

Rachel Koch
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AoW #11

1. Mark your confusion.
2. Show evidence of a close reading on the page.
3. Write a one-page reflection in your WN

How Writing By Hand Makes Kids Smarter

Younger Americans are typing or texting more and writing less, even in school — and that's a problem when it comes to brain development

With the ubiquity of keyboards large and small, neither children nor adults need to write much of anything by hand. That's a big problem, says Gwendolyn Bounds in *The Wall Street Journal*. Study after study suggests that handwriting is important for brain development and cognition — helping kids hone fine motor skills and learn to express and generate ideas. Yet the time devoted to teaching penmanship in most grade schools has shrunk to just one hour a week. Is it time to break out the legal pad? Here's a look at how the brain and penmanship interact:

Writing by hand can get ideas out faster

University of Wisconsin psychologist Virginia Berninger tested students in grades 2, 4, and 6, and found that they not only wrote faster by hand than by keyboard — but they also generated more ideas when composing essays in longhand. In other research, Berninger shows that the sequential finger movements required to write by hand activate brain regions involved with thought, language, and short-term memory.

Writing increases neural activity

A recent Indiana University study had one group of children practice printing letters by hand while a second group just looked at examples of A's, B's, and C's. Then, both groups of kids entered a functional MRI (disguised as a "spaceship") that scanned their brains as the researchers showed them letters. The neural activity in the first group was far more advanced and "adult-like," researchers found.

Good handwriting makes you seem smarter

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.

This isn't only an English-language phenomenon

Chinese and Japanese youths are suffering from "character amnesia," says AFP's Judith Evans. They can't remember how to create letters, thanks to computers and text messaging. In China, the problem is so prevalent, there's a word for it: "Tibiwangzi," or "take pen, forget character." "It's like you're forgetting your culture," says Zeng Ming, 22. So closely are Chinese writing and reading linked in the brain, says Hong Kong University linguist Siok Wai Ting, that China's reading ability as a nation could suffer.

New technology is part of the solution

New touch-screen phones and tablets, like the iPhone and iPad, are providing a countervailing force, translating handwriting into digital letter forms or making writing practice fun (a \$1.99 iPhone app called "abc PocketPhonics" rewards kids with "cheering

ouch!
Wow that's impressive!

I agree
- I'm not so great at expressing myself on paper, but I'm sure if I practiced more I would get better.
haven't even learned to type very well why would that give them any info.
How

?

? How is it adult-like? what do they mean?

That's cool

Oh wow!
I'd better work on my handwriting then...

> ... Yikes! That test is really important

Oh so that's what it means

text and computers can really affect us if we use them too much.

I had no idea about it

pencils"). In Japan, an iPhone game called kanji kentei — a character quiz with 12 levels — has become a hit with all age groups.

Heather Horn in *The Atlantic Wire* says that while all this research is fascinating, it mostly shows that "scientists are finally beginning to explore what writers have long suspected." She notes a 1985 article in the *Paris Review* in which the interviewer asks novelist Robert Stone if he mostly types his manuscripts. His reply: "Yes, until something becomes elusive. Then I write in longhand in order to be precise. On a typewriter or word processor you can rush something that shouldn't be rushed — you can lose nuance, richness, lucidity. The pen compels lucidity."

Source:

<http://theweek.com/article/index/207846/how-writing-by-hand-makes-kids-smarter>
posted on October 6, 2010

very true!
I tend to do it quite often.
I've noticed when I hurry with my essays my expressions and ideas become less expressive and are pitiful.

Helpful Vocabulary:

- Ubiquity:** the state of being everywhere
- Mediocre:** ordinary; not special
- Insidious:** intended to entrap; sneaky
- Elusive:** hard to define
- Lucidity:** clarity; clear.

Possible WN topics:

- Do you think that writing by hand is good exercise for your brain? Why? Why not?
- Do you agree that writing by hand might create different thinking than those thoughts you generate when you type?
- Reflect on whether you are writing enough in your Writer's Notebook.

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Is that an overstatement

Younger Americans are typing or texting more and writing less, even in school — and that's a problem when it comes to brain development

I never knew that. It makes me want to write more.

With the ubiquity of keyboards large and small, neither children nor adults need to write much of anything by hand. That's a big problem, says Gwendolyn Bounds in *The Wall Street Journal*. Study after study suggests that handwriting is important for brain development and cognition — helping kids hone fine motor skills and learn to express and generate ideas. Yet the time devoted to teaching penmanship in most grade schools has shrunk to just one hour a week. Is it time to break out the legal pad? Here's a look at how the brain and penmanship interact:

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Why is it a problem?

I remember having more than that in elementary

Writing by hand can get ideas out faster

How much faster than regular writing? Enough to drop scores?

University of Wisconsin psychologist Virginia Berninger tested students in grades 2, 4, and 6, and found that they not only wrote faster by hand than by keyboard — but they also generated more ideas when composing essays in longhand. In other research, Berninger shows that the sequential finger movements required to write by hand activate brain regions involved with thought, language, and short-term memory.

Isn't that why you do a rough draft before the final?

!!!!
I never expected that! That's deep,

Writing increases neural activity

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That's pretty cool, they should reduce the amount of typing and have you write more.

Good handwriting makes you seem smarter

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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.

Should they really make those judgments?

This isn't only an English-language phenomenon

That should be true for everything

Chinese and Japanese youths are suffering from "character amnesia," says AFP's Judith Evans. They can't remember how to create letters, thanks to computers and text messaging. In China, the problem is so prevalent, there's a word for it: "Tibiwangzi", or "take pen, forget character." "It's like you're forgetting your culture," says Zeng Ming, 22. So closely are Chinese writing and reading linked in the brain, says Hong Kong University linguist Siok Wai Ting, that China's reading ability as a nation could suffer.

This is probably because it is so hard to draw the characters that they type whenever they can

New technology is part of the solution

That's no surprise

New touch-screen phones and tablets, like the iPhone and iPad, are providing a countervailing force, translating handwriting into digital letter forms or making writing practice fun (a \$1.99 iPhone app called "abc PocketPhonics" rewards kids with "cheering

They should make more apps to help you do this I think that might help alot

pencils"). In Japan, an iPhone game called kanji kentei — a character quiz with 12 levels — has become a hit with all age groups.

they should make more levels

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???

I think that school papers would be more precise if we wrote them by hand

Source:

???

I agree with this

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Why does HIS opinion matter?

Can't we generate ideas when typing/texting? Are they suggesting we're not smart enough anymore? I get ideas while texting.

I did it more than that. Teachers fuss over it.

Writing by hand can get ideas out faster

Big name!

University of Wisconsin psychologist Virginia Berninger tested students in grades 2, 4, and 6, and found that they not only wrote faster by hand than by keyboard — but they also generated more ideas when composing essays in longhand. In other research, Berninger shows that the sequential finger movements required to write by hand activate brain regions involved with thought, language, and short-term memory.

I'm dyslexic, I don't agree with that.

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Who wants to be adult-like? Seriously?

Why spaceship? I'd much rather be put into something cool like a giant whale. Like in Phinacia. That would be cool.

Good handwriting makes you seem smarter

People shouldn't judge.

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.

Does that mean I seem stupid? My handwriting is pretty much sucks. Yay, that's just stupid.

Isn't a big zero better than a little one?

This isn't only an English-language phenomenon

that's because they're letters are crazy!

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It's not my fault I have big awkward, hard to control, man hands.

Maybe they could make their letters simpler so it's not so hard to remember.

New technology is part of the solution

New touch-screen phones and tablets, like the iPhone and iPad, are providing a countervailing force, translating handwriting into digital letter forms or making writing practice fun (a \$1.99 iPhone app called "abc PocketPhonics" rewards kids with "cheering

I have that, it's free. No one uses it.

pencils"). In Japan, an iPhone game called kanji kentei — a character quiz with 12 levels — has become a hit with all age groups. — *of all ages? what age do they get phones? I rods over there?*

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How many studies?

Writing helps the brain grow and technology interferes with that.

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Children have better ideas when writing by hand.

They have just started keyboarding. No wonder they are faster at writing!

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Why didn't they type the "A, B, C's" looking doesn't prove anything.

Writing produces more brain activity than typing.

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Good handwriting is needed to have a good reputation

Most professional places want a TYPE-D paper or resume, body handwritten piece would seem mediocre.

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Chinese letters are a LOT more confusing

Without regular writing, China is forgetting how.

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Technology can help us bring writing back.

So technology is bad, but can be good. Have they proved that yet?

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Is that the magazine or what?

completely agree.

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