

# The Prophet's Pen:

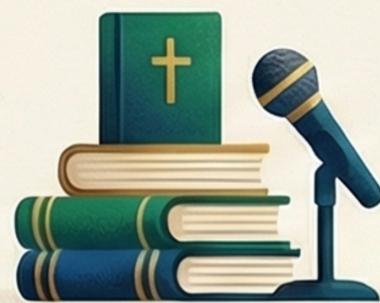
Was Joseph Smith Capable of Writing the Book of Mormon?

## The Claim: An "Illiterate" Prophet



*"Could neither write nor dictate a coherent and well-worded letter."*

Emma Smith, 1879.  
The basis of the argument.



Church Leaders Used This Quote to Argue for Divine Origins



### The Source of the Quote is Unreliable

In the same testimony, Emma Smith verifiably and falsely denied Joseph's practice of polygamy.



## The Evidence: Analysis of Smith's Early Letters

75% → 80%

### His Letters Were Saturated with Biblical Language

of his 1830 letters consist of direct quotes or paraphrases from the Bible.

### He Demonstrated a Deep Command of Scripture

Smith integrated phrases from over 20 different books of the Bible in a single letter.

### Early Writings Support His Authorship of the Book of Mormon

The letters show he had the literary skill and biblical fluency to produce the text.



### Analysis of Letters to Colesville Saints



Aug 1830



Biblical Integration: ~75%

Total Books of the Bible Cited: 19



Dec 1830



Biblical Integration: ~80%

Total Books of the Bible Cited: 21