

Occupational Therapy: Children, Young People & Families Department

# 2: Hand Skills

Intervention Programme for Schools



Occupational Therapy: Children, Young People & Families Department  
12/1/2015

## Intervention programme 2: HAND SKILLS

**Aims:** To develop fine motor skills:

- pincer grip,
- hand strength,
- visual-motor integration,
- bilateral integration,
- memory and perception,
- spatial awareness and planning.

**Functional outcomes:** using pencil and scissors, starting to do fastenings, cutlery use.

### Introduction

The activities in this programme are designed to build on the Foundation Skills. In each session, the pencil skills and scissor skills activities are designed to complement each other, working on the same shapes to reinforce learning.

### A note on progress

Some children will take several sessions practicing a particular skill before they master it. In this case, it is advisable to repeat the same activity each session until some improvement is seen, rather than move on to the next stage before they are ready.

For example, if the child is struggle with drawing vertical lines, keep practicing these each session, rather than moving on to horizontal lines or curves. Similarly, with scissor skills, don't move on to more advanced shapes until the child is reasonably secure with the simpler shapes.

### Before you start...

- Complete the “**Which Programme?**” Fine Motor Skills screening form to make sure you are choosing the appropriate programme for the child
- Fill in the **Baseline Assessment** (see back of booklet) to get an idea of how the child is performing now.

### Remember...

- To fill in the **Session Completion** (see back of booklet) list to keep track of which sessions the child has completed.

- To re-do the **Baseline Assessment** at the end to see how much progress the child has made.

## Further information

You can find more information and resources on our website:

[www.swft.nhs.uk/our-services/children-and-young-peoples-services/occupational-therapy](http://www.swft.nhs.uk/our-services/children-and-young-peoples-services/occupational-therapy)

## Overview

Week 1	Warm up	Main activities
<b>Session 1:</b>	Arm wake-up routine Playdough sausages/ snakes	<u>Scissors</u> – straws, playdough <u>Pencil skills</u> – colouring on a vertical surface Coin posting
<b>Session 2:</b>	Wall push-ups	<u>Scissors</u> – cutting up narrow strips of card Unicubes/ pop-together pegs Threading Cheerios on straws <u>Pencil skills</u> – dots Hungry Horace
<b>Session 3:</b>	Shoulder spirals; Rubber band stretch	Tearing paper into strips <u>Scissors</u> – straight lines Playdough and peg treasure hunt <u>Pencil skills</u> – vertical lines
Week 2	Warm up	Main activities
<b>Session 1:</b>	Arm wake-up routine Playdough	<u>Scissors</u> – cutting round edge of paper plate <u>Pencil skills</u> – vertical lines Pegboard patterns Threading beads on string
<b>Session 2:</b>	Wall push-ups	<u>Scissors</u> – cutting straight lines within margins <u>Pencil skills</u> – horizontal lines Clothes peg match Button sorting
<b>Session 3:</b>	Shoulder spirals; Rubber band stretch	Peg tweezers/ tweezer game Bubblewrap popping <u>Pencil skills</u> – horizontal lines Finger football
Week 3	Warm up	Main activities
<b>Session 1:</b>	Arm wake-up routine Playdough	<u>Scissors</u> - curved lines <u>Pencil skills</u> – Curves Pegboard patterns Paperclip chains
<b>Session 2:</b>	Wall push-ups	<u>Scissors</u> : playdough hedgehogs Playdough monsters Mini sponge/ pom pom painting <u>Pencil skills</u> : curves Hungry Horace
<b>Session 3:</b>	Shoulder spirals; rubber band stretch	<u>Scissors</u> : curves Clothes peg tweezers and pompoms Button snakes <u>Pencil skills</u> : curves

<b>Week 4</b>	<b>Warm up</b>	<b>Main activities</b>
<b>Session 1:</b>	Arm wake-up routine	Pegboard patterns Threading – lacing cards <u>Pencil skills</u> : – circles Nuts and bolts
<b>Session 2:</b>	Wall push-ups	<u>Scissors</u> : circles Tweezer beans Buttoning – large buttons, shirt in front <u>Pencil skills</u> : circles Hungry Horace
<b>Session 3:</b>	Shoulder spirals; Rubber band stretch	Buttoning – large buttons, shirt on Hole punching <u>Pencil skills</u> : circles Pencil aerobics
<b>Week 5</b>	<b>Warm up</b>	<b>Main activities</b>
<b>Session 1:</b>	Arm wake-up routine Playdough	Pegboard patterns Threading – lacing cards <u>Pencil skills</u> – squares Cutlery – cutting using knife
<b>Session 2:</b>	Wall push-ups	<u>Scissors</u> : squares Card and peg creatures Tweezer beans <u>Pencil skills</u> – squares Hungry Horace
<b>Session 3:</b>	Shoulder spirals; Rubberband stretch	Buttoning – small buttons, shirt in front Marble and golf tee balance <u>Pencil skills</u> – diagonals Coin shift
<b>Week 6</b>	<b>Warm up</b>	<b>Main activities</b>
<b>Session 1:</b>	Arm wake-up routine Playdough - sausages	Cutlery – cutting with a knife, stabilising with hand <u>Scissors</u> – zig zags <u>Pencil skills</u> – diagonals Pegboard patterns
<b>Session 2:</b>	Wall push-ups	Tweezer beans Spinning tops <u>Pencil skills</u> : diagonals/ crosses <u>Scissors</u> : zigzags Hungry Horace
<b>Session 3:</b>	Shoulder spirals; Rubber band stretch	Pencil aerobics Buttoning – small buttons, shirt on Cutlery – knife and fork together <u>Pencil skills</u> : diagonals /crosses Coin shift

## Week 1: Session 1

### Resources:

- Playdough
- Straws
- Scissors
- Large pieces of paper attached to the wall
- Stubby crayons/marker pens/chunky chalks
- Coins or counters
- A posting box (this can be a moneybox or a cardboard box with a suitable size hole cut in it)

### Warm-up:

#### Arm wake-ups

- Shrug your shoulders to your ears then back down.
- Touch the sky, keeping your shoulders down.
- Touch your shoulders – hand to same shoulder
- Touch your shoulders – hand to opposite shoulder
- Push down on the desk
- Hold your hands out, palm up, then palm down
- Push palms together
- Pull hands apart
- Link your hands together and circle your wrists, one way then the other
- Make a fist, thumbs up and give them a wiggle
- Touch each finger to your thumb, one at a time, making a big circle.
- Shake your hands out – you're ready to begin!

#### Playdough sausages/snakes



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Use both hands together to gradually roll an even-sized length of dough. Ensure the body remains still, the shoulders relaxed and the arms move from the shoulders. Isolate the thumb and each individual finger consecutively to press down on the snake of dough; first one hand then the other. Pinch/squeeze the snake between thumb and individual finger tips consecutively, one hand and then the other.

Roll the snake into a ball on the tabletop with one hand. Pick up and squeeze as hard as possible with one hand. Roll dough into a ball between two hands and squeeze as hard as possible using the other hand.

## **Main activities:**

### **Scissors – preparing to use**

First, make a loose fist. Now, using your thumb, index and middle finger make a bird's beak (or alligator's mouth) and open and close it, keeping the ring and little finger tucked away. See if you can open and close the "mouth" rhythmically – this is the action you will use for cutting.

Pick up the scissors and position the wrist so that the thumb is turned upward, the thumb joint resting inside the thumb loop. Make sure the tip of the middle finger is inside the opposite loop. Some scissors have enough space for the middle and ring fingers to be positioned inside this loop.

Place the index finger outside the loop, in front of the middle finger serving as a "guide".

The ring finger and little should be curled into the palm (unless the ring finger is inside the loop with the middle finger).

If the child is struggling to hold the wrist in the 'thumbs up' position, try holding the paper above eye level or taping it to the wall so that the child is cutting upwards. You can try **drawing a smiley face on the thumbnail** of the cutting hand: you should always be able to see the smiley face while cutting.

*Repeat this preparatory exercise each time you use scissors, until the technique is mastered.*

### **Scissors – cutting up straws, cutting up playdough sausages**

Roll out the playdough sausages so they are really thin, then cut them up into little pieces using the scissors. Focus on a good scissor technique, with thumbs facing upwards. Make sure the elbows aren't resting on the table, squeezed against your ribs, or up in the air: they should just be gently by your sides. Demonstrate how to hold the scissors, and give hand-over-hand guidance if required. Next, cut up some straws, using single cuts.

*You can extend this activity by threading the pieces of straw onto kebab sticks, or sticking them onto card to make a picture. Or save the pieces of straw for the next session and thread them on to kebab sticks.*



Correct scissor grip.  
Thumb is facing up and index finger is outside the loop.



Incorrect scissor grip.  
Thumb is facing down and hand is in a fist.

### **Pencil skills – colouring on a vertical surface**

Attach some paper to the wall (or use a chalkboard). Using stubby crayons or chalks, colour in the paper. If the children are at a scribbling stage, that is fine. If children are able to, they can create a picture, or colour in a large, simple shape.

### **Coin posting**

Position the coins on your dominant side (on your right side if you are right handed), and steady the posting box with your non-dominant hand.

Start by picking up one coin or counter at a time and posting it into the box. Make sure to use a **pincer grip** (fingertips) not the side of your finger.

Next, pick up two coins, and hold one in the palm of the hand, using the ring and little finger to keep it in place, while posting the other.

Try placing a coin in the palm of your hand and using the fingers and thumb of that hand to move the coin up to your fingertips. Don't cheat by tipping the hand to slide the coin down the palm!

*You can use this activity to work on numeracy or coin recognition.*

## Week 1: Session 2

### Resources:

- Scissors
- Strips of thin card (some 1cm wide, some 3cm wide)
- Unicubes or pop-together beads
- Cheerios, dried pasta tubes or beads
- Straws, kebab sticks or dried spaghetti
- Playdough
- Chunky pencils, markers, crayons or chalks
- Do-a-dot printable worksheets (optional)
- Large pieces of paper/ chalkboard/ whiteboard
- “Hungry Horace” (tennis ball with a slit cut in for a “mouth”)
- Small items for posting (coins/counters, mini pompoms, buttons, beads, dried beans)

### Warm-up:

#### **Wall push-ups**

Stand in front of a wall about arm's length away from it. Lift your arms up to shoulder level and place your hands on the wall so they are a little bit wider than your shoulders.

Breathe in as you slowly bend your elbows to lean into the wall.

Breathe out as you push to straighten your arms.

Start with five and see if you can build that up. Don't rush the move!

A lot of children have “bendy” elbows – in this case, try not to “lock” your elbows when you straighten them. Instead, don't straighten your arms all the way.



### Main activities:

#### **Scissors – cutting up narrow strips of card**

***Repeat the scissors preparation exercise (Week 1, Session 1) before beginning.***

Prepare some narrow strips of card, some about 1cm wide and some about 3cm wide. Start with the narrower strips, cut these up using a single cut. Then move on to the wider strips, using two or more cuts. Focus on a good scissor technique, and make sure to steady the card with your thumb on top.

*You can extend this activity by using the pieces of card to make mosaic pictures.*

## Unicubes/ pop-together beads

Make a chain using unicubes or pop together beads. Use a pincer grip.

*You can use this activity to work on matching or sequencing colours, or numeracy.*

*See if the child can copy a pattern you make.*



## Threading on straws

Place a lump of playdough on the table, on your non-dominant side (left for a right-handed child) and insert some straws (or kebab sticks).

Steady the playdough with the non-dominant hand, and then thread Cheerios, dried pasta, or beads onto the straws or sticks, making sure you are using a pincer grip and tucking the ring and little finger away. You can use a spare Cheerio or a piece of blutak under these fingers to make sure they stay tucked.

Check beforehand that whatever you are threading fits onto the straws or sticks! For an even bigger challenge, thread Cheerios or beads onto dried spaghetti – start with shorter sticks and progress to longer sticks.

## Pencil skills – dots

**See the resources at the end of this booklet.**

Attach some paper to the wall, or use a chalkboard or whiteboard. Using chunky markers (or chalks), make dots on the paper.

The teacher can draw some small circles – see if you can make a dot inside them.

Or print out a picture of a spotty animal and see if you can fill in the dots.

A more advanced activity would be to fill in a maze path, shape outlines or letter outlines with dots.



## Hungry Horace

Hold Horace in your non-dominant hand and place the items for posting on the dominant side.

Using a **pincer grip**, pick up one item at a time and feed it to Horace. You can also try picking up two items at a time, and keeping one in the palm of the hand while posting the other.

## Week 1: Session 3

### Resources:

- Rubber bands of different sizes
- Tissue paper/newspaper
- Scissors
- Thin card/paper - green
- Playdough
- Pegs or beads
- Chunky pencils, markers, crayons or chalks
- Vertical lines worksheet (optional)
- Large pieces of paper/ chalkboard/ whiteboard

### Warm-up:

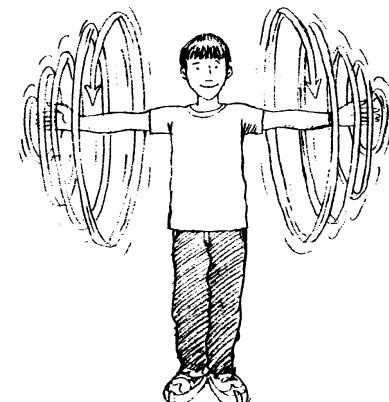
#### **Shoulder spirals**

Hold both arms out horizontally to the side and start to circle them, initially making small circles but gradually getting larger until the circles are as large as possible, (this should take about 5 rotations).

Keep the circles controlled – don't rush them! Try some in slow motion.

When the circles have reached full size, change direction and gradually reduce the circles, (again taking about 5 rotations) to get back to the smallest size.

Start by trying to complete 3 spiral sequences then gradually build up the number you can do. Aim to do 10 spiral sequences comfortably.



#### **Rubber band stretch**

Place a rubber band around the fingers and thumb. Now slowly stretch the fingers out and then relax them back in. Start with five and then build up to ten. Add extra bands or thicker bands if it is too easy.

A loop of playdough can be used instead of rubber bands.

### Main activities:

#### **Tearing paper into strips**

Take a sheet of tissue or newspaper. Using a pincer grip, try to tear it up into neat strips. Now roll the strips up into little balls.

*You can extend this activity by using the strips or balls of paper to make pictures.*

## Scissors – cutting along straight lines and stopping (grass)

Repeat the scissors preparation exercise (Week 1, Session 1) before beginning.



Using thin green card, mark a line about halfway along its length. Now cut strips along one side of the card as far as the line to make grass.

*You can extend this activity by using the “grass” as part of a picture, or linking the edges to turn it into a grass crown. Add some flowers for decoration.*

## Playdough and peg treasure hunt

Take a lump of playdough and warm it up by squashing and squeezing it. Now hide some beads or pegs in it and scrunch it up again. Find the pegs by using both hands to dig, stretch and press into the putty. Have a race!

## Pencil skills – vertical lines

**See the resources at the end of this booklet.**

Attach some paper to the wall, or use a chalkboard or whiteboard. Mark some dots or a line along the top, or place some stickers along the top – this will be the starting point. The instructor should demonstrate how to draw the line, verbalising to start at the top and draw straight down to the bottom. Draw the shape in the sky first, then the board.

Using chunky crayons, markers or chalk, draw vertical lines. Start at the top and draw down. A line or stickers at the bottom may help with aim.

You can use a template to help, for example, some widely spaced lines to keep between.

Once you have tried on a vertical surface, sit down at the table and repeat the task.

*You can extend this activity with worksheets – some examples and web links are included in the resource section at the back – or with your own drawing tasks or multisensory activities, such as drawing in sand, making vertical lines in chalk on an outside wall or playground surface, or using rope, scarves or ribbon to make vertical lines on the floor and then walking along them.*



## Week 2: Session 1

### Resources:

- Playdough
- Scissors
- Paper plates
- Paint and brushes / crayons or pens
- Chunky pencils, markers, crayons or chalks
- Vertical lines worksheet (optional)
- Large pieces of paper/ chalkboard/ whiteboard
- Pegs and pegboard
- Beads and laces

### Warm-up:

#### Arm wake-ups

- Shrug your shoulders to your ears then back down.
- Touch the sky, keeping your shoulders down.
- Touch your shoulders – hand to same shoulder
- Touch your shoulders – hand to opposite shoulder
- Push down on the desk
- Hold your hands out, palm up, then palm down
- Push palms together
- Pull hands apart
- Link your hands together and circle your wrists, one way then the other
- Make a fist, thumbs up and give them a wiggle
- Touch each finger to your thumb, one at a time, making a big circle.
- Shake your hands out – you're ready to begin!

### Playdough nest

Warm the playdough up by squashing and squeezing it into a ball. Break off a big chunk and roll it into a ball. Now pinch and press round the edges to turn it into a nest. Next, break off smaller chunks of the playdough and roll these into eggs. Try to roll these out between the tip of your thumb and forefinger.

## **Main activities:**



### **Scissors – cutting round edge of paper plate**

*Repeat the scissors preparation exercise (Week 1, Session 1) before beginning.*

Take a paper plate and cut around the edge of it. Turn the plate into a lion's face, or a flower.

### **Pencil skills – vertical lines**

**See the resources at the end of this booklet.**

Attach some paper to the wall, or use a chalkboard or whiteboard. Mark some dots or a line along the top, or place some stickers along the top – this will be the starting point. The instructor should demonstrate how to draw the line, verbalising to start at the top and draw straight down to the bottom. Draw the shape in the sky first, then the board.

Using chunky crayons, markers or chalk, draw vertical lines. Start at the top and draw down. A line or stickers at the bottom may help with aim.

You can use a template to help, for example, some widely spaced lines to keep between.

Once you have tried on a vertical surface, sit down at the table and repeat the task.

If accuracy is difficult, try sticking down lolly sticks, straws or pipe cleaners, or use 3D glue or paint to mark the margins.

*You can extend this activity with worksheets – some examples and web links are included in the resource section at the back – or with your own drawing tasks or multisensory activities, such as drawing in sand, making vertical lines in chalk on an outside wall or playground surface, or using rope, scarves or ribbon to make vertical lines on the floor and then walking along them.*

### **Pegboard patterns**

Position a pegboard on the child's non-dominant side, with the pegs on the dominant side. Make sure you are using a pincer grip. Steady the pegboard with your non-dominant hand. Pick up one peg at a time and place them carefully in the pegboard, starting on the left hand side of the board and working to the right. Don't use the table or your body to help you turn the peg around – just use your fingers! Now try holding one peg in the palm of your hand while placing another peg.

You can use this activity to work on matching or sequencing colours, or numeracy. See if the child can copy a pattern you make. Show them a pattern then hide it and see if they can remember it.



### Threading large beads on string

Make a necklace by threading beads onto a lace. Remember to use a pincer grip. If a lace and beads is too difficult, thread pasta tubes or Cheerios on to a straw or kebab stick.

You can use this activity to work on matching or sequencing colours, or numeracy. See if the child can copy a pattern you make. Show them a pattern then hide it and see if they can remember it.

## Week 2: Session 2

### Resources:

- Scissors
- Scissor worksheets – straight lines
- Large pieces of paper/ chalkboard/ whiteboard
- Chunky pencils, markers, crayons or chalks
- Horizontal lines worksheets (optional)
- Clothes pegs
- Coloured stickers
- Selection of buttons
- Eggboxes or ice cube trays

### Warm-up:

#### **Wall push-ups**

Stand in front of a wall about arm's length away from it. Lift your arms up to shoulder level and place your hands on the wall so they are a little bit wider than your shoulders.

Breathe in as you slowly bend your elbows to lean into the wall.

Breathe out as you push to straighten your arms.

Start with five and see if you can build that up. Don't rush the move!

A lot of children have "bendy" elbows – in this case, try not to "lock" your elbows when you straighten them. Instead, don't straighten your arms all the way.



### Main activities:

#### **Scissors – cutting straight lines within margins**

*Repeat the scissors preparation exercise (Week 1, Session 1) before beginning.*

Use worksheets with straight lines (see resources) and cut between the lines. Use narrower margins as the accuracy improves. If accuracy is difficult, try sticking down lolly sticks, straws or pipe cleaners, or use 3D glue or paint to mark the margins.

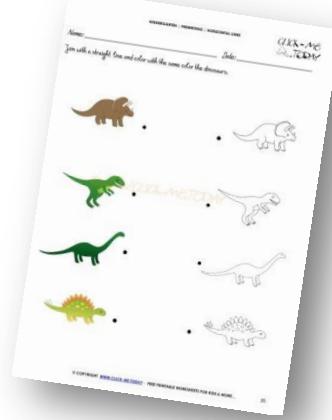


## **Pencil skills – Horizontal Lines**

**See the resources at the end of this booklet.**

Attach some paper to the wall, or use a chalkboard or whiteboard. Mark some dots or a line or place some stickers along the left-hand side – this will be the starting point. The instructor should demonstrate how to draw the line, verbalising to start at the left and draw straight across to the right. Draw the shape in the sky first, then the board.

Using chunky crayons, markers or chalk, draw horizontal lines. Start at the left and draw right. A line or stickers on the right may help with aim.



You can use a template to help, for example, some widely spaced lines to keep between. If children are having real difficulty, stick some lolly sticks, pipe cleaners or straws to the paper to form a tactile guideline to draw between.

Once you have tried on a vertical surface, sit down at the table and repeat the task.

*You can extend this activity with worksheets – some links are included in the resource section at the back – or with your own drawing tasks or multisensory activities, such as drawing in sand, making horizontal lines in chalk on an outside wall or playground surface, or using rope, scarves or ribbon to make horizontal lines on the floor and then walking along them sideways.*

## **Clothes peg match**

	
This is an incorrect clothes peg hold, using the side of the index finger.	This is a better pincer grip, using the tips of the thumb and index finger.

Prepare some clothes pegs by marking them in pairs using coloured dots (stickers or paint) or by gluing on little pictures (animals, fruit, letters or numbers).

Place half the clothes pegs on your right and half on your left. Now use your dominant hand to pick up a peg and reach across your body to find its pair. Match the clothes pegs up by attaching them to a piece of string attached to the wall, or the edge of a cardboard box.

You can also play this game with cards, using clothes pegs to attach them to the string or box.

Make sure you use a pincer grip to open and close the pegs – don't use the side of your finger.

### **Button sorting**

Place an empty eggbox or ice cube tray on your non-dominant side and hold it steady with that hand. Place a pot of buttons or different coloured mini pompoms on the dominant side. Using a pincer grip, pick up the items one at a time and sort them into the container by colour (or size or number of holes).

To make this more challenging, pick up the mini pompoms with tweezers, or using clothes pegs.

## Week 2: Session 3

### Resources:

- Rubber bands of different sizes
- Clothes pegs or childrens tweezers (or a commercial tweezer game)
- Dried beans
- Small ball or pieces of scrunched up paper
- Bubblewrap
- Large pieces of paper/ chalkboard/ whiteboard
- Chunky pencils, markers, crayons or chalks
- Horizontal lines worksheets (optional)

### Warm-up:

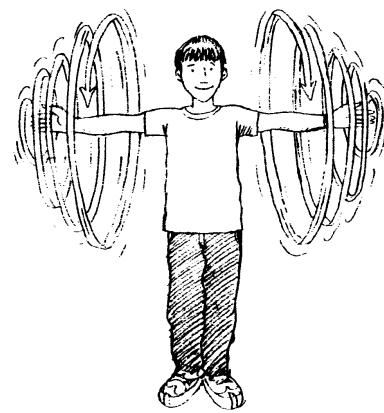
#### **Shoulder spirals**

Hold both arms out horizontally to the side and start to circle them, initially making small circles but gradually getting larger until the circles are as large as possible, (this should take about 5 rotations).

Keep the circles controlled – don't rush them! Try some in slow motion.

When the circles have reached full size, change direction and gradually reduce the circles, (again taking about 5 rotations) to get back to the smallest size.

Start by trying to complete 3 spiral sequences then gradually build up the number you can do. Aim to do 10 spiral sequences comfortably.



#### **Rubber band stretch**

Place a rubber band around the fingers and thumb. Now slowly stretch the fingers out and then relax them back in. Start with five and then build up to ten. Add extra bands or thicker bands if it is too easy.

A loop of playdough can be used instead of rubber bands.

### Main activities:

#### **Clothes peg tweezers/ tweezer game**

Place an empty eggbox or ice cube tray on your non-dominant side and hold it steady with that hand. Using children's tweezers (or clothes pegs as tweezers), pick up one bean at a time and place it in the container. Make sure you are using a good tripod grip, not the sides of your fingers! (You can also play this game with sweets.) If you have a commercial tweezer game, such as *Operation* or *Feed the Puppy*, you can play this instead. You can also buy children's training chopsticks to play this kind of game.

## **Bubblewrap popping**

Take some bubblewrap and pop the individual bubbles, using a pincer grip.

## **Pencil skills – Horizontal Lines**

Attach some paper to the wall, or use a chalkboard or whiteboard. Mark some dots or a line or place some stickers along the left-hand side – this will be the starting point. The instructor should demonstrate how to draw the line, verbalising to start at the left and draw straight across to the right. Draw the shape in the sky first, then the board.

Using chunky crayons, markers or chalk, draw horizontal lines. Start at the left and draw right. A line or stickers on the right may help with aim.

You can use a template to help, for example, some widely spaced lines to keep between. If children are having real difficulty, stick some lolly sticks, pipe cleaners or straws to the paper to form a tactile guideline to draw between.

Once you have tried on a vertical surface, sit down at the table and repeat the task.

*You can extend this activity with worksheets – some examples and web links are included in the resource section at the back – or with your own drawing tasks or multisensory activities, such as drawing in sand, making horizontal lines in chalk on an outside wall or playground surface, or using rope, scarves or ribbon to make horizontal lines on the floor and then walking along them sideways.*

## **Finger football**

Use a small ball or scrunch up some little pieces of paper to make a ball. Set up a goal at each end of the table and play a game of finger football. Use the index finger and thumb to flick the football towards the goal.

## Week 3: Session 1

### Resources:

- Playdough
- Scissors
- Scissor worksheets – curved lines
- Large pieces of paper/ chalkboard/ whiteboard
- Chunky pencils, markers, crayons or chalks
- Pencil worksheets - curves
- Pegboard and pegs
- Paperclips

### Warm-up:

#### **Arm wake-ups**

- Shrug your shoulders to your ears then back down.
- Touch the sky, keeping your shoulders down.
- Touch your shoulders – hand to same shoulder
- Touch your shoulders – hand to opposite shoulder
- Push down on the desk
- Hold your hands out, palm up, then palm down
- Push palms together
- Pull hands apart
- Link your hands together and circle your wrists, one way then the other
- Make a fist, thumbs up and give them a wiggle
- Touch each finger to your thumb, one at a time, making a big circle.
- Shake your hands out – you're ready to begin!

#### **Playdough nest**

Warm the playdough up by squashing and squeezing it into a ball. Break off a big chunk and roll it into a ball. Now pinch and press round the edges to turn it into a nest. Next, break off smaller chunks of the playdough and roll these into eggs. Try to roll these out between the tip of your thumb and forefinger.

## **Main activities:**



### **Pencil skills – Curved lines**

Attach some paper to the wall, or use a chalkboard or whiteboard. Draw curved lines. Draw the shape in the sky first, then the board. Make sure you are reaching across your body, from left to right. You can start with a simple rainbow shape, then try a row of smaller curves. These can be hills, or a frog jumping from lily pad to lily pad. Use stickers as targets to help with aim and make sure you work from left to right. Try to keep the curves the same size. Now try while sitting at the desk. Make the curves smaller.

### **Scissors - curved lines**

***Repeat the scissors preparation exercise (Week 1, Session 1) before beginning.***

Use worksheets with curved lines (see resources), and cut between the lines. Use narrower margins as the accuracy improves. If accuracy is difficult, try sticking down Wikistiks or pipe cleaners, or use 3D glue or paint to mark the margins.



### **Pegboard patterns**

Position a pegboard on the child's non-dominant side, with the pegs on the dominant side. Make sure you are using a pincer grip. Steady the pegboard with your non-dominant hand. Pick up one peg at a time and place them carefully in the pegboard, starting on the left hand side of the board and working to the right. Don't use the table or your body to help you turn the peg around – just use your fingers! Now try holding one peg in the palm of your hand while placing another peg.

*You can use this activity to work on matching or sequencing colours, or numeracy. See if you can copy a pattern. What about copying from memory?*



### **Paperclip chains**

Demonstrate how to hook together paper clips to make a chain. Different coloured paperclips are more appealing! See if you can make a repeating pattern of different colours.

## Week 3: Session 2

### Resources:

- Scissors
- Playdough
- Pegs or beads
- Clothes pegs
- Pieces of straw, pipecleaners
- Goggly eyes
- Mini sponges or pompoms
- Poster paint
- Large pieces of paper/ chalkboard/ whiteboard
- Chunky pencils, markers, crayons or chalks
- Pencil worksheets – curves
- Hungry Horace (tennis ball with slit cut into it for a “mouth”)
- Small items for posting (coins/counters, mini pompoms, buttons, beads, dried beans)

### Warm-up:

#### **Wall push-ups**

Stand in front of a wall about arm's length away from it. Lift your arms up to shoulder level and place your hands on the wall so they are a little bit wider than your shoulders.

Breathe in as you slowly bend your elbows to lean into the wall.

Breathe out as you push to straighten your arms.

Start with five and see if you can build that up. Don't rush the move!

A lot of children have “bendy” elbows – in this case, try not to “lock” your elbows when you straighten them. Instead, don't straighten your arms all the way.



### Main activities:

#### **Scissors - playdough hedgehogs**

Make a ball of playdough and place it on the table. Now snip with your scissors to make the spikes of the hedgehog. Add some beads or pegs for nose, eyes, legs.



## Playdough monsters

Shape the playdough into a body shape for your monster. Add pieces of straw, pipecleaners, googly eyes and beads to decorate your monster.



## Mini sponge/ pom pom painting

Take some mini pom-poms or little pieces of sponge and use these as little paintbrushes. Hold them in a pincer grip or use clothes pegs as handles. See if you can make some of the lines and shapes that you have been practicing.

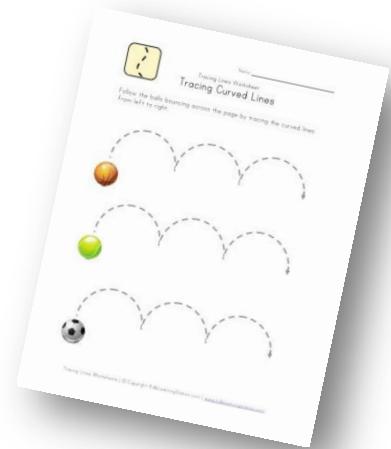
## Pencil skills – Curved lines

**See resources at the end of the booklet.**

Attach some paper to the wall, or use a chalkboard or whiteboard. Draw curved lines. Draw the shape in the sky first, then the board.

You can start with a simple rainbow shape, then try a row of smaller curves. These can be hills, or a frog jumping from lily pad to lily pad. Use stickers as targets to help with aim and make sure you work from left to right. Try to keep the curves the same size.

Now try while sitting at the desk. Make the curves smaller.



## Hungry Horace

Hold Horace in the non-dominant hand and place the items for posting on the dominant side.

Using a **pincer grip**, pick up one item at a time and feed it to Horace. You can also try picking up two items at a time, and keeping one in the palm of the hand while posting the other.

## Week 3: Session 3

### Resources:

- Rubber bands
- Large pieces of paper/ chalkboard/ whiteboard
- Chunky pencils, markers, crayons or chalks
- Pencil worksheets – curves
- Scissors
- Scissor worksheets – curves
- Clothes pegs or play tweezers
- Pompoms
- Button snake kit: button sewn on to the end of a piece of ribbon, and selection of felt shapes with slits cut in for button holes)

### Warm-up:

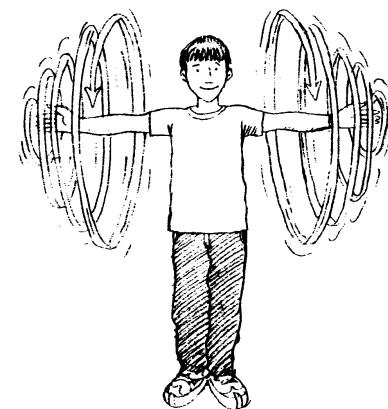
#### **Shoulder spirals**

Hold both arms out horizontally to the side and start to circle them, initially making small circles but gradually getting larger until the circles are as large as possible, (this should take about 5 rotations).

Keep the circles controlled – don't rush them! Try some in slow motion.

When the circles have reached full size, change direction and gradually reduce the circles, (again taking about 5 rotations) to get back to the smallest size.

Start by trying to complete 3 spiral sequences then gradually build up the number you can do. Aim to do 10 spiral sequences comfortably.



#### **Rubber band stretch**

Place a rubber band around the fingers and thumb. Now slowly stretch the fingers out and then relax them back in. Start with five and then build up to ten. Add extra bands or thicker bands if it is too easy.

A loop of playdough can be used instead of rubber bands.

### Main activities:

#### **Pencil skills – Curved lines**

Attach some paper to the wall, or use a chalkboard or whiteboard. Draw curved lines. Draw the shape in the sky first, then the board.

You can start with a simple rainbow shape, then try a row of smaller curves. These can be hills, or a frog jumping from lily pad to lily pad. Use stickers as targets to help

with aim and make sure you work from left to right. Try to keep the curves the same size.

Now try while sitting at the desk. Make the curves smaller.

### Scissors - curved lines

**Repeat the scissors preparation exercise (Week 1, Session 1) before beginning.**

Use worksheets with curved lines (see resources), and cut between the lines. Use narrower margins as the accuracy improves. If accuracy is difficult, try sticking down Wikistiks or pipe cleaners, or use 3D glue or paint to mark the margins.



tripod grip, not the sides of your fingers!

### Clothes peg tweezers and pompoms

Place an empty eggbox or ice cube tray on your non-dominant side and hold it steady with that hand. Using children's tweezers (or clothes pegs as tweezers), pick up one pom pom at a time and place it in the container. Make sure you are using a good

Sort the pompoms by colour or size, or

have a race against a partner.

If you have a commercial tweezer game, such as *Operation* or *Feed the Puppy*, you can play this instead. You can also buy children's training chopsticks to play this kind of game

### Button snakes

You will need to prepare for this game! Sew a button to the end of a strip of ribbon, and sewing a square of felt to the other end. Now prepare some squares (or other felt shapes) by cutting a slit in them wide enough to thread the button through.

Take a stack of felt shapes and thread the button through them one at a time. The instructor should demonstrate how to hold the button in a pincer grip and how to open the buttonhole by gently pulling the sides apart.



## Week 4: Session 1

### Resources:

- Pegs and pegboard
- Large pieces of paper/ chalkboard/ whiteboard
- Chunky pencils, markers, crayons or chalks
- Pencil worksheets – circles
- Lacing cards/ card/ paper plates and laces or wool
- Holepunch
- Toy nuts and bolts

### Warm-up:

#### **Arm wake-ups**

- Shrug your shoulders to your ears then back down.
- Touch the sky, keeping your shoulders down.
- Touch your shoulders – hand to same shoulder
- Touch your shoulders – hand to opposite shoulder
- Push down on the desk
- Hold your hands out, palm up, then palm down
- Push palms together
- Pull hands apart
- Link your hands together and circle your wrists, one way then the other
- Make a fist, thumbs up and give them a wiggle
- Touch each finger to your thumb, one at a time, making a big circle.
- Shake your hands out – you're ready to begin!

### Main activities:

#### **Pegboard patterns**

Position a pegboard on the child's non-dominant side, with the pegs on the dominant side. Make sure you are using a pincer grip. Steady the pegboard with your non-dominant hand. Pick up one peg at a time and place them carefully in the pegboard, starting on the left hand side of the board and working to the right. Don't use the table or your body to help you turn the peg around – just use your fingers! Now try holding one peg in the palm of your hand while placing another peg.

*You can use this activity to work on matching or sequencing colours, or numeracy. See if the child can copy a pattern you make. Show them a pattern then hide it and see if they can remember it.*

## Threading – lacing cards

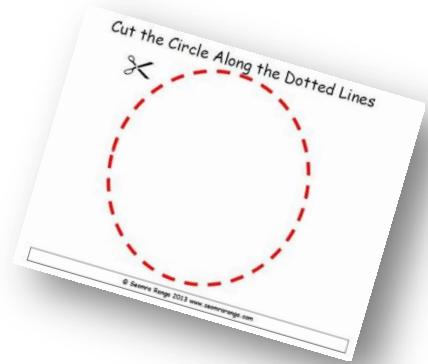


Lacing games are available (see resources at end of this booklet). Concentrate on using one hand as a steady hand and the dominant hand for threading the lace. Try to use a pincer grip (fingertips) rather than the sides of the fingers. If you don't have access to a commercial game, you can use the holes of a pegboard, or punch some holes in a piece of card, or around the edge of a paper plate.

## Scissors – circles:

**Repeat the scissors preparation exercise (Week 1, Session 1) before beginning.**

Use worksheets with circles (see resources), and cut round the shape. Use shapes with thinner lines as the accuracy improves. If circles are too difficult, go back to curved lines and keep working on these until competency is achieved.



## Pencil skills – Circles

Attach some paper to the wall, or use a chalkboard or whiteboard. The instructor should demonstrate first, emphasising the movement and shape. Draw the shape in the sky first, then the board.

Draw big circles then smaller circles. Now try while sitting at the desk.



## Nuts and bolts

Using either plastic toy nuts and bolts or real nuts and bolts, ask the children to undo and then do them up again.

## Week 4: Session 2

### Resources:

- Scissors
- Scissor worksheets – circles
- Large pieces of paper/ chalkboard/ whiteboard
- Chunky pencils, markers, crayons or chalks
- Pencil worksheets – circles
- Clothes pegs or play tweezers
- Dried beans
- Shirt or cardigan with large buttons
- Hungry Horace (tennis ball with slit cut into it for a “mouth”)
- Small items for posting (coins/counters, mini pompoms, buttons, beads, dried beans)

### Warm-up:

#### **Wall push-ups**

Stand in front of a wall about arm's length away from it. Lift your arms up to shoulder level and place your hands on the wall so they are a little bit wider than your shoulders.

Breathe in as you slowly bend your elbows to lean into the wall.

Breathe out as you push to straighten your arms.

Start with five and see if you can build that up. Don't rush the move!

A lot of children have “bendy” elbows – in this case, try not to “lock” your elbows when you straighten them. Instead, don't straighten your arms all the way.



### Main activities:

#### **Scissor skills – circles**

*See resources at the end of the booklet.*

*Repeat the scissors preparation exercise (Week 1, Session 1) before beginning.*

Use worksheets with circles, and cut round the shape. Use shapes with thinner lines as the accuracy improves. If circles are too difficult, go back to curved lines and keep working on these until competency is achieved.

#### **Tweezer beans**

Hold some children's play tweezers in your dominant hand and place a pot of dried beans on your non-dominant side. Now reach across your body to pick up the beans one at a time and place them in another pot or egg carton. Make sure you are holding the tweezers in a good tripod grip, not using the sides of your fingers!

Try sorting the beans into different types. (This also works with jellybeans!).

### **Buttoning – large buttons, shirt in front**

Use a shirt or cardigan with large buttons. Place it in front of you on the desk. The instructor should demonstrate how to post the button through the hole, verbalising as they do it. Now have a go.

Use a pincer grip to hold the button and the top. Pull the buttonhole open and post the button through. Say what you are doing out loud as you do it. Watch each other and see what techniques work and what don't.

### **Pencil skills – Circles**

Attach some paper to the wall, or use a chalkboard or whiteboard. The instructor should demonstrate first, emphasising the movement and shape. Draw the shape in the sky first, then the board.

Draw big circles then smaller circles. Now try while sitting at the desk.



### **Hungry Horace**

Hold Horace in the non-dominant hand and place the items for posting on the dominant side.

Using a **pincer grip**, pick up one item at a time and feed it to Horace. You can also try picking up two items at a time, and keeping one in the palm of the hand while posting the other.

## Week 4: Session 3

### Resources:

- Rubber bands
- Shirt or cardigan with large buttons
- Large pieces of paper/ chalkboard/ whiteboard
- Chunky pencils, markers, crayons or chalks
- Pencil worksheets – circles
- Hole punchers
- Paper plates
- Wool
- Marker pens
- Pencils with a rubber on the end

### Warm-up:

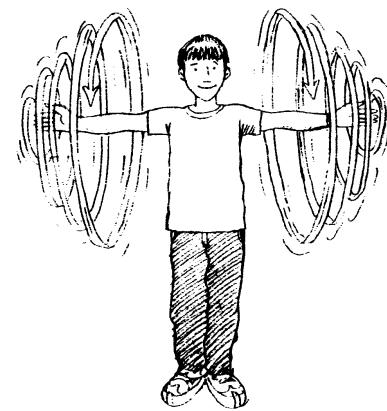
#### **Shoulder spirals**

Hold both arms out horizontally to the side and start to circle them, initially making small circles but gradually getting larger until the circles are as large as possible, (this should take about 5 rotations).

Keep the circles controlled – don't rush them! Try some in slow motion.

When the circles have reached full size, change direction and gradually reduce the circles, (again taking about 5 rotations) to get back to the smallest size.

Start by trying to complete 3 spiral sequences then gradually build up the number you can do. Aim to do 10 spiral sequences comfortably.



#### **Rubber band stretch**

Place a rubber band around the fingers and thumb. Now slowly stretch the fingers out and then relax them back in. Start with five and then build up to ten. Add extra bands or thicker bands if it is too easy.

A loop of playdough can be used instead of rubber bands.

### Main activities:

#### **Buttoning – large buttons, shirt on**

Use a shirt or cardigan with large buttons. Put it in on. The instructor should demonstrate how to post the button through the hole, verbalising as they do it. Now have a go.

Use a pincer grip to hold the button and the top. Pull the buttonhole open and post the button through. Say what you are doing out loud as you do it. Watch each other and see what techniques work and what don't.

If it is difficult, go back to buttoning with the top in front of you, or get someone to stand in front of you while you do their buttons up, or try in front of a mirror.

### Hole punching

Take a paper plate and use a hole puncher to punch holes around the edge. Make sure to squeeze the hole puncher between your thumb and fingers, rather than resting it on the table.



Now you can draw a face on the plate and thread some wool through the holes to make hair or a beard. Or, you can draw a spider on the plate and lace the wool across the plate to make its web.

### Pencil skills – Circles

Attach some paper to the wall, or use a chalkboard or whiteboard. The instructor should demonstrate first, emphasising the movement and shape. Draw the shape in the sky first, then the board.

Draw big circles then smaller circles. Now try while sitting at the desk.

### Pencil aerobics

- Hold onto the pencil as if you were going to write – using your fingers only, walk up the pencil! And when you get to the end walk back down. Try this 5 times.
- Put your pencil down facing right, pick it up and be ready to write.
- Put your pencil down facing left, pick it up and be ready to write.
- Don't forget, only use one hand – try this 3 times each side.
- Place your palm facing up with your pencil on it. Roll your pencil from your palm into your fingertips 10 times – using movement of your fingers and wrist only.
- Pick up the pencil so you're ready to write. Draw a dot on the paper. Now, using just that hand, turn the pencil round and rub out the dot. Repeat five times.

## Week 5: Session 1

### Resources:

- Playdough
- Pegs and pegboard
- Lacing card game (or home-made lacing cards)
- Scissors
- Pencils
- Pencil worksheets – squares
- Junior Caring Cutlery / child-sized knife

### Warm-up:

#### Arm wake-ups

- Shrug your shoulders to your ears then back down.
- Touch the sky, keeping your shoulders down.
- Touch your shoulders – hand to same shoulder
- Touch your shoulders – hand to opposite shoulder
- Push down on the desk
- Hold your hands out, palm up, then palm down
- Push palms together
- Pull hands apart
- Link your hands together and circle your wrists, one way then the other
- Make a fist, thumbs up and give them a wiggle
- Touch each finger to your thumb, one at a time, making a big circle.
- Shake your hands out – you're ready to begin!

### Playdough shapes

Roll out the playdough and form it into a thin sausage. Now see if you can “draw” shapes with it.

Can you make:

- A straight line
- A curve
- A circle
- A square
- A triangle



If appropriate, try with letter shapes too. Start with the adult modelling the shapes for the children to copy, then see if they can make them from memory. Add some pegs or beads along the shape to decorate it.

## **Main activities:**

### **Pegboard patterns**

Position a pegboard on the child's non-dominant side, with the pegs on the dominant side. Make sure you are using a pincer grip. Steady the pegboard with your non-dominant hand. Pick up one peg at a time and place them carefully in the pegboard, starting on the left hand side of the board and working to the right. Don't use the table or your body to help you turn the peg around – just use your fingers! Now try holding one peg in the palm of your hand while placing another peg.

Make some square shapes – see if you can use the same number of pegs for each side of the square.

*You can use this activity to work on matching or sequencing colours, or numeracy. See if the child can copy a pattern you make. Show them a pattern then hide it and see if they can remember it.*

### **Threading – lacing cards**

Commercially available lacing games are available (see resources at end of this booklet). Concentrate on using one hand as a steady hand and the dominant hand for threading the lace. Try to use a pincer grip (fingertips) rather than the sides of the fingers.

If you don't have access to a commercial game, you can use the holes of a pegboard, or punch some holes in a piece of card.

### **Pencil skills – squares**

Attach some paper to the wall, or use a chalkboard or whiteboard. Mark dots or place some stickers to form the corners of the square. The instructor should demonstrate how to draw the square, verbalising to start each movement as they draw it. Draw the shape in the sky first, then the board. Using chunky crayons, markers or chalk, draw some big squares. Add some smaller squares inside to make windows and turn the shapes into buildings.

Once you have tried on a vertical surface, sit down at the table and repeat the task.

*You can extend this activity with worksheets – some examples and web links are included in the resource section at the back – or with your own drawing tasks or multisensory activities, such as drawing in sand, in chalk on an outside wall or playground surface, or using rope, scarves or ribbon to make squares on the floor and then walking around them.*

### **Cutlery – cutting using knife, stabilising with hand**

Roll some playdough out to make a sausage shape. Use the non-dominant hand to keep the putty steady. Hold the putty just beside where you want to cut. Pick up the knife so that the shaft sits in the palm of the hand and the index (Peter Pointer) finger rests on top.

Place the knife onto the putty and use a backwards and forwards motion to cut the putty. Press down as you cut – make sure you don't tear! Make more cuts. You may need to put the knife down to move your supporting hand each time.



The index finger is in a good position, with joints aligned.



The fingertip joint is bending further than it should, putting it under stress.

***Some children have very bendy fingers, also known as “hypermobility” or “joint laxity”. You will notice that the joints of the fingers bend backwards when pressing down with the index finger on the knife. In this case, chunkier cutlery, or holding the knife with more of a fist grip may be more appropriate.***

## Week 5: Session 2

### Resources:

- Scissors
- Scissor worksheets - squares
- Card shapes
- Clothes pegs
- Tweezers
- Dried beans
- Pencils
- Pencil worksheets – squares
- Hungry Horace (tennis ball with slit cut into it for a “mouth”)
- Small items for posting (coins/counters, mini pompoms, buttons, beads, dried beans)

### Warm-up:

#### **Wall push-ups**

Stand in front of a wall about arm's length away from it. Lift your arms up to shoulder level and place your hands on the wall so they are a little bit wider than your shoulders.

Breathe in as you slowly bend your elbows to lean into the wall.

Breathe out as you push to straighten your arms.

Start with five and see if you can build that up. Don't rush the move!

A lot of children have “bendy” elbows – in this case, try not to “lock” your elbows when you straighten them. Instead, don't straighten your arms all the way.

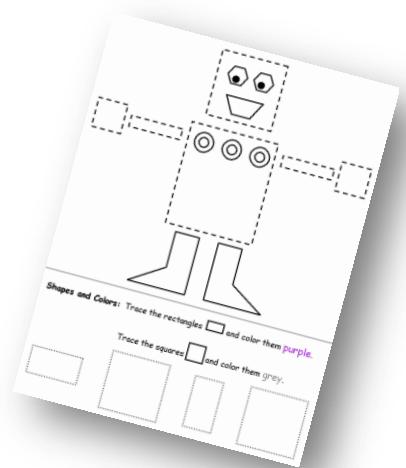


### Main activities:

#### **Pencil skills – squares**

Attach some paper to the wall, or use a chalkboard or whiteboard. Mark dots or place some stickers to form the corners of the square. The instructor should demonstrate how to draw the square, verbalising to start each movement as they draw it. Draw the shape in the sky first, then the board. Using chunky crayons, markers or chalk, draw some big squares. Add some smaller squares inside to make windows and turn the shapes into buildings.

Once you have tried on a vertical surface, sit down at the table and repeat the task.



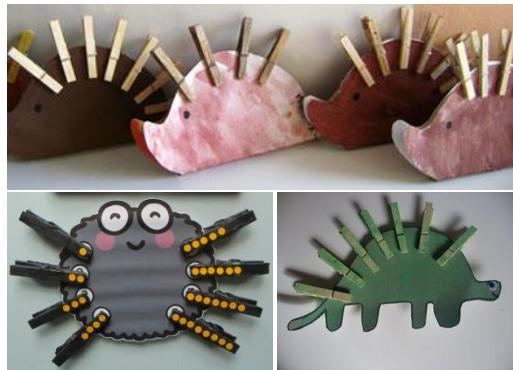
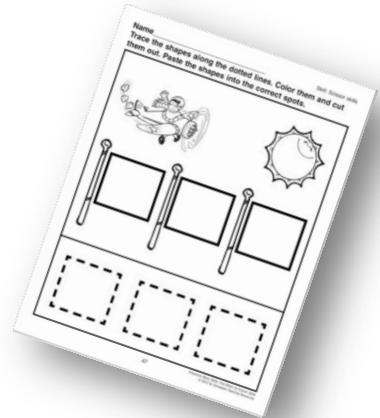
You can extend this activity with worksheets – some examples and web links are included in the resource section at the back – or with your own drawing tasks or multisensory activities, such as drawing in sand, in chalk on an outside wall or playground surface, or using rope, scarves or ribbon to make squares on the floor and then walking around them.

### Scissor skills – squares

**See resources at the end of the booklet.**

Repeat the scissors preparation exercise (Week 1, Session 1) before beginning.

Use worksheets with squares, or the squares that you have just drawn. Cut round the shape. Use shapes with thinner lines as the accuracy improves. If squares are too difficult, go back to straight lines and keep working on these until competency is achieved.



### Card and peg creatures

Cut out some body shapes from card.

Dinosaurs, hedgehogs, insects or spiders are a good choice. Use templates if that helps. Now attach some clothes pegs for spines or legs.

Hold the card in your non-dominant hand, with your thumb on top of the card. Pick up the clothes pegs in your dominant hand, using a tripod grip (not the sides of your fingers).

### Tweezer beans

Hold some children's play tweezers in your dominant hand and place a pot of dried beans on your non-dominant side. Now reach across your body to pick up the beans one at a time and place them in another pot or egg carton. Make sure you are holding the tweezers in a good tripod grip, not using the sides of your fingers!

Try sorting the beans into different types. (This also works with jellybeans!).



### Hungry Horace

Hold Horace in the non-dominant hand and place the items for posting on the dominant side.

Using a **pincer grip**, pick up one item at a time and feed it to Horace. You can also try picking up two items at a time, and keeping one in the palm of the hand while posting the other.

## Week 5: Session 3

### Resources:

- Rubber bands
- Button or cardigan with small buttons
- Marbles (or little pompoms)
- Golf tees
- Playdough (or a block of Styrofoam or florists' oasis)
- Pencils
- Pencil worksheets – diagonals
- Coins or counters

### Warm-up:

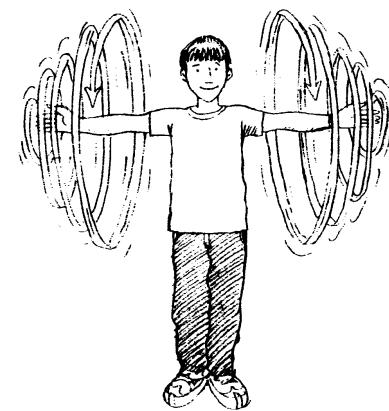
#### **Shoulder spirals**

Hold both arms out horizontally to the side and start to circle them, initially making small circles but gradually getting larger until the circles are as large as possible, (this should take about 5 rotations).

Keep the circles controlled – don't rush them! Try some in slow motion.

When the circles have reached full size, change direction and gradually reduce the circles, (again taking about 5 rotations) to get back to the smallest size.

Start by trying to complete 3 spiral sequences then gradually build up the number you can do. Aim to do 10 spiral sequences comfortably.



#### **Rubber band stretch**

Place a rubber band around the fingers and thumb. Now slowly stretch the fingers out and then relax them back in. Start with five and then build up to ten. Add extra bands or thicker bands if it is too easy.

A loop of playdough can be used instead of rubber bands.

### Main activities:

#### **Buttoning – small buttons, shirt in front**

Use a shirt or cardigan with smaller buttons. Place it on the table in front of you. The instructor should demonstrate how to post the button through the hole, verbalising as they do it. Now have a go.

Use a pincer grip to hold the button and the top. Pull the buttonhole open and post the button through. Say what you are doing out loud as you do it. Watch each other and see what techniques work and what don't.



### Marble and golf tee balance

Place a bowl of goal tees, a bowl of marbles and some playdough (or a block of Styrofoam or florists' oasis) in front of you, as shown. Pick up one golf tee at a time and push them into the playdough to make a row, working from left to right.

Now, using a pincer grip, pick up one marble at a time and balance it on the golf tees, working from left to right. Make sure you use your dominant hand to pick up the tees.

Try picking up two marbles at a time, and keeping one in your hand while you place the other on the golf tee. To make this extra challenging, use a mixture of marbles and mini pompoms so you have to adjust the amount of force you use.

### Pencil skills: diagonals

Draw a diagonal from right to left in the sky. Repeat on a whiteboard or chalkboard. Remember to talk through what you are doing. Now, repeat while sitting down. Use stickers or markers to help with the start and end points initially. You can also try drawing the diagonal within a square box or between two horizontal lines. Try with eyes open and with eyes closed.

### Coin shift

Place a coin or counter in the palm of your hand. Try to move it so that you are holding it between your index finger and thumb. Don't slide it down your hand – use your fingers to move it!

Start with a bigger coin and then try with smaller ones.

## Week 6: Session 1

### Resources:

- Playdough
- Rolling pin and shape cutters
- Junior Caring Cutlery or child-sized cutlery
- Scissors
- Scissor worksheets – zigzags
- Pencils
- Pencil worksheets – diagonals
- Pegs and pegboard

### Warm-up:

#### Arm wake-ups

- Shrug your shoulders to your ears then back down.
- Touch the sky, keeping your shoulders down.
- Touch your shoulders – hand to same shoulder
- Touch your shoulders – hand to opposite shoulder
- Push down on the desk
- Hold your hands out, palm up, then palm down
- Push palms together
- Pull hands apart
- Link your hands together and circle your wrists, one way then the other
- Make a fist, thumbs up and give them a wiggle
- Touch each finger to your thumb, one at a time, making a big circle.
- Shake your hands out – you're ready to begin!

### Playdough rolling



Use both hands on a rolling pin to roll out a ball of playdough. Ensure the body remains still, the shoulders relaxed and the arms move from the shoulders. Try to keep the pressure even so that the playdough is flat. Use cutters to cut out some shapes.

## **Main activities:**

### **Cutlery – cutting using knife, stabilising with hand**

Roll some playdough out to make a sausage shape. Use the non-dominant hand to keep the putty steady. Hold the putty just beside where you want to cut. Pick up the knife so that the shaft sits in the palm of the hand and the index (Peter Pointer) finger rests on top.

Place the knife onto the putty and use a backwards and forwards motion to cut the putty. Press down as you cut – make sure you don't tear! Make more cuts. You may need to put the knife down to move your supporting hand each time.

### **Scissors: Zigzags:**

**See resources at the end of the booklet.**

*Repeat the scissors preparation exercise (Week 1, Session 1) before beginning.*

Use worksheets with zigzags, or the zigzags that you have just drawn. Cut along the lines. Use thinner lines as the accuracy improves. If zigzags are too difficult, go back to squares and keep working on these until competency is achieved.

### **Pencil skills: diagonals:**

Draw a diagonal from left to right in the sky. Repeat on a whiteboard or chalkboard. Remember to talk through what you are doing. Now, repeat while sitting down. Use stickers or markers to help with the start and end points initially. You can also try drawing the diagonal within a square box or between two horizontal lines. Try with eyes open and with eyes closed.

### **Pegboard patterns**

Position a pegboard on the child's non-dominant side, with the pegs on the dominant side. Make sure you are using a pincer grip. Steady the pegboard with your non-dominant hand. Pick up one peg at a time and place them carefully in the pegboard, starting on the left hand side of the board and working to the right. Don't use the table or your body to help you turn the peg around – just use your fingers! Now try holding one peg in the palm of your hand while placing another peg.

*You can use this activity to work on matching or sequencing colours, or numeracy.*

*See if the child can copy a pattern you make. Show them a pattern then hide it and see if they can remember it.*

## Week 6: Session 2

### Resources:

- Tweezers
- Dried beans
- Card
- Rulers
- Scissors
- Pencils, felt tip pens, crayons
- Pencil worksheets – diagonals and crosses
- Scissor worksheets - zigzags
- Hungry Horace (tennis ball with slit cut into it for a “mouth”)
- Small items for posting (coins/counters, mini pompoms, buttons, beads, dried beans)

### Warm-up:

#### **Wall push-ups**

Stand in front of a wall about arm's length away from it. Lift your arms up to shoulder level and place your hands on the wall so they are a little bit wider than your shoulders.

Breathe in as you slowly bend your elbows to lean into the wall.

Breathe out as you push to straighten your arms.

Start with five and see if you can build that up. Don't rush the move!

A lot of children have “bendy” elbows – in this case, try not to “lock” your elbows when you straighten them. Instead, don't straighten your arms all the way.



### Main activities:

#### **Tweezer beans**

Hold some children's play tweezers in your dominant hand and place a pot of dried beans on your non-dominant side. Now reach across your body to pick up the beans one a time and place them in another pot or egg carton. Make sure you are holding the tweezers in a good tripod grip, not using the sides of your fingers!

Try sorting the beans into different types. (This also works with jellybeans!).

#### **Spinning tops**

Draw a circle on thin card (for example, a used cereal box). Drawing round a jam jar lid or a plastic cup is a good idea. Now colour in the shape, then cut it out. Now gently poke a sharpened pencil through the centre (it may help to put some

playdough underneath while you do this. A shorter pencil will be easier to spin). Use a pincer grip (fingertips) to spin your top. How long can you keep it spinning for?

### **Pencil skills: diagonals / crosses**

Draw a diagonal from right to left in the sky, then from left to right in the sky to make an 'x'. Repeat on a whiteboard or chalkboard. Remember to talk through what you are doing. Now, repeat while sitting down. Use stickers or markers to help with the start and end points initially. You can also try drawing an 'x' within a square box or between two horizontal lines. Try with eyes open and with eyes closed.

### **Scissors: Zigzags:**

**See resources at the end of the booklet.**

*Repeat the scissors preparation exercise (Week 1, Session 1) before beginning.*

Use worksheets with zigzags, or the zigzags that you have just drawn. Cut along the lines. Use thinner lines as the accuracy improves. If zigzags are too difficult, go back to squares and keep working on these until competency is achieved.



### **Hungry Horace**

Hold Horace in the non-dominant hand and place the items for posting on the dominant side.

Using a **pincer grip**, pick up one item at a time and feed it to Horace. You can also try picking up two items at a time, and keeping one in the palm of the hand while posting the other.

## Week 6: Session 3

### Resources:

- Rubber bands
- Pencils with rubber on the end.
- Shirt or cardigan with small buttons
- Junior Caring Cutlery / child-sized cutlery
- Playdough
- Pencils, crayons, felt tip pens, chunky markers, chalks
- Chalkboard/ whiteboard/ paper stuck to wall
- Pencil worksheets: diagonals/crosses

### Warm-up:

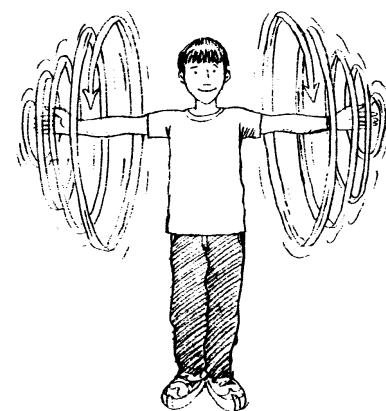
#### **Shoulder spirals**

Hold both arms out horizontally to the side and start to circle them, initially making small circles but gradually getting larger until the circles are as large as possible, (this should take about 5 rotations).

Keep the circles controlled – don't rush them! Try some in slow motion.

When the circles have reached full size, change direction and gradually reduce the circles, (again taking about 5 rotations) to get back to the smallest size.

Start by trying to complete 3 spiral sequences then gradually build up the number you can do. Aim to do 10 spiral sequences comfortably.



#### **Rubber band stretch**

Place a rubber band around the fingers and thumb. Now slowly stretch the fingers out and then relax them back in. Start with five and then build up to ten. Add extra bands or thicker bands if it is too easy.

A loop of playdough can be used instead of rubber bands.

### Main activities:

#### **Pencil aerobics**

- Hold onto the pencil as if you were going to write – using your fingers only, walk up the pencil! And when you get to the end walk back down. Try this 5 times.
- Put your pencil down facing right, pick it up and be ready to write.
- Put your pencil down facing left, pick it up and be ready to write.
- Don't forget, only use one hand – try this 3 times each side.

- Place your palm facing up with your pencil on it. Roll your pencil from your palm into your fingertips 10 times – using movement of your fingers and wrist only.
- Pick up the pencil so you're ready to write. Draw a dot on the paper. Now, using just that hand, turn the pencil round and rub out the dot. Repeat five times.

### **Pencil skills: diagonals / crosses**

Draw a diagonal from right to left in the sky, then from left to right in the sky to make an 'x'. Repeat on a whiteboard or chalkboard. Remember to talk through what you are doing. Now, repeat while sitting down. Use stickers or markers to help with the start and end points initially. You can also try drawing an 'x' within a square box or between two horizontal lines. Try with eyes open and with eyes closed.

### **Buttoning – small buttons, shirt on**

Use a shirt or cardigan with small buttons. Put it on. The instructor should demonstrate how to push the button through the hole, verbalising as they do it. Now have a go.

Use a pincer grip to hold the button and the top. Pull the buttonhole open and push the button through. Say what you are doing out loud as you do it. Watch each other and see what techniques work and what don't.

If it is difficult, go back to buttoning with the top in front of you, or get someone to stand in front of you while you do their buttons up, or try in front of a mirror.

### **Cutlery – knife and fork together**

Roll out some finger-length sausages of playdough on the table and position them in front of you. Now pick up your fork and push it into the playdough, near where you want to cut it. Keeping the playdough steady with your fork, pick up the knife and cut through the playdough with a sawing motion. Remember to leave a little gap between the knife and fork. Make sure you don't cross them over!

Keep practicing, using a longer piece of playdough to make several cuts in a row.

### **Coin shift**

Place a coin or counter in the palm of your hand. Try to move it so that you are holding it between your index finger and thumb. Don't slide it down your hand – use your fingers to move it!

Start with a bigger coin and then try with smaller ones.

## 2: Hand Skills

### Baseline and outcome assessment

Child's name ..... Date of birth .....

Class ..... Date of assessment .....

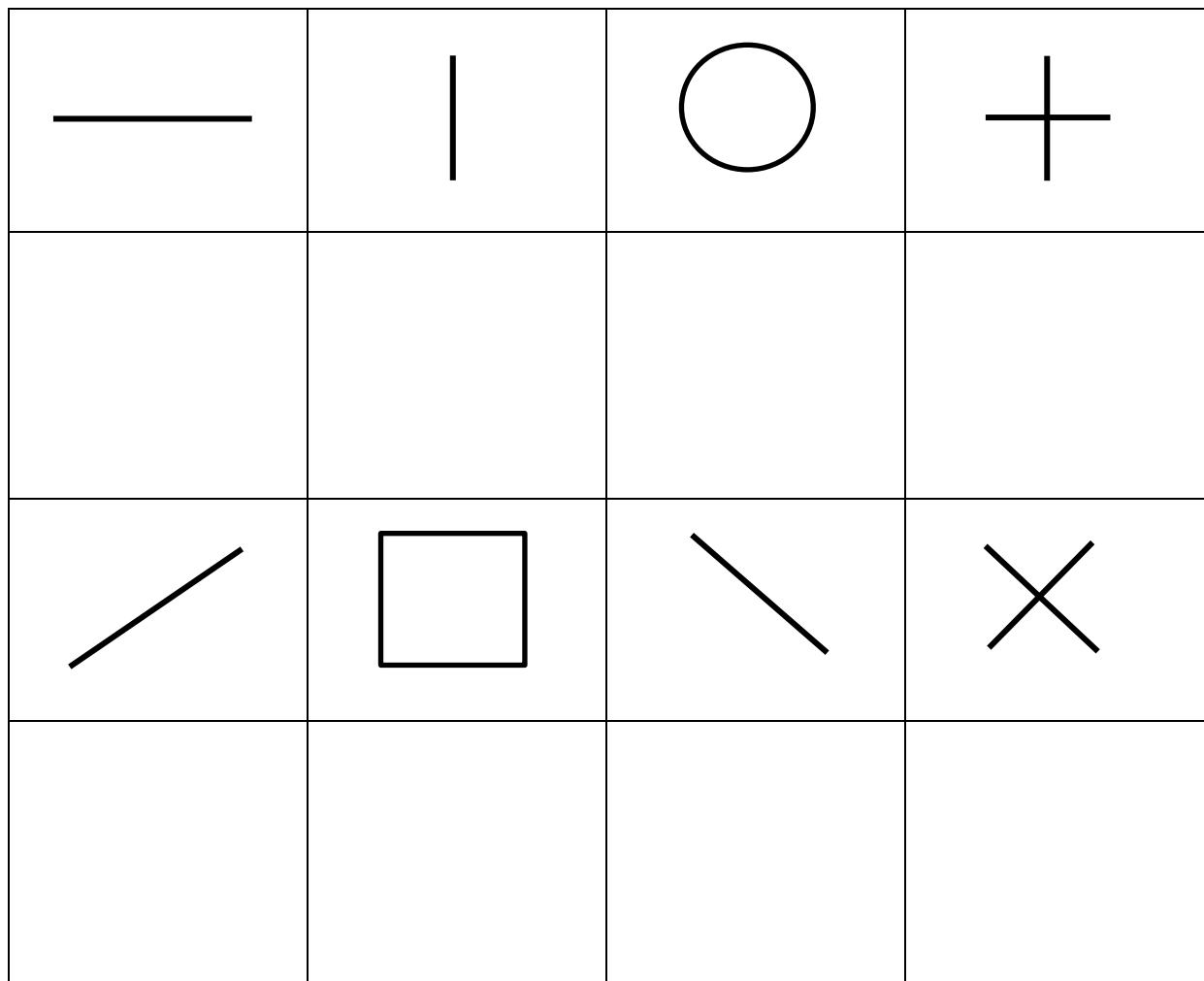
Fill in this table to rate the child's performance **before** and **after** the block of intervention sessions.

Area of difficulty	Before intervention			After intervention		
	A lot of difficulty	Some difficulty	No difficulty	A lot of difficulty	Some difficulty	No difficulty
<b>Classroom Skills</b>						
Able to sit upright in a chair in class						
Can follow verbal directions						
Can change for PE independently						
Can fasten buttons/zips						
Can use a knife and fork for school meals (if appropriate)						
Can open packets (crisps, yoghurt, etc)						
<b>Fine Motor Skills</b>						
Able to pick up small objects with a pincer grip						
Can copy the first 8 pre-writing shapes (see attached)						
Able to cut out a circle with reasonable accuracy						
Able to trace along a straight line with reasonable accuracy						
Able to write their name						
Shows a consistent hand preference						
Can hold a pencil in a tripod (3-finger) grasp						
Can complete a 20-piece jigsaw						
Can touch each finger to their thumb in sequence						
Can reach across their body with their dominant hand to pick up an object						
Can move a coin from palm to fingertips/ fingertips to palm						

<b>Classroom Skills</b>	
Able to sit upright in a chair in class	<i>Observe the child sitting on their chair in class – can they maintain an upright sitting posture, or do they slump forward on the desk, slump back in the chair, or wrap their feet around the chair legs?</i>
Can follow verbal directions	<i>Is the child generally able to understand and follow instructions, or do they need support with this?</i>
Can change for PE independently	<i>Can the child get their clothes and shoes on the right way, manage fastenings, do they need prompting to complete the task</i>
Can fasten buttons/zips	<i>Can the child manage their own buttons and zips?</i>
Can use a knife and fork for school meals (if appropriate)	<i>If the child has school meals, are they able to use a knife and fork to cut up their food?</i>
Can open packets (crisps, yoghurt, etc)	<i>If a child has packed lunch, are they able to open packets, undo lids, etc?</i>
<b>Fine Motor Skills</b>	<i>These activities are based done as a 1-to-1 or small group activity.</i>
Able to pick up small objects with a pincer grip	<i>Use small objects such as plastic pegs or beads. Can the child pick them up using the tips of their thumb and index finger?</i>
Can copy the first 8 pre-writing shapes (see attached)	<i>Print out the attached shapes and ask the child to copy them. Are they able to form clear corners and to draw diagonal lines?</i>
Able to cut out a circle with reasonable accuracy	<i>Print out the attached circle shape – can the child cut it out with reasonable accuracy? Are they able to hold the scissors correctly, open and close them with control, and use their other hand to turn the paper?</i>
Able to trace along a straight line with reasonable accuracy	<i>Print out the attached line – can the child draw a path between it without going outside the line?</i>
Able to write their name	<i>Can the child write their name from memory?</i>
Shows a consistent hand preference	<i>Does the child consistently use one hand for scissors, pencil and other tasks, or do they tend to swap?</i>
Can hold a pencil in a tripod (3-finger) grasp	<i>Can the child hold a pencil or crayon in a tripod grasp (using thumb, index and middle finger).</i>
Can complete a 20-piece jigsaw	<i>Can the child complete a jigsaw without support? Are they able to look at the picture and copy it, or do they randomly try to fit the pieces together?</i>
Can touch each finger to their thumb in sequence	<i>Ask the child to imitate you as you touch each finger to your thumb in turn, making a nice round shape between the fingers and thumb. Can they do this in sequence, without missing out a finger and without using their other hand to help them move their fingers?</i>
Can reach across their body with their dominant hand to pick up an object	<i>Set up either a pegboard with pegs or coins and a moneybox. Place the box or board at the child's middle and arrange the pegs or coins in a line that reaches from one side of the body to the other. Ask the child to pick up the items one at a time. Do they use their left hand to pick up objects on their left, and their right hand to pick up objects on their right, or are they able to reach across their body with their dominant hand?</i>
Can move a coin from palm to fingertips/ fingertips to palm	<i>Ask the child to hold their hand out flat, and place a 2p piece in the palm of their hand. Without tipping their hand or using their other hand to help, can they get the coin down to their fingertips to hold it in a pincer grip?</i>

1) Write your name here: \_\_\_\_\_

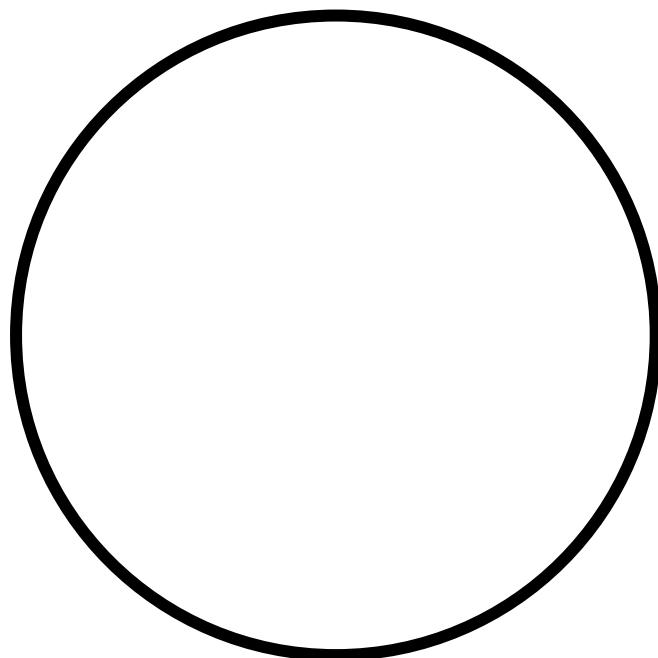
2) Copy each shape in the blank space below it.



3) Draw a straight line along the path:



4) Cut out the circle.



## Session completion record

Child's name .....

Date of birth .....

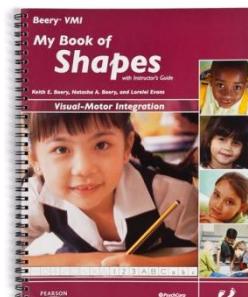
Class .....

Date of assessment .....

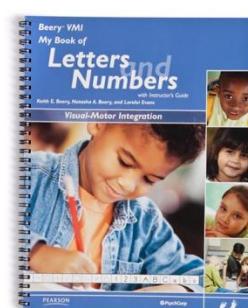
Write in the name of the programme you have carried out with the child and then the date when you carried out each session. If you have carried out additional activities, add these in the final column.

Name of programme					
	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Additional activities?	Comments on performance (difficulties and achievements).
Week 1					
Week 2					
Week 3					
Week 4					
Week 5					
Week 6					

## Resources



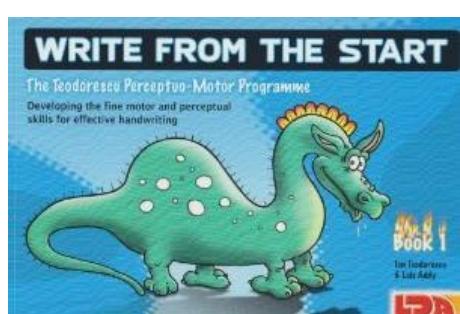
**Beery VMI - My Book of Shapes** - Contains 100 geometric paper-and-pencil exercises that preschool and reception teachers and parents may use with children to refine motor, visual and visual-motor activities development. The exercises help support early prevention of problems and provide an important foundation for the teaching of letter and numeral shapes in the first semester of reception.



**Beery VMI - My Book of Letters and Numbers** - Provides 100 exercises for use with students in the second semester of reception. The exercises use numeral and letter shapes so that the motor, visual and visual-motor skills children learn with geometric shape exercises can be successfully transferred to numeral and letter shapes they will use in school.

These are available from Pearson Clinical:

[http://www.pearsonclinical.co.uk/Psychology/ChildCognitionNeuropsychologyandLanguage/ChildPerceptionandVisuomotorAbilities/Beery-BuktenicaDevelopmental\(BeeryVMI\)/Beery-BuktenicaDevelopmentalTestofVisual-MotorIntegrationSixthEdition\(BeeryVMI\).aspx](http://www.pearsonclinical.co.uk/Psychology/ChildCognitionNeuropsychologyandLanguage/ChildPerceptionandVisuomotorAbilities/Beery-BuktenicaDevelopmental(BeeryVMI)/Beery-BuktenicaDevelopmentalTestofVisual-MotorIntegrationSixthEdition(BeeryVMI).aspx)



### **Write from the Start: The Teodorescu Perceptuo-Motor Programme**

A unique approach to developing fine motor and perceptual skills, Write from the Start offers a radically different and effective approach to handwriting. Structured activities develop the muscles of the hand - so that children gain the necessary control.

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Write-start-Programme-Perceptual-Handwriting/dp/1855032457>

or

<http://www.thedyslexiashop.co.uk/write-from-the-start-unique-programme-to-develop-the-fine-motor-and-perceptual-skills-necessary-for-effective-handwriting-3-volumes.html>



## Kumon books

Kumon publish a range of books, including some useful ones on cutting skills and mazes. These are available from [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk)

## **Downloadable resources**

### **Mazes/patterns/shapes**

<http://www.education.com>

This site has a big selection of pencil skills worksheets, including shapes, mazes and dot-to-dots. You can select which age range you want resources for, so you can grade the difficulty of the worksheets.

<http://www.theteachingstation.com/go/pathway.cfm>

### **Handwriting patterns/pencil skills**

<https://www.tes.com/teaching-resource/pencil-skills-pattern-cards-6301579>

<http://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/t-l-154-pencil-control-worksheets>

<http://www.sparklebox.co.uk/literacy/writing/letter-formation/pencil-control.html#.VpjfNPmLR8w>

<http://www.yourtherapysource.com/freestuff.html>

### **Scissor worksheets**

<http://www.activityvillage.co.uk/cutting-skills-printables>

[http://www.dltk-kids.com/crafts/miscellaneous/scissor\\_skills.htm](http://www.dltk-kids.com/crafts/miscellaneous/scissor_skills.htm)

<http://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/t-m-470-scissor-cutting-skills-workbook>

<http://www.sparklebox.co.uk/misc/other/cutout.html#.VpjfdfmLR8w>

## **Week 1 Session 2**

**Pencil Skills: Dots**

**Web search:** “dot templates”

**Links:**

<http://palmerpracticality.blogspot.co.uk/2014/04/spring-do-dot-printables.html>

<http://freecoloringpages.co.uk/?r=dot+painted>

Alphabet dots: [http://shared.confessionsofahomeschooler.com/lotw/A\\_ZDoADots.pdf](http://shared.confessionsofahomeschooler.com/lotw/A_ZDoADots.pdf)

## **Week 1 Session 3; Week 2 Session 1**

**Pencil Skills: Vertical lines**

**Web search:** “prewriting vertical line templates”

**Downloads:**

## **Week 2 Session 2; Week 2 Session 3,**

**Pencil Skills: Horizontal lines**

**Web search:** “prewriting horizontal line templates”

**Downloads:**

## **Week 3 Session 1; Week 3 Session 2; Week 3 Session 3**

**Pencil Skills: Curves**

**Web search:** “prewriting curved line templates”

**Scissor Skills: Curves**

**Web search:** “scissor skills curved lines”

## **Week 4 Session 1; Week 4 Session 2; Week 4 Session 3**

**Pencil Skills: Circles**

**Web search:** “prewriting circle templates”

**Scissor Skills: Circles**

**Web search:** “scissor skills circles”

## **Week 5 Session 1; Week 5 Session 2**

**Pencil Skills: Squares**

**Web search:** “prewriting square templates”

**Scissor Skills: Squares**

**Web search:** “scissor skills squares”

## **Week 5 Session 3; Week 6 Session 1; Week 6 Session 2**

**Pencil Skills: Diagonals, crosses**

**Web search:** “prewriting diagonal line templates”; “prewriting crosses templates”

**Scissor Skills: Diagonals**

**Web search:** “scissor skills diagonals”