

# The Screening Process

This is not a test, but an attempt to obtain information about broad levels of strengths or areas of concern. The children will be asked to perform simple large and small motor skills. They will be asked to identify some basic concepts with regard to colors, shapes, numbers, and letters. They will be asked to repeat some words and short phrases, to follow simple directions, and to respond to some questions about themselves.

A summary sheet will be mailed to you indicating areas for improvement. Please see the activities in the Kindergarten Screening folder to help improve these areas. Please share with us any information that you feel is pertinent to the education of your child. Thank you for your cooperation.



# Kindergarten Activities



## Early Literacy Skills

- Play with alphabet letters, such as magnetic letters on the refrigerator, and help your child to identify letter names and words that begin with the sound the letter makes.
- Use your environment: point out letters and colors on everyday objects (signs, cereal boxes, etc.),
- I Spy game: Can be used for letters or colors
- Practice directed coloring activities (“Color the sun yellow”)
- Sort items based on their color
- Use flash cards for letters and colors

## Auditory Memory

- Play Simon Says
- Give your child 2- or 3- step directions to complete tasks around the house
- Encourage your child to repeat an instruction aloud before they complete it

## Phonemic Awareness

- Use the beginning sound in their name as a foundation for building sound knowledge. For example, if your child’s name starts with P, find other items that start with /p/ like popcorn, puzzle, pillow, etc.
- Read, say, and practice rhymes
- Use compound words to blend the word parts (ex. parent says: base / ball; child says baseball)



## Gross and Fine Motor Skills

- Help your child practice, identify, and write his/her own name. Have children start with the letters in their own name when attempting to recognize and name letters.
- Provide a writing center in your house with writing materials: crayons, markers, paper, journals, and books.
- Roll play-doh into balls and snakes using the palm of the hand and/or fingertips
- Attempt to turn over cards, coins, checkers, or buttons without bringing them to the edge of the table
- Cut up junk mail or play-doh with scissors
- Pick up small objects (ex. Cheerios) with large tweezers
- For proper pencil grip, see attached handout
- To teach left and right, sing songs, such as the Hokey Pokey, and use the terms left and right when giving directions or putting on shoes

## Math Skills

- I Spy Game: Can be used with numbers and shapes
- Counting everyday objects, such as Cheerios
- Use flash cards to learn numbers 0-9
- Practice counting out loud to 10
- Identify shapes in everyday objects (square, circle, rectangle, triangle, oval, and diamond)

## General Knowledge

- Take every opportunity you can to help increase your child's vocabulary. You can do this by pointing to things and asking the child to tell you what they are, or you can stop and explain the meaning of any words in your reading that the child may not understand. The more you talk to your child, the faster their vocabulary will grow.

## Visual Discrimination

- Play traditional Memory Game or create your own with letters (uppercase and lowercase), shapes, or colors



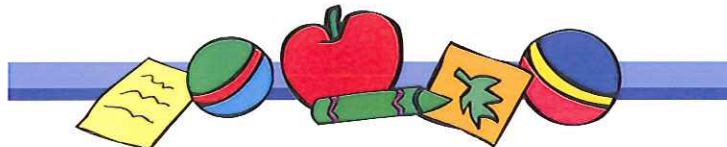


# Developing Literacy Skills



## What can I do to help my child develop literacy skills?

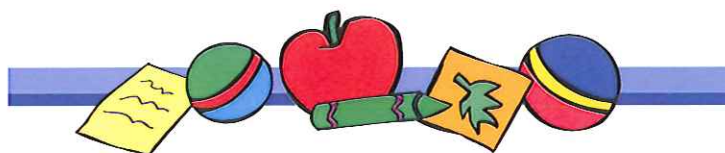
1. Read to your child daily. Follow the words with your finger and talk about the cover of the book, the illustrations, and the words. Draw his/her attention to forms of print such as punctuation and placement of the title.
2. Help your child notice that words on a page are read from left to right and top to bottom. Show him that words are separated by spaces and that the end of a line is not always the end of a thought.
3. Make reading an interactive process. Have him ask his own questions about the story and answer the ones you ask. Practice answering questions: *who, what, where, when, why* and *how*.
4. Talk about the books you read together.
  - The characters – why do they do things in the story?
  - Make predictions about what will happen next.
  - Make connections between the story and their own lives.
5. Ask your child to retell a story that you have just read. Listen for him/her to talk about the characters, problem(s), solution(s), the beginning, middle, and end of the story. Ask how he/she felt about the story, and why.
6. Develop Concepts: *up, down, under, over, on, in, and beside*.
7. Practice following 2 step directions. (For example, tell your child to put the fork down and take the cup to the sink.)
8. Practice listening skills. Have your child repeat what you have said.
9. Read, say, and practice rhymes.
10. Help your child understand that anything spoken can be written. For example, have him/her think of a title for a picture he/she drew, and write it for him/her.



11. Help your child practice, identify, and write his/her own name. Young children naturally like to see their name in print and have a great desire to know the letters in their name. Have children start with the letters in their own name when attempting to recognize and name letters.
12. Also, use the beginning sound in their name as a foundation for building sound knowledge. For example, if your child's name starts with P, find other items that start with /p/ like popcorn, puzzle, pillow, etc.
13. Provide a writing center in your house with writing materials: crayons, markers, paper, journals, and books.
14. Encourage your child to write notes using scribble writing and pretend spelling.
15. Have your child write when you make grocery lists, letters, checkbooks, etc. Let him/her see you writing letters, checks to pay the bills, the grocery list, notes, anything! Give your child his/her own piece of paper, letting him/her write out his/her own list using kid writing (*It's all right if you can't read it at this point - You are modeling for them uses/reasons for writing and reading which is much more important at this stage.*)
16. Play with alphabet letters, such as magnetic letters on the refrigerator, and help your child to identify letter names and words that begin with the sound the letter makes.
17. Practice identifying capital letters.
18. Read aloud signs like "No Parking" and "Exit" and talk about what the signs mean.

## Why Read Aloud?

1. Reading aloud develops an awareness of print, its form and function, the relationship between speech and print, and book handling skills.
2. Reading aloud builds familiarity with story patterns and story language. Familiarity with stories allows for prediction.
3. Reading aloud promotes language development, helps to build the child's vocabulary, expands the child's understanding of the world, and helps link new concepts to known concepts.
4. Reading aloud creates pleasant associations with books...enjoyment, pleasure, and fun. These associations will eventually lead the child to seek out books on their own.



## Developing a pencil grip

### Definition

Pencil grip is only one component of handwriting. Most children naturally develop a pencil grip that is comfortable for them. In any kinder or school class a variety of pencil grips will be seen. Acceptable pencil grips include those shown in Figure 1.

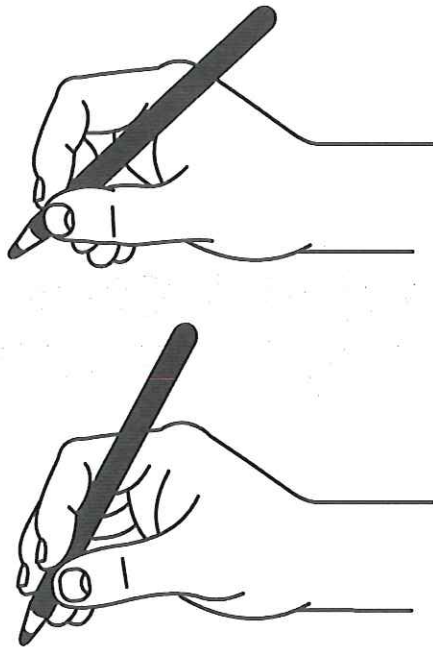


Figure 1: Acceptable pencil grips.

A pencil grip is only a problem if a child has difficulty writing legibly, at a reasonable speed, or complains of a sore or tired hand when writing.

If an awkward grip pattern becomes a habit it is more difficult to change later. Pencil grips are easier to change in kinder and the early school years.

Encourage your child to hold her pencil in a way that allows her hand and fingers to move freely and easily when writing or drawing. General guidelines for a good pencil grip, as shown in figure 2, include:

- ▶ the pencil is held in a stable position between the thumb, index and middle fingers
- ▶ the ring and little fingers are bent and rest comfortably on the table
- ▶ the index finger and thumb form an open space
- ▶ the wrist is bent back slightly, and the forearm is resting on the table
- ▶ the pencil is held about 1–2 cm from the tip.

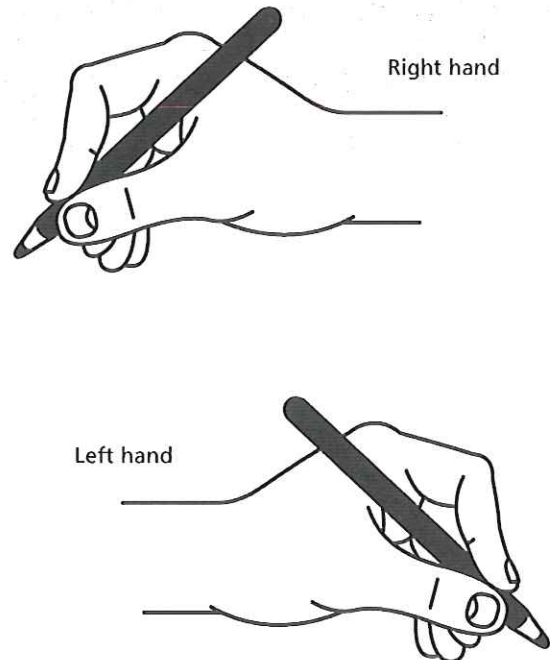


Figure 2: A good pencil grip.



## Helpful strategies

- ▶ Show your child the correct finger and thumb positioning for holding the pencil and help him place his fingers and thumb in these positions.
- ▶ Try a commercially available pencil grip. Your child, however, will need to learn how to correctly and consistently hold the grip. Pencil grips are available from your occupational therapist.
- ▶ Encourage your child to practice for a few minutes each day until your child automatically and consistently uses a suitable pencil grip.
- ▶ Give feedback to your child to help him become aware of his finger and thumb positions and praise him whenever he demonstrates a suitable pencil grip.
- ▶ Encourage your child to do lots of fun and interesting drawing and writing activities using different types of texts, coloured pencils, crayons and chalks so he is motivated to practice.

## Sitting and paper position

General guidelines for a good sitting position, as shown in figure 3, include:

- ▶ bottom back on the chair
- ▶ feet flat on the floor
- ▶ forearms rest comfortably on the table
- ▶ table and chair suitable for your child's size.

The paper position should be sloped at the same angle as the writing arm and steadied with the non-writing hand (Figure 4). This will help your child see what she is writing and make it easier for her writing hand to move across the page.

Please talk to your occupational therapist if you have any queries about the above information.



Figure 3: A good sitting position.

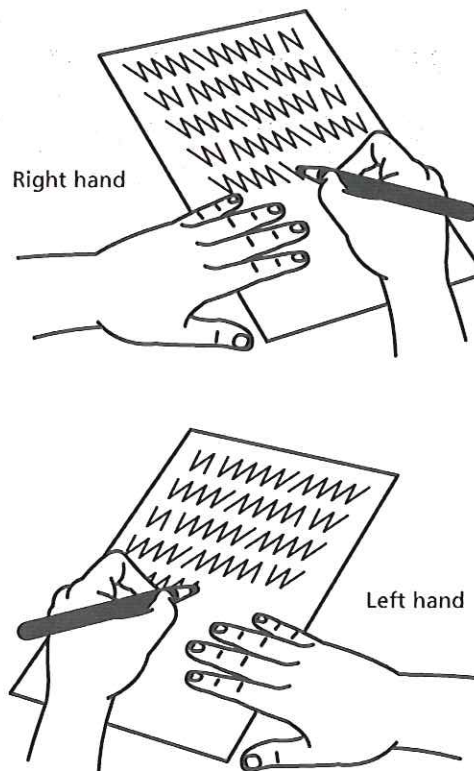


Figure 4: Correct paper position.



Dear Parents,

There are many websites on which you can find interactive games, printable materials, information on books, etc. There are also books online that your child can listen to. Some sites are better than others. Computers are available for use by students at the Children's Library in Scranton, The Abington Community Library, and at some of the other branches.

Here are just a few of the websites available. Some provide links to other sites.

[www.internet4classrooms.com/kindergarten\\_links.htm](http://www.internet4classrooms.com/kindergarten_links.htm)

[www.earlychildhood.com](http://www.earlychildhood.com)

[www.familyeducation.com](http://www.familyeducation.com)

[www.primarygames.com](http://www.primarygames.com)

[www.pbskids.org/games.html](http://www.pbskids.org/games.html)

[www.scholastic.com](http://www.scholastic.com)

<http://www.starfall.com>

<http://www.gamequarium.org/dir/Readquarium/>

[www.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/reader/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/reader/index.html)

[www.reading.org/resources/tools/parent.html](http://www.reading.org/resources/tools/parent.html)



[www.trelease-on-reading.com](http://www.trelease-on-reading.com)

[www.mrsalphabet.com](http://www.mrsalphabet.com)

[www.picturebookart.org](http://www.picturebookart.org)

[www.discoverymuseums.org](http://www.discoverymuseums.org)

[www.janbrett.com](http://www.janbrett.com)

[www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown/authors.html](http://www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown/authors.html)

[www.berenstainbears.com](http://www.berenstainbears.com)

<http://www.funbrain.com>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/>

Which is More?

<http://math.rice.edu/~lanius/counting/count5.html>

What Comes Next?

<http://math.rice.edu/~lanius/counting/pattern.html>

Let's Count

<http://math.rice.edu/~lanius/counting/count.html>

Let's Count Animals

<http://math.rice.edu/~lanius/counting/count2.html>

Let's Count Again!

<http://math.rice.edu/~lanius/counting/count3.html>

The Counting Story

<http://www.magickeys.com/books/count/index.html>

The Counting Game

<http://home.earthlink.net/~cmalumphy/countinggame.html>