

Experts Series: Assessing and Addressing Handwriting Challenges

with Peggy Morris, OTD, OTR/L, BCP, Patti Sharp, OTD, OTR/L, BCP
and Lara Collins Barros OTD, OTR/L

March 5, 2025, 8:30 am–3:45 pm ET

Online via Zoom + 60-day access to on-demand version

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Are your assessment tools for handwriting helping you determine the true needs of the child? Do your handwriting interventions work?



Apply EBP Experts Series is here to help! Peggy will start the day by discussing a 4-Step Top-down process for assessing handwriting. You will learn the utility of various tools,

including which tests are helpful for your decision-making and which ones you should avoid using. In the 2nd seminar, she will discuss a systems approach for developing handwriting skills with the school as the client as the first-choice intervention.

The afternoon is for students who require additional OT intervention beyond a handwriting curriculum. First, Patti will present you with 5 evidence-informed strategies that you can easily incorporate into your current therapeutic session. She will utilize case studies and videos to help you identify barriers to writing legibly, focus on what matters the most and use active learning strategies that empower your client. Finally, Lara will provide you with the 4 Steps to Decision-Making and Implementing AT for written expression. You will learn about considerations for assessing AT needs, instructing the student on AT use, embedding AT into the classroom, and monitoring its successful use.

Leave the course with a deeper understanding of supporting written expression and with various tools and strategies that you can use the next day!

Audience: OTs, OTAs, and Educators

Educational Level: Intermediate

Your Mentors:

Peggy Morris, OTD, OTR/L, BCP is an OT with 30+ years of peds experience in early intervention, private practice & out-patient, but most of her experience & passion is in school-based practice. She coordinates the post-professional MS and OTD programs & school-based certificate program at Tufts University. She is Board Certified in Pediatrics through the AOTA, and a regular SeekFreaks contributor.

Patti Sharp, OTD, OTR/L, BCP is a certified CO-OP Instructor, and OT at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center (CCHMC). She co-leads the Developmental Coordination Disorder Community of Practice at CCHMC. She is an adjunct instructor at the University of Cincinnati. She works with children and youth with DCD, ASD, CP, SCI, TBI, orthopedic and neurologic injuries, and developmental delay.

Lara Collins Barros, OTD, OTR/L has been a school-based OT for over 25 years. She discovered the CO-OP Approach while completing her OTD at NYU and has never looked back. She had the privilege to develop "A Guide for Implementation: Using the Principles of CO-OP to Frame a Top-Down Approach with School-Aged Children" with the mentorship of Dr. Helene Polatajko of ICAN CO-OP.

Disclosures: Peggy, Patti, and Lara receive speaking fees from Apply EBP, LLC. They have no relevant nonfinancial relationships to disclose.

Registration

For more info and registration

[Click here!](#)

Or contact Carlo at

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Agenda

This course is from 8:30 am – 3:30 pm Eastern Time. (Note that you may be in a different time zone. Please contact Carlo at carlo@applyebp.com if you have any questions or need assistance).

8:30 am – 10:00 am: Seminar 1: Assessing Handwriting: Testing Tools and Clinical Reasoning to Determine Need for OT Services | Peggy Morris, OTD, OTR/L, BCP

Are the tools you are using to assess handwriting helping you determine the true needs of the student, and whether they would benefit from OT services?

To do so effectively, Peggy will start this seminar by presenting the latest evidence on the multiple variables that influence handwriting speed and legibility. She will share with you the 4-Step Top-Down Process for assessing handwriting. You will learn about various assessment tools, from screening to self-proficiency questionnaires, and testing tools. She will discuss which tools are most helpful in your decision-making. Peggy will then utilize a case study with 3 different scenarios to discuss the decision-making of the handwriting needs of students, and ways the OT practitioner can support their specific needs.

Learning Objectives: At the completion of this course, the learner will be able to

1. Identify 3 variables influencing handwriting.
2. Select 2 assessment tools to investigate variables influencing the handwriting of a student in a given case study.
3. Determine the appropriateness of OT services to support handwriting based on the assessment results of a given case study.

10:00 am – 10:15 am: Break

10:15 am – 11:45 am: Seminar 2: Systems Approach to Handwriting Interventions: An Evidence-Rich Practice | Peggy Morris, OTD, OTR/L, BCP

This course will utilize the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework to organize a systems approach to handwriting interventions. A systems approach takes into account the school as client and the use of a general education handwriting curriculum delivered with fidelity, along with determination of educational disability in this area of handwriting within the mandate of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Advocacy as a school-based systems intervention will also be discussed.

Learning Objectives: At the completion of this course, the learner will be able to

1. Determine the efficacy of a general education handwriting curriculum
2. Select 2 assessment tools for handwriting
3. Identify at least 3 evidence-based practices for a systems approach for handwriting instruction

11:45 am – 12:30 pm: Lunch (on your own)

12:30 pm – 2:00 pm: Seminar 3: Remediating Handwriting: Strategies that Work! | Patti Sharp, OTD, OTR/L, BCP

Do your interventions for remediating handwriting work? Are your clients' handwriting improvements in the "therapy room" not carried into real-life handwriting tasks in the classroom or at home?

It is time to re-think handwriting remediation interventions! In this seminar, Patti will provide you with evidence-informed strategies to support your pediatric clients. She will review common diagnoses of clients with handwriting problems. You will hear about the latest evidence on what handwriting interventions work and do not work. Based on this evidence, Patti will provide you with 5 Strategies that you can easily incorporate into your current therapeutic sessions. You will learn to identify the barriers to writing legibly, focus on what matters the most, and use active learning strategies that empower your pediatric client. She will demonstrate these strategies via videos and case studies of clients with various handwriting difficulties. Leave the course with evidence-based handwriting strategies that you can utilize the very next day!

Learning Objectives: At the completion of this course, the learner will be able to

1. Identify 2 diagnoses that are frequently associated with functional handwriting problems for children
2. Determine 3 features of effective handwriting intervention that are supported by evidence
3. Apply 3 strategies to remediate handwriting difficulties in the school, home, or community environment on a given case study

2:00 pm – 2:15 pm: Break

2:15 pm – 3:45 pm: Seminar 4: Assistive Technology for Written Expression: 4 Steps to Decision-making and Implementation | Lara Collins Barros, OTD, OTR/L

Do you need a structured approach for determining a student's need for assistive technology (AT) and implementing its use in the classroom?

In this seminar, Lara provides you with the 4 Steps to Decision-making and Implementing AT for written expression. You will learn various considerations for assessing a student's need for AT. She will describe concrete strategies for instructing a student on the use of AT, embedding the AT into the classroom, and monitoring their use, to ensure that the student is successful and to prevent abandonment of the AT. Lara will also present and demonstrate various AT examples for written expression, such as Speech to Text, Word Prediction and Spell Check programs. She will provide you with options from pre-installed AT features to those that require a fee, so you may select the right AT that fits your budget. Leave the course with an organized approach to deciding and implementing the use of AT for written expression that you can use the very next day!

Learning Objectives: At the completion of this course, the learner will be able to

1. Identify 3 available options for assistive technology (AT) for written expression
 2. Determine 3 considerations for assessing a student's need for assistive technology (AT) for written expression
 3. Select 3 strategies for effective student instruction and implementation of AT for written expression
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CEUs for OTs and OTAs

6 hours of continuing education training are awarded to learners who complete this course

- Apply EBP, LLC is an AOTA-approved provider of CEUs. Each seminar counts for 0.15 AOTA CEUs for each, for a total of 0.6 AOTA CEUs.

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Accommodation: Contact carlo@applyebp.com for any requests for accommodation.