

Gross motor preparation for fine motor skills including handwriting

Postural Control

-Refer to the bigger muscles of the shoulders and trunk that stabilise the arm so the fingers are free to move.

-If a child presents with an unstable base, they may adopt compensatory strategies to handwrite e.g. hold his pencil really tightly to give himself a firmer base, or press really hard on the paper as he does not have enough control over it, or tense up at the shoulders and then he gets tired easily.



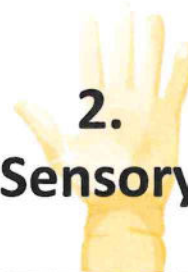
Hand Function

The muscles of the hand need to learn to work well together to control pencils and other small objects. Closely related to that are wrist and forearm position, as the wrist and forearm get the hand into place for writing



Foundation for fine motor skills

2. Sensory



Sensory

-If you are not getting good feedback from your fingers, it is hard to be accurate with them.
-When a child has a poor touch perception, it feels like he is doing everything with rubber gloves on.
-Perhaps he is really clumsy, always dropping small items, letting things slip out of his grasp. Maybe he squeezes the pencil really tightly so he can "feel" it properly to control it.

3. Bilateral Coordination



Bilateral Coordination

- This is the ability to use the two sides of the body together in a coordinated way. It may seem like a strange base when we are talking about fine motor skills, but if your hands don't work well together, simple tasks like tying your shoelaces, cutting with scissors, and tightening a bolt will be tricky for you.

- They may also struggle with fine motor tasks such as tying shoelaces, drawing a line with a ruler, threading beads, lacing, using a knife and fork together and scissor cutting as these all require both hands to work together well. As you can see, bilateral integration skills are vital for many areas of your child's life.

There are two sides to every hand, a power side and a precision side. A power grasp uses all of the fingers and the thumb together to hold something using counter pressure. This takes strength. Some examples of using a power grasp include holding onto monkey bars, pounding with a toy hammer, or playing tug of war with a rope. A precision grasp uses only three fingers that are known for control and coordinating small movements of the hand. These fingers are the thumb, first, and middle fingers...or, as we call them at The Inspired Treehouse, "Super Fingers!" Some examples of how a child uses a precision grasp include holding a pencil, using scissors, holding a spoon, and buttoning buttons on a shirt. As children grow and become more independent they use this grasp all day long.

The preschool years are jam-packed with fine motor skill development as children refine their grasping skills, develop more precise coordination, and get ready for "big school" activities like handwriting. The following are some activity suggestions to enhance these skills:

For Strengthening

- Gross motor activities including playground activities e.g. climbing up ramped boards, using monkey bars etc.
- Tweezers
- Squeeze Balls
- Clothespins
- Pegs and Pegboards
- Theraputty
- Pop Beads

For Precision grip:

- Playing with a squirt bottle
- Stringing beads
- Popping bubble wrap
- Playing with playdoh (rolling big/little balls, poking holes with fingers, pulling apart)
- Tearing paper for crafts
- Putting pennies into a piggy bank
- Play with clothespins or tweezers to pick up items
- Board games such as Operation, memory (flipping cards), bed bugs, etc. There are many games that use small manipulatives that can enhance hand strength and coordination.