



Developing an efficient pencil grip

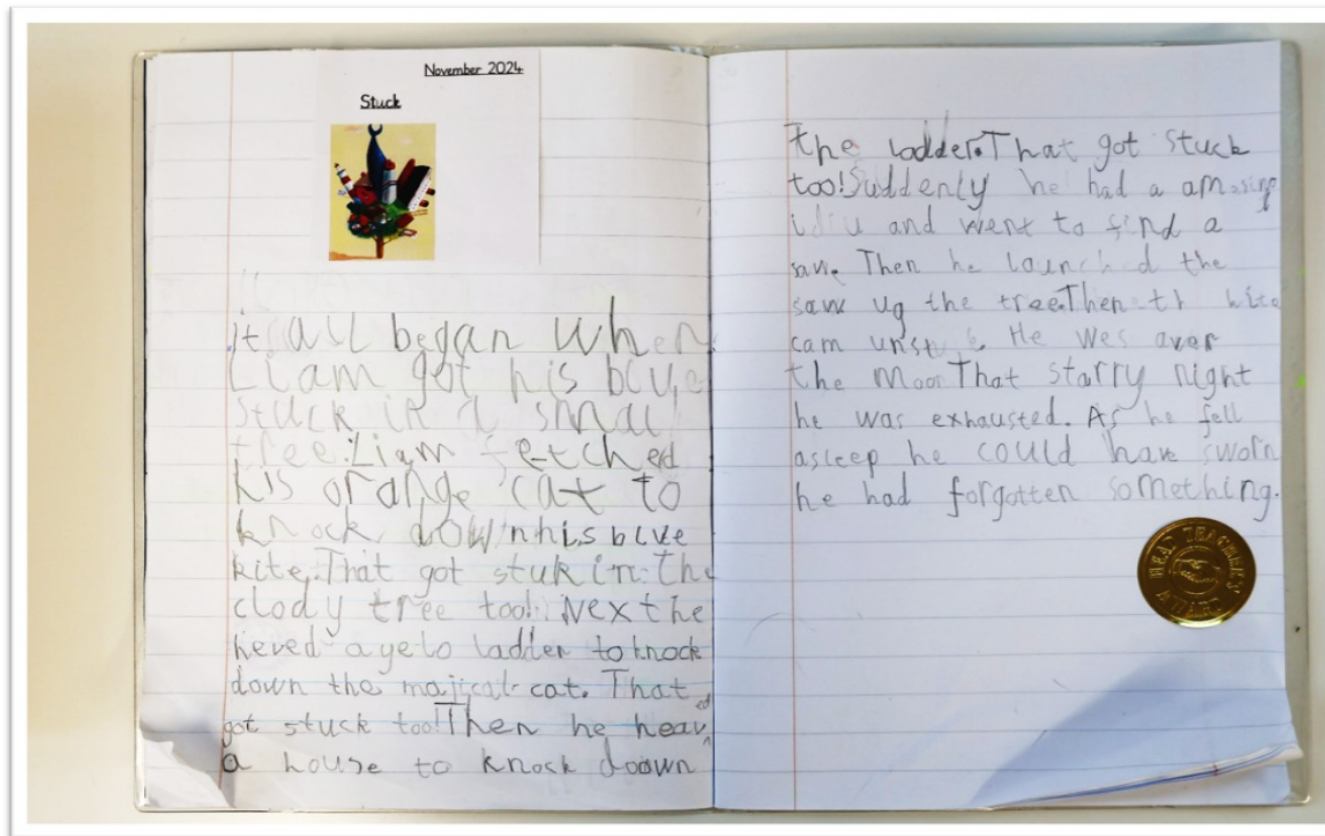
Aims



To understand the development of pencil grip and handwriting

To explore strategies to support the development of an efficient pencil grip





Year 1 handwriting improvement over the course of a week. Due to the child's determination and a term of additional fine and gross motor practise.

Why?



- It makes writing easier and more enjoyable
- It helps children to take pride in work
- It is important so that you can communicate thoughts
- It enables extended writing without fatigue
- It provides a focus on the content (and not the labour of writing)



Definition



- A grip that enables a child to write efficiently and neatly without tiring
- It does not cause undue strain, tension or negative alignment to the rest of the body



Phase expectations



Stage	Aim
EYFS	Building the foundations
KS1	Developing efficient pencil grip & posture
LKS2	Honing efficient pencil grip & posture
UKS2	Maintaining efficient pencil grip & promoting a master class culture

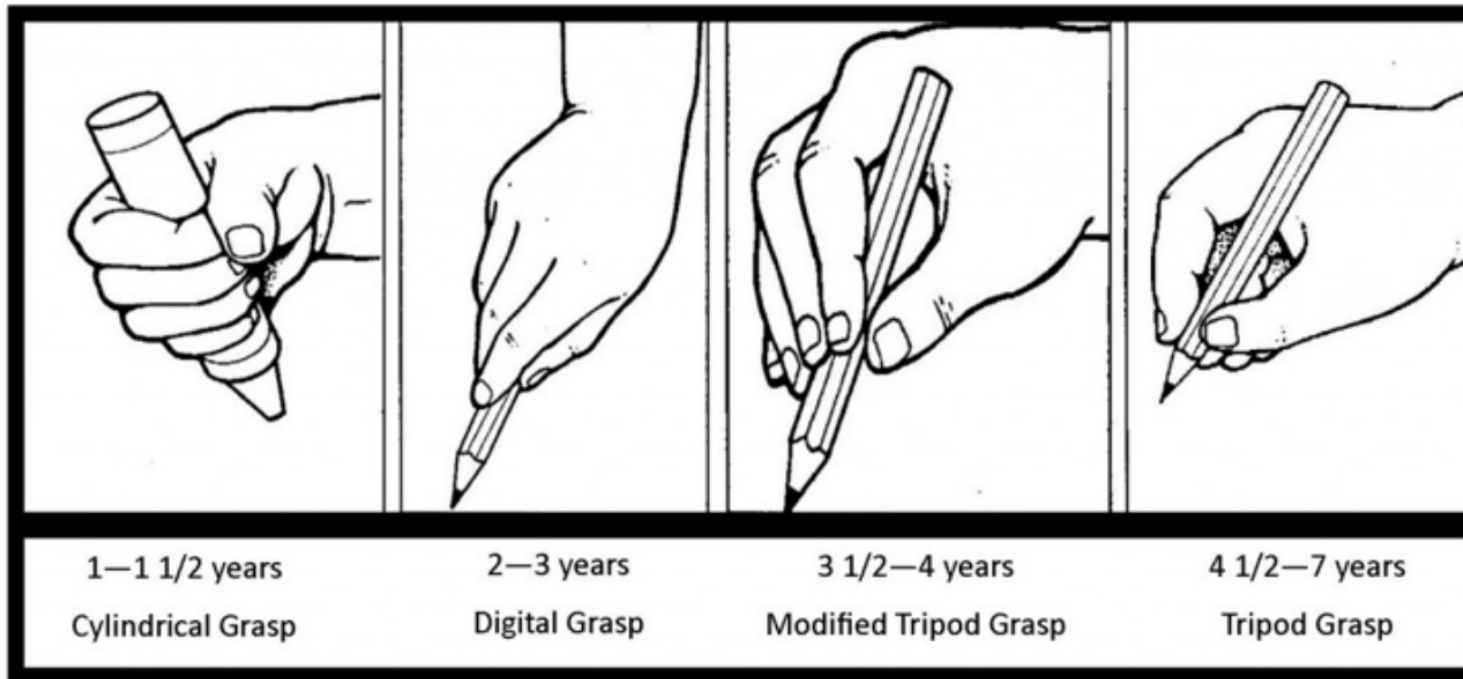
Development



There are principles of development called
“big to small” and **“proximal to distal”** (Myers 1995)

i.e. children develop the larger muscles of the trunk and arms before the smaller muscles of the hands, and that the proximal muscles closer to the body centre (e.g. shoulder muscles, upper arm muscles) develop before the distal muscles which are further away (e.g. hand muscles)

Development



Think about the muscles being used at each stage

The four bases



The four essential bases for fine motor skills



Each leg of the stool represents one of the bases for fine motor skills.

When one base is missing or broken the stool will wobble.
Each leg needs to be strong for the stool to be stable.

Postural stability

When the bigger muscles of the shoulder girdle and trunk are strong and stable, the smaller muscles of the arms and hands can move freely in a controlled way.

When this is lacking a child will hold their pencil really tight to try and control it or sometimes press really hard on the paper. It may also cause tension in the shoulders.



Shoulder and core exercises

Pushing games (wall push and people push)

Chair push ups

Snake curls

Tightrope walker

Crab walking

Leg lifts



Tactile Perception

If you are not getting good tactile feedback from your fingers, it is hard to be accurate with them.

When a child has poor tactile perception it may feel as though the pencil is being held with rubber gloves on. Fine motor developmental is not optimal.

Can be clumsy
Can drop things small items regularly
Can let items slip from their grasp



Tactile perception activities

Help children to process touch feedback from the hands in order to use hand muscles more effectively.

Encourage children to 'look' with their hands.

Feely bag type 1 – Describe object

Feely bag type 2 – Specific item search



Hand function

The hand and finger muscles need to work well together in order to control pencils and other small items and tools.

The wrist and forearm muscles are also important, as their positioning will get the hand in the best position to control pencils.

Cutting with scissors is one of the best ways a child can develop hand function.



Hand and wrist exercises

Paper crumpling – as hand strength increases the ball will get tighter

Water spray bottles and squeezing sponges

Playdough exercises

Working on a vertical surface to develop wrist strength

Old fashioned games – tiddly winks, hungry hippos, crocodile tooth game



Finger exercises

Aim to develop and increase the dexterity and skill of the tripod fingers.

We want these three fingers working in isolation.

Finger ball walk



Playdough balls



Crepe paper crumpling



Bilateral coordination

If your hands do not work well together, your ability to do fine motor tasks may be affected.

Eating with a knife and fork
Holding paper whilst cutting
Tying shoe laces
Playing with construction toys



These activities need both hands to work together in a coordinated way.

Children with poor bilateral coordination may avoid fine motor activities and thus affect their handwriting development.

Bilateral coordination activities

Using a roller pin



Climbing using a rope in the playground



Cutting, threading, drawing lines with a ruler

Catching a ball

Rolling large balls of playdough



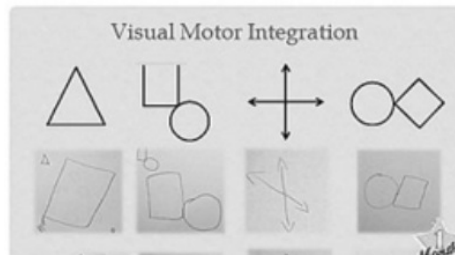
Other important skills



What is also necessary for handwriting?

Visual Motor Integration

enables the **hands to correctly replicate what the eyes see**



Hand-eye coordination – to guide their pencil between the lines

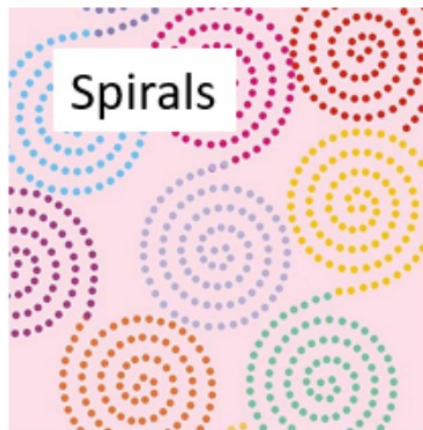
Spatial Perception – to lay work out well or maintain consistent size



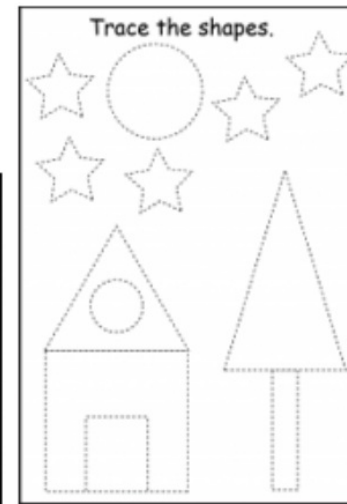
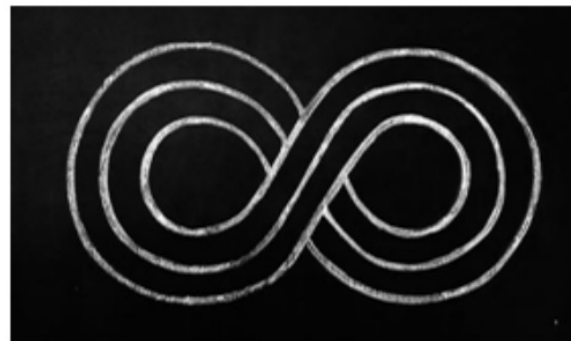
Visual motor integration

Children need to be able to copy basic shapes – such as diagonal lines, circles, squares, triangles and intersecting lines before learning to form their letters correctly.

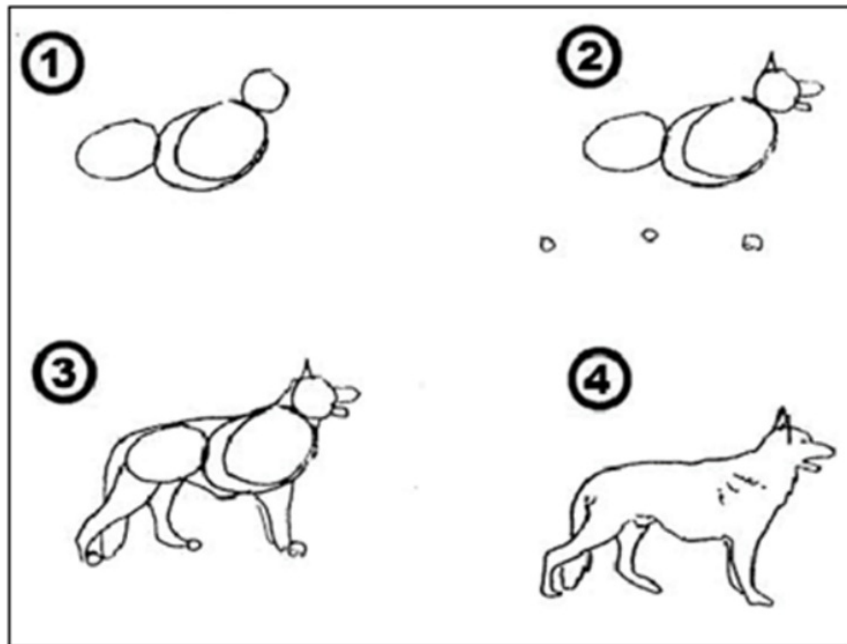
Large surfaces first and interesting mediums.



Lots of **tracing** practice before children do them on their own



Diagonals (ready for triangles) - stars made from + and x

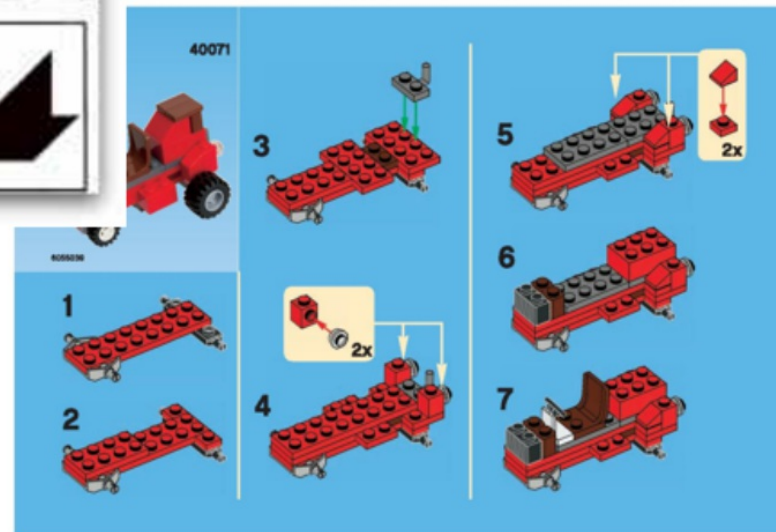


Hand eye coordination

Object relay warm up?!



Spatial perception





Observe the child not just the handwriting



Pencil grips



Pencil grips



OT tool box

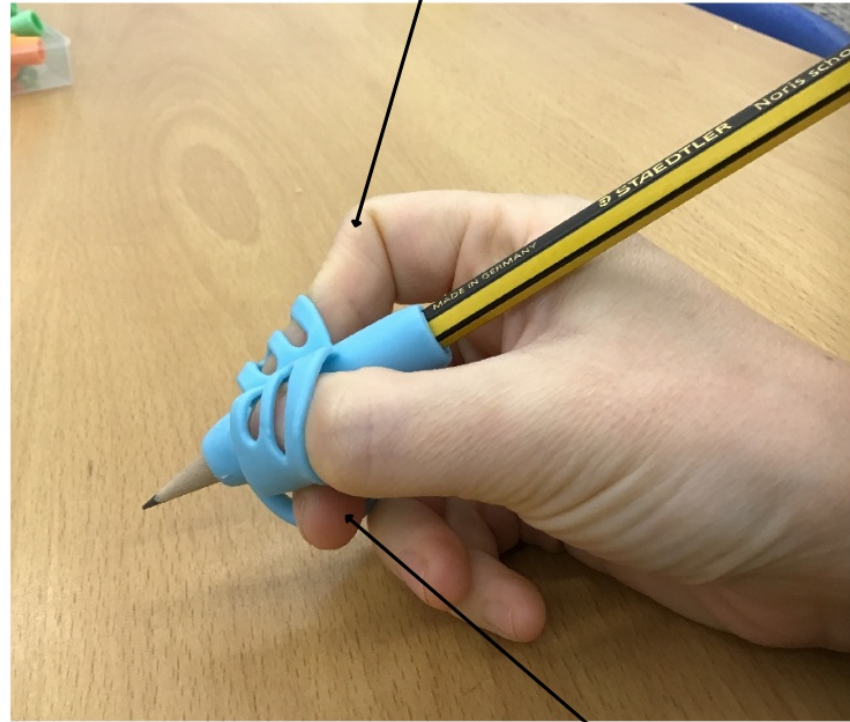
<https://www.theottoolbox.com/types-of-pencil-grips/>



- Not a miracle cure. It does not get to the root of and inefficient grip
- Different types of pencil grips support different issues
- Important to use all of the time but ensure it is being used correctly
- There must be time to remove and review grip



Thumb and index fingers in the holes.

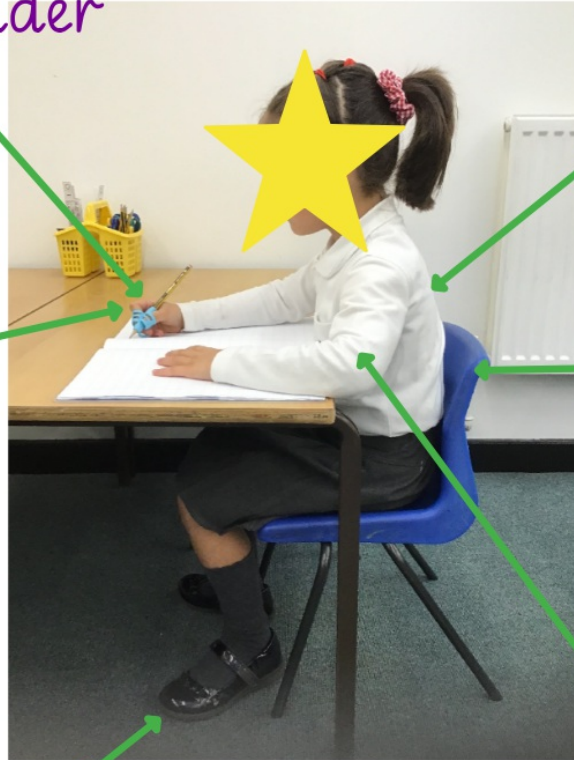


End of the pencil pointed to your shoulder

Middle finger in the loop.

Posture

end of the pencil
towards your shoulder



sitting up straight

writing
wrist flat

chair tucked in

anchor arm down

feet flat on the floor



Practice puts brains in your muscles.

— *Sam Snead* —

AZ QUOTES

Practice doesn't make perfect; it makes permanent.

Our scheme



a b c d e f g h i j k
l m n o p q r s t u
v w x y z

Our scheme



ā b c d e f g h i j
k l m n o p q r s t
u v w x y z

Formation

s	Back over the hill, curl around the snake.	ä	Back over the hill, curl up down and flick.	t	Down and curl. Cross from left to right.
i	Down and flick. Dot above the stick.	p	Down through the line, up and round.	n	Down, over the bridge and flick.
m	Down, bridge, bridge, flick.	d	Back over the hill, curl, all the way to the top, down and flick.	g	Back over the hill, curl up, down through the line and hook.
ö	Back over the hill and all the way round.	c	Back over the hill and curl.	k	Down from the top, up to the middle, make a bow and flick.
e	Forward, back over the hill and curl.	u	Down, bowl, down and flick.	r	Down, over half a bridge and flick
h	Down from the top, bridge and flick.	b	Down from the top, up and round.	f	Back over a tall hill, down through the line, hook and cross.
l	Down from the top and flick.	j	Straight through the line, hook and dot.	v	Zig-zag.
w	Zig-zag, zig zag.	x	Diagonally down, from the top again diagonally back.	y	Down, bowl, through the line and hook.
z	Across, diagonally down and across.	q	Back over the hill, curl up, down through the line and flick.		



Our scheme



A B C D E F G H I J
K L M N O P Q R S
T U V W X Y Z

Our scheme



À Á Â Ã Ä Å Æ Ç È É Ê Ë
Ì Í Î Ï Ñ Ò Ó Ô Õ Ö Ø Ù Ú
Û Ü Ý Þ ß à á â ã
ä å æ ç è é ê ë ì í î ï ð ñ ò ó ô õ ö ø ù ú û ü ý ÿ ÿ

Barnes Primary School Website Handwriting Page

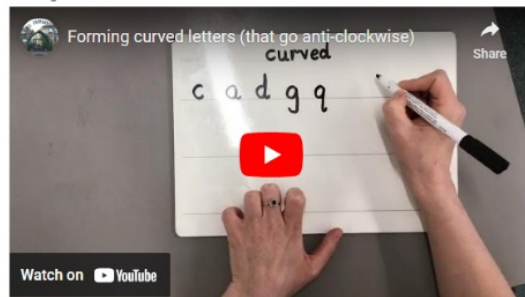


Forming the letters

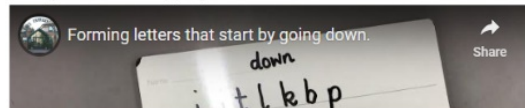
To ensure the children have consistency when learning to form the letters, we teach how we form the letters in a certain way.

To see how we teach the letters, you can either watch the videos below or [click here](#) to see a document with the wording we use.

Forming curved letters



Forming letters that start by going down



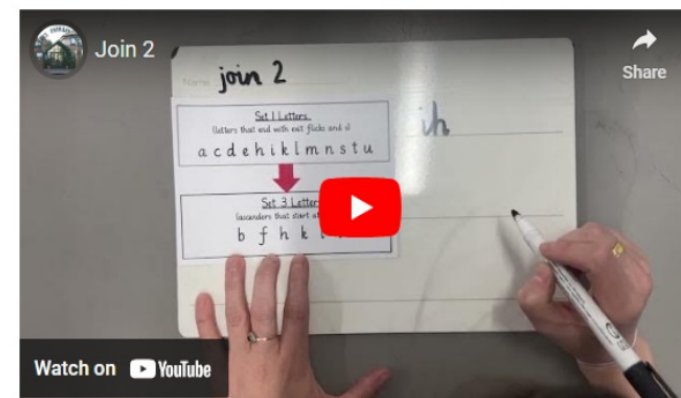
Joining the letters

Joining the letters

Join 1



Join 2



Join 3





Thank you