

Unit guidance: Lower-case letters

Unit 2: Curly letter family

Letter formation phrases

Letter mnemonic	Formation phrase	Letter mnemonic	Formation phrase
	Curl around the cat.		Around the queen's face, down her robe and a flick at the end.
	Around the astronaut's helmet and down into space.		Around the elephant's eye and curl down its trunk.
	Around the duck's body, up to its head and down to its feet.		Down the snake from head to tail.
	Around the goat's face and curl under its chin.		Down the flamingo to its foot and across its wings.
	All around the octopus.		

Unit outcomes and assessment criteria

Key outcomes

In this unit, the children will:

- Form the letters from the curly letter family accurately, with a controlled curve
- Use the up and down movement for the letters 'a', 'd', 'g' and 'q'
- Form a straight descender for the letters 'g' and 'q'
- Lift the pencil off and cross the letter 'f'
- Make a loop for the letter 'e'
- Form ascenders and descenders with accuracy.

Key assessment criteria

For every letter, check that a child:

- Follows the four Ps:
 - Sits with the correct posture
 - Uses the correct pencil grip
 - Holds their paper in the correct position
 - Applies appropriate pressure
- Starts and finishes letters in the correct place and follows the correct orientation
- Recites the formation phrase to help them remember the letter formation.

Letter	Letter-specific assessment criteria
	In addition to the key assessment criteria above, check that a child: • Forms a controlled, anticlockwise round curve • Keeps the pencil on the paper from the start to finish • Positions the letter correctly on the line
	In addition to the key assessment criteria above, check that a child: • Forms a controlled, anticlockwise round curve • Uses controlled up and down movements, retracing the same line • Creates a small flick at the end of the letter • Keeps the pencil on the paper from the start to finish • Positions the letter correctly on the line
	In addition to the key assessment criteria above, check that a child: • Forms a controlled, anticlockwise round curve • Uses controlled up and down movements, retracing the same line • Creates a small flick at the end of the letter • Forms a straight ascender at an appropriate height • Keeps the pencil on the paper from start to finish • Positions the letter correctly on the line
	In addition to the key assessment criteria above, check that a child: • Forms a controlled anticlockwise curve • Uses controlled up and down movements, retracing the same line • Forms a straight descender which extends below the line with a leftward curve • Keeps the pencil on the paper from the start to finish • Positions the round part of the letter correctly on the line

	In addition to the key assessment criteria above, check that a child: • Forms a controlled, anticlockwise curve all the way around • Keeps the pencil on the paper from the start to finish • Positions the letter correctly on the line
	In addition to the key assessment criteria above, check that a child: • Forms a controlled, anticlockwise round curve • Uses controlled up and down movements, retracing the same line • Forms a straight descender which extends below the line with an upward flick at the end of the letter • Positions the round part of the letter correctly on the line • Keeps the pencil on the paper from the start to finish
	In addition to the key assessment criteria above, check that a child: • Forms a controlled, anticlockwise round curve • Keeps the pencil on the paper from the start to finish • Positions the letter correctly on the line
	In addition to the key assessment criteria above, check that a child: • Forms controlled curves • Keeps the pencil on the paper from the start to finish • Positions the letter correctly on the line
	In addition to the key assessment criteria above, check that a child: • Lifts the pencil off the paper to form the horizontal crossbar across the middle of the letter • Positions the letter correctly on the line

Unit 3: Long letter family

Letter formation phrases

Letter mnemonic	Formation phrase	Letter mnemonic	Formation phrase
	Down the lollipop stick.		Down the jellyfish and dot its head.
	Down the iguana and dot the leaf.		Down and around the umbrella and back to the ground.
	Down the tiger and across its neck.		Down, around the yo-yo and curl around the string.

Unit outcomes and assessment criteria

Key outcomes In this unit the children will: • Form the letters from the long letter family accurately using the down movement for the letters ‘l’, ‘i’, ‘t’ and ‘j’ • Use the down and back up movement for the letters ‘u’ and ‘y’ • Lift the pencil off and complete the letters ‘i’ and ‘t’ • Form ascenders and descenders with accuracy.
Key assessment criteria For every letter, check that a child: • Follows the four Ps: • Sits with the correct posture • Uses the correct pencil grip • Holds their paper in the correct position • Applies appropriate pressure • Starts and finishes letters in the correct place and follows the correct orientation • Recites the formation phrase to help them remember the letter formation.

Letter	Letter-specific assessment criteria
	In addition to the key assessment criteria above, check that a child: • Creates a controlled straight line • Begins at the top and uses a straight downward movement • Creates a small flick at the end of the letter • Keeps the pencil on the paper from the start to finish • Positions the letter correctly on the line
	In addition to the key assessment criteria above, check that a child: • Creates a controlled straight line • Begins at the top and uses a straight downward movement • Creates a small flick at the end of the letter • Forms the letter in the correct order: lifts the pencil to add a small dot positioned just above the letter • Positions the letter correctly on the line
	In addition to the key assessment criteria above, check that a child: • Begins at the top and uses a straight downward movement with an anticlockwise curve • Creates a controlled straight line • Forms a straight ascender at an appropriate height • Forms the letter in the correct order: lifts the pencil off the paper to form the horizontal crossbar across the middle of the letter • Positions the letter correctly on the line
	In addition to the key assessment criteria above, check that a child: • Begins at the top and uses a straight downward movement with a controlled clockwise curve at the end • Positions the letter correctly on the line • Forms the letter in the correct order: lifts the pencil to add a small dot positioned just above the letter
	In addition to the key assessment criteria above, check that a child: • Creates a small flick at the end of the letter • Keeps the pencil on the paper from the start to finish • Positions the letter correctly on the line
	In addition to the key assessment criteria above, check that a child: • Forms a descender which extends below the line with a controlled leftward curve • Keeps the pencil on the paper from the start to finish • Positions the letter correctly with the round part of the letter sitting on the line

Unit 4: Bouncy letter family

Letter formation phrases

Letter mnemonic	Formation phrase	Letter mnemonic	Formation phrase
	Down, up and over the mouse's ears.		Down the bear's back, up and around its tummy.
	Down, up and over the net.		Down the penguin's back, up and around its head.
	From the cloud to the ground and over the rainbow.		Down, up and over the helicopter.

Unit outcomes and assessment criteria

Key outcomes In this unit the children will: - Form the letters from the bouncy letter family accurately with a down, up and over movement - Form ascenders and descenders with accuracy.
Key assessment criteria For every letter, check that a child: - Follows the four Ps: - Sits with the correct posture - Uses the correct pencil grip - Holds their paper in the correct position - Applies appropriate pressure - Starts and finishes letters in the correct place and follows the correct orientation - Recites the formation phrase to help them remember the letter formation.

Letter	Letter-specific assessment criteria
	In addition to the key assessment criteria above, check that a child: • Uses a 'down, up and over' movement • Creates a small flick at the end of the letter • Keeps the pencil on the paper from the start to finish • Positions the letter correctly on the line
	In addition to the key assessment criteria above, check that a child: • Uses a 'down, up and over' movement • Creates a small flick at the end of the letter • Keeps the pencil on the paper from the start to finish • Positions the letter correctly on the line
	In addition to the key assessment criteria above, check that a child: • Uses a 'down, up and over' movement • Keeps the pencil on the paper from the start to finish • Positions the letter correctly on the line
	In addition to the key assessment criteria above, check that a child: • Uses a 'down, up and over' movement • Creates a straight ascender at an appropriate height • Keeps the pencil on the paper from the start to finish • Positions the letter correctly on the line
	In addition to the key assessment criteria above, check that a child: • Uses a 'down, up and over' movement • Keeps the pencil on the paper from the start to finish • Extends the descender below the line • Positions the letter correctly on the line
	In addition to the key assessment criteria above, check that a child: • Uses a 'down, up and over' movement • Creates a straight ascender at an appropriate height • Creates a small flick at the end of the letter • Keeps the pencil on the paper from the start to finish • Positions the letter correctly on the line

Unit 5: Zig-zag letter family

Letter formation phrases

Letter mnemonic	Formation phrase	Letter mnemonic	Formation phrase
	Down to the bottom of the volcano and back up to the top.		Across the top of the zebra's head, zig-zag down its neck and along.
	Down and up and down and up the waves.		Down the kite, up to the top corner and down to the bottom corner.
	From the top, across the box to the bottom. From the top again, across the box to the bottom.		

Unit outcomes and assessment criteria

Key outcomes

In this unit, the children will:

- Form the letters from the zig-zag letter family accurately, with diagonal movements
- Use the down and up movement for the letters 'v' and 'w'
- Lift the pencil off and complete the letters 'x' and 'k'
- Form ascenders with accuracy.

Key assessment criteria

For every letter, check that a child:

- Follows the four Ps:
 - Sits with the correct posture
 - Uses the correct pencil grip
 - Holds their paper in the correct position
 - Applies appropriate pressure
- Starts and finishes letters in the correct place and follows the correct orientation
- Recites the formation phrase to help them remember the letter formation.

Letter	Letter-specific assessment criteria
	In addition to the key assessment criteria above, check that a child: • Makes controlled diagonal movements • Controls the down and back up movement • Keeps the pencil on the paper from the start to finish • Positions the letter correctly on the line
	In addition to the key assessment criteria above, check that a child: • Makes controlled diagonal movements • Controls the down and back up movement • Keeps the pencil on the paper from the start to finish • Positions the letter correctly on the line
	In addition to the key assessment criteria above, check that a child: • Makes controlled diagonal movements • Lifts the pencil off the paper to form the second diagonal line • Positions the letter correctly on the line
	In addition to the key assessment criteria above, check that a child: • Makes controlled diagonal movements • Keeps the pencil on the paper from the start to finish • Positions the letter correctly on the line
	In addition to the key assessment criteria above, check that a child: • Makes controlled diagonal movements • Forms a straight ascender at an appropriate height • Keeps the pencil on the paper from the start to finish • Creates the strokes in the correct order • Positions the letter correctly on the line