

Ohio's FLAP K-4 Mandarin Curriculum Reading and Writing Guidance

Assumptions:

- All language classrooms should support integrated literacy development through language-rich environments with meaningful print displays.
- Language acquisition in first and second language progresses naturally from oracy skills (listening and speaking) to literacy skills (reading and writing).
- Students bring oracy and literacy skills from home language learning to bear in learning a second language.
- Writing skills should be introduced at developmentally-appropriate points, and in a developmentally-appropriate manner, taking into account small motor skills and muscle development of small children.
- Students will be able to recognize more than they can produce.

Therefore:

- Before writing is encouraged, recognition skills (sight words) should be practiced through the use of flashcards and environmental print. (K)
- For very young students, writing practice should begin with large-motor activities, such as brush work on large font characters, air tracing, total physical response (TPR) or writing largely in sand. (K)
- Writing production should proceed from tracing and copying to experience writing characters. (K-1)
- High-frequency/commonly used words and radicals, and those characters containing fewer strokes (under six or seven), will be targeted for writing in K-1. It is best to introduce characters in thematic groups, such as, 头(head), 目(eye), 口(mouth), 舌(tongue), 耳(ear).
- Move to labeling, matching, sorting, and classifying at the word then sentence level.
- Surround students with text in the form of key words, word banks, charts, bulletin boards, signs, class rules, menus, etc.
- Use visual discrimination and directionality experiences with early readers.
- Model reading and engage learners through Big Books.

The choice of having students learn to **write** traditional or simplified characters is left up to the individual teacher or Chinese language department at each elementary school. To become proficient, students must ultimately learn to **read** both.

Use traditional or simplified characters consistently, or introduce students to both simultaneously.

Roman alphabet phonetic systems, such as Pinyin, may be used as a bridge to literacy, but students ultimately need to read and write characters to be considered literate.