

Hand Warmups



We know that children and young people sometimes need an opportunity to modulate the pressure needed to hold the pencil and write letters in a given space. Other times, they will need to warm up their muscles much like a runner stretches their legs against a wall before heading out for a jog. While it's not likely that children are going to strain an intrinsic muscle while copying a sentence, they might complain of hand fatigue.

Writing can be a difficult thing for many children and waking up those muscles of the hands and body is smart to do in a fun and relaxed way, and also encourages the brain and muscles to work together as a team.

Choose a selection of these exercises to create a warm-up that lasts 2 – 4 minutes:

Hand Warm-ups Ideas

- **10 jumping jacks**
- **10 wall push ups** – stand facing a wall and take one step back. With both hands on the wall, slowly bend your arms so that nose comes towards (not touching) the wall and then straighten arms.
- **10 chair push-ups** -Put your hands on the sides of your chair and push yourself up and down. You can keep feet on the floor.
- **10 shoulder shrugs** – slowly raise your shoulders towards your ears then release.
- **10 Butterflies** – Begin with arms straightened in front of you. Link your thumbs together to make an “X” and turn your hands facing out. Using the shoulders to move, make small circles with the hands. 10 to the left then 10 to the right (remember the movement from the shoulders, not the fingers and hands).
- **Finger opposition** -Touch your thumb to each finger; do this 5 times on each hand.



- Warm-up the hands with a **light massage**. Rub palms of hands together quickly to generate a little heat and along the back of hands. Use thumb to rub palms, each finger up to the fingertips and in between the fingers. Swap hands.



- **Praying position** – push hands together, holding hands close to chest and hold for 5 – 10 seconds.



- **Pulling position** – hook fingers together and firmly pull hands apart, without losing your grasp, and hold for 5 – 10 seconds.

- **Finger taps** – tap fingers one at a time on a tabletop. Tap out a sequence they can try to copy.

- **10 fist releases** - hold for count of five then spread fingers into stars and repeat.



- **Pencil walks** – hold the pencil with a tripod grasp then walk fingers up the pencil shaft and back down again using their writing hand only.

- **Pencils twirls** – twirl your pencils in the air like a baton, spinning them both vertically and horizontally. This combines some shoulder and finger exercises together.

You will now be ready to start writing!!



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

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