

Literacy for All In Our Playrooms

LfA Year 2 - Fine and Gross Motor
Development - 14th Jan 2025



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Content

- Introduction to mark making and emergent writing
- Gross and fine motor skills
- Enabling environments



Motor Development and Mark Making



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Motor Development and Mark Making

“Understanding the link between gross and fine motor skill development is crucial for practitioners. Children are better equipped to make fine motor movements if they also have adequate opportunity to develop their gross motor skills. Both are linked. In the development of writing, children need to not only be provided with a wide range of mark-making opportunities when they are small, but also be able to explore other experiences such as manipulating clay or using peg boards, completing jigsaws or sewing to fully develop the small muscles in their hands.”

Realising the Ambition p70
6.4 Playful Literacy



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Discussion

When do the skills for writing and mark making develop?



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When do the skills for mark making and writing begin to develop?

- The foundations for becoming a confident writer begin at birth
- Writing begins long before a child can hold or control pencils or pens.
- All children will need to develop their **muscles for writing**
- Development of these muscles can be influenced by many factors e.g a child's sex, opportunities for experience, motivation, interest

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Growth and Development of Muscular Control

- Control of our muscles develop in a 'typical' order.
- They develop slowly and build upon each other
- Develop from the inside out and top to bottom.



Doing Tummy Time
while lifting head



Sitting up



Pulling up
to stand



Walking





Fine Motor Skills

These are the last to be developed and refined...

- Developing control of hands and fingers is a difficult task for **most** children and very difficult for **some**.
- Boys are less attracted to activities involving the use of fine motor skills and may prefer more physical activities, using the strength and gross motor skills they have already mastered.

Fine motor skills in use look like...



Playing with
small toys



Typing on a
keyboard



Handling fine
objects, like sand



Writing

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Fine Motor Skills

Factors affecting motor skills development

Missed or incomplete stages of muscular development

The environment

Gender

Engagement in risky play

Developmental delays

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Motor Skills



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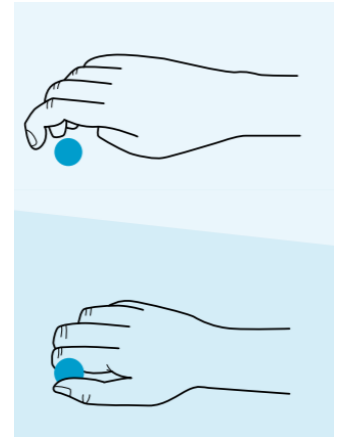
Gross to Fine motor Skills

1. Shoulder Pivot – Grip
2. Elbow Pivot
3. Wrist Pivot
4. Static Tripod Grasp
5. Dynamic Tripod Grasp



Stage 1 Shoulder Pivot – Grip

- Stiff wrist and straight elbow
- Movement from shoulder
- upper body muscles in shoulder, back and neck stronger and so can be used to help hand make marks
- At this stage children will often make long, straight or large circular movements



Motor Skills

Stage 1 Activities to support



Climbing



Swinging



Circular movements

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Stage 2 Elbow Pivot (palmer grasp)



- Elbow now doing most of the work
- Shoulder more of a support
- Two stages within:
 - Emergent stage: elbow bends to give movement but main power still from shoulder
 - Advanced Elbow Pivot: using muscles in upper and lower arm to swing arm away from body in circular motion. Wrist stays quite stiff.



Motor Skills

Stage 2 Activities to support



Stirring

Shaking



Hammering

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Stage 3 Wrist Pivot (digital pronate)



- Grasp with palm facing down and using finger to grasp
- Holding with finger
- Wrist straight
- Often elbow tucked into body
- Minimal shoulder movement and forearm moving as a unit



Motor Skills

Stage 3 Activities to support



Rolling

Screwing



Twisting

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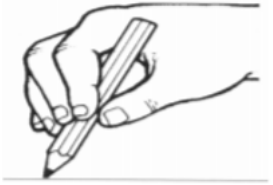
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Stage 4 Static Tripod Grasp



- Using three fingers – thumb, index and middle
- Tools held like a dart
- Movement mainly from the wrist
- Some finger movement as hand strength improves
- Using other hand to maintain balance
- Will need to develop control of pincer grasp or grip, palm arches, in hand manipulation



Motor Skills

Stage 4 Activities to support



Squeezing

Threading



Pinching

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Stage 5 Dynamic Tripod Grasp



- Using thumb, first and middle finger to hold tools
- Other fingers arched to aid grip
- Fingers beginning to move independently
- More fluid movement



Motor Skills

Stage 5 Activities to support



Thumb
opposition

Finger
isolation



Stretch
Resistance

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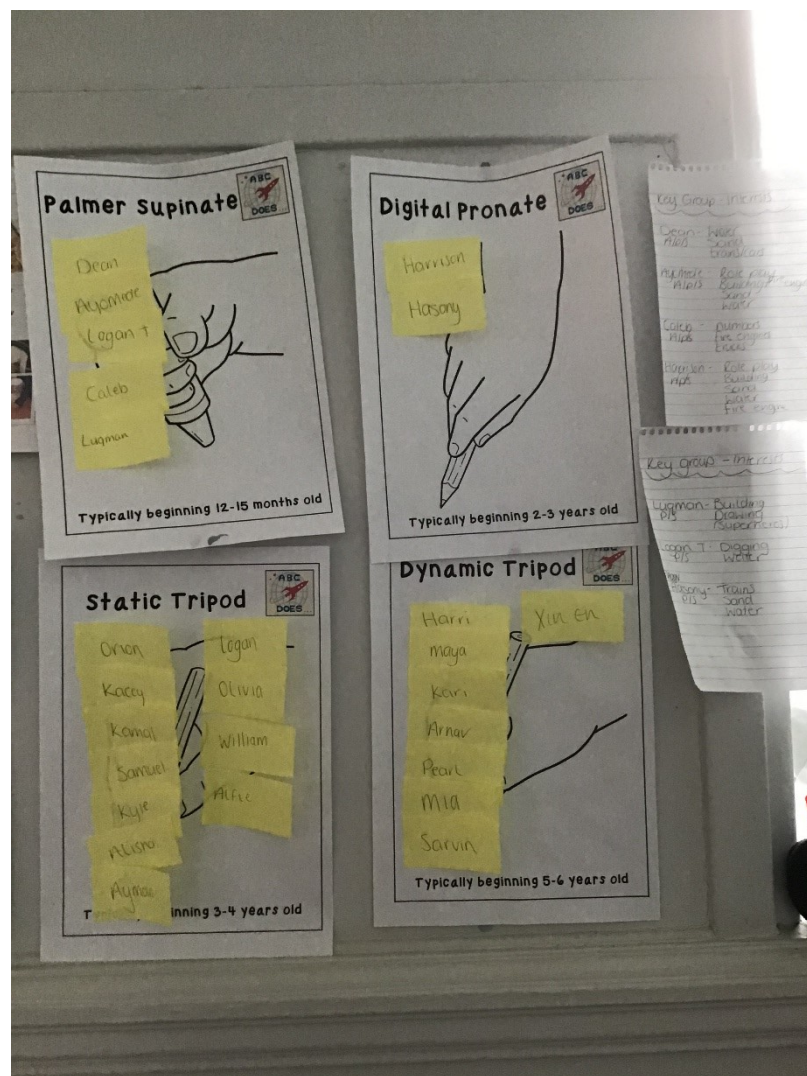
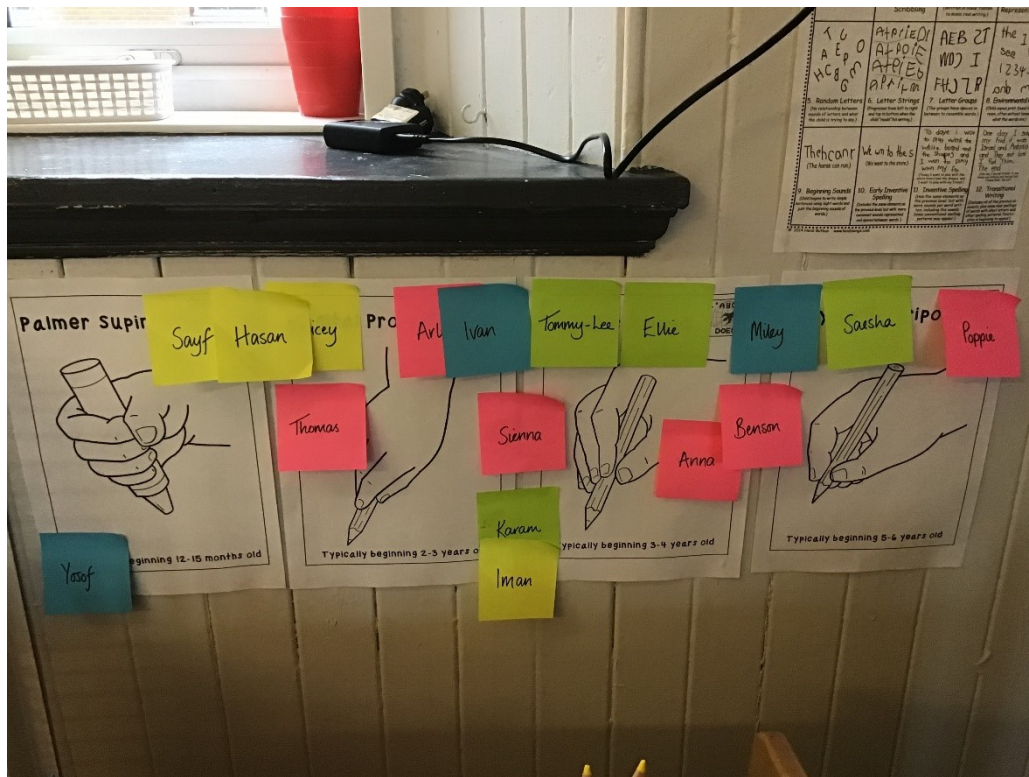
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Other aspects to consider

- **Bilateral Integration:** ability to use both side of the body simultaneously and together
- **Shoulder and Girdle Stability:** core body strength





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Emergent Writing Skills

<p>I can hold a pencil using a palmer grasp to mark make.</p> 	<p>I can make marks using a wide range of materials.</p>	<p>I can hold a pencil using a digital pronate grasp to mark make.</p> 	<p>I can manipulate and use small tools.</p>	<p>I can use small tools with control and accuracy.</p>	<p>I can hold a pencil with a tripod grasp to mark make.</p> 	<p>I can make marks with control.</p>
<p>I can make marks during play.</p>	<p>I can 'write' during play and explain what my 'writing' means</p>	<p>I can 'write' for a range of different purposes i.e. to label, create stories, write letters/cards</p>	<p>I can create my own drawings and talk about them.</p>	<p>I can ask an adult to scribe my thoughts and feelings when I draw and create my own stories.</p>		

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Early Level Tracker 1

Enjoyment & Choice LIT 0-1a LIT 0-11a LIT 0-20a	Have opportunities to write, inspired by what they have listened to, watched or read	Explore a variety of writing materials for purposeful mark making	Develop mark making in different contexts and share what they have created	Begin to explore creating texts in meaningful contexts through play based and outdoor learning	Begin to explore imitating writing letters and words and use the print in their environment as a stimulus	Begin to develop pride and confidence in writing own name	
Tools for Writing ENG 0-12a LIT 0-13a LIT 0-21a/b	Begin to be aware that words and writing go in a left to right direction	Begin to be aware that words are made up of letters	Use a variety of tools to mark make e.g. sticks and fingers in the sand	Begin to explore writing letters	With adult scaffolding participate in collaborative writing activities	Develop gross and fine motor skills and pencil control	Use own drawings to retell a story and show their knowledge of a text
Organising and Using Information LIT 0-26a	With support, plan by thinking about, verbalising, acting out and/or drawing what they want to write about	Convey ideas through play to show understanding of real life purposes for writing e.g. shopping lists	Begin to share feelings and opinions on stories and illustrations	Begin to use signs and labels from the environment in own texts and drawings	Contribute to a collaborative piece of writing		
Creating Texts LIT 0-9a ENG 0-31a	Begin to invent own stories and characters and share these ideas with others through mark making and talk	Begin to describe characters and explain likes and dislikes using appropriate vocabulary	Begin to describe settings and explain likes and dislikes using appropriate vocabulary	Begin to retell and adapt familiar stories using a combination of drawing and mark making	Be able to give meaning to own drawings and mark making		

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Enabling Environments



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“Do it big and do it outside!”

Sue Gifford, Early Years Conference 2019

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Promote Pretend Play

“Many experts believe that symbolic play is critical to a child's cognitive development in that it fosters abstract thought, problem–solving, self-control, and creativity.”

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Deconstructed Role Play



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Deconstructed Role Play

Why? –Open- ended resources will give more potential for the development of imagination with adult support

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Deconstructed Role Play

What? - Deconstructed role play allows children to fully engage in the experiences without any **limitations** on their imagination. It creates a language rich learning space where children can interact with one another sharing ideas and developing their own play scenarios. Children can make sense of the world around them by exploring and investigating things that are current, relevant and interest them

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Deconstructed Role Play

How? – You are going to fill your identified space with...

- *Cardboard boxes*
- *Crates*
- *Large sheets*
- *Bread trays*
- *Fabrics*

....the list is endless

BUT...



Let's not throw the baby out with the bath water.

You may still have a house corner!





What will I need?

- Cardboard boxes of differing sizes
- Cable reels
- Selection of fabric
- String
- Tubes
- Crocodile clips
- Large scale junk modelling
- Masking tape
- Portable mark making kit
- Large sheets



Enhancements

What you need

- Basket or box
- Resources that are themed around a specific interest e.g. doctor, builder or vet
- Books to support and enhance the theme
- Mark making materials

What to do

1. Identify themes that you wish to cover in your role-play.
2. Identify key areas of interest for children that they have expressed through their play.
3. Create an enhancement basket of resources to support these themes.
4. Take the enhancement baskets into your deconstructed role-play area to support children's learning.



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Deconstructed Role Play



Mark Making

Providing backing paper with a variety of tools allows the children to create drawings which are related to their play scenario

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