

Caitlin was in the third grade. She was in a **new school**. She was happy with the change. The kids in her class were lots of fun. She had made friends by the end of the first day. The next day, Mrs. Clark said they were going to learn to write in cursive. “Oh, no”, thought Caitlin, “I like the way I print. I do not want to start making my letters a different way. I am afraid my papers will be messy. Mrs. Clark may not like messy papers. Maybe she will think that I am not a smart girl.”

Caitlin remembered the way Mrs. Smith had helped her learn to print her letters when she was in first grade. There was a large grid on the wall of the class. The grid had lines on it to help the children learn to form the letters. The lines had names like the sky line, the grass line, and the plane line. Mrs. Smith used the lines to help kids learn to make **each** letter. She just told the kids to start at the sky line or the plane line and how to move their hands to the right places. Then, she told them all the steps for all of the letters. It was not hard to learn to print at all. Caitlin was starting to think she would like to return to first grade and be back in Mrs. Smith’s class.

The next day, before class, Caitlin asked Mrs. Clark if she had to start cursive. She told her that her printing was great and that she was happy to print for the rest of her life. Mrs. Clark told her that all the kids had to begin cursive. She said it would not be hard at all. Caitlin said okay, but did not think it would be any fun. After lunch, Mrs. Clark said that it was time to begin cursive. Caitlin started to sink behind her desk. Then, Mrs. Clark hung some paper on the wall. When Caitlin saw the paper, she began to smile. It was the same grid Mrs. Smith had used when she was in first grade. “Stand up class”, said Mrs. Clark. “Make your arms stiff and **point** to the grass line.” Caitlin was very happy. Learning cursive would be a snap this way.

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