

## Pre-Writing Skills



Writing is a tricky task for a child to learn. It involves many different skills including good posture, fine motor skills, hand-eye coordination, motor planning and visual skills. As with all new skills, building up to writing will take time to learn and will require practice. It is important to be patient and have fun with your child while you explore the advice and activities provided below.

### Posture

Good posture for tabletop tasks will support the development of fine motor skills and increased focus. Here are some tips below to help:

- Have your child seated in a suitable sized chair with their hips flex at 90 degrees, feet flat on floor (or footplate), bottom and back supported.
- You can use cushions or rolled up towels to help your child stay sitting up straight in their chair.
- Ensure your child is sitting close to the table and that it is at the right height (elbows comfortably supported).
- Try to keep the table free from clutter, this will encourage them to concentrate on the task.

Information adapted from OT Tool Box (<https://www.theottoolbox.com/chair-posture-while-writing-slouched-handwriting/>)



## Fine Motor Skills

Fine motor skills are one of the core elements of achieving success in writing. These skills include hand strength, using both hands together (bi-lateral integration), using different grips and being able to move an object in the hand (in-hand manipulation). Here are a variety of activities you can try with your child that will help develop all of these skills:

- Messy play e.g. sandpit play or finger painting
- Playdoh activities e.g. making cookies or animals
- Scissor activities
- Gluing and sticking crafts
- Threading beads / Lacing cards
- Stamping crafts
- Posting pots
- Tweezers / Clothes pegs
- Gardening
- Baking
- Games with small pieces – counters, etc.



## Hand-Eye Coordination

The ability to co-ordinate what is being seen by the eyes with your hand movements is a core skill of writing. Here are some ideas on how to work on these skills:

- Throwing & catching / Aiming at a target
- Copying shapes / Tracing
- Stencilling
- Colouring in - staying inside the lines
- Copying lines, patterns and shapes



## Motor Planning

Motor planning skills allow us the ability to plan, organise and sequence movements which is essential to writing. Here are some ideas on how to work on these skills:



- Construction activities e.g. Lego or building models
- Cutting and sticking activities
- Threading and lacing
- Jigsaw puzzles



## Visual Skills

Visual skills are important for learning how to write. These allow us to recognise the similarities and differences between shapes, if things are upside down/inside out or turned over, see how shapes relate to each other and be able to remember information about what has been seen. Here are some ideas on how to work on these skills:

- Dressing – both yourself and dolls, dressing up play
- Snap or Pairs game
- Spot the difference
- Jigsaw puzzles
- Sorting and matching games e.g. sorting buttons
- Mazes



**Most importantly, remember to have fun!**

For more tips, trick and activity ideas, please visit these websites by scanning the QR codes below:



**NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde - Fine Motor Kit**



**Kid Sense Writing Readiness**



**NHS South Warwickshire Handwriting Development**

### **Further resources:**

For more resources to help with developing skills or for further helpful tips and tricks, please visit our website or lookout for our Facebook posts.

[www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/cypot](http://www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/cypot)

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