

Pre-Writing Skills

What skills do we need to help us write?

- Balance
- Shoulder stability
- Wrist control
- Forearm control
- Grasp
- Bilateral co-ordination
- Hand-eye co-ordination.

Here are some activities to help us develop these skills:

Balance:

- Outdoor activities: Climbing, jumping, hopping, skipping and running.
- Playing musical statues
- Using chalk, draw a line on the ground/tiled floor. Encourage your child to walk along, starting with a straight line, and then making the challenge more exciting by upgrading the complexity of the shape as appropriate.



Shoulder Stability:

- Crawling on all 4's and playing on all 4's e.g. to complete a jigsaw puzzle
- Obstacle courses on all 4's – over/under/up/down
- Standing at a vertical surface e.g. Blackboard to paint with hands and fingers.
- Container play: pouring water out of and into different containers.



Wrist Control:

- Digging for items e.g. digging to find hidden items buried in sand/rice/pasta.
- Mixing items e.g. mixing ingredients in a bowl
- Hand prints: using all parts of the hand.
- Playing a wide range of musical instruments e.g. drums, cymbals etc.



Forearm Control:

- Clapping hands
- Playing a wide range of musical instruments.

- Lying on tummy over gym ball/peanut roll and weight bearing through forearms. Introduce an activity whilst lying over gym ball/peanut roll.

Grasp:

- Water play with squeeze bottles
- Using play dough/clay– squeezing and using various tools
- Stamp and print sets
- Building with toys like Duplo
- Peg board and block designs
- Pegging items to a washing line.
- Using tongs to pick up smaller items to sort including, beads, marbles, cotton balls etc.
- Peeling stickers



Bilateral Co-ordination:

- Ball games
- Threading activities
- Blowing bubbles and reaching to clap and pop them
- Pulling cotton wool apart or tearing paper for art work.
- Animal Walks – encourage the child to move like a particular animal.

Hand-Eye Co-ordination:

- Paper folding
- Target Games
- Rolling Ball: Have your child sit with legs apart, and you roll the ball between the legs. Your child needs to try and stop the ball before it hits their tummy
- Tossing a beanbag or ball into the air and catching again is a good hand-eye coordination exercise.



Pre writing tips:

Work big to small:

- Start with encouraging whole arm movements for example; in the air with a wand or tube or at the board with chalk or a marker
- Gradually make the movements smaller and more confined as appropriate.

Multi- Sensory Experiences and Letter Formations:

- Use various different writing tools e.g. a stick in sand, a wet paintbrush on concrete, finger paints, chalk, sand/salt trays, shaving foam on tin foil, 'Gloop' made from corn flour and water, charcoal, felt tips of different sizes, wax crayons.
- Using a variety of different writing surfaces e.g. various types of paper, black/white boards.
- Feel letters and shapes hidden in a bag
- Walking around letter shapes.

