

FINE MOTOR IDEAS



Activity	What's Important?	Materials	Why?
<p>Playing with water spray bottles e.g. squirt the concrete to make pictures, water the garden with spray bottle, use empty spray bottles to blow ping pong balls</p>	<p>Students use one hand to squeeze handle where appropriate If possible, use small bottles and encourage students to squeeze with index and middle fingers</p>	<p>Spray bottles</p>	<p>Encourages open/close action of the hand (pre-scissor skill) Develops hand/finger strength Develops separation of the two sides of the hand in preparation for holding pencil (thumb, index, and middle fingers performing task, while ring and little fingers are tucked against palm)</p>
<p>Hole punching Use small single hole punches to decorate pictures, put a border around a drawing, or create lacing cards.</p>	<p>Students hold the punch within their hand rather than on the table Use the opportunity to practice punching with "thumbs on top"</p>	<p>Paper Small single hole punches</p>	<p>Develops hand/finger strength Emphasises "thumbs on top" (in preparation for holding scissors with thumb through the top loop) Encourages open/close action of the hand (pre-scissor skill)</p>
<p>Tong relay Use small tongs (plastic) or teabag squeezers to have a relay while carrying small objects with the tongs.</p>	<p>Students use one hand to manipulate tongs</p>	<p>Tongs (plastic) or teabag squeezers Small objects to carry</p>	<p>Develops hand strength Encourages open/close action of the hand (pre-scissor skill)</p>
<p>Sorting game Use tweezers to sort small objects (e.g. plastic insects, jacks, sultanas, macaroni, scrunched paper balls) <i>Challenge 1: Hold a small item (e.g. marble, ball of playdough, scrunched paper) against the palm of the hand using ring and little fingers, while using other fingers to hold and manipulate tweezers.</i> <i>Challenge 2: Try transferring items that are more delicate and require more precise use of the tweezers (e.g. rice bubbles, cornflakes)</i></p>	<p>Students use one hand to manipulate tweezers (preferably using three fingered grasp incorporating thumb, index, and middle fingers) Students are encouraged to use their "helping hand" to stabilise the container</p>	<p>Tweezers Small objects to move (e.g. plastic insects, jacks, sultanas, macaroni)</p>	<p>Develops hand/finger strength Encourages open/close action of the hand (pre-scissor skill) Develops separation of the two sides of the hand in preparation for holding pencil (thumb, index, and middle fingers performing task, while ring and little fingers are tucked against palm)</p>

<p>Tweezer race Have a race to transfer the most items from a pile in the centre of the table to a small container in front of you using tweezers. <i>Challenge 1: Hold a small item (e.g. marble, ball of playdough, scrunched paper) against the palm of the hand using ring and little fingers, while using other fingers to hold and manipulate tweezers.</i> <i>Challenge 2: Try transferring items that are more delicate and require more precise use of the tweezers (e.g. rice bubbles, cornflakes)</i></p>	<p>Students use one hand to manipulate tweezers (preferably using three fingered grasps incorporating thumb, index, and middle fingers) Students are encouraged to use their "helping hand" to stabilise the container</p>	<p>Tweezers Small objects to move (e.g. plastic insects, jacks, sultanas, macaroni) Small container for each player</p>	<p>Develops hand/finger strength Encourages open/close action of the hand (pre-scissor skill) Develops separation of the two sides of the hand in preparation for holding pencil (thumb, index, and middle fingers performing task, while ring and little fingers are tucked against palm)</p>
<p>Peg race Have a race to peg clothes pegs around the outside of an ice-cream container. Use the "helping hand" to stabilise the container. <i>Challenge: Hold a small item (e.g. marble, ball of playdough, scrunched paper) against the palm of the hand using ring and little fingers, while using other fingers to hold and manipulate pegs.</i></p>	<p>Students squeeze the pegs open rather than pushing them on Students only use one hand to manipulate the pegs (try not to use other hand or body to help manipulate the pegs)</p>	<p>Clothes pegs Ice-cream container</p>	<p>Develops hand/finger strength Encourages open/close action of the hand (pre-scissor skill) Develops separation of the two sides of the hand in preparation for holding pencil (thumb, index, and middle fingers performing task, while ring and little fingers are tucked against palm)</p>
<p>Finger soccer Tear paper into thin strips. Scrunch each strip into a ball using one hand only (try not to let the other hand help or push the paper against the body to help). Flick at a "goal". <i>Challenge: Begin with paper that is easily scrunched (e.g. tissue paper, crepe paper). As strength develops, increase resistance of paper (e.g. newspaper, photocopy paper).</i></p>	<p>Students tear paper in a controlled manner using two hands in a coordinated manner Students attempt to scrunch paper using one hand only (not against body)</p>	<p>Scrap paper</p>	<p>Coordinated use of the leader hand and helper hand Develops hand/finger strength Control of the small muscles of the hand</p>
<p>Straw necklace Students snip straws into short segments (approximately 2cm). Thread the straws onto a string to make a straw necklace.</p>	<p>Students use one hand to hold the straw while cutting with the other</p>	<p>Drinking straws String</p>	<p>Coordinated use of the leader hand and helper hand Isolating finger movements and controlling small muscles of the hand Encourages open/close action of the hand (pre-scissor skill)</p>

<p>Threading Use a commercially available threading kit or thread macaroni or straws onto a string</p>	<p>Students use two hands together in a coordinated manner to manage the thread and beads</p>	<p>String Beads/ Drinking Straws/ Macaroni</p>	<p>Coordinated use of the leader hand and helper hand Isolating finger movements and controlling small muscles of the hand</p>
<p>Lacing cards Use a hole punch to put holes around the border of a picture and lace string through the holes.</p>	<p>Students hold the punch within their hand rather than on the table Use the opportunity to practice punching with “thumbs on top” Students use two hands together in a coordinated manner to manage the thread and card</p>	<p>Paper or thin cardboard Small single hole punch String</p>	<p>Coordinated use of the leader hand and helper hand Isolating finger movements Develops hand/finger strength Emphasises “thumbs on top” (in preparation for holding scissors with thumb through the top loop) Encourages open/close action of the hand (pre-scissor skill)</p>
<p>Collage Tear paper into thin strips. Scrunch each strip into a ball using one hand only (try not to let the other hand help or push the paper against the body to help). Glue to a picture to make clouds, trees, hair etc.</p>	<p>Students tear paper in a controlled manner using two hands in a coordinated manner Students attempt to scrunch paper using one hand only</p>	<p>Scrap paper (different colours)</p>	<p>Coordinated use of the leader hand and helper hand Develops hand/finger strength Control of the small muscles of the hand</p>
<p>Finding game Fill an ice-cream container with sand, rice, macaroni, beans, or cotton balls and hide small objects (e.g. marbles, plastic insects) inside for the students to find</p>		<p>Ice-cream container Textured materials (e.g. sand, rice, macaroni, beans, cotton balls) Small objects (e.g. marbles, plastic insects)</p>	<p>Develops sensory awareness in the hands to give information about what the hands are doing</p>
<p>Finger Drawing Students draw letters, shapes, or pictures using their fingers on a tray of a shaving cream, sand, flour, or finger paint etc. Place a laminated copy of the letter in the tray to provide a model to trace if necessary. Have fun drawing pictures and writing name in the tray as well. <i>Hint: At home, shaving cream can be used in the bathtub to reduce mess!</i></p>	<p>Students use correct letter formation when drawing letters. Students are not forced to tolerate sensations that they find confronting (wash hands if necessary or finish task)</p>	<p>Tray Sand, flour, finger paint, shaving cream etc. Laminated copies of the letters or shapes to trace (optional)</p>	<p>Develops sensory awareness in the hands to give information about what the hands are doing Develops “feel” for the correct formation of letters or the pattern for shapes Engages students who may be reluctant to put pencil to paper for writing tasks</p>

<p>Eyedropper Use an eyedropper to transfer water from one cup to another (put a few drops of food colouring in the bottom of the second cup and watch the water change colour) <i>Challenge 1: Hold a small item (e.g. marble, ball of playdough, scrunched paper) against the palm of the hand using ring and little fingers, while using other fingers to hold and manipulate eyedropper.</i> <i>Challenge 2: Try to let only one drop of water through at a time.</i></p>	<p>Students use one hand to manipulate eyedropper (preferably using three fingered grip incorporating thumb, index, and middle fingers) Students are encouraged to use their "helping hand" to stabilise the container</p>	<p>Eyedroppers Plastic cups Food colouring</p>	<p>Encouraging an open webspace (i.e. a round O shape between thumb and index finger – similar to the hand shape used to grasp a pencil) Develops hand/finger strength Control of the small muscles of the hand</p>
<p>Eyedropper picture Use an eyedropper to drip coloured water onto paper to create a picture <i>Challenge 1: Hold a small item (e.g. marble, ball of playdough, scrunched paper) against the palm of the hand using ring and little fingers, while using other fingers to hold and manipulate eyedropper.</i> <i>Challenge 2: Try to let only one drop of water through at a time.</i></p>	<p>Students use one hand to manipulate eyedropper (preferably using three fingered grasp incorporating thumb, index, and middle fingers) Students are encouraged to use their "helping hand" to stabilise the container Students control drops of water to release just a little at a time</p>	<p>Eyedroppers Water with food colouring added Paper</p>	<p>Encouraging an open webspace (i.e. a round O shape between thumb and index finger – similar to the hand shape used to grasp a pencil) Control of the small muscles of the hand</p>
<p>Marbles Flick marbles at a target</p>	<p>Students flick using index or middle finger only</p>	<p>Marbles</p>	<p>Isolating and controlling finger movements</p>
<p>Marble Drop Lay hand on the table palm down, with fingers spread apart. Place marbles in the space between each finger. Slowly lift the hand and try to let go of only one marble at a time.</p>	<p>Students perform task slowly, with only one marble released at a time Students do not use other hand to assist</p>	<p>Marbles</p>	<p>Isolating and controlling finger movements</p>
<p>Marble Pick-up Using one hand only, pick up a marble from a container using thumb and index finger. Drop this into the same hand (to hold with little, ring, and middle fingers). Continue taking one marble at a time and adding it to the hand until a marble is dropped. Try to get as many marbles as possible!</p>	<p>Students use one hand and manipulate marbles using that hand only</p>	<p>Marbles Small container</p>	<p>Isolating and controlling finger movements Manipulating objects within the hand</p>

<p>Playdough Have fun playing with playdough</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll into a sausage and cut into small pieces • Roll into a sausage and use index finger and thumb to pinch along the length of the sausage • Hide marbles in a ball of playdough and try to find them all • Use the fingers of one hand to roll small playdough balls (try not to use other hand to help) • Roll with a rolling pin • Use playdough pushers • Hold a ball of playdough in the hand and try to push a marble in to the playdough using only the thumb <p><i>Challenge: Try using plasticine or clay to provide greater resistance and make hands work harder.</i></p>	<p>Actions that incorporate squeezing, pinching, pushing, rolling</p>	<p>Playdough</p>	<p>Develops hand/finger strength Isolating and controlling finger movements</p>
<p>String drawings Paste different lengths of string or wool onto the outline of a picture or inside the outline to make a string drawing or pattern</p>	<p>Students independently manipulate the string to fit the picture</p>	<p>Basic picture Glue String</p>	<p>Isolating and controlling finger movements Coordinated use of leader hand and helper hand</p>
<p>Snipping Take the opportunity to teach safe scissor use and practice open/close action with scissors by incorporating snipping tasks into activities (without the demands of having to cut on a line)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cut fringing around the edge of pictures • Snip a playdough sausage into small pieces • Snip straws into small pieces to put on a collage or thread onto string • Cut fringing along a strip of paper and glue to a picture as grass or hair 	<p>Students grasp the scissors correctly Students stabilise the item they are cutting with their helper hand</p>	<p>Scissors Items to snip – paper, playdough, drinking straws</p>	<p>Develops hand/finger strength Isolating finger movements Coordinated use of the leader hand and helper hand Open/close of the scissors in a coordinated way</p>

<p>Stencils Draw around stencils or everyday objects to create pictures. <u>Challenge:</u> Stick the paper to a wall and draw around stencils on this surface. The “helping hand” has a very important role in trying to keep the stencil in place when drawing at a vertical surface.</p>	<p>Students adequately stabilise the stencil with their helping hand</p>	<p>Paper Pencils Stencils or everyday items to trace around</p>	<p>Coordinated use of the leader hand and helper hand</p>
<p>Paperclip chains Link paperclips together to form a chain. Unlink the paperclips at the end of the activity. <u>Challenge:</u> Link as many paperclips as you can in one minute. Try to beat your time.</p>	<p>Students efficiently use two hands together to link paperclips</p>	<p>Paperclips</p>	<p>Isolating and controlling finger movements Coordinated use of leader hand and helper hand</p>

More fine motor ideas:

- Dress and undress dolls
- Play with construction toys e.g. Lego, Mobilo, Meccano
- Make paper planes or boats
- Use matchsticks to makes shapes, build roads, glue to collages
- Use different fasteners e.g. zips, buttons, press-studs, hooks, laces, Velcro
- Use finger puppets or sock puppets
- Use a stapler
- Build a tower using paddle pop sticks
- Make pipe cleaner shapes
- Make paper chains
- Play with commercial games that require manipulation of small pieces e.g. Trouble, Don't Spill the Beans, Ants in the Pants, Operation, Bedbugs, Pick-up-sticks, travel size Connect 4
- Screw and unscrew nuts and bolts
- Spin tops
- Art and craft activities – including cutting, pasting, folding, tearing, scrunching, sticking with tape, stapling, drawing, paper weaving
- Play with cards e.g. fish, snap, memory
- Finger paint
- Create models using clay, plasticine, or blu-tac

References:

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