



Cognition and Learning

Quick Guide to...

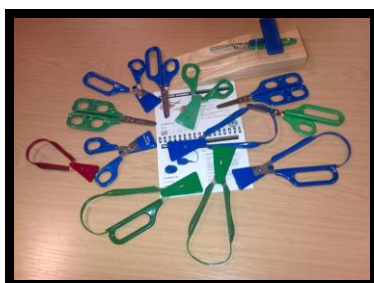
Fine motor skill activities

A good pincer grip, finger strength and hand-eye coordination are all needed to support the development of writing.

The activities listed here can be used on a daily basis as part of a pre-writing or literacy session. They could also be included at other times as part of a brain break.

- Moulding and rolling play dough into balls - using the palms of the hands facing each other and with fingers curled slightly towards the palm.
- Rolling play dough into tiny balls (peas) using only the finger tips.
- Using pegs or small thin sticks to make designs in play dough.
- Cutting play dough with a plastic knife or with a pizza wheel.
- Tearing newspaper into strips and then crumpling them into balls. Use for collage or other art work
- Scrunching up 1 sheet of newspaper in one hand and then using the same single hand push it and flatten it again
- Using a plant sprayer to spray plants or spray a monster pictures drawn with markers so that the colours run when it is sprayed.
- Picking up objects using large tweezers. This can be adapted by picking up large seeds, small cubes, pennies, etc., in counting games.
- Shaking dice by cupping the hands together, forming an empty air space between the palms.
- Using play screwdrivers with their appropriate screws and nuts
- Lacing and sewing activities such as stringing beads, macaroni, etc.
- Using a pipette to "pick up" up water for colour mixing or to make artistic designs on paper –marbling.
- Rolling small balls out of tissue paper and then gluing the balls onto a collage or model.

- Turning over cards, coins, or buttons, without bringing them to the edge of the table.
- Making pictures using stickers or sticky paper.
- Re-enacting known stories with finger puppets focusing on use of the thumb, index, and middle fingers.
- Attach a large piece of drawing paper to the wall or use a vertical white board. Draw lines one at a time. The pupil needs to trace over your line from left to right, or from top to bottom using a different coloured felt pen. Trace each figure at least 10 times. The pupil can then draw the figure next to your model several times, including one time with their eyes shut. Ask the pupil which one they think is best and let them tick this one.
- Catching (clapping) bubbles between hands.
- Pulling off pieces of play-doh with individual fingers and thumb.
- Picking out small objects like pegs, beads, coins, etc., from a tray of salt, sand, rice, or putty. Try it with eyes open and closed. This also helps develop sensory awareness in the hands.



Scissor Activities

Using scissors to practice cutting exercise the same muscles that are used for pencil control. There are different types of scissors available to support the pupil develop this skill.

- Cutting up scrap paper or junk mail.
- Making a fringe on the edge of a piece of paper.
- Cutting play dough with scissors.
- Cutting straws or shredded paper (making confetti) for use in a collage or model making.

It will take a number of sessions for a pupil to become familiar with a new way of working. Review the impact of your new approach at regular intervals, and make adjustments to practice as needed.

If you require further guidance on this Quick Guide or the Graduated Approach, please contact your Specialist Teacher.