	A K M	1R	C E G K Q R S U	2I	E G J Q	2T	U
				2J	K Q	2U	J
				2K	M	2V	M

First grade teachers who had taught from 2 to 5 years totaled 21 lower case errors with an average of 2.6 errors per teacher. Nineteen was the total of upper case errors with an average of 2.4 errors per teacher.

Second grade teachers who had taught 2 to 5 years totaled 13 lower case errors with an average of 2.2 errors per teacher. The same group totaled 23 upper case errors with an average of 3.8 errors per teacher.

First grade teachers who had taught 6 years and over totaled 33 lower case errors with an average of 3.6 errors per teacher. Upper case errors also totaled 33 with an average of 3.6 errors per teacher.

Second grade teachers who had taught for 6 years and over totaled 25 lower case errors, averaging 2.3 errors per teacher. The total upper case errors was 19, averaging 1.2 errors per teacher.

First grade teachers who had learned manuscript in a college course had a total of 14 lower case errors, with an average of 2.3 errors per teacher. Unprescribed upper case letters for this group totaled 9, with an average of 1.5 errors per teacher.

Second grade teachers who had learned manuscript in college courses had a total of 26 lower case errors, with an average of 2.4 errors per teacher. Thirty-five upper case errors were made by this group, thus averaging 3.2 errors per teacher.

First grade teachers who had learned manuscript from the manual had a total of 34 lower case errors, averaging 3.8 errors per teacher. Upper case errors totaled 28, with an average of 3.1 errors per teacher.

Thirty-two lower case errors were made by second grade teachers who learned manuscript from the manual, with an average of 3.5 errors per teacher. Twenty-four upper case errors were made by second grade

teachers who had learned manuscript from the manual, with the average of 2.6 errors per teacher.

Individuals in the first grade group who had learned manuscript from other teachers had 11 unprescribed lower case letters, averaging 3.6 errors per teacher. Upper case errors for this group totaled 10, thus averaging 3.3 errors per teacher.

Second grade teachers who had learned manuscript from other teachers had a total of 7 lower case errors, averaging 3.5 errors per teacher. Ten unprescribed upper case letters were made by this group, with an average of .5 error per teacher.

Second grade teachers results are similar to those of first grade teachers and there appears to be no significant relationship between where manuscript was learned and the frequency of errors.

Table IV indicates the types and frequency of errors of lower case letters for both first and second grade teachers. The prescribed lower case form is indicated in the left hand column, so that comparison can be made with the unprescribed forms.

The 3 lower case letters that were most frequently misformed by the first grade teachers were a, d, and q. The letter d was made in an unprescribed manner 8 times by extending the straight line all the way to the top of the line. The letter q was misformed 6 times with 3 different types of variant formations. In all 6 formations both the circle and tail parts were misformed. The letter a was misformed in 2 different ways 5 times with the circle and line misformed in all 5 instances. Twelve lower case letters, b, h, i, l, o, p, s, v, w, x, and z, were formed in the prescribed manner by all first grade teachers.

Types and Frequency of Letter Forms

Prescribed Form	First Grade Teachers	First Total	Second Grade Teachers	Second Total	Total First & Second
a	a ¹ a ⁴	5	a ⁶ a ⁶ a ²	14	19
b		0	b ¹	1	1
c	c ¹	1		0	1
d	d ⁸	8	d ⁶ d ¹	7	15
e	e ² e ¹	3	e ⁵	5	8
f	f ¹ f ¹	2	f ¹ f ¹	2	4
g	g ¹	1	g ¹ g ¹	2	3
h		0	h ³ h ¹	4	4
k	k ¹ k ¹ k ¹	3	k ¹ k ¹	2	5
m	m ¹ m ¹ m ¹	3	m ¹ m ²	3	6
n	n ¹ n ¹	3	n ¹	1	4
o		0	o ¹ o ¹	2	2
q	q ² q ¹ q ³	6	q ² q ²	4	10
r	r ¹	1		0	1
t	t ¹ t ²	3	t ²	2	5
u	u ¹	1	u ² u ¹	3	4
y	y ¹ y ¹	2	y ¹	1	3
		42	Totals for Group	53	95

The 3 most recurring unprescribed lower case letters for second grade teachers were a, d, and e. The a had 3 deviant formations for a total of 14 times. All 3 formations had the circle improperly formed and 2 of the 3 had incorrect straight line formations. The d was written in 2 unprescribed forms for a total of 7 mistakes. Six individuals formed the straight line of the letter all the way to the top of the line, and one individual curved the straight line at the bottom of the letter. The e was misformed the same way 5 times. In each case it had been made in one stroke rather than two, giving it a rounded effect where the circle and straight line meet. There were 11 letters, e, i, j, l, p, r, s, v, w, x, and z, that were made according to the prescribed manual form.

All the letters except i, j, l, p, s, v, w, x, and z, were made in an unprescribed form at least once in the lower case by both first or second grade teachers. For these letters, the 18 first grade teachers made a total of 42 incorrect lower case forms. The 22 second grade teachers made 53 unprescribed lower case formations.

First grade teachers averaged 2.3 lower case errors while second grade teachers had 2.8 errors per teacher. It must be remembered, though, that five minutes more were allotted to the first grade group.

Table V indicates the types and frequency of errors in upper case letters for first and second grades compared to the standard formation indicated on the left. The 3 most frequently incorrect letters were A, M, and Q. The letter A was formed in an unprescribed manner 6 different times; the center line connecting the two slanted lines had been placed on, rather than slightly below the middle line. The letter M was made in an incorrect form 6 times. In each case the slanted center lines connected

TABLE V
Nonprescribed Upper Case Letter Forms
Types and Frequency of Letter Forms

Prescribed Form	First Grade Teachers	First Total	Second Grade Teachers	Second Total	Total First and Second
A	A ⁶	6	A ⁸	8	14
B	B ²	2	B ¹	1	3
C	C ¹ C ¹	2	C ¹	1	3
E	E ⁴	4	E ¹	1	5
F	F ¹	1	F ¹	1	2
G	G ¹ G ³	4	G ³ G ³ G ¹	7	11
I	I ¹	1		0	1
J		0	J ⁴	4	4
K	K ² K ²	4	K ² K ¹ k ¹	4	8
L	L ¹	1	L ¹	1	2
M	M ⁶	6	M ³	3	9
Q	Q ⁵ Q ¹ Q ¹	7	Q ⁶ Q ⁴ Q ² Q ¹	13	20
R	R ¹	1	R ¹	1	2
U	U ⁴	4	U ⁵	5	9
X		0	X ¹	1	1
Y	Y ²	2	Y ¹	1	3
Z		0	Z ¹	1	1
	Total	45		53	98

at the center line rather than at the bottom line as the manual directs. The letter Q was written in 3 unprescribed ways for a total of 7 mistakes. The circle of each Q was made in the proper form, but the tails were formed in unprescribed manners. The authorized form of Q has a small slanted line that touches the base line. Five Q's had tails that went below the line, one had a tail that curved to the right, and one had a tail that curved to the left. The 11 upper case letters that were formed in the prescribed manner by all first grade teachers were D, H, J, N, O, P, S, T, V, W, and X.

The three most often misformed upper case letters by second grade teachers, were A, G, and Q. The letter A was formed in one unprescribed manner 8 times; as with the first grade teachers, the center line connecting the two slanted lines was placed on, rather than slightly below the middle line. The letter G was written in 3 unprescribed forms 7 times. Properly written, the short crossbar extends left toward the center of the letter. Three second grade teachers extended the crossbar to the right also. Three more teachers extended the crossbar to the right instead of the left, and one teacher properly extended it to the left, but did not bring the circular part to the middle line. The letter Q was written in 4 unprescribed ways by 13 teachers. Again, the circular part of all 13 Q's was formed according to the proper manner, but the tails were made incorrectly. Six teachers curved the tail to the left and below the line, 4 extended it straight and below the line, 2 curved it to the right and below the line, and one extended the tail in the form of a loop up into the circular part of the letter, then down below the line. The 10 upper case letters that were consistently formed according to the standard by the second grade teachers were D, H, I, N, O, P, S, T, V, and W.

The 18 first grade teachers had a total of 45 unprescribed upper case letter forms, to 53 for the 22 second grade teachers, for an average of 2.5 for the first grade group and 2.4 for the second grade group. These totals are very similar to those on Table IV which indicates 42 nonstandard lower case forms for first grade teachers to 53 for the second grade teachers.

Size

Another element evaluated in manuscript handwriting was size. According to the first grade teacher's manual, I Learn to Write Book 1, the child will develop a proper concept of letter size from the teacher's example.¹³ While the child's first letters will lack uniformity, proper height will come to all his letters in time and with practice if the teacher's handwriting sets a good example to him in size.

To evaluate the samples according to size, each one was judged as a whole according to uniformity or lack of uniformity. All the samples were analyzed by comparing the manner in which letters were placed on lined paper. Lower and upper case letters were compared to the sizing indicated in the two manuals. After evaluating each first and second grade teacher's sample, a check list was formed in order to more carefully study this element.

Table VI lists the number identification of each teacher and the terms "uniform" and "lack of uniformity." All letters were evaluated by continual reference to prescribed letter size indicated in the teacher's manual. If the sample as a whole was consistent in size, a check was made under the column labeled "uniform." If the over all impression was that of unevenness, a check was made under the column "lack of uniformity."

¹³Op. cit., Book 1, Davidson and Veal, p. 18.

TABLE VI

SIZE

GRADE 1 AND 2 TEACHERS

Teacher	Uniform	Lack of Uniformity
1A	X	
1B	X	
1C	X	
1D		X
1E	X	
1F	X	
1G	X	
1H	X	
1I	X	
1J	X	
1K	X	
1L		X
1M		X
1N		X
1O	X	
1P	X	
1Q	X	
1R		X
Totals	13	5
2A	X	
2B		X
2C		X
2D	X	
2E	X	
2F	X	
2G	X	
2H	X	
2I		X
2J	X	
2K	X	
2L		X
2M	X	
2N	X	
2O		X
2P	X	
2Q		X
2R	X	
2S	X	
2T	X	
2U	X	
2V	X	
Totals	16	6

The first grade teacher who had taught one year displayed a uniform letter size. In addition, all first year second grade teachers had consistent height of letters, or 100 per cent uniformity. Twenty-five per cent of the first grade teachers with 2 to 5 years experience had uneven sized letters compared to 50 per cent for the similar category among second grade teachers. Among the first grade teachers who had taught for 6 years and over, 33.3 per cent lacked uniformity. Those second grade teachers with the same experience showed 27.3 per cent as lacking consistency.

Of the first grade teachers who had learned manuscript form from college courses, 16.7 per cent lacked uniformity to 27.3 per cent for second grade teachers who learned it from the same source.

Thirty-three and three tenths per cent of all first grade instructors as well as second grade teachers whose only exposure to manuscript writing was through the manual had inconsistent letter size.

Although 33.3 per cent of the first grade teachers who learned from other instructors had uneven letter size, 100 per cent of similarly taught second grade teachers had proper uniformity.

Looking at these figures in yet another way, 72.2 per cent of all first grade teachers had uniformly sized letters as opposed to 27.8 per cent who did not. Second grade teachers showed similar results with 72.7 per cent uniformity.

Slant

Ideally, manuscript letters do not appear to slant as do cursive letters. Since people more frequently write cursively than in manuscript the tendency to slant the letters frequently carries over. An examination

of the samples submitted by the forty primary teachers of this study showed that a few teachers had "excessive slant" in their manuscript form, others had "some slant" and many had no slant, herein rated "excellent." It is in terms of these three categories that the samples were then judged. Table VII provides a summary.

The first grade teacher who had taught one year exhibited some slant in her sample as did 60 per cent of the second grade teachers who had the same experience. The other 40 per cent of this group of second grade teachers were rated "excellent."

In the 2 to 5 year category, first grade teachers proved to have "excellent" slant among 50 per cent of their number and "some slant" for the other 50 per cent. Second grade teachers with 2 to 5 years experience had 16.7 per cent "excellent" and 83.3 per cent with "some slant."

"Excellent slant" and "some slant" were evidenced 44.4 per cent each among first grade teachers who had taught for 6 years and over, and 11.1 per cent of the same group had "excessive slant." The same group of second grade teachers' samples demonstrated 54.5 per cent with "excellent slant," 27.3 per cent with "some slant" and 18.2 per cent with "excessive slant."

Those first grade teachers who had studied manuscript form in a college course were divided between "excellent" and "some slant" with 66.7 per cent in the former group and 33.3 per cent in the other. Second grade teachers in the same category showed 45.5 per cent with "excellent" and 45.5 with "some slant"; and other 9.0 per cent had "excessive slant."

SLANT
GRADE 1 AND 2 TEACHERS

Teacher	Excellent	Some Slant	Excessive Slant
1A		X	
1B	X		
1C	X		
1D		X	
1E		X	
1F	X		
1G		X	
1H			X
1I	X		
1J	X		
1K	X		
1L		X	
1M		X	
1N		X	
1O	X		
1P	X		
1Q	X		
1R		X	
Totals	9	8	1
2A	X		
2B		X	
2C			X
2D	X		
2E		X	
2F	X		
2G		X	
2H		X	
2I		X	
2J	X		
2K	X		
2L			X
2M	X		
2N	X		
2O		X	
2P	X		
2Q		X	
2R			X
2S	X		
2T		X	
2U		X	
2V	X		
Totals	10	9	3

First grade teachers whose training was limited to the manual provided them had "excellent" or "some slant" appearing 44.5 per cent each with "excessive slant" appearing in 11.0 per cent of the group. Of the second grade teachers with similar instruction on the other hand, 33.3 per cent had "excellent slant" and 22.2 per cent showed "excessive slant."

Among the first grade instructors who had learned to teach manuscript style from other teachers, 33.3 per cent displayed "excellent slant" while 66.7 per cent wrote the sample with "some slant." Second grade teachers who also learned from fellow teachers had an equal frequency of "excellent" and "some slant", or both occurring in 50 per cent of the teachers tested.

First grade teachers with "excellent slant" numbered 50 per cent, those with "some slant" 44.4 per cent and "excessive slant" 5.6 per cent. The second grade teachers showed less perfect writing style with 45.5 per cent judged "excellent" while samples with "some slant" or "excessive slant" appeared 40.9 per cent and 13.6 per cent of the time, respectively.

Alignment

The proper vertical positioning of letters on the page contributes greatly to their appearance and eliminates confusion with other letters. This is the element of alignment, herein rated "good" if conforming to the prescribed form, "fair" if deviating from the pattern, and "poor" if unacceptable. Table VIII contains this information.

The single first grade teacher who had taught for one year showed "good" alignment; thus 100 per cent of this category. Second grade teachers fared less well on a percentage basis with only 40 per cent rated "good."

Another 40 per cent had "fair alignment" and 20 per cent had "poor alignment."

Of the first grade teachers who had taught from 2 to 5 years, 87.5 per cent had "good alignment" while only 12.5 per cent had "fair alignment." Second grade teachers in the same category were rated "good" or "poor," each 16.7 per cent with the other 66.7 per cent rated "fair."

Those first grade teachers with experience of at least 6 years were ranked 66.7 per cent "good," 11.1 per cent "fair," and 22.2 per cent "poor." Among second grade teachers who had taught 6 years or more 36.4 per cent were rated "good" and 54.5 per cent were "fair." Nine and one tenth per cent had "poor alignment."

Teachers in grade one who indicated on the sample that they had learned manuscript form from a college course were rated 83.3 per cent "good" and 16.7 per cent "fair." Second grade teachers of the same training ranked 45.5 per cent "excellent," 45.5 per cent "fair" and 9.0 per cent "poor."

Of the teachers in the first grade group who learned to teach manuscript style from the teachers' manual, 66.7 per cent were judged "good," 22.2 "fair" and 11.1 per cent "poor." Second grade teachers with the same background had 33.3 per cent of their number "good," 44.5 per cent "fair," and 22.2 per cent "poor."

The 3 first grade teachers whose writing form was examined in this survey and who had learned the prescribed manuscript form from other teachers were 66.7 "excellent," and 33.3 per cent "poor" on the basis of alignment. One hundred per cent of the second grade teachers were rated fair.

ALIGNMENT

GRADE 1 AND 2 TEACHERS

Teacher	Good	Fair	Poor
1A	X		
1B	X		
1C	X		
1D		X	
1E	X		
1F	X		
1G	X		
1H	X		
1I	X		
1J	X		
1K	X		
1L		X	
1M		X	
1N			X
1O	X		
1P	X		
1Q	X		X
1R			
Totals	13	3	2
2A	X		
2B		X	
2C			X
2D	X		
2E		X	
2F		X	
2G	X		
2H	X		
2I		X	
2J	X		
2K	X		
2L		X	
2M	X		
2N		X	
2O			X
2P	X		
2Q		X	
2R		X	
2S		X	
2T		X	
2U		X	
2V			X
Totals	8	11	3

TABLE IX

SPACING

GRADE 1 AND 2 TEACHERS

Teacher	Good	Fair	Poor
1A	X		
1B	X		
1C	X		
1D	X		
1E	X		
1F	X		
1G		X	
1H	X		
1I	X		
1J	X		
1K	X		
1L	X		
1M		X	
1N	X		
1O	X		
1P	X		
1Q	X		
1R	X		
Totals	16	2	
2A	X		
2B	X		
2C	X		
2D	X		
2E	X		
2F	X		
2G	X		
2H	X		
2I	X		
2J	X		
2K	X		
2L		X	
2M	X		
2N	X		
2O		X	
2P	X		
2Q	X		
2R		X	
2S	X		
2T	X		
2U		X	
2V		X	
Totals	17	5	

"Good alignment" was present in 72.2 per cent of the samples submitted by first grade teachers; 16.7 per cent were rated as "fair" and 11.1 per cent had "poor" alignment. Only a small distortion can be drawn between this group of teachers and those of the second grade group who rated 36.4 per cent "good," 50 per cent "fair" and 13.6 per cent "poor" in the element of alignment. The difference is actually small in that only 2.5 per cent more first grade than second grade teachers wrote with "good" or "fair" alignment.

Spacing

The submitted samples were next examined according to spacing. E. E. Seale Book 1 instructs the teacher that, "Letters in a word appear as a singularly complete unit. Spacing between words is equivalent to that required to write an a or an o."¹⁴ Each Sample was, according to this criteria, scored as "good," or "poor." Table IX shows this data.

The single first grade teacher in the Collinsville Unit #10 school system with one year of experience was considered to have "good" spacing as did 80 per cent of the second grade teachers who had the same record; the other 20 per cent of these second grade teachers were "fair."

Eighty-seven and five tenths per cent of the first grade teachers who had taught from 2 to 5 years showed "good spacing while 12.5 were "fair." A similar group of second grade teachers were equally "good" and 27.3 per cent "fair."

Teachers with 6 years or more of experience in the primary grades and who were currently teaching first grade were marked 88.9 per cent "good" and 11.1 per cent "fair." Seventy-two and seven tenths per cent

¹⁴ Op. cit., Book 1, Davidson and Veal, p. 7

of similar second grade teachers were judged "good" and 27.3 per cent "fair."

It was further found that those first grade teachers who had learned manuscript form from a college course had 83.3 per cent "good" spacing and 16.7 per cent "fair." Second grade teachers in the same category scored 100 per cent "good" spacing.

First grade teachers who had learned from the manual showed 88.9 per cent "good" and 11.1 per cent "fair" spacing. Second grade teachers who had studied the manual provided for instructions showed 55.6 per cent "good" and 44.4 per cent "fair" spacing.

The first grade teachers who said that they had learned the manuscript form from other teachers exhibited 100 per cent "good spacing." Of second grade teachers with a similar background in manuscript, 50 per cent were rated "good" and 50 per cent "fair" in their spacing.

Of the first grade teachers 88.9 per cent were rated as "good" and 11.1 per cent as "fair" in the element of spacing. Second grade teachers had 77.3 per cent "good" and 22.7 per cent "fair" spacing, again with no instructor rated as "poor."

CHAPTER IV
SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The percentages of mistakes for each individual element in manuscript writing showed no direct correlation between frequency of error and place learned, grade taught, or years of experience. Some parallel might be drawn were a later study to include a wider sampling of teachers. No trend or tendency, though is presently apparent.

Recommendations

Certainly to pretend possession of perfectly workable solutions would be, at best, presumptuous. It would, however, be proper to recommend certain possible methods of dealing with this particular problem. A school system of this sort might profitably encourage as much as possible that teachers in their employ periodically return to institutions of higher education in order to keep abreast with current developments and refresh themselves in areas such as proper manuscript form.

The local school system might, as a part of new teacher orientation, include in their program a pre-service training session in the currently used manuscript form. Such an orientation need take no longer than to introduce once each upper and lower case letter.

Perhaps the most profitable procedure that could be incorporated would be periodic inservice training courses conducted by a representative of the publishing firm or a recognized

instructor from their system or a neighborhood college. The frequency and extent of these sessions would, of course, be determined by the school board in light of the results obtained.

These are but a few suggestions that could be tailored to the local needs of the individual system, and they can be only suggestions. They are made in light of the results of this study and with the air that, with periodic, professional training the teacher in the primary grades might evidence an improvement that will benefit the child.

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Mr. Fox is returning from a vacation. Just as he nears Boston he meets some old friends: Cindy Vixen, Sammy Zebra, Ed Horse, George Kangaroo, Inez Lama and Uncle Silas Rat. "Where have you been?" they ask.

"Oh, I've just been to Albany, New York; Vanhus; Paris; and Quebec."

As he is leaving his weary friends the quick fox comes upon a sleeping dog; however this is no problem, for the quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

My ABC's

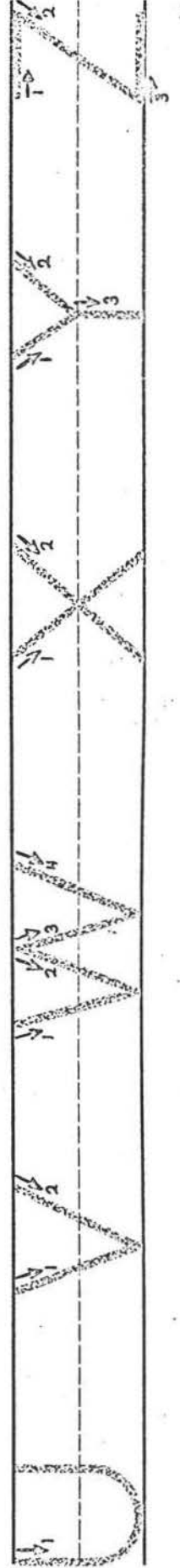
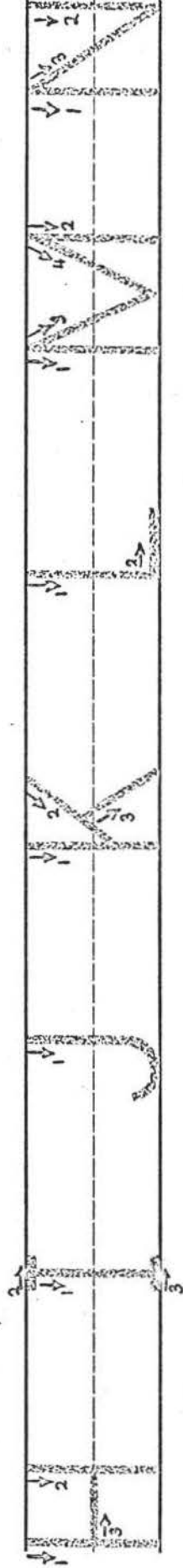
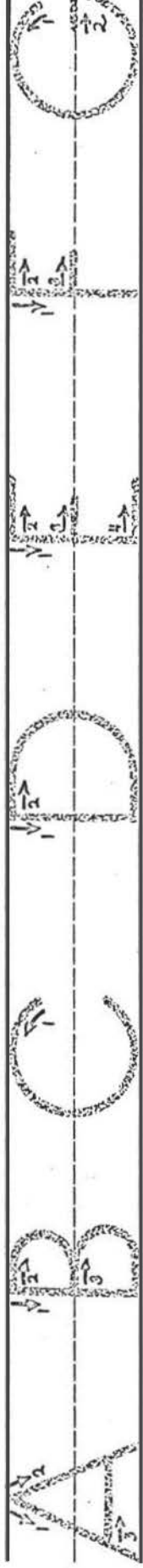
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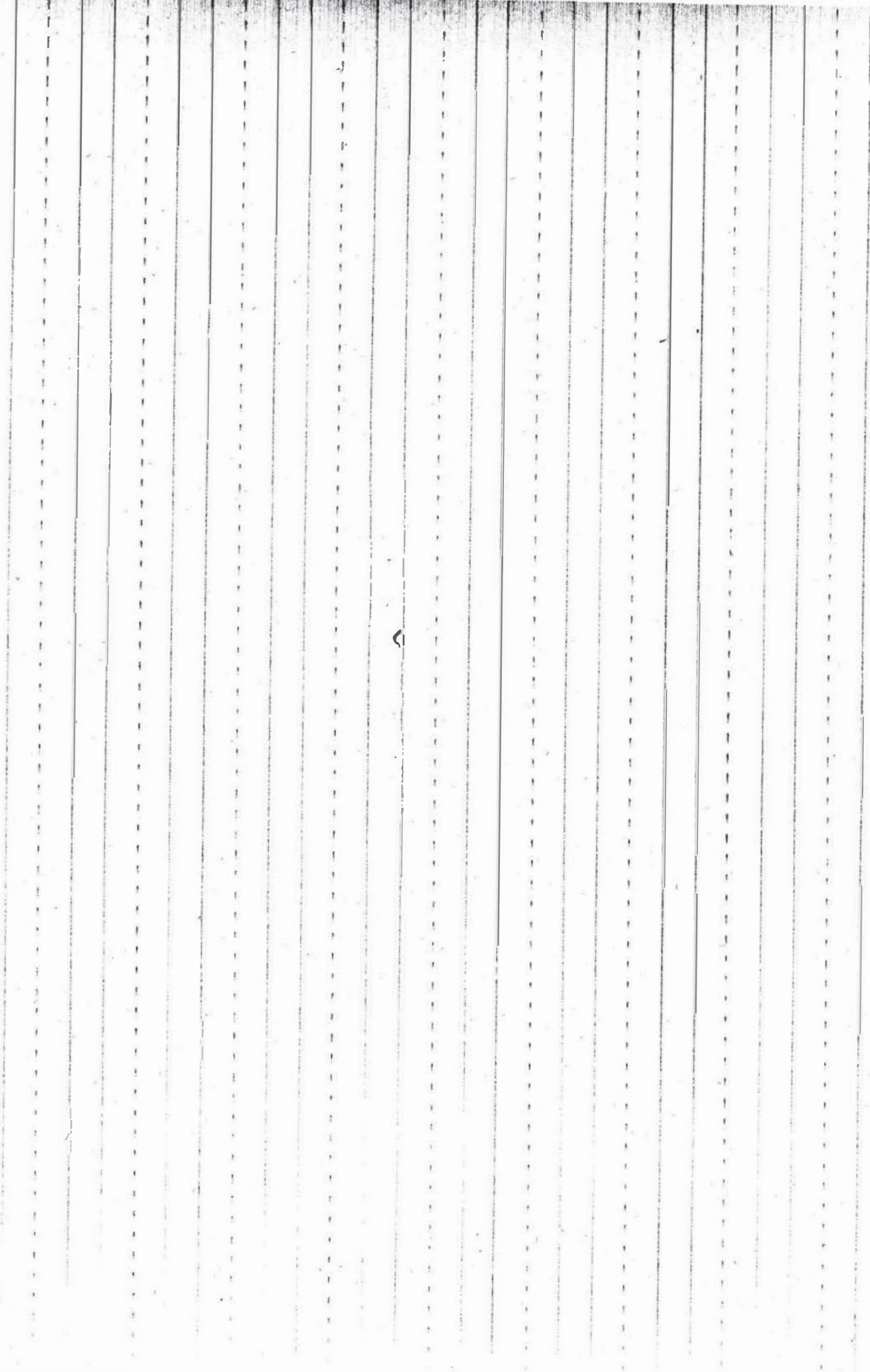
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My ABC's





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