

Handwriting

There is more to handwriting than just placing a pencil in your child's hand. Learning to write requires the integration of cognitive, motor and perceptual skills. The body must support the brain.

Motor:

- Posture - Your child needs to sit squarely in the chair with his/her feet flat on the floor, knees and hips are at 90
- Pencil Grasp - Your child needs to hold his pencil using a tripod grasp. A pencil grip may help to facilitate a tripod grasp
- Eye hand coordination - The eye needs to work together with and at the same speed as the hand
- Visual Memory - ability to recall what the letter looks like
- Bilateral Coordination - ability to use two hands in an activity



Cognitive/Perceptual

- Your child needs to have the ability to copy basic lines and shapes.
- Your child needs to have directional concepts and similarities.

Wake up hands

▪ Spider on the mirror

Exercise: Place left hand in front of the body with the palm up and elbow in positioned against the body.. Place the right hand with palm down on top with fingertips touching. Bend the fingers until all fingertips touch each other (pushup). Extend fingers until palms touch (spider falls down). Repeat 10x. Turn hands over so the right is on the bottom and the left on top. Repeat 10x.

Benefits: Increases the movement of the fingers needed for writing, develops palmar arches, facilitates wrist movement and coordination of the shoulder arm complex needed for handwriting.

Activate the brain

▪ Double Doodle® www.braingym.org

Exercise: Place a crayon in each hand. Have child begin by scribbling. Progress to making shapes and writing name. Create art work where each hand produces a side of a drawing. The key is to use both hands at the same time. Write spelling words using both hands. Write answers to math facts using both hands.



Benefits: increases eye hand coordination, hemispheric communication, improves ability to follow direction and left right awareness.

▪ Infinity ∞

Exercise: Place an infinity on the wall or table. Begin with the dominant hand and move around the ∞ starting up and to the left, around, crossing at the middle, up and around, back through the middle. Repeat with the other hand. Then both hands together. Complete each pattern 5-8 times. The key is to move slowly so that the eye has time to track the hand.



Benefits: Increases eye-muscle coordination, increases the ability to cross visual midline, aids with the mechanics of reading and helps with reading comprehension.



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"Pilot Study: First-Grade Students Improve Their Writing Skills," by Debra Honegger, Ohio. From Brain Gym® Journal, March 2004, Volume XVIII, No. 1

