

# Why is Legible Handwriting Important?

## Academically

"What's just as surprising says Dr. Laura Dinehart, is that the academic achievement by those with better penmanship is seen in both reading and math, and it's reflected in both teachers' grades and standardized test scores." - Donna Krache, CNN, Feb. 03, 2013

"Creating Better Readers and Writers," a report emphasizing the importance of handwriting instruction released in fall 2010, stresses that good handwriting skills increase speed and fluency in reading and writing. Fast, legible handwriting improves note-taking and test-performance because students are able to write quickly and, later, decipher their notes." - The Gazette/ Education 2011

"Handwriting also affects other people's perceptions of adults and children. Several studies have shown that the same mediocre essay will score much higher if written with good penmanship and much lower if written out in poor handwriting, says Vanderbilt University education professor Steve Graham. "There is a reader effect that is insidious," he says. "People judge the quality of your ideas based on your handwriting." And the consequences are real: On standardized tests with handwritten sections, like the SAT, an essay deemed illegible gets a big zero." - The Week Staff | October 6, 2010

"The benefits of gripping and moving a pen or pencil reach beyond communication. Emerging research shows that handwriting increases brain activity, hones fine motor skills, and can predict a child's academic success in ways that keyboarding can't."

"Good handwriting can mean better grades. Studies show that the same mediocre paper is graded much higher if the handwriting is neat and much lower if the writing is not." - Julie Deardorff, Tribune Newspapers *June 15, 2011*

## Real World Connections

"Today's device-centric information workers rely on handwritten notes and believe that better integration of handwritten notes and spoken information with their digital workflow would significantly improve professional productivity."

"While workers and their employers alike increasingly favor the use of laptops, mobile phones, tablets and other peripherals to manage overall workplace information, an overwhelming majority (87 percent) of business professionals use handwritten notes to complement these technologies. Also, three out of 10 review such notes on a daily basis."

Findings included:

- 87 percent of information workers make use of handwritten notes
- 38 percent of workers use handwritten notes to organize their priorities through to-do lists
- 67 percent felt that better note-taking would improve both their personal job performance and decision-making within their organizations
- 75 percent saw value in the ability to computerize, index and search, and share handwritten notes and associated audio

# Why Can't I Skip My 30 Minutes of Reading Tonight?

**Student "A"**  
reads **30 minutes**  
each day  
5,400 minutes in a school  
year

**2,179,000 words**



*90<sup>th</sup> percentile*

**Student "B"**  
reads **5 minutes**  
each day  
900 minutes in  
a school year

**282,000 words**



*50<sup>th</sup> percentile*

**Student "C"**  
reads **1 minute**  
each day  
180 minutes in  
a school year

**8,000 words**



*10<sup>th</sup> percentile*

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By the end of 6<sup>th</sup> grade Student A will have read the equivalent of 60 hours. Student B will have read only 12 hours. Which student would you expect to have a better vocabulary? Which student would you expect to be more successful in school and life? ( adapted from Nagy & Herman)

*f*The average higher-achieving students read approximately three times as much a week as their lower-achieving classmates, not including out of school reading."

– Richard Allington, What Works for Struggling Readers