

Sign Up: Supporting Name Writing

WHAT AND WHY: Name writing is a classic goal that sometimes stays on the IEP for decades! Students typically practice name writing by copying and tracing, which leads to little or no generalization. Signing our name is an important goal, as it is a part of who we are,— but we need to address it using strategies that work!

SUPPORTING NAME WRITING THROUGH SIGN UP: ‘Sign Up’ refers to having students sign up for special activities. This can be more motivating than signing in, as there is a tangible response (such as signing up for computer or iPad time). Use actual sheets so that students understand the POWER of signing up!

Essential Name Writing Strategy: Give Correct Model AFTERWARDS
(Erickson & Koppenhaver, 2003)

Here is the step-by-step procedure:

Step 1: Make sure the student has an easy way to write! Most of the student’s focus should be on thinking about their name—and not to the physical act of making it. (See May, 2009 Tip at www.aacintervention.com). CD with templates & strategies for using alternative pencils: <http://www.med.unc.edu/ahs/clds/products/available-for-purchase>

Step 2: Student makes a name writing attempt with their alternative pencil. Below are several examples:

- Alice uses a braille alphabet flip chart with partner assisted scanning to write: FFFFGGGHH

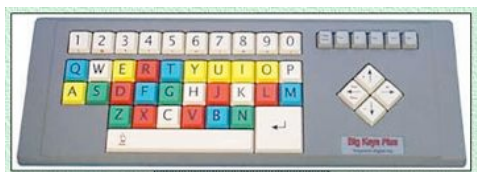


labeler to write: J

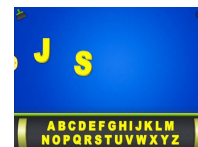
- Ariana uses the alphabet page on her AAC device to write: N

Alphabet 36			
A	B	C	D
E	F	G	H
I	J	K	L
O	P	Q	R
U	V	W	X
Y	Z		

- Marcy uses an paper based alphabet board to write: ABCDEFG



José uses Big Keys connected to his computer to write: RMNBCC



- Jessica uses the *ABC Magnetic Alphabet* app on her iPad to write: JS

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Step 3: Give instructional feedback. The adult follows up by telling the student what they wrote. Then the adult provides the correct model. The adult spells the student's name out loud and writes it using the student's alternative pencil.

For example:

- Alice: "You wrote FFFFGGGHH. Here's how I write your name" (spells it out loud while showing letters on flip chart);
- Jeff: "You wrote J. Here's how I write your name" (spells it out loud while typing letters using the labeler);
- Ariana: "You wrote N. Here's how I write your name" (spells it out loud while typing it using the alphabet page on her AAC system).

**After you give the model, the activity ends! The student should not write their name correctly.

Providing the model AFTERWARDS gives a cognitive structure for the NEXT time the student writes. It also ensures that students are thinking about how to make their names, rather than just copying a model.

**It is useful to have a table/chart where you can track students' attempts across the year. See Tip of the Month Sign In Data Form (May, 2014) to download a name writing data form.

IDEAS FOR STUDENTS SIGN UP

• **Favorite activities:** Sample high-motivation activities are computer or iPad time or video watching;

• **Snacks or Lunch:** Students get to sign their names below choices



• Voting for Specific Songs or Videos

- Students watch 2 video trailers /song clips
- They vote for favorite by finding the initial letter
- The video with the most votes is watched on Fun Friday



Name signing should **NOT** be considered the student's writing program.

