***Topic # 1***

***The Power of The Pen and Reasons Why***

***Handwriting Is Important***

*“…Recite, and your Lord is the most Generous [96:3], Who taught by the pen [96:4],**Taught man that which he knew not [96:5]…”*

*Holy Quran.*

*The Messenger of Allah peace be upon him said: “The first thing created by Allah was the pen, then, He ordered it to write, so it wrote everything that will happen till the Day of Judgment.”*

*(Narrated by Tirmidhi, Abu-Dawud, and Ahmad).*

1. The brain engages differently when we write something by hand as opposed to typing it on a keyboard or by touching a screen. Studies show that writing improves memory; students retain learning better when working with new ideas through handwriting instead of typing.

2. Engaging the body in writing by hand helps make writing a more holistic activity. There is something uniquely physical and multidimensional about putting pen to paper to form words and sentences.

3. Learning the alphabet by interacting with each letter in many different physical ways helps students imprint and retain the letters and the letter sounds for easier recall when learning to read. Learning letters on a screen engages at most two physical channels: the eyes and the fingertips. It is not possible to tell one letter from another by the shape of the keys. Learning letters through writing them involves numerous tactile experiences, engaging the fine-motor muscles of the fingers and hand, and larger muscles of the arm and body, as well as the eyes.

4. Many writers attest to the value of a handwritten first draft and the subsequent process of reading through and interacting with their writing by annotating, correcting, editing, and reshaping it as a whole. Typing on a screen tempts us instead to edit as we go, fragmenting and dissecting, and potentially interfering with the organic flow of ideas.

5. Even in this digital age, many accomplished people consider it critical to their success to keep a small notebook and pen handy so that they can jot down ideas in the moment and refer back to them later.

6. Many historical documents were written by hand and are now indecipherable to any who are unable to read cursive. The ability to read handwriting is gained through learning to write in one’s own handwriting. Being able to decipher both cursive and print is an important part of language literacy.

7. Handwriting can help us slow down and fully engage with our thoughts. Have you ever heard anyone say, “I type as fast as I think”? This is certainly an asset when transcribing the spoken word, but thoughts need to breathe (as do writers), and writing by hand conveniently holds such a space for thoughts to fully form before being set down in sentences.

8. With a pen in hand, there are instantly accessible creative and artistic opportunities that are not possible to weave into the experience of typing on a keyboard.

9. Handwriting is unique to each individual writer, unlike typeface. One’s handwriting style, and especially one’s signature, is a public and permanent statement. Learning to write well can help make that statement strong, beautiful, and – perhaps most importantly – legible.

10. Handwritten notes to friends and loved ones are intimate and personal in a way that email and typewritten text cannot fully convey. Nothing but handwriting can fully represent the mood and personality of the writer. A handwritten love note is a creative gift to cherish!

11. Proficient writing has a soothing flow and rhythm. While technology and culture is goading us to work faster and more intensely, tasks such as writing can help us find healthy balance in our work, our learning, and our play.

12. Being able to write effortlessly enables the mind to focus more fully on a topic. Struggling with handwriting takes valuable brain energy away from any writing task, but when that skill is mastered, it makes all the difference. Skilled, fluid handwriting is an asset to learning!

*12 Reasons Why Handwriting Is Important*

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