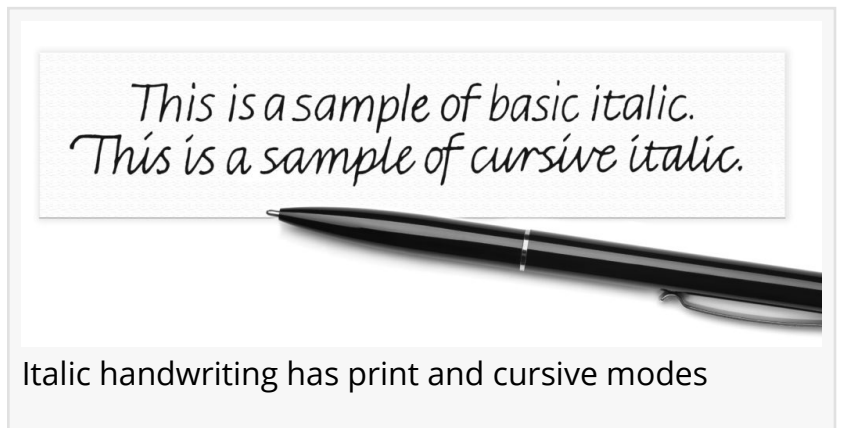


Study says there may be a better cursive style for students

The style of handwriting taught appears to influence retention of instruction, according to study of 756 school children.

PORTLAND, OREGON, UNITED STATES, January 23, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- January 23rd is National Handwriting Day in the United States. For those who notice its annual occurrence, it is, among other things, an opportunity to advocate for handwriting instruction.

For good reason, those advocates say, as the body evidence for handwriting as a scaffold and intervention for literacy is large and compelling.



Now a new research validation of a previous study of handwriting retention in elementary school tells us that one handwriting style, commonly called “italic”, may be more beneficial than continuous cursive styles.

“

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Jonathan Dubay

A 9-year-long correlation study by Betty Duvall looked at the handwriting of 756 eleventh-grade students in Great Falls, Montana who had received writing instruction with a continuous cursive style since grade 3. “

<https://handwritingsuccess.com/wp-content/uploads/HandwritingStudyCombinedSummary-3.pdf>) Although no students had received instruction in italic, [by 11th grade] 47% of the students wrote italic

cursive or italic print and nearly 2.5 times as many students wrote italic cursive as wrote the [continuous] cursive style they had been taught.” Duvall therefore concluded that there was a logical rationale to teach italic handwriting.

Duvall’s work has been validated by Nathaniel Hansford and Elizabeth Reenstra of Pedagogy Non Grata (<https://www.pedagogynongrata.com>). They give the Duvall study a U.S. Department of Education Every Students Succeeds Act (ESSA) Tier 3 rating. “This study shows promising evidence that italic handwriting instruction correlates with higher levels of retention than other

forms of handwriting instruction," writes Hansford.

"If you are going to spend classroom time teaching handwriting, as you should, then you'll probably want to look at the retention rates and efficacy of the particular handwriting method you are using," says Jonathan Dubay, CEO and Curriculum Specialist for the Portland (Oregon) based company [Handwriting Success](#), which publishes a leading italic handwriting method for K-6 by [Getty-Dubay](#).

Italic handwriting, sometimes called "chancery" or "modern cursive", has a print mode and a cursive mode, as do most other handwriting styles commonly taught in the United States and Canada. But with italic, the print and cursive letters are the same, allowing students to join those print letters for cursive mode writing. In contrast, continuous looped cursive styles such as those published by Zaner-Bloser, D'Nealian and Handwriting Without Tears typically require students to relearn the alphabet in order to write in a cursive mode.

Dubay continues, "Not only does italic save classroom time on the front end by not having to teach up to 44 new letter paths to 2nd graders, but this validation of Duvall's work suggests that if you teach students italic, they will actually use that handwriting later in school."

Getty-Dubay Italic is a method developed in 1979 by two Oregon educators and artists, Barbara Getty and Inga Dubay. Their method faithfully replicates and modernizes the historical italic script that was invented in the Italian Renaissance and used by Vatican Chancery scribes. Getty and Dubay note that the first handwriting instruction book was written in italic in 1522. Their 2009 New York Times Op-Ed "The Write Stuff" provided an opportunity for readers to learn the italic style by copying and tracing from the op-ed itself.

Italic handwriting has recently become also known as "modern cursive", most notably by [Primarium](#) (primarium.info), the global compendium of Latin-based educational handwriting styles funded by Google.

Read the full validation report by Pedagogy Non Grata here:

<https://handwritingsuccess.com/new-research-validation-suggests-benefit-of-italic/>

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