Paper size  At this level give the child half-sheets of braille paper for brailling. Half-sheets will provide additional practice loading and unloading the braillewriter, be easier for the child to handle, and cut down on waste. They will also be similar to the size of the pages in the child’s book. Either 5 1/2" x 11 1/2" sheets or 4 1/4" x 11" half sheets can be used for most activities at this level.

Finger positions  Put paper in the braillewriter and let the child examine the braillewriter and the paper. Help the child place his fingers on the correct keys. The index fingers of both hands should be on the keys near the center, middle fingers on the keys in the middle on each side, and the ring finger on each side on the extreme left and right. Now have the child try pushing down the first key with the index finger of the left hand while resting the other fingers on the other keys. Encourage the child to check after pushing the keys down to see what is on the paper. Have the child push the key down and release it several times. Repeat with the index finger of the right hand. Have the child try to push two keys down with the index and middle fingers of the left hand and then the right hand. Let the child practice pushing keys down for several minutes. While the child is doing this, you should be able to observe the child’s finger strength and ability to reach the keys. When the bell rings at the end of the line, show the child the line spacing key on the left and have it pushed two times. Then show the child how to push the embossing head lever back to the left margin ready to begin brailling another line. After the child has brailled some more shapes, remove the paper from the braillewriter and have the child examine the braille shapes on it.

Double spacing  On the kindergarten level and through most of the 1st grade level, the child will use double spacing. As you are teaching the child how to line space, always have the line spacer pushed twice for ease of reading. Also always have the child push the line spacer before moving the embossing head so that he won’t accidentally write over the line that was already written.