

ABECEDARIA PRESS



Igbo Writing Workbook No. 1

EVAN MILLNER

UNIVERSITAS SCHOLARIUM

HANDWRITING

Ṃ

Handwriting practice lines for the letter *b*. The page features ten sets of horizontal guidelines, each consisting of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line. The first set of lines includes a large, black, cursive letter *b* positioned at the beginning for tracing or reference. The remaining nine sets of lines are blank, providing space for independent practice of the letter *b*.

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f

Handwriting practice lines for the letter 'f'. The page contains ten sets of horizontal lines. Each set consists of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a dotted bottom line. The letter 'f' is written on the first set of lines, starting from the top solid line, going down to the bottom dotted line, and crossing the middle dashed line.

g

h

Handwriting practice lines for the letter *h*. The page contains ten sets of horizontal lines, each consisting of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line. The first set of lines includes the letter *h* at the beginning for tracing and reference.

í

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j



Uppercase letter K on handwriting lines. The letter is formed with a vertical stem and a diagonal leg that curves to the right. The top of the stem is on the top line, and the bottom of the stem is on the bottom line. The diagonal leg starts at the middle line and extends to the bottom line.



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High and low

When you speak Igbo, your voice goes up and down. Each part of a word is said high or low, and this belongs to the word just as its letters do, so learn them together.

A high part is always a little lower than the high part before it: you can only step down, until you stop at the end of a sentence. A low part is clearly lower than the high parts around it. Sometimes a part stays at the same height as the part before it.

When we write Igbo, we do not mark the high and low. We write it as it is written in books and letters today.

The eight vowels

Igbo has eight vowel sounds. They are written **i i̇ e a ọ o u u**. The mark under i̇, ọ and u̇ is part of the letter: u̇ is as different from u as it is from o. In handwriting we make the mark as a small dash.

i i̇ e a ọ o u u *the eight vowels*

í í ē á ọ ó u̇ u

“It’s a ...” and “He saw a ...”

Each of these sentences starts high, then stays low to the end.

Ọ bụ akwa. *It’s a bed.*

Ọ bụ akwa.

Ọ bụ ite. *It’s a pot.*

Ọ bụ ite.

Ọ bu ụdọ. *It's a rope.*

Ọ bu ụdọ.

Ọ bu akpa. *It's a bag.*

Ọ bu akpa.

Ọ bu igba. *It's a drum.*

Ọ bu igba.

Ọ hụrụ akwa. *He saw a bed.*

Ọ hụrụ akwa.

Ọ hụrụ ite. *He saw a pot.*

Ọ hụrụ ite.

Ọ hụrụ ụdọ. *He saw a rope.*

Ọ hụrụ ụdọ.

Ọ hụrụ akpa. *He saw a bag.*

Ọ hụrụ akpa.

Ọ hụrụ igba. *He saw a drum.*

Ọ hụrụ igba.

Rising at the end

These sentences are the same, but the very last part goes up again, though not quite as high as the start.

Ọ bụ iko. *It's a cup.*

Ọ bụ iko.

Ọ bụ akwa. *It's an egg.*

Ọ bụ akwa.

Ọ bụ uwe. *It's a dress.*

Ọ bụ uwe.

Ọ bụ igbe. *It's a box.*

Ọ bụ igbe.

Ọ bụ ezi. *It's a compound.*

Ọ bụ ezi.

Ọ hụrụ iko. *He saw a cup.*

Ọ hụrụ iko.

Ha hụrụ akwa. *They saw an egg.*

Ha hụrụ akwa.

Ha hụrụ uwe. *They saw a dress.*

Ha hụrụ uwe.

Ha hụrụ igbe. *They saw a box.*

Ha hụrụ igbe.

Ha hụrụ ezi. *They saw a compound.*

Ha hụrụ ezi.

Uwe can also mean a blouse, a shirt, or anything sewn. **Ezi**, a compound, is the yard where a house and the buildings around it stand.

Five kinds of words

Most Igbo nouns have two parts. The first is a vowel, or an m or n on its own; the second is a consonant and a vowel. Each word has one of five patterns of high and low.

akwa *a bed: low, low*

akwa

akwa *an egg: low, high*

akwa

oche *a chair: high, same*

oche

ego money: high, high

ego

akwa cloth: high, low

akwa

Three of these words are spelled **akwa**. Only the high and low tell them apart.

Sounds to watch

kp and **gb** are each one sound, not two. You close the back of your mouth (as for k or g) and your lips (as for p or b) at the same moment, and open them together. You may have made this sound copying a hen.

kpọ kpọ kpọ *a hen*

kpọ kpọ kpọ

akpa *a bag*

akpa

igbe *a box*

igbe

kw, **gw** and **nw** are single sounds too.

ikwe *a mortar*

ikwe

igwe *iron; a bicycle*

igwe

The sound of English *ch* is written **ch**.

oche *a chair*

oche

An **m** or **n** before a consonant is a part of the word on its own: just hum it, then go on to the next sound. Almost every Igbo word ends with a vowel; a few end with m.

mgbe *time*

mgbe

More words to write

atu *a chewing stick*

atu

ele *an antelope*

ele

oba *a calabash*

oba

akpu *cassava*

akpu

igwe *iron; a bicycle*

igwe

ikwe *a mortar*

ikwe

ugbo *a vehicle*

ugbo

egbe *a gun*

egbe

ezi *a pig*

ezi

aka *a hand*

aka

oke *a rat*

oke

ihe *a thing*

ihe

okwa *a partridge*

okwa

ato *three*

ato

udu *a water jug*

udu

okpu *a cap*

okpu

mgbe *time*

mgbe

osa *a squirrel*

osa

ise *five*

ise

ala *the ground, land*

ala