



Left-handedness

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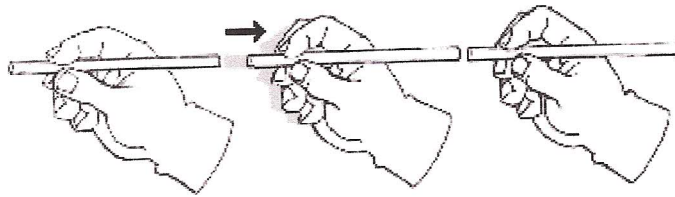
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Right-handed world

Through the ages, writing has been shaped by the right hand, and what it does best. Some movements it makes easily, others not at all. Unfortunately, the writing movements that are easiest for the right hand are very difficult for the left.

Left-handedness has long been suppressed and punished. It hasn't worked. Instead, we need to help left-handed children in a right-handed world.

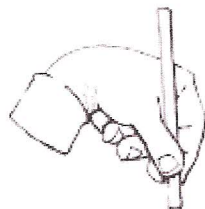


Of all handwriting movements, this is the most difficult. The thumb, index finger, and middle finger bend together. And for a six-year old, it is a challenge. In the italic lower case, you'll find it in the letters k s and x.

Left-handed writing is not ordinary writing, with the left hand holding the pen. The right hand makes the stems with easy waving movements of the wrist and the fingers. And there the left hand is already at a disadvantage.



This shows the left hand mirroring the position of the right. It has to make all the downstrokes by pulling. This is the most difficult movement of all: the thumb, index finger, and middle finger bending together.



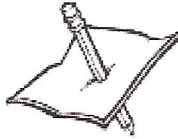
No solution

The pen should never be above the line of writing.

A hooked wrist allows the left hand to imitate the writing movements of the right hand. This has caused the worst writing cramp I have seen. Put a stop to this. There are better ways.

First of all, find the lefties

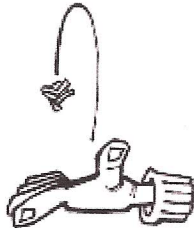
About thirteen per cent of children are left-handed. That's three in an average class. They'll need your help. To help you find them, here are four tests. Children like them.

**Test 1**

Punch a hole in a piece of paper. Which hand holds the pen?

**Test 2**

Stretch your arm, and look at your hand through the hole in the paper. Which eye do you use?

**Test 3**

Crumple up the paper. Toss it in the air, and catch it a few times. Which hand does the catching?

**Test 4**

Make a long running jump. Which foot goes first?

When you know which of your pupils are left-handed, tell their parents. They may not know. And ask them to buy a pair of left-handed scissors.

A child may catch and punch with his right hand, but use his left eye to look through a hole (or the other way around). He may need an eye test. And some children prefer the left foot and the right hand. Watch them: they may need help if they become left-handed later.

Different pen hold

The left-handed pen hold should not be a mirror-image of a right-handed pen hold. In the left hand, the pen should be at less of an angle to the paper and be gripped higher on the barrel.

