

Why Cursive?

"The hand is the instrument of the mind."

Maria Montessori, [The 1946 London Lectures](#), p. 36

Montessori's educational philosophy places great importance on cursive writing due to its benefits for holistic child development. Cursive, with its fluid and continuous strokes, fosters fine motor skills, hand-eye coordination, and cognitive development. Montessori believed that learning involves both the mind and body, and cursive writing engages both in harmony, promoting better brain hemisphere coordination.

Additionally, cursive writing encourages creativity, self-expression, and enhances reading abilities by allowing children to read historical and culturally significant documents. These skills align with Montessori's focus on fostering independence, critical thinking, and cultural literacy. By incorporating cursive early in education, Montessori schools aim to build stronger neural connections and support comprehensive language development, ensuring that children can transition smoothly from writing to more advanced academic tasks.

As is often the case, current research supports Montessori's educational approach. Here are some key benefits of cursive writing according to recent findings:

1. **Boosted Cognitive Development:** Writing in cursive engages the brain, improving memory retention and neural connections, (James & Engelhardt, 2012).
2. **Increased Writing Speed:** Cursive writing allows for faster expression of thoughts, promoting efficiency (Connelly et al., 2007).
3. **Improved Fluency and Legibility:** The connected nature of cursive letters enhances writing fluency and legibility (Graham, 2010).
4. **Cultural Literacy:** Learning cursive gives students access to historical documents and cultural works, enriching their understanding of history (Swerling, 2018).
5. **Creativity and Expression:** Cursive allows for personalisation and creativity in writing, fostering individuality (Berninger, 2012).
6. **Spelling and Composition:** Writing in cursive reinforces spelling and composition, aiding in word recall (Gentry & Graham, 2010).
7. **Improved Focus:** Mastering cursive requires sustained focus, benefiting concentration and overall learning (James, 2017).

Montessori's educational philosophy emphasises the benefits of cursive writing for holistic development, including fine motor skills, cognitive growth, and creativity. Montessori saw cursive as a tool for harmonising mind-body coordination and fostering independence. Current research supports this view, noting that cursive enhances brain function, writing fluency, and personal expression while improving focus and cultural literacy. Cursive writing reinforces important language skills like spelling and composition, making it a valuable component of early education and intellectual growth.

References:

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Additional resources and articles:

<https://www.brainbalancecenters.com/blog/brain-benefits-write-in-cursive>

<https://academynw.com/print-or-cursive-which-works-best/>

<https://writesteps.com/cursive-vs-print-consider-one/>

<https://www.fireflyeducation.com.au/support/articles/the-benefits-of-cursive-handwriting>

<https://www.brainbalancecenters.com/blog/brain-benefits-write-in-cursive>

<https://www.weareteachers.com/cursive-instruction-benefits/>

<https://www.scholastic.com/parents/books-and-reading/raise-a-reader-blog/cursive-writing-practice.html>

https://thinkwrite-learning.co.uk/article_detail.php?title=part1-the-neurological-benefits-of-cursive-writing

<https://parenting.firstcry.com/articles/contribution-must-read-for-parents-5-amazing-benefits-of-cursive-writing-for-kids/>

<https://www.memoriapress.com/articles/top-10-reasons-to-learn-cursive/>

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/life-style/parenting/toddler-year-and-beyond/5-reasons-all-kids-should-learn-cursive-writing/photostory/74225890.cms?picid=74225949>

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/au/blog/the-athletes-way/202010/why-cursive-handwriting-is-good-your-brain>