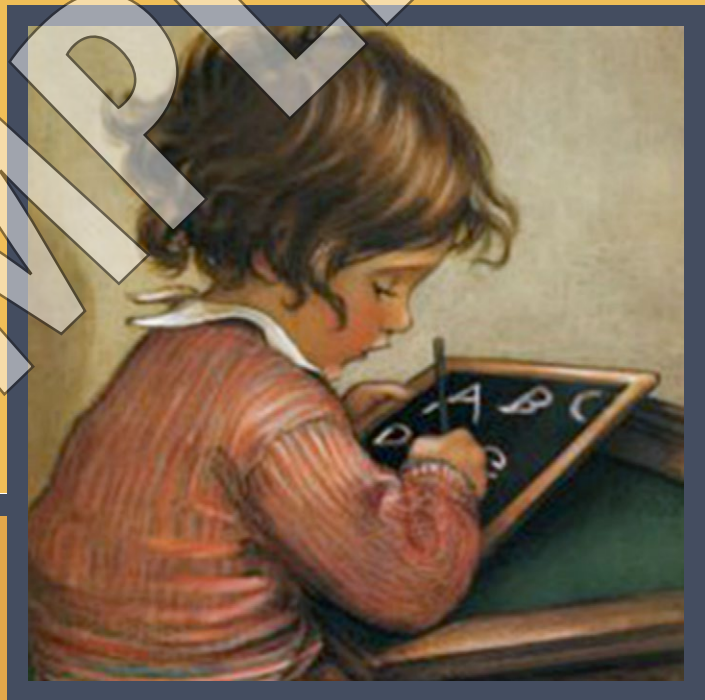


*Simply Charlotte Mason presents*

# Delightful Handwriting

by Lanaya Gore



*D'Nealian & Zaner-Bloser*

Teacher

# *D'Nealian & Zaner Bloser*

*Delightful Handwriting* uses Charlotte Mason's gentle and effective methods to make handwriting lessons a delight. Your child will naturally progress from writing simple initial strokes to letters to words to wonderful phrases and sentences.

**Simple and Effective**—Step-by-step instructions reflect Charlotte Mason's method and cover large-motor activities as well as fine-motor writing skills.

**Sense of Accomplishment**—Students begin writing words early in the lessons to use the letters learned.

**Reinforces Good Habits**—Short lessons cultivate the habits of focused attention and best effort by emphasizing quality over quantity.

**Gentle**—Move through the lesson plans at your child's pace.

**Strengthens Reading Confidence**—Words and copywork selections are taken from the *Delightful Reading* program (optional) to reinforce and review words your child can read if you are also using that program.

Student copywork books are available in two popular styles: Zaner Bloser and D'Nealian. One *Delightful Handwriting* teacher book is all you need to teach both styles.

*Simply*  
*Charlotte Mason*  
.com

*Delightful Handwriting*  
Teacher Book

by  
Lanaya Gore

Delightful Handwriting Teacher Book  
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# *Contents*

Introduction .....5

## *Part 1: Charlotte Mason's Own Words*

Charlotte Mason on Teaching Handwriting .....9

## *Part 2: Handwriting Lessons*

Capital Letters and Strokes .....17  
Lowercase Letters and Strokes .....37

## *Part 3: Copywork Selections*

Rain .....55  
The Dogs and the Fox .....56  
Proverbs 23:4 and 5.....57



# *Introduction*

Children work so hard at their young age to learn some of the very basics of education: reading and writing. Charlotte Mason had a unique philosophy which strove to teach children in a natural, simple, and interesting way. This handwriting manual and child's copybook will help your child learn to write according to Charlotte Mason principles.

You can first read what Charlotte said about copywork. The next section is the teacher instruction on how to form capital and lowercase letters. Throughout the lessons will be quotes and reminders on how to apply Charlotte's principles to teach handwriting.

Two different font choices are offered, D'Nealian and Zaner Bloser, and this instruction book is all you need to teach either choice.

When possible, words from *Delightful Reading* were chosen with which your child could practice writing in his copybook. This has the benefit of extra reading review if *Delightful Reading* is your choice for reading instruction. Words from the poem *Rain* are used during the capital letter lessons. And words from *The Dogs and the Fox* and Proverbs are used during the lowercase letter lessons. At the very end of the lessons, all three selections are written out in large print for your child to copy for practice. Extra lined pages are also included for the teacher's own writing practice ideas.

What a privilege to be able to teach your child such a useful skill as writing! Enjoy the journey together!





*Part 1*

**Charlotte Mason's  
Own Words**



# Charlotte Mason on Teaching Handwriting

## Notes

**1. A beautiful style of handwriting helps cultivate your child's taste for beauty. Do not allow vulgar handwriting.**

“Some years ago I heard of a lady who was elaborating, by means of the study of old Italian and other manuscripts, a ‘system of beautiful handwriting’ which could be taught to children. I waited patiently, though not without some urgency, for the production of this new kind of ‘copy-book.’ The need for such an effort was very great, for the distinctly commonplace writing taught from existing copy-books, however painstaking and legible, cannot but have a rather vulgarising effect both on the writer and the reader of such manuscript. At last the lady, Mrs Robert Bridges, has succeeded in her tedious and difficult undertaking, and this book for teachers will enable them to teach their pupils a style of writing which is pleasant to acquire because it is beautiful to behold. It is surprising how quickly young children, even those already confirmed in ‘ugly’ writing, take to this ‘new handwriting’ ” (Vol. 1, pp. 235, 236).

*Vulgar means “lacking refinement, culture, or taste.”*

**2. A beautiful model of the letters or words and interesting content should keep copywork lessons interesting and pleasant.**

“I should say that variety and beauty of form are attractive, even to little children, and that the attempt to create something which interests them, cheers and crowns their stupendous efforts with a pleasure that cannot be looked for in the task of copying monotonous shapes” (Vol. 1, p. 237).

*A sample of Mrs. Bridges' new handwriting.*



abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz  
ff gg th st a e e

“A sense of beauty in their writing and in the lines they copy should carry them over this stage of their work with pleasure” (Vol. 1, p. 239).

**3. Your child should continue writing a medium size until he can make his letters with ease.**

“‘Text-hand,’ the medium size, should be continued until he makes the letters with ease” (Vol. 1, p. 235).

**4. Do not hurry your child into writing small; it can instigate bad habits.**

“One word more; do not hurry the child into ‘small hand’; . . . It is much easier for the child to get into an irregular scribble by way of ‘small-hand,’ than to get out of it again. In this, as in everything else, the care of the educator must be given, not only to the formation of good, but to the prevention of bad habits” (Vol. 1, p. 235).

**5. Do not require your child to copy elaborate or ornamental writing.**

“If he write in books with copperplate headlines (which are, on the whole, to be eschewed), discrimination should be exercised in the choice of these; in many of them the writing is atrocious, and the letters are adorned with flourishes which

*“Variety and beauty of form are attractive, even to little children.”*

## Notes

An example of an elaborate heading and copperplate handwriting.



*M<sup>r</sup>. Leonard Newman*  
*Bought of Samuel Jones*  
1738  
June 19. 10<sup>6</sup> Yards of Yorkshire Cloth at 6. 6. 0. 1/2. 3. 0. 3  
7 ditto of fine Spanish Cloth at 16. 3. 0. 1/2. 5. 13. 9  
6 ditto of fine Gray Cloth at 16. 3. 0. 1/2. 4. 14. 6  
5 ditto of superfine fine Cloth at 16. 6. 0. 1/2. 4. 12. 6  
31 ditto of fine Spanish Cloth at 13. 0. 0. 1/2. 20. 3. 0  
£ 38. 12. 0  
*Received as a<sup>o</sup> with these the full Contents.*  
*J<sup>o</sup>. Samuel Jones*

"In this, as in everything else, the care of the educator must be given, not only to the formation of good, but to the prevention of bad habits."

increase the pupil's labour but by no means improve his style" (Vol. 1, p. 235).

### 6. *Make sure your child's work surface is well lit and that his body is not casting a shadow across his work.*

"For the writing position children should sit so that light reaches them from the left" (Vol. 1, p. 239).

### 7. *The desk or table should be at a comfortable height for your child.*

"Desk or table should be at a comfortable height" (Vol. 1, p. 239).

### 8. *Teach your child to hold a pencil or pen correctly.*

"It would be a great gain if children were taught from the first to hold the pen between the first and second fingers, steadying it with the thumb. This position avoids the uncomfortable strain on the muscles produced by the usual way of holding a pen—a strain which causes writer's cramp in later days when there is much writing to be done. The pen should be held in a comfortable position, rather near the point, fingers and thumb somewhat bent, and the hand resting on the paper. The writer should also be allowed to support himself with the left hand on the paper, and should write in an easy position, with bent head but not with stooping figure" (Vol. 1, p. 239).

### 9. *Teach a young child to write only if he is interested in it.*

"A child will have taught himself to paint, paste, cut paper, knit, weave, hammer and saw, make lovely things in clay and sand, build castles with his bricks; possibly, too, will have taught himself to read, write, and do sums, besides acquiring no end of knowledge and notions about the world he lives in, by the time he is six or seven. What I contend for is that he shall do these things because he chooses (provided that the standard of perfection in his small works be kept before him)" (Vol. 1, pp. 193, 194).

### 10. *Beginning writing lessons require your child to learn how to control his hand and make it draw what he sees in his mind's eye.*

"A child must first learn to control his hand and constrain it to obey his eye" (Vol. 1, p. 236).

### 11. *Practice letters first on the chalkboard or whiteboard, later with pencil on paper, then with pen and ink.*

"In all writing lessons, free use should be made of the blackboard by both teacher and children by way of model and practice" (Vol. 1, p. 239).

"At this stage the chalk and blackboard are better than pen and paper, as it is well that the child should rub out and rub out until his own eye is satisfied with the word or letter he has written" (Vol. 1, p. 234).

"The method of using Mrs Bridges' *Handwriting*, which we find most effectual, is to practise each form on the blackboard from the plate, and later to use pencil, and still later pen and ink" (Vol. 1, p. 237).

## Notes

**12. Beginning writing lessons should be short, not more than five or ten minutes.**

“Let the writing lesson be short; it should not last more than five or ten minutes” (Vol. 1, p. 233).

**13. Encourage your child to accomplish something perfectly in every writing lesson, whether a stroke or a letter. Avoid forming the habit of careless work.**

“I can only offer a few hints on the teaching of *writing*, though much might be said. First, let the child accomplish something perfectly in every lesson—a stroke, a pothook, a letter. . . . Ease in writing comes by practice; but that must be secured later. In the meantime, the thing to be avoided is the habit of careless work—humpy *m*'s, angular *o*'s” (Vol. 1, pp. 233, 234).

“ ‘Throw perfection into all you do’ is a counsel upon which a family may be brought up with great advantage. We English, as a nation, think too much of persons, and too little of *things, work, execution*. Our children are allowed to make their figures or their letters, their stitches, their dolls’ clothes, their small carpentry, anyhow, with the notion that they will do better by-and-by. Other nations—the Germans and the French, for instance—look at the question philosophically, and know that if children get the *habit* of turning out imperfect work, the men and women will undoubtedly keep that habit up. I remember being delighted with the work of a class of about forty children, of six and seven, in an elementary school at Heidelberg. They were doing a writing lesson, accompanied by a good deal of oral teaching from a master, who wrote each word on the blackboard. By-and-by the slates were shown, and I did not observe *one faulty or irregular letter* on the whole forty slates. The same principle of ‘perfection’ was to be discerned in a recent exhibition of schoolwork held throughout France. No faulty work was shown, to be excused on the plea that it was the work of children” (Vol. 1, pp. 159, 160).

**14. Give your child good copies to imitate.**

“Set good copies before him, and see that he imitates his model dutifully” (Vol. 1, p. 234).

**15. Have your child evaluate his writing compared to the model and have him point out what is wrong.**

“Set him six strokes to copy; let him, not bring a slateful, but six perfect strokes, at regular distances and at regular slopes. If he produces a faulty pair, get *him* to point out the fault, and persevere until he has produced his task” (Vol. 1, p. 160).

**16. Set a goal for your child of producing a few perfect letters or a single line copied exactly. When he reaches the goal, the lesson is done.**

“His writing task is to produce six perfect *m*'s: he writes six lines with only one good *m* in each line; the time for the writing lesson is over and he has none for himself; or, he is able to point out six good *m*'s in his first line, and he has the rest of the time to draw steamboats and railway trains” (Vol. 1, p. 143).

“The writing lesson being, not so many lines, or ‘a copy’—that is, a page of

“Let the child accomplish something perfectly in every lesson—a stroke, a pothook, a letter.”

## Notes

*These letter groupings are based on the style of handwriting that Charlotte used for her students. You may need to reorganize which letters should be grouped together if you are using a different style.*

**"If children get the habit of turning out imperfect work, the men and women will undoubtedly keep that habit up."**

writing—but a single line which is as exactly as possible a copy of the characters set. The child may have to write several lines before he succeeds in producing this" (Vol. 1, p. 235).

"If he does not do it to-day, let him go on to-morrow and the next day, and when the six perfect strokes appear, let it be an occasion of triumph" (Vol. 1, p. 160).

### ***17. Teach printing before cursive, possibly italics style.***

"But the child should have practice in printing before he begins to write" (Vol. 1, p. 234).

### ***18. Teach capital letters before lowercase letters.***

"First, let him print the simplest of the capital letters with single curves and straight lines. When he can make the capitals and large letters, with some firmness and decision, he might go on to the smaller letters" (Vol. 1, p. 234).

### ***19. Your child should write simple, large letters for beginning writing lessons.***

"When he can make the capitals and large letters, with some firmness and decision, he might go on to the smaller letters—'printed' as in the type we call 'italics,' only upright,—as simple as possible, and large" (Vol. 1, p. 234).

### ***20. Writing lessons should group letters with similar strokes. Charlotte's students followed this sequence.***

1. Learn to draw a straight line.
2. Learn to draw a hooked line.
3. Learn to draw letters that are made up of a straight line and a hooked line:  
*n, m, v, w, r, h, p, y.*
4. Learn to draw a circle.
5. Learn to draw letters with a curve in them: *a, c, g, e, x, s, q.*
6. Learn looped and irregular letters: *b, l, f, t,* etc.

"Let the stroke be learned first; then the pothook; then the letters of which the pothook is an element—*n, m, v, w, r, h, p, y*; then *o*, and letters of which the curve is an element—*a, c, g, e, x, s, q*; then looped and irregular letters—*b, l, f, t,* etc." (Vol. 1, p. 234).

### ***21. Writing lessons should follow this technique.***

1. Day One: Form one letter perfectly.
2. Day Two: Form another letter that uses the same element.
3. Repeat until that element and its letters are familiar.
4. Form letters into words as soon as possible for the student to copy. The goal is to write the word once without a mistake.
5. Continue in this fashion with an emphasis on making perfect letters.

## Notes

“One letter should be perfectly formed in a day, and the next day the same elemental forms repeated in another letter, until they become familiar. By-and-by copies, three or four of the letters they have learned grouped into a word—‘man,’ ‘aunt’; the lesson to be the production of the written word *once* without a single fault in any letter” (Vol. 1, p. 234).

***22. Do not hurry or pressure a child to have beautiful handwriting; that will come by and by.***

“Of the further stages, little need be said. Secure that the child *begins* by making perfect letters and is never allowed to make faulty ones, and the rest he will do for himself; as for ‘a good hand,’ do not hurry him; his ‘handwriting’ will come by-and-by out of the character that is in him; but, as a child, he cannot be said, strictly speaking, to have character” (Vol. 1, p. 234).

“Secure that the child begins by making perfect letters and is never allowed to make faulty ones, and the rest he will do for himself.”





*Part 2*

# Handwriting Lessons



# Capital Letters & Strokes

## Supplies Needed

- Pan of raw rice or sand if desired
- Dry erase board with markers or chalkboard with chalk
- *Delightful Handwriting* Copybook (one for each child)
- Pencil

Charlotte wanted students to practice the elements of the alphabet before moving on to the actual letters: “Let the stroke be learned first; then the pothook; then the letters of which the pothook is an element . . . .”

We’ll teach each new element before teaching the capitals that use those elements, starting with capital letters with straight lines, moving to capitals with single curves and straight lines, and finishing up with double curve capitals.

## Lesson 1

### Learn the stroke.



Zaner Bloser



D’Nealian

In the air, using your finger, make a simple line from top to bottom, the element called the stroke. (For the D’Nealian font, your stroke will be slanted with the top starting at the right and ending at the bottom with the stroke slightly to the left.) With your child sitting next to you, have him imitate you. He can also make a stroke in a pan of rice or sand. Have him pat out the image if it’s not formed correctly and keep making it until he can make it flawlessly. Make a stroke on the chalkboard or dry erase board and have him copy the model, erasing as often as needed until he has a nice straight line. A short lesson in copywork that ends with success will give your child confidence and anticipation for the next lesson!

*If your child is ready, feel free to skip the air- and pan-of-rice drawing and proceed directly to chalkboard and paper.*

## Notes

*When writing with pencil and paper, your child should be practicing good sitting positions with plenty of light to see by and correct pencil-holding procedures.*

*If your child is a very new beginning writer, he may not be ready to write in his copybook yet. The black board and chalk may be sufficient for him for now: "At this stage the chalk and blackboard are better than pen and paper, as it is well that the child should rub out and rub out until his own eye is satisfied with the word or letter he has written" (Vol. 1, p. 234).*

## Lesson 2

### 1. Review and write the stroke.

Let your child make another perfect stroke on the chalkboard or dry erase board and once he is confident, he can make one in his copybook on page 3. Use any features of the copybook pages described below that will work best for your student. He might

- trace the large stroke in the box, using his finger;
- practice writing the stroke in the blank space beside the box, using a pencil;
- trace the smaller stroke with his finger, getting a "feel" for how it fits inside the guide lines;
- trace the smaller stroke with a pencil;
- practice writing the stroke inside the guide lines with a pencil. If he's not satisfied that it follows the model exactly, he can continue to make a careful stroke until he gets one perfect one.
- If you haven't used the blank space beside the box at the top of the page, you might allow your student to draw a picture there or place a sticker there after this step is accomplished.

### 2. Learn the side stroke.



Zaner Bloser or D'Nealian

Once a perfect stroke is accomplished he can move on to the side stroke. This is simply a stroke starting from your left and ending at your right. With your child sitting next to you (instead of face to face with you, so he can see the element made in the correct direction), draw the side stroke in the air, allowing him to copy your movements. Move on to making a side stroke in a pan of rice or sand. And then draw a side stroke on the chalkboard or dry erase board and have him copy your model as exactly as possible, erasing to his heart's content until he makes a perfect one.

## Lesson 3

### 1. Review and write the side stroke.

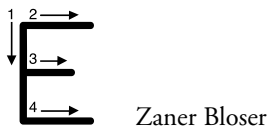
Review the side stroke on the board, having your child make an exact

## Notes

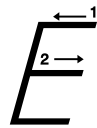
copy of the model, and then draw a side stroke in his copybook on page 4 until he has made one perfect side stroke. You may use any of the features of the copybook page mentioned in Lesson 2 to help your student be successful.

The page in the copybook shows the side stroke in different locations on the guide lines. Help your child notice the various locations in preparation for learning capital *E*.

## 2. Learn capital *E*.



Zaner-Bloser



D'Nealian

And now for a letter! In the air, using your finger, follow the arrows to make the capital letter *E*. Make it big and have your child sitting beside you so that he can see the correct direction. He can then draw a big *E* in the air with starts and stops correctly made.

Next have him make *E* with his finger in a pan of rice. If it is wobbly or unclear, have him immediately pat it out and make a better one.

Lastly, write *E* for him on the chalkboard or dry erase board. Then have your child make one perfect capital *E*, erasing as often as needed until he is satisfied that it looks like the model.

*“Set good copies before him, and see that he imitates his model dutifully: the writing lesson being, not so many lines, or ‘a copy’—that is, a page of writing—but a single line which is as exactly as possible a copy of the characters set. The child may have to write several lines before he succeeds in producing this” (Vol. 1, p. 235).*

# Lesson 4

## 1. Review and write *E*.

Have your child draw capital *E* on the board. Once he is confident in his work, let him make a good *E* in his copybook on page 5. If it is not satisfactory, let him continue to make capital *E* carefully until a perfect one is attained.

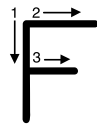
Use the tracing and practice features of the copybook page as needed for your child to be successful. Be watchful that he is not slipshod in his work until a good *E* just happens to be printed. “Secure that the child *begins* by making perfect letters and is never allowed to make faulty ones . . . .” (Vol. 1, p. 234).

## Notes

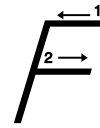
*For those perfectionist parents or children, don't let the word "perfect" paralyze you. Expect your child's very best effort to be done, but allow graciousness to reign.*

*Keep lessons short: 5–10 minutes is long enough for a young child's handwriting lesson.*

### 2. Learn capital F.



Zaner-Bloser



D'Nealian

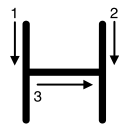
Once *E* is reviewed, move on to making capital *F*. If helpful, depending on the level of your child, make *F* with your finger in the air followed by your child copying your motions. Have him make *F* in a pan of rice, wiping out any incorrectly formed *F*'s until a perfect one is made. Then proceed to the chalkboard or dry erase board. Demonstrate a good model *F* and have him make one perfect capital *F*, erasing and redoing as often as needed until an excellent *F* is produced.

## Lesson 5

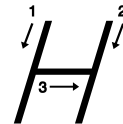
### 1. Review and write capital F.

Review capital *F* on the board with your child making an exact *F*. When he knows he can do it well, have him make a good *F* in his copybook on page 6.

### 2. Learn capital H.



Zaner-Bloser



D'Nealian

With your child sitting beside you, follow the arrows to draw an *H* in the air for your child to copy with his finger. Follow air-writing with making an *H* in the pan of rice. And then make a good capital *H* on the board for your child to copy. Let his eye be trained to recognize when he needs to erase and continue trying for a perfect *H*: “. . . it is well that the child should rub out and rub out until his own eye is satisfied with the word or letter he has written” (Vol. 1, p. 234).

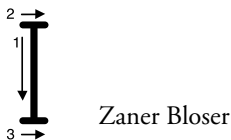
## Lesson 6

### 1. Review and write capital H.

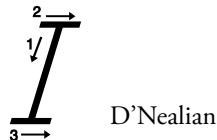
Let your child review capital *H* on the board, and if he is ready for pencil and paper, he can write *H* in his copybook on page 7.

Once he can write *H* satisfactorily, he is ready to combine letters he knows to write a word. Have him write the word *HE* until his eye is satisfied that both letters in the word are exactly like the model in his copybook.

### 2. Learn capital I.



Zaner Bloser



D'Nealian

Capital *I* is the next letter to be learned. Draw it in the air with your child. Have him practice it in his pan of rice. Then write a good capital *I* on the board and let your child make an *I*, erasing until an accurate one is achieved.

Writing is hard work for new learners, so right now accuracy is what you want to see. Writing will become easier with practice once he has secured the habit of excellent work.

*“Ease in writing comes by practice; but that must be secured later. In the meantime, the thing to be avoided is the habit of careless work—humpy m’s, angular o’s” (Vol. 1, p. 234).*

## Lesson 7

### 1. Review and write capital I.

Review capital *I* on the board, and when your child is confident, he can write *I* in his copybook on page 8. He should also be ready to write the word *IF* in nice letters in his copybook.

### 2. Learn capital L.



Zaner Bloser



D'Nealian

Work with your child to air-write capital *L* and draw *L* in a pan of rice. Then make a good *L* on the board for him to copy with chalk or dry erase marker until he has it perfect.