



# Developing Handwriting Skills





## Hand Activities

- Hand turning – place hands down on table. Turn left palm up. Now turn right palm up at the same time as the left hand turns palm down. Keep turning, speeding up until the rhythm breaks down.
- Clenched fist – both hands on the table, one clenched, and one stretched out. Swap clenching and stretching, building up rhythm and pace.
- Drumming fingers – using table top. Tap each finger in order, then reverse the order, one hand followed by the other.
- Threading beads – one hand holds string while other hand threads beads.
- Put dice (appropriate size) in palm of hand. Fingers turn dice to show given number of spots.
- Use tweezers to pick up and place a number of small objects into a container.

## Handwriting Resource/Programmes

**“Write from the Start”** by Lois Addy and Ion Teodorescu – a perceptuo-motor approach to handwriting.

**“A Hand for Spelling”** by Charles Cripps – programme which teaches spelling and handwriting together.

**“Speed Up”** by Lois Addy – a kinaesthetic programme to develop fluent handwriting.

**Writestart Desktop** – Angled board with non-slip surface.

**Write Angle** – angled board with non-slip surface, non-slip feet.

**Tri-gro Grips** - Uniquely designed contoured pencil grips.

**Right Line Paper with Raised Lines**

**Handhugger Crayons/Pens/Felt-tips** –Berol.

**Triangular Pencils (Thick & Thin)**


***Yoropens/pencils***

**Stabilo** especially for lefthanders




## Handwriting Difficulties

### Observable Characteristics:

- Letter sizes vary in height
- Slant of letters irregular
- Reversals, inversions, fragmented
- Mirror writing 
- No regularity of spacing
- Margins increase
- Head almost on the table
- Shoulders hunched
- Awkward pencil grip
- Complains of aching wrist or hand

## Classroom Adaptations

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Teach cursive writing early</li><li>• Consider a sloping surface</li><li>• Provide templates for paper slant</li><li>• Try out a variety of pencil grips, pens and pencils</li><li>• Consider paper with raised lines or with coloured lines - Taskmaster</li><li>• On the blackboard, mark the beginning and end of each line with a shape or number</li></ul>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Limit copying from the board</li><li>• Left-handers sit to the left</li><li>• When writing in books, use green and red spots to show start and finish</li><li>• Furniture sizes – with adaptations</li><li>• Hand aerobics</li><li>• Use on-screen word and sentence banks e.g. Clicker 4</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hand and finger exercises / rhymes / activities</li><li>• Air tracing beginning with circular movements</li><li>• Mazes and pathways</li><li>• Dot-to-dot</li><li>• Finger painting</li><li>• Sand / lentil tray to trace letters or words</li><li>• Trace letters on table or hand</li><li>• Whiteboard and dry pens</li><li>• Use of wrist weights to help increase pressure</li><li>• Light-up pens to reduce pressure</li><li>• Carbon paper sandwich to reduce pressure</li><li>• Typing tutor – computer based</li><li>• Dycem non-slip matting</li></ul>
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## **Activities to Encourage the Development of Fine Motor Control**

- Finger Exercises
- Sit at a table. Move fingers as if playing fast music on the piano.
- Sit with heel of hands together with fingers curled, fingertips apart. Touch corresponding tips one at a time. Try and do it faster and faster.
- Use Playdoh to squash and roll.
- Use pegs to clip onto a card or paper plate (latter could support learning of time).
- Pop bubble wrap with thumb and index finger.
- Place a soft ball in palm of hand. Tap it with one finger at a time.
- One hand at a time, wriggle fingers individually. Try to keep other fingers still.
- Turn cube in fingers.
- Put pegs in a pegboard and take them out.
- Build a tower with building blocks (one hand).
- Finger 'press-ups' Progress Chart.