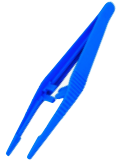




Fine Motor Development



Fine motor development is the ability to control the small movements of the hands and fingers, as well as the small muscles of the face and mouth (tongue) and feet.

For our purposes here, we are only referring to the use of the small muscles in the hands and fingers.

Acquiring basic fine motor skills, leads to the development of more advanced ones requiring precision and control.

The development of fine motor skills involves more than the strengthening of hand and finger muscles.

Fine motor activities usually have a visual motor and cognitive component, so in order for your child to meet his fine motor skill milestones, he must also demonstrate healthy visual motor and cognitive development.

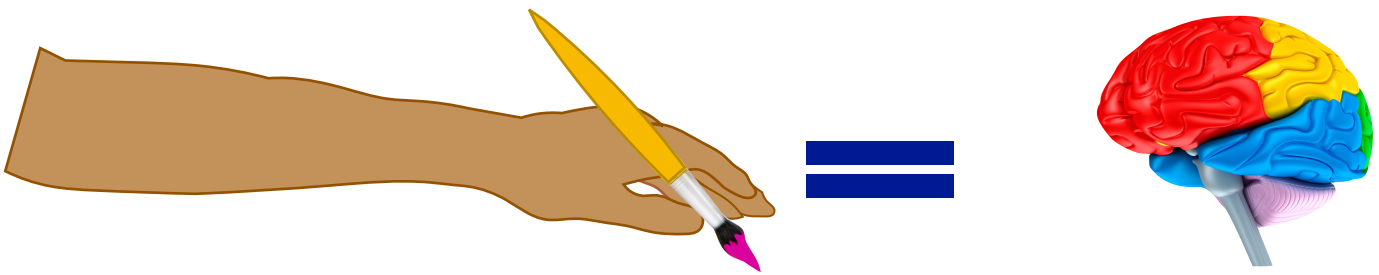
Why is Fine Motor development so important?

Once formal schooling starts, good control of the hand muscles will help your child to learn handwriting with a minimum of effort. Many bright children struggle in the early years because of their great difficulty with pencil control. This issue holds them back from showing what they are really capable of.

When your child has to concentrate on just trying to hold a pencil, there is less brain power to devote to actually learning the work! When a child can write freely and easily, it is easier for him/her to concentrate on writing an amazing essay, or on answering the test questions.

Fine Motor:

Whole Arm



Whole/or Full Arm: with arm extended as straight as is comfortable. This engagement helps to strengthen the scapular /shoulder areas. It also limits bending of the wrist which is important for young children.

Whole arm tracing of a large model/image activates the afferent sensory reception cells in the parietal/kinesthetic-tactile lobes and the visual/visualization cells in the occipital lobe.

At BSMART, you will see many opportunities for children to trace models/objects/lines. We use several methods of tracing which produces the many inputs needed on the way to automaticity.

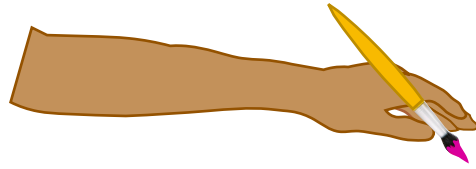
It is important to note that:

There is a difference between copying and tracing. Copying is looking at something and trying to recreate it, while tracing is going over lines that can be seen. For young children tracing is preferred to copying.

Copying is trying, not teaching or learning
--a source of many bad habits since no movement input is given.

Activities: Fine Motor: Whole Arm

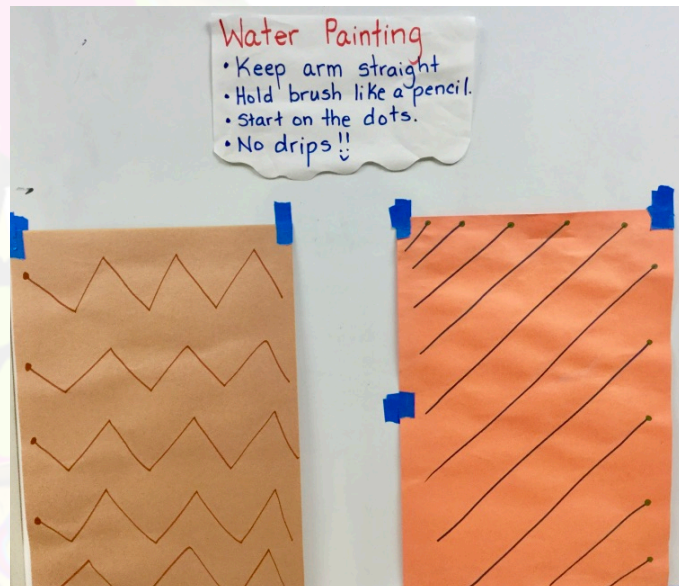
Waterpainting



Water Painting is an excellent (little mess) whole arm activity that can easily be completed at home.

Materials:

- paintbrush
- permanent marker
- water container
- Poster paper or paper bags



Use permanent marker to create simple lines on poster paper. Start with horizontal, vertical, diagonal lines, and then on to shapes and other simple patterns.

Children dip their paintbrush into water and then trace over patterns.

Arm should be extended as much as possible to activate the involved brain lobes and to get the whole arm engaged and strengthened.

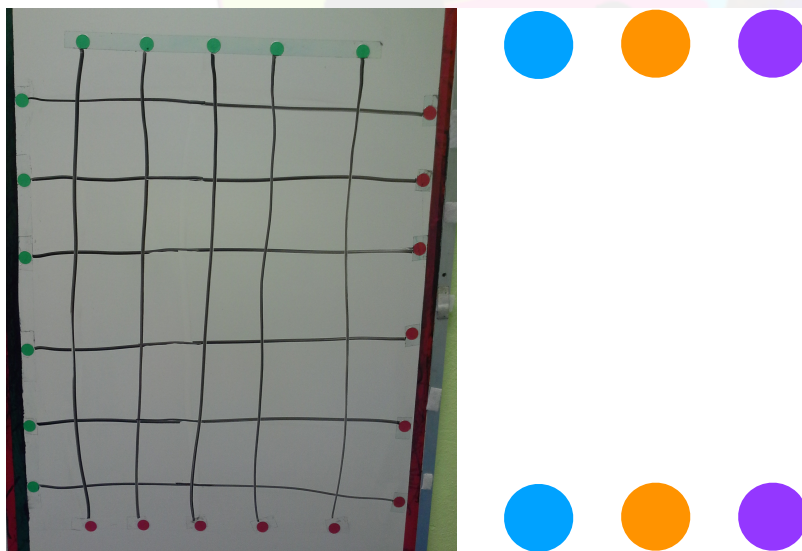


Dry Erase Board Activities:

Fine Motor - Whole Arm

- * The vertical full arm activities can also be completed (indoors) on a large whiteboard or perhaps using whiteboard contact paper.
- * Alternatively, large rolls of paper can be attached to a wall to be used instead.
- * Varying background surfaces is important in providing vibratory feedback to the hands at young ages.

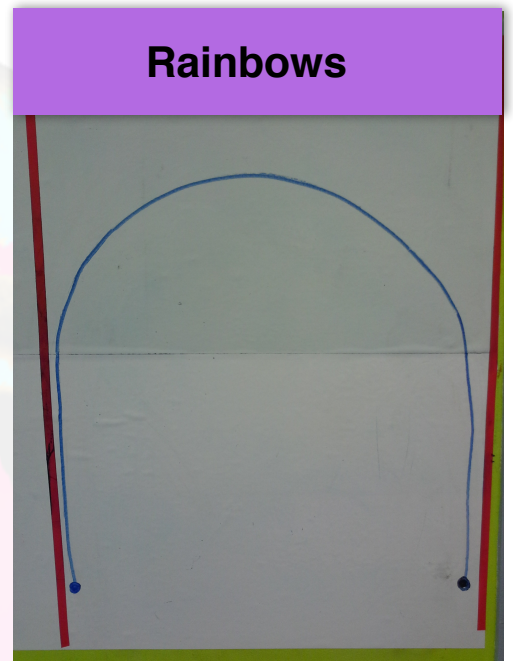
Connect the Lines



- * Place sticker dots at arm's height near the top and bottom of the board.
- * Place additional sticker dots on the left & right.
- * Ensure that the dots are spaced widely enough so as not to confuse preschoolers.
- * It may also help to have each column in a designated color.
- * Students use their dry erase markers to go from top to bottom and left to right.

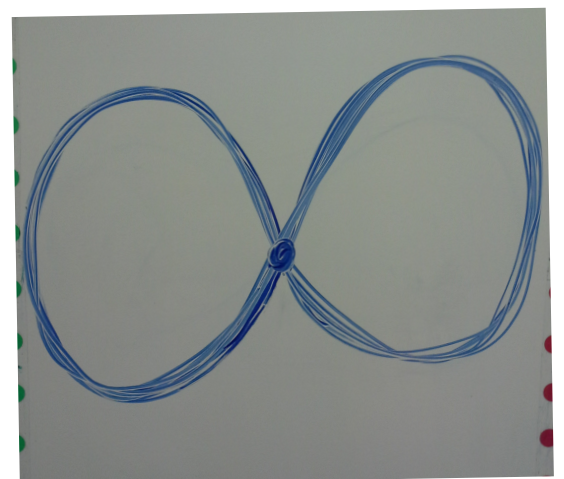
Rainbows

- Put 2 dots on the board (approx. shoulder width apart) near child's waist height.
- Child is positioned in the center of the two dots.
- Using dry erase marker, have your child make continuous rainbows from one dot to the other.
- Encourage them to start and stop at each dot (this is difficult for the little ones to control so ensure the dot is a big enough target).
- See how long they can do this with one hand/arm without tiring.
- Do not allow them to hold marker like a dagger. Encourage a proper grip.



Octopus Arms (Lazy 8s)

- Young students will need the first lazy 8 traced for them.
- Students stand in the middle of their board so that the middle dot is in line with their noses.
- Students use their dry erase markers to trace around the the lazy 8 remembering to cross over to the other side.
- Watch out for little ones who have difficulty crossing the midline to the the other side.



Chalkboard Activities:

Fine Motor - Whole Arm

Children should learn to write on vertical surfaces before horizontal surfaces.

Movements should move from large whole arm movements before progressing to small movements requiring increased fine motor control.

Easels are a great tool, but if you don't have one there are alternatives:

- ✿ Paint a wooden board or large cardboard box with chalk board paint and attach it to a wall.
- ✿ Use an inexpensive dry erase board and paint the other side with chalkboard paint or chalkboard contact paper.
- ✿ Cover an inner door with chalkboard paint.
- ✿ Foam core board is another alternative.



Chalkboard Activities for Full Arm

Paintbrush Writing on Chalkboard

- cover entire wall with chalk, students can use paintbrushes dipped in water, small sponge pieces, or cotton balls to make patterns through the chalk covering.
- Paint dots at the top & bottom for students to match up.
- Paint thin dotted line shapes on a section of the chalkboard for students to trace over.

