Washington, D.C. … January 2023) On Monday, January 23rd, the Writing Instrument Manufacturers Association will honor the 46th anniversary of National Handwriting Day. The designated day recognizing the art of handwriting was established in 1977 on the birthday of America’s famous scribe, John Hancock.

Created to celebrate the history and influence of penmanship, National Handwriting Day should be honored by picking up a writing instrument and putting pen to paper. Note-taking by Hand Leads to a Higher Level of Learning As the world becomes increasingly more digital, it is important to consider the benefits of keeping a writing instrument in hand. Students, in particular, have been shown to perform better in learning comprehension when taking notes by hand as opposed to digitally. In a study by Pam Mueller (Princeton University) and Daniel Oppenheimer (Carnegie Mellon University), students who “wrote notes by hand had a stronger conceptual understanding and were more successful in applying and integrating the materials than those who took notes with their laptops.” Further the duo went on to claim that “taking notes by hand requires different types of cognitive processing.” Students have demonstrated a deeper understanding of the material when taking notes by hand and are able to postulate concepts and apply learned material to more situations. (Cindi May, Scientific American 2014)

As we recognize National Handwriting Day, WIMA suggests honoring the art of handwriting in any of the following ways:

1. Just write. The simplest way to keep handwriting in our lives is to put pen (or pencil) to paper. Whether it’s a note, a letter or a card, write it down.

2. Sign on the dotted line. Skip the digital signature and perfect your John Hancock in honor of his birthday.

3. Start a diary. Relive your youth and start a diary. Write down your daily innermost thoughts to help you work through internal struggles.

4. Jot down your to dos. Write down your daily to dos in a planner or notebook as it tends to stick more in the memory.

5. Stock up on writing instruments! What better way to honor handwriting day than to splurge on some new pens and pencils.

“The most important thing to do today is pick up a pen or pencil and write. The essence of National Handwriting Day is quite simple, encouraging everyone to keep the art of handwriting alive by picking up your favorite writing instrument and get to work,” says David H. Baker, Executive Director of WIMA.