

Mastering Your Penmanship with Max and Zara

Learning objective: To develop consistent handwriting, focusing on joining letters and maintaining correct letter size and orientation.

Read the guide below with Max and Zara. Use the word bank to practise your joining techniques in your neatest cursive script. Ensure your ascenders and descenders are clear and your spacing is even.

Max the monkey loves to solve maths puzzles, but he also knows that neat handwriting makes his work easier to read. Zara the zebra, our artistic friend, says that letters are like patterns. To get your handwriting just right, keep your letters sitting on the baseline. When you use cursive, add a small flick to the end of each letter to help it reach out to the next one. Ascenders, like the top of a 'd' or 'l', should reach up tall, while descenders, like the tail of a 'g' or 'y', should reach down below the line. With practice, your writing will flow smoothly across the page like a river.

Word bank: ascender · descender · cursive · parallel · flick · joining · legibility · consistency · fluency · baseline

1. According to Zara, why is it important to use a small flick at the end of each letter? (2 marks)

2. Define the terms 'ascender' and 'descender' in your own words using the passage to help you. (2 marks)

3. Why does Max think that neat handwriting is useful for his maths work? (2 marks)

4. Look at the word 'legibility' in the word bank. What do you think this word means in the context of handwriting? (2 marks)

5. If you were writing the word 'monkey', which letters would be considered descenders? (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a picture of Max and Zara working at a desk. Show Max carefully writing out a long division sum and Zara painting a beautiful, swirling pattern next to him.



Extension challenge: Choose a short poem by Leo the lion. Copy it out three times, focusing on improving your speed each time while keeping your handwriting perfectly neat and joined.