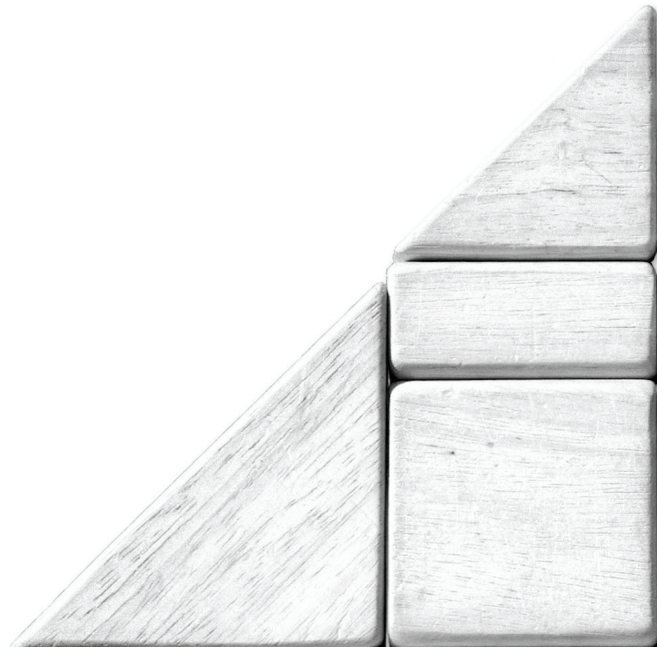


GRAMMAR OF  
*Grace*

First Copybook

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Grammar of Grace First Copybook  
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Be ye followers of me, even as I am of Christ.

1 Corinthians 11:1



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## THE GODS OF THE COPYBOOK HEADINGS

Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936)

AS I PASS through my incarnations in every age and race,  
I make my proper prostrations to the Gods of the Market Place.  
Peering through reverent fingers I watch them flourish and fall,  
And the Gods of the Copybook Headings, I notice, outlast them all.

We were living in trees when they met us. They showed us each in turn  
That Water would certainly wet us, as Fire would certainly burn:  
But we found them lacking in Uplift, Vision and Breadth of Mind,  
So we left them to teach the Gorillas while we followed the March of Mankind.

We moved as the Spirit listed. They never altered their pace,  
Being neither cloud nor wind-borne like the Gods of the Market Place,  
But they always caught up with our progress, and presently word would come  
That a tribe had been wiped off its icefield, or the lights had gone out in Rome.

With the Hopes that our World is built on they were utterly out of touch,  
They denied that the Moon was Stilton; they denied she was even Dutch;  
They denied that Wishes were Horses; they denied that a Pig had Wings;  
So we worshipped the Gods of the Market Who promised these beautiful things.

When the Cambrian measures were forming, They promised perpetual peace.  
They swore, if we gave them our weapons, that the wars of the tribes would cease.  
But when we disarmed They sold us and delivered us bound to our foe,  
And the Gods of the Copybook Headings said: "Stick to the Devil you know."

On the first Feminian Sandstones we were promised the Fuller Life  
(Which started by loving our neighbour and ended by loving his wife)  
Till our women had no more children and the men lost reason and faith,  
And the Gods of the Copybook Headings said: "The Wages of Sin is Death."

In the Carboniferous Epoch we were promised abundance for all,  
By robbing selected Peter to pay for collective Paul;  
But, though we had plenty of money, there was nothing our money could buy,  
And the Gods of the Copybook Headings said: "If you don't work you die."

Then the Gods of the Market tumbled, and their smooth-tongued wizards withdrew  
And the hearts of the meanest were humbled and began to believe it was true  
That All is not Gold that Glitters, and Two and Two make Four  
And the Gods of the Copybook Headings limped up to explain it once more.

As it will be in the future, it was at the birth of Man  
There are only four things certain since Social Progress began.  
That the Dog returns to his Vomit and the Sow returns to her Mire,  
And the burnt Fool's bandaged finger goes wabbling back to the Fire;

And that after this is accomplished, and the brave new world begins  
When all men are paid for existing and no man must pay for his sins,  
As surely as Water will wet us, as surely as Fire will burn,  
The Gods of the Copybook Headings with terror and slaughter return!





## INTRODUCTION TO *Copywork*

For hereunto ye are called: for Christ also suffered for you,  
leaving you an **example** that ye should follow his steps...

1 Peter 2:21

The study note for the word *example* in 1 Peter 2:21 reads, “A borrowed kind of speech taken of painters and schoolmasters,” in the margin of the Geneva Bible. Painters and schoolmasters used a technical term in their trades, which we would translate today as *example*. In Greek culture, the master artist would prepare a sketch for others to color and complete. And throughout the ages, schoolmasters have taught students how to write by giving the learners a written example for them to copy.

How strange in our day, to think that for all of recorded history, children were taught to write through the method of copywork, and that this practice was so universal in Peter’s time, that in order to teach Christians about following the example of Christ, he had to borrow the schoolhouse term—yet in the last fifty years, the practice has been so thoroughly eradicated from educational practice that most of us have never even heard of it.

The Greek word Peter uses there is **ὑπογραμμον**, or more properly, **ὑπογραμμος**. Strong defines this word as “an underwriting, i.e. copy for imitation; figuratively: example.” The literal English word would be **copyhead**.

The copyhead is the text the student is to copy, for the purpose of learning how to write. It would be placed at the top of the page, and students would copy it again and again, going down the page. In Christian education, texts were chosen for the children to copy only if they taught truth and good character. The children would be meditating on these words as they wrote them again and again, so Christian educators only chose texts of the highest value. Hence, our Copybook is almost entirely scriptures.

Young student, as you do your copywork, consider that you are joining the ranks of students who, for thousands of years, have learned how to write by doing their copywork...

And consider that you are called to live your entire life as if you are a line of copywork, copying Jesus himself, the copyhead at the top of your page.



# HOW TO TEACH *Copywork*

Copywork is the age-old method for teaching children how to write. Copywork teaches:

- Spelling
- Grammar
- What Excellent Writing Is
- How to Write Well (though related, those are Different Things)
- Comprehension
- Good Penmanship
- Patience
- The Content of the Selections, such as: Character, History, Philosophy (particularly as pertains to the New Life in Christ), Beauty, and Excellence
- Literature

It hardly bears mentioning, but the accomplishment of these objectives will rise or fall on the merits of the Copywork texts. Old primers that reflect a Christian worldview are traditional sources for copywork material, with a good track record. But the riches of the wisdom of the Holy Scriptures are incomparable, so *Grammar of Grace* humbly presents this offering to the canon of Copybooks.

These are the same texts in the first third of the Grammar of Grace Copybook, in *Grammar of Grace* core curriculum. The classic *New England Primer* alphabet verses are placed first, to introduce the letters of our alphabet,<sup>1</sup> and after that the rest of the *First Copybook* texts are scriptures worthy of meditation and memorization, progressing from shorter to longer passages.<sup>2</sup>

A word about Penmanship: Good Penmanship has come under disrepute, in our modern age. The stereotype of the doctor with terrible handwriting seems to leave one with the impression that if he values truly Important Learning and Accomplishment, he should scribble out his ideas as quickly and illegibly as possible, as if to prove that his every minute is so filled with Important Endeavors that he would be wasting his time to write well. Consider the lovely handwriting with which the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States were penned. When we peruse the private and public writings of our classically-educated forebears, we see handwriting that is often not only legible, but quite lovely. When we slow down and make ourselves use good penmanship, we are doing whatever we do *heartily*, as to the Lord, and not for men.<sup>3</sup> Good Penmanship also helps the child develop dexterity and fine motor skills.

As for writing by hand, as opposed to typing: Computers are a wonderful tool for writing. However, there is a valuable process that takes place in our minds when we form our letters by hand, especially for a child, during his formative years.<sup>4</sup> Hand-writing has been our practice in the education of youth for millenia, with reliably good results. As such, I have my children write out their Copywork lessons by hand.

When they are first learning to form their letters, I work with each child individually; I have them write in cursive from the start. I write on the first line, demonstrating how each letter is formed, explaining what I'm doing as I do it, and then asking the child to copy me on the next line. In the very beginning, I may write one letter at a time, until the child begins to remember how to form his letters correctly. As he improves, I will write out one word at a time, again, talking through how I'm forming these letters while he watches me do it, and then I progress to writing the whole sentence out. After he learns how to form his letters well, he is able to copy out his lessons on his own, directly from the Copybook.

The *Grammar of Grace First Copybook* is intended to be used for two years, but you and your student might take it at a slower pace, or a faster one, as suits you. The shorter copyheads can usually be written out on a single line, but expect for the lengthier ones to take 2 or more lines to write out.

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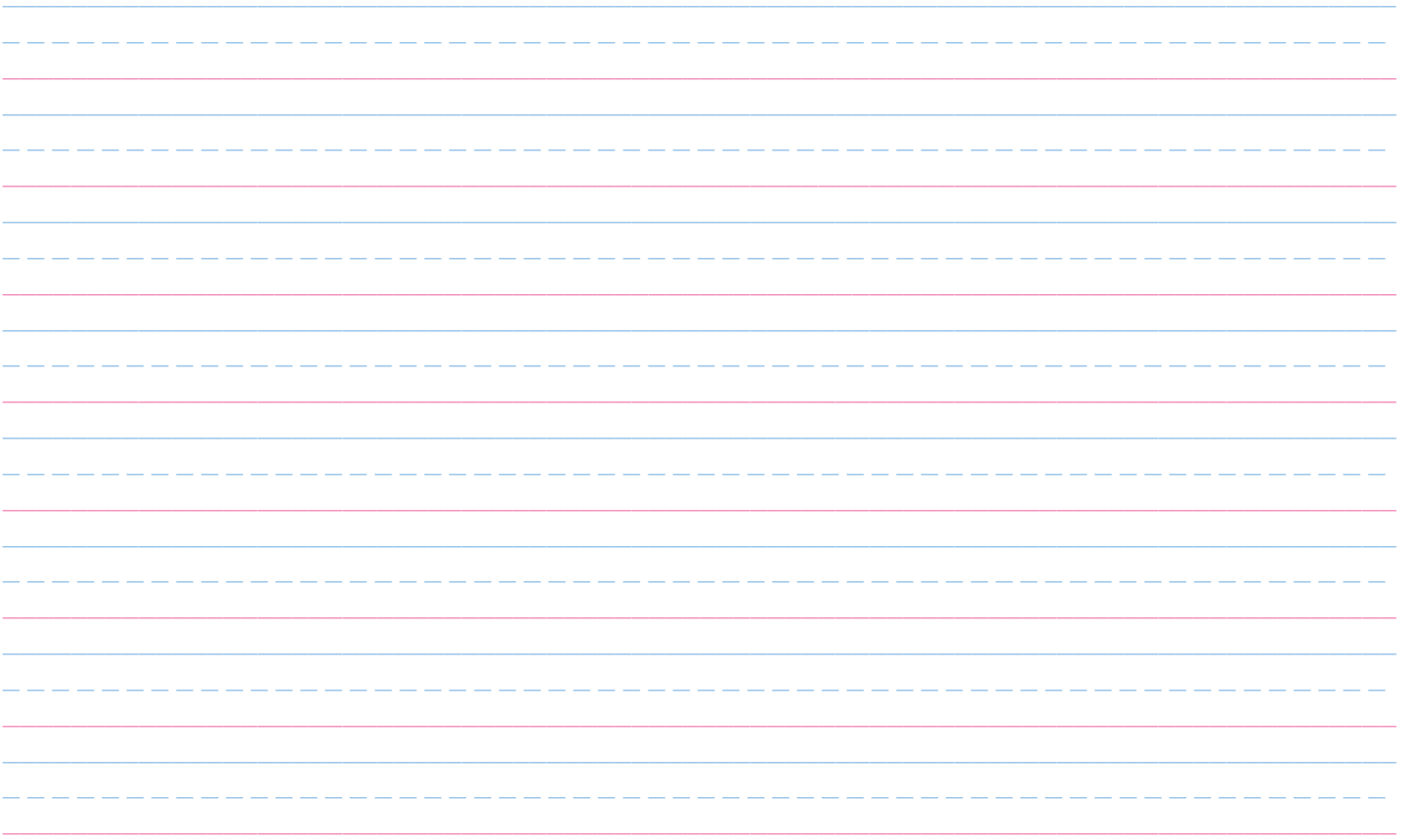
1. When the NEP was written, there were only 24 letters in our language; I & J were considered a single letter, and U & V were also considered a single letter. To teach our modern letters, I added two short scriptures to these alphabet verses, for I and U.

2. Note: 16<sup>th</sup> century English used different punctuation and capitalization rules than we do, many of which are preserved in the Copywork texts.

3. Colossians 3:23.

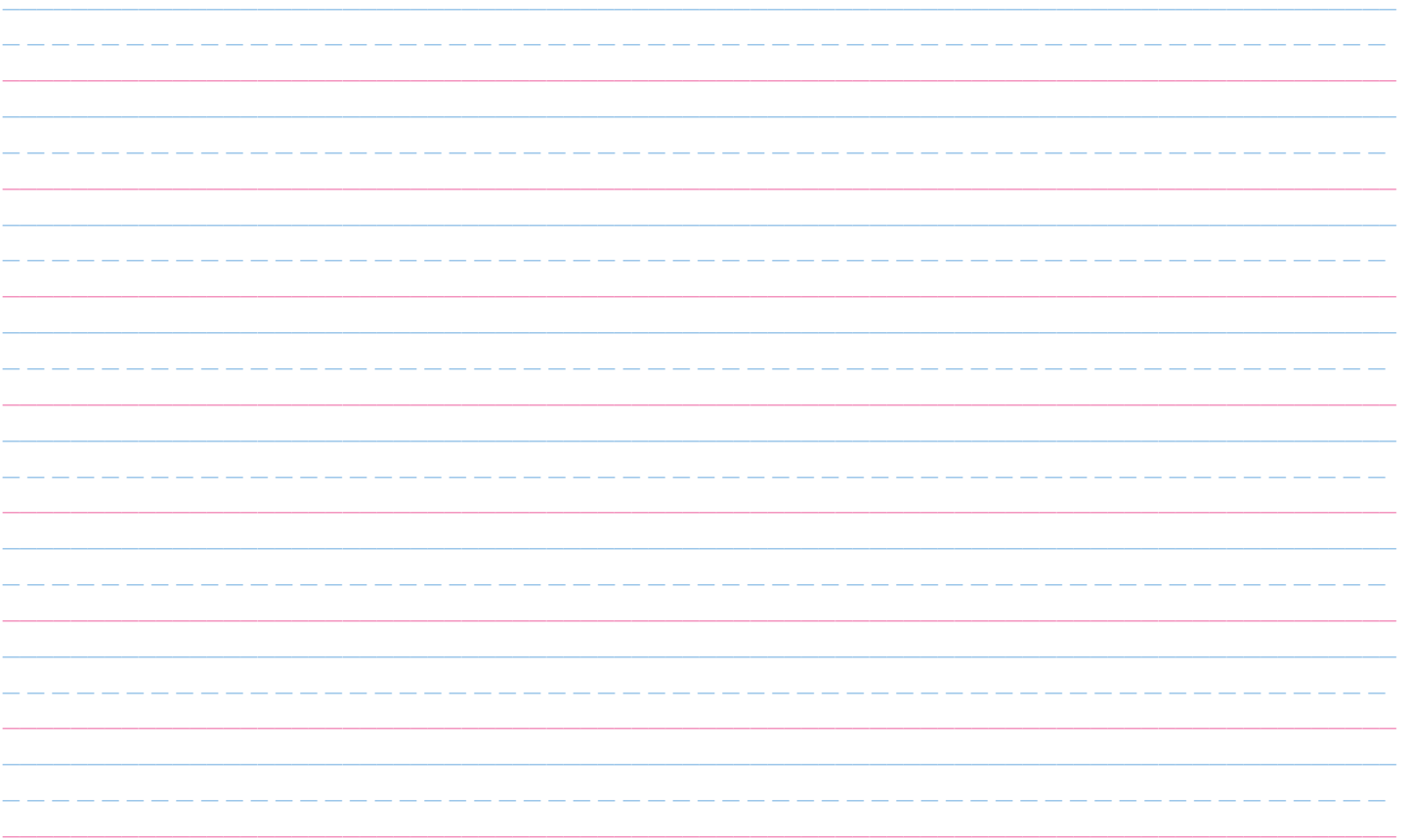
4. A websearch of "have a child write by hand vs typing" yields informative articles from the New York Times (6/2014), UK Daily Mail (1/2011), the UK Guardian (12/2014), and several other sources.

In Adam's fall, we sinned all.



A series of ten sets of handwriting practice lines. Each set consists of a solid blue top line, a dashed blue middle line, and a solid red bottom line.

Heaven to find, the Bible mind.



A series of ten sets of handwriting practice lines. Each set consists of a solid blue top line, a dashed blue middle line, and a solid red bottom line.

Christ crucified, for sinners died.

Handwriting practice lines consisting of multiple sets of three horizontal lines: a solid blue top line, a dashed blue middle line, and a solid red bottom line.

The Deluge drowned the Earth around.

Handwriting practice lines consisting of multiple sets of three horizontal lines: a solid blue top line, a dashed blue middle line, and a solid red bottom line.

This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you. John 15:12

Handwriting practice lines consisting of multiple sets of three horizontal lines: a solid blue top line, a dashed blue middle line, and a solid red bottom line.

Verily, verily I say unto you, he that believeth in me, hath everlasting life. John 6:47

Handwriting practice lines consisting of multiple sets of three horizontal lines: a solid blue top line, a dashed blue middle line, and a solid red bottom line.

And be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. James 1:22

Handwriting practice lines consisting of multiple sets of three horizontal lines (top solid blue, middle dashed blue, bottom solid red).

A foolish son is a grief unto his father, and a heaviness to her that bare him. Proverbs 17:25

Handwriting practice lines consisting of multiple sets of three horizontal lines (top solid blue, middle dashed blue, bottom solid red).