

# OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

## Developing Skills Resource Pack Activity Sheets



**Information and resources for parents, schools, SENCO's and other professionals**

This pack has been modified with permission from the Paediatric Occupational Therapy team in Buckinghamshire and the North Surrey Locality

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## **Introduction to Activity Sheets**

In this section you will find the activity sheets; Memory, Perception, Using two hands, Hand skills, Letter formation, Body awareness and co-ordination, Ball skills and Balance. Choose the sheet or sheets identified from the flow charts which can be found in the Occupational Therapy Information and Referral Pack. Each sheet contains various activities that can be carried out by the child with adult support. This can be done on a one to one or with a small group of children who have all been identified through the screening flow charts.

The activity sheets aim to:

- Address areas of need (identified using flow charts) which may prevent referral to the OT or enable schools to implement resources whilst the child is awaiting an assessment.
- Clarify areas of need i.e. if the child has persistent difficulty completing an activity, to enable detailed referral.

VIZZIES - MEMORY  
PERCEPTION

HANDIES - USING TWO HANDS  
HAND SKILLS  
LETTER FORMATION

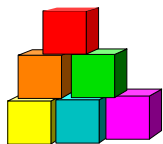
## MEMORY



### Vizzies Activity Sheets

#### Memory

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## 1 Tactile Letters

Have an assortment of tactile letters in a bag. Begin with only 3 letters. Show the child the letter put it in the bag with the other 2 letters. Encourage the child to feel for the correct letter without looking.

## 2 Kim's Game

Find 10 everyday items i.e. key, spoon. Encourage the child to remember as many of the items as they can. Remove one item without the child looking. Child has to identify the missing object. Try to increase the number of objects removed.

## 5 Coloured Cubes

Provide a sequence of coloured cubes beginning with two. Allow the child to

## 3 Memory Game

Use a selection of matching pair cards. Encourage child to turn card, replace it and turn another card to attempt to find a pair.

## 4 Sequencing

Use selection of matching pair cards. Lay cards in a sequence. Encourage the child to visualise characteristics of each card to aid memory of sequence. Cover sequence. Child reproduces sequence with own cards. Begin with sequence of 2 and increase as confidence and competency increases. view the sequence. Cover the sequence and encourage the child to copy the sequence from memory.

## 6 Squared Paper

Adult colours a sequence of squares on squared paper. Allow the child to view the sequence before covering it and encourage the child to reproduce the sequence.

## 7 Jumping Sequence

Use large squares of paper, which are coloured, numbered or lettered. Begin with coloured squares taped to the floor. Show the child a sequence, initially only two colours/numbers etc. Child then jumps onto the squares in the correct sequence. Increase difficulty by increasing amount of squares in the sequence and move onto letters and numbers.

### **Equipment needed:**

- Tactile bag
- Large tactile letters e.g. foam bath letters
- Sandpaper
- Letter\number\picture cards
- 10 Everyday objects e.g. key
- Large paper squares with colours/numbers/letters
- Masking tape
- Coloured cubes
- Squared paper

### **VIZZIES ACTIVITY SHEET**

#### **MEMORY:**

The activities have been put together to improve visual memory skills. They can be done in any order and should ideally be practised about 3 times a week for 10 – 15 minutes.

## VISUAL PERCEPTION



### Vizzies Activity Sheets

Visual Perception  
Child's Name:

# 1

Adult draws incomplete shapes, numbers or letters on whiteboard, chalkboard or in sand. Child has to guess what the letter is and complete it.

# 2

Adult to print or hand draw large A4 sized shapes, numbers or letters. Cut into 2, 3 or 4 pieces. Child reassembles the jigsaw to find out what the shape, number or letter is.

# 3

Adult to select pictures with a lot of detail and ask the child to find specific details. E.g. Where's Wally books or collages of magazine pictures and find all the people with red hair etc.

# 4

Adult to produce sheets of assorted letters/numbers and ask the child to circle the symbols requested.

e.g. Find all the a's: a b e a q b a c

E.g. Find the word cat

e f c b t s q  
c b d s v p d  
s t a w h k m  
c p c a t s d  
a g l k h j e

Begin with one hidden word and then increase to more.

# 5

Paper

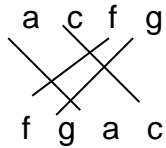
- Pens, pencils, coloured pencils & felt tip pens
- Square building blocks

Write two rows of letters or words and get the child to draw a line to match the letters or words.

I.e. cat dog pig cow



cow pig dog cat



# 6

Use building blocks to follow spatial directions. I.e. place the blue block behind / in front / next to / on top / under the red block.



# 7

Copy designs using building blocks.

Train



Steps

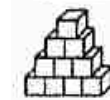
▪



Gate



Pyramid



## VIZZIES ACTIVITY SHEET

### **VISUAL PERCEPTION:**

These activities have been put together to help improve the child's ability to interpret information that they are seeing. Visual perception is important for handwriting – letter formation and spacing, as well as reading and maths. These activities can be done in any order and should ideally be practised about 3 times a week for 10 – 15 minutes.

### **Equipment needed:**

- Chalkboard/whiteboard

## USING TWO HANDS



### Handies Activity Sheets

#### Using Two Hands

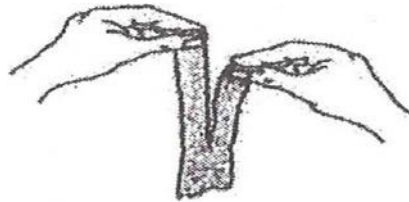
Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# 1



#### Paper Tearing

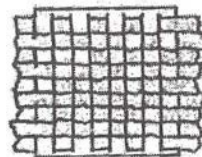
Tear strips of paper with both hands, using thumb, index and middle finger to hold paper.



# 2

#### Paper Weaving

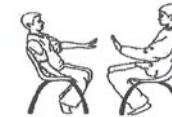
1. Fold a piece of paper in half
2. Cut strips in the paper but not all the way to the edge
3. Using the paper you have just torn into strips weave them between the strips of the folded paper to make a mat.



# 3

#### Mirroring

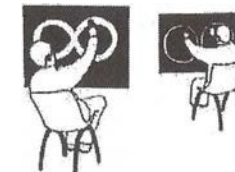
Sit opposite a partner and mirror pattern of alternate hand movements. Increase to more complicated patterns, include patting partner's palms and crossing the body.



# 4

#### Figure of 8's

Stand facing the centre of the black/white board; draw a large horizontal figure of 8 using only one hand. Trace shapes on a blackboard. Use both hands. The emphasis is on simultaneous movements.





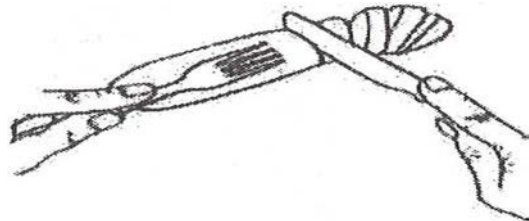
order and should ideally be practised about 3 times a week for 10 – 15 minutes.

**Equipment needed:**

- Putty
- Paper
- Knife and fork
- Blackboard/whiteboard/ Easel

## 5 Cutting

Roll a piece of putty into a thick sausage and then cut with a knife and fork using correct technique. This can be demonstrated by an adult using the 'hand over hand technique' if necessary (where the adult stands behind the child and places their hands over his/her hands demonstrating the movement).



## 6 Helping around the house

Helping with the housework - using a dustpan and brush, sweeping or mopping the floor, washing up or drying up etc.

## 7 Paper Folding

Take a square piece of paper. Fold horizontally in half; open out then fold in half vertically. Open out and make a dot in the centre where the creases join.

Fold the corners to the centre to make a smaller square. Turn the square over and do the same again to make the square smaller again.

Fold in half horizontally then open out and fold in half vertically. Whilst still folded in half put thumb and index finger of each hand into each of the four flaps and open up and out to make a point.

### **HANDIES ACTIVITY SHEET** **USING TWO HANDS:**

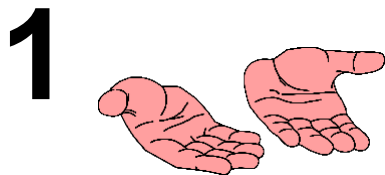
These activities have been put together to improve bilateral hand skills. They should help with skills that require the use of two hands such as dressing, tying shoelaces or using a knife and fork. These activities can be carried out in any

## **HAND SKILLS**



## Handies Activity Sheets

Hand Skills \_\_\_\_\_  
Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

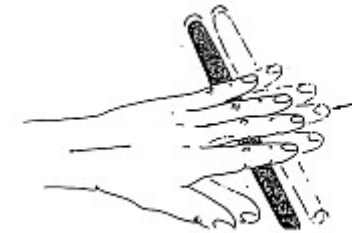


**Grasp**  
Squeeze a ball of putty 10-20 times with each hand making sure that all fingers are included.



**2** **Wrist Extension**  
Whilst ~~standing~~, flatten ball of putty with the palm of the hand (not fingers) into a flat pancake

**3** **Extension**  
Roll out a ball of putty into a sausage using the whole hand. Use one hand at a time, then 2 hands together on the table and then try rolling the sausage between 2 hands up in the air.



**4** **Finger Extension**  
Use a straightened finger to press into the putty to make holes in it. Repeat with each finger.



## HANDIES ACTIVITY SHEET

### HAND SKILLS:

These activities have been put together to improve hand strength and fine motor skills, thereby helping handwriting skills. The activities can be done in any order. They should ideally be carried out about 3 times a week for about 10 – 15 minutes.

### Equipment needed:

- Theraputty
- Paper
- Toothpicks
- Elastic band

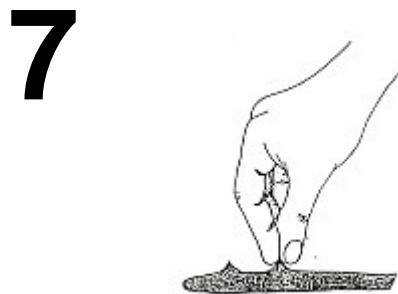
## 5 Opposition

Hold putty sausage with one hand. Use the other hand to pinch the sausage between the thumb & index and thumb & middle fingers alternately. Repeat with other hand.



## 6 Tripod Pinch

Place putty sausage flat on the table and pinch the putty into small peaks using the thumb against the index and middle fingers.



## Manipulation

With the child's forearm resting on the table, take small pieces of putty and roll them into balls using only the tips of the fingers and thumb. Repeat with the other hand.

### Other Suggestions:

- Tear up a piece of scrap paper, take a piece in one hand and scrunch it up into a ball using the fingertips. Using the thumb and index finger flick the paper balls towards a goal.
- Using a ball of putty, stick toothpicks into the putty to resemble a hedgehog. It is also good practise to pull the toothpicks out of the putty.
- Place an elastic band around the thumb and one fingertip and stretch it apart. Repeat with all fingers.

**NB:** When completing putty activities, particularly number 4, ensure the child does not hyperextend (bend the wrong way) at their finger joints e.g. the joints at the tips of their fingers.

## LETTER FORMATION



### Handies Activity Sheets

Letter Formation

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# 1

Write letters in the air using a rolled up magazine or newspaper as a writing wand. Write each letter three times verbalising the direction and sequence of the strokes (i.e. up, down and around) and saying the name and sound of the letter.

# 3

Use a variety of colours to draw over and over a particular letter to make a rainbow letter. (An adult may need to draw the letter first so that the child traces over it). Preferably do this activity when standing with the paper / chalkboard secured vertically at shoulder height.

# 2

Ask the child to identify letters drawn on their back or hand and then write that letter using the correct formation.

# 4

Child to use the index finger of their preferred hand (writing hand) to write letters in sand, finger paint, cornflower or shaving foam.

The activities can be done in any order. They should ideally be carried out about 3 times a week for about 10 – 15 minutes.

**Equipment needed:**

- Magazine
- Paper
- Pens, pencils, coloured pencils &/or felt tip pens
- Chalkboard
- Playdough
- Paper clips, string and magnet
- Sandpaper

# 5

Child to roll putty or playdough into long, thin sausages and use these to form different letters. Use the index finger of the child's preferred hand to press the playdough letters down going in the direction of the correct formation of the letter.

# 6

With eyes closed, child to draw a letter three times on a chalkboard or piece of paper using the correct formation.

# 7

Adult to write each letter of the alphabet onto small squares of paper or card and attach a paper clip to each letter. Tie a magnet to a piece of string. Child to 'catch' a letter with the magnet, identify the letter and then write it onto paper using the correct formation.

**Other Suggestions:**

- Draw using crayons, chalk, pencil and pens to get a variety of tactile experiences.
- Try writing on different coloured or textured paper.
- Try using scented or sparkly pens to make the activity seem more interesting or motivating.
- Write on paper with a piece of sandpaper under it.

**HANDIES ACTIVITY SHEET  
LETTER FORMATION:**

These activities have been put together to practice and improve letter formation skills, thereby helping handwriting skills.

## HOW TO TIE A TIE



### Pre-writing Activity Sheets

How to Tie a Tie \_\_\_\_\_  
Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

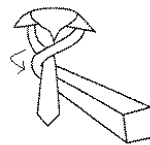
# 1

Place the tie around your neck with the fat end lower than the thin end.



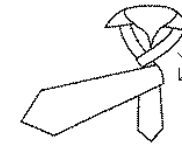
# 2

Wrap the fat end over and under the thin end.



# 3

Wrap the fat end over the thin end again.



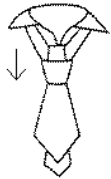
# 4

Pull the fat end up through the loop at the top.



# 5

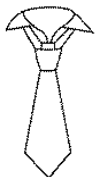
Pull the fat end down through loop in front.



# 6

Push the knot up and pull on the thin end to tighten.

Tying the tie this way, allows you to loosen it enough to pull off over your head and then put back over your head and tighten, without having to tie and untie the knot.



## DRESSING ACTIVITY SHEET

### **HOW TO TIE A TIE:**

These activities have been put together to practice and dressing skills.

They should ideally be practised about three times a week for 10-15 minutes.

## TIPS FOR DRESSING



### Dressing Activity Sheets

#### Tips for Dressing

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_



#### Forward Training

This means that the child starts the task, e.g. putting on sock and adult helps with later stages the child cannot achieve. The child needs to be motivated to begin this himself.

#### Backward Chaining

Here the adult begins the task with the child only doing the last step. Gradually the adult does less so the child has to perform more steps. This way the child always has the reward of finishing the task, e.g. adult picks up jumper, places over the child's head, helps put arms through, but the child pulls it down. Always go at the child's pace and give lots of positive feedback.

#### Types of Clothing

- Use 'loose fitting' lightweight clothing. Avoid lots of layers and difficult fastenings.
- Use wide neck holes and wide sleeves to make it easier to locate these. Cuffs can be elastic or have a button attached with elastic thread, so it stretches open when put on.

- Use elastic waistbands on trousers and shirts if buttons and buckles are difficult.
- Velcro / zips can be used instead of buttons or buckles e.g. on a coat, use Velcro and sew buttons on the top flap.
- To avoid shoelaces, Velcro fastenings or slip on shoes can be worn initially.

#### SOME PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED:

##### POOR BALANCE

##### Suggestions:

Sit the child on a bed or chair with his feet supported or sit him on the floor if it is easier for him to reach his feet in this way, rather than bending down to his feet. Alternatively sit him against a wall or in the corner of the room or standing with the wall or a chair for support.

##### CHILD NOT GRIPPING CLOTHES TO PULL ON

##### Suggestions:

Use adult hand over the child's hand to grip underneath adult's fingers. Roll up clothing to create 'more' to grip e.g. roll up edge of jumper before putting on. Put elastic around the cuffs or waist to ease gripping. Use quoits, placing them over



arms / legs as a game, pulling them off with the other hand. Use hoops to step into and pull up over the body.

### **CHILD LOSES ARM AND HEAD HOLES**

#### **Suggestion:**

Lay clothes flat in front of the child with the arms showing. Place arms into garment first so they can't be lost. Then put head in.

### **CHILD PUTS CLOTHES ON INSIDE OUT**

#### **Suggestions:**

Use contrasting linings – different colours and textures from outside to inside. Use contrasting sleeve linings from the rest of the lining. Draw child's attention to clothes that are the wrong way round. Use labels inside clothes. Wear T-shirts and sweatshirts that have a picture on the front.

### **CHILD PUTS ON CLOTHES BACK TO FRONT**

#### **Suggestions:**

Lay garment flat down on table or floor, front down. With bottom edge rolled up to give a good grip and to reveal a special mark on the inside, bottom, front

to indicate the front of the garment. There can be a different mark for the back. Use patches of material or different textures for front and back and right and left sides.

### **CHILD TWISTS SOCK HEEL TO FRONT OF FOOT**

#### **Suggestions:**

Do not use tight socks. Use marked coloured toes and heels. Use loop on back edge of sock for child to hold as he pulls up sock. Mark top of sock with ribbon threaded through.

### **CHILD FINDS BUTTONS DIFFICULT**

#### **Suggestions:**

It is easier to do up and undo buttons on someone else's clothes. Start with larger buttons, working down to smaller ones. Use pockets with rewards inside. Practice out of dressing times. Child needs to be able to use a pinch grasp before starting buttoning skill development.

### **SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO IMPROVE FASTENING BUTTONS**

- Start with large buttons and progress to smaller ones.

- Use backward chaining to teach the skill – e.g. start with the last part of the task first – child pulls button through buttonhole that you have pushed through first.
- Encourage general fine motor development, e.g. picking up small items and posting them into holes.
- To reduce initial frustration replace buttons with Velcro fastenings until the skill is learnt.
- Add elastic to buttons at cuff so button can remain buttoned while sleeve is slipped on / off.
- Buttons are easier to grip if flat or textured. Be sure buttons and buttonholes are large enough for buttoning ease.
- Teach buttons at the front, then side and then back.
- Give direction slowly, clearly. Demonstrate first then guide the child, then allow independent practice. Intervene if he is frustrated or else he will lose motivation.
- Emphasise verbal directions; through, push in, pull out.

## Activities

- Post different size buttons through a slot made in the lid of a cardboard box. (The box will catch the buttons).
- Cut out a slot in a piece of card and post the buttons through the slot.
- Sewing cards, threading beads on laces.
- Make a buttonhole on a square of material. Sew a large button onto another piece of material with elastic thread. Practice threading the button through the buttonhole and out again using the two pieces of material. Use bright colours for material and make the button a separate colour that highlights it i.e. red and yellow.
- Make the same again but with a smaller button and buttonhole.
- Use garments of the child and practice buttoning whilst placed in front of him on a table.
- Use garments of the child, whilst he is wearing them and practice buttoning.
- Make an oversized waistcoat with large buttons, and grade buttons accordingly as child becomes more proficient.

## SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE TYING OF SHOELACES

- Provide the child with different coloured shoe laces. For example, buy one black and one white lace, snip the end off and sew them together. You will then have one long lace in two colours. This will assist the child to see what is happening with each lace, visually, so that they do not get the two laces confused during the process.
  - Allow him to practice with the shoe in his lap before expecting him to tie the laces with his foot in the shoe.
  - Demonstrate the activity from a position next to him, not opposite as the actions are easier to copy from this position.
  - Ensure the child is sitting correctly on a stable, firm chair. (Hips, knees and ankles should be ideally at 90°). Or the child should be seated in a supported manner on the floor.
  - Elevate the foot with the shoe on to a low surface, to improve his vision of the laces that are being tied and to reduce the distance that he has to bend down to reach his laces.
- Use shortened laces to encourage the child to pull the laces tighter and to make it easier for him to handle.
  - Break down the process into steps, ensuring that he masters one step before moving on to the next.
  - Allow the child to start the activity while an adult completes it. More steps should be given to him to do independently until he is able to tie his own shoelaces.
- Tying Process:
    1. Make sure they tie the lace over the other lace TWICE before they begin to make bows, otherwise the knot will come loose and the bows will fall apart.
    2. Make a loop with one piece of lace (call this the 'tree').
    3. Wind the other piece of lace (the 'rabbit') around the 'tree' (loop) and through the hole.
    4. Take hold of the rabbit and the tree and make one quick hard tug movement away from each other.

## **Equipment List All Activity Sheets**

### **Memory**

- Tactile bag
- Large tactile letters eg. foam bath letters
- Sandpaper
- Letter\number\picture cards
- 10 Everyday objects eg. key
- Large paper squares with colours/numbers/letters
- Masking tape
- Coloured cubes
- Squared paper

### **Visual Perception**

- Chalkboard/whiteboard
- Paper
- Pens, pencils, coloured pencils & \or felt tip pens
- Square building blocks

### **Using Two Hands**

- Putty
- Paper
- Knife and fork
- Blackboard/whiteboard/ Easel

### **Hand Skills**

- Putty

### **Letter Formation**

- Magazine
- Paper
- Pens, pencils, coloured pencils &/or felt tip pens
- Chalkboard
- Playdough
- Paper clips, string and magnet