

## **The Why of D'Nealian®**

The D'Nealian lowercase manuscript letters were developed because the "circle-and-stick" method of printing small letters was difficult for children to master. If the child could produce the first stroke of the letter, chances are he or she couldn't get the second and third strokes attached to it in the right places. Another concern was that after the child accomplished the task of learning to print using the circle-and-stick method, he or she was then told to forget everything and learn a new method—cursive. Thus, the D'Nealian lowercase manuscript alphabet was developed. For all but five letters, the lowercase manuscript converts to cursive with the addition of only three connecting strokes. It is, therefore, important to make sure that the letters are produced according to the stroke directions.

To further help the learner, the procedure suggested for teaching or presenting the lowercase letters is skill-progressive. The letters are introduced in common-stroke groups—first, *a, d, o, g, c, e, s*; second, *f, b, l, t, h, k*; third, *i, u, w, y, j, r, n, m, p*; fourth, *q, v, z, x*.