



**Digital Magazine for Pediatric
Occupational and Physical Therapy**

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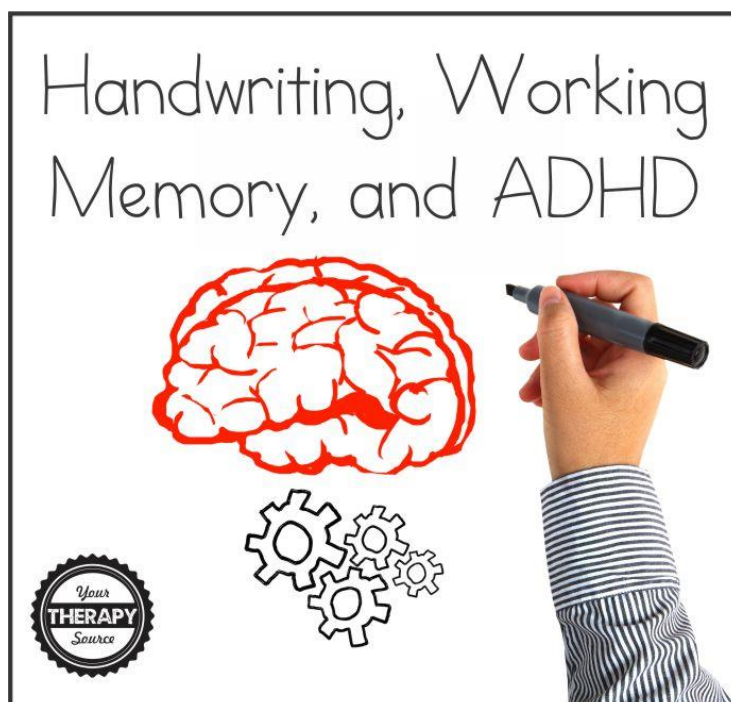
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Your Therapy Source Digital Magazine May 2018

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HANDWRITING, WORKING MEMORY, AND ADHD

Handwriting is an important skill for written expression in school and at work. Many times children with ADHD may display difficulties with legibility and speed of handwriting during school activities. Recent research examined handwriting, working memory, and ADHD in 16 fourth and fifth-grade children compared to age-matched control children. Each participant was evaluated for handwriting performance in a simple condition and under verbal or spatial working memory load.



The results of the study on handwriting, working memory, and ADHD indicated the following:

there was a significant difference between the ADHD and control group for handwriting speed only in the verbal working memory loading condition

children with symptoms of ADHD wrote more slowly and showed a greater intra-individual variability than controls.

handwriting legibility was affected by verbal WM loading too.

The researchers concluded that working memory load influences handwriting skills in children with ADHD (Capodieci, A et. al., 2018).

Read more about handwriting and ADHD:

[Movement Scaling, Handwriting, and ADHD](#)

[ADHD, Medication, and Handwriting](#)

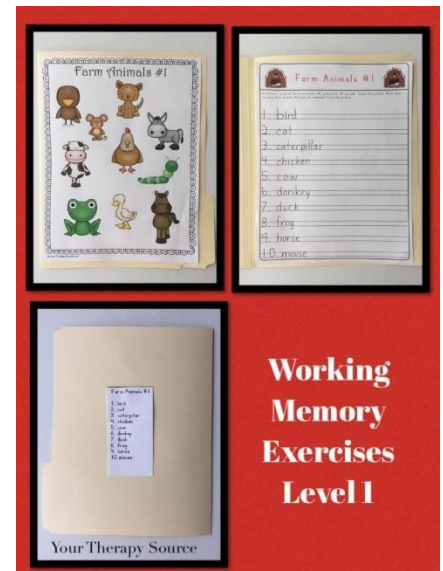
[ADHD and Handwriting](#)

Dysgraphia, ADHD, and Autism

Previous research indicates that exercising twice per week or more was associated with higher [working memory](#) scores and lower inattentiveness scores at baseline when compared with exercising only once per week or less (López-Vicente, M. et. al., 2016). An interesting hypothesis to test would be: If a student exercises 2 times per week (associated with higher working memory), then handwriting speed and/or legibility will improve in children with ADHD.

Do you need students to practice working memory skills along with handwriting? Check out the [Working Memory Exercises packet](#).

[Working Memory Exercises](#) includes the materials to create 20 memory challenges (the 10 Level 1 exercises are in categories and the 10 Level 2 exercises are not categorized) recording sheets for each category in double lined (Handwriting without Tears® style), dotted lined (Zaner-Bloser® style) or regular lined paper and answer sheets. In addition, both levels come with additional visual cues if the exercises are too difficult. This download is great for classroom use, therapy sessions or to send home with a student. These activities are reproducible to print to use over and over again with all the children that you teach.



References:

Capodieci, A., Lachina, S., & Cornoldi, C. (2018). Handwriting difficulties in children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). *Research in developmental disabilities*, 74, 41-49.

López-Vicente, M. et. al. (2016). Physical Activity and Cognitive Trajectories in Schoolchildren. *Pediatric exercise science*, 28(3), 431-438.

THE FOUR COMPONENTS OF LETTER RECOGNITION

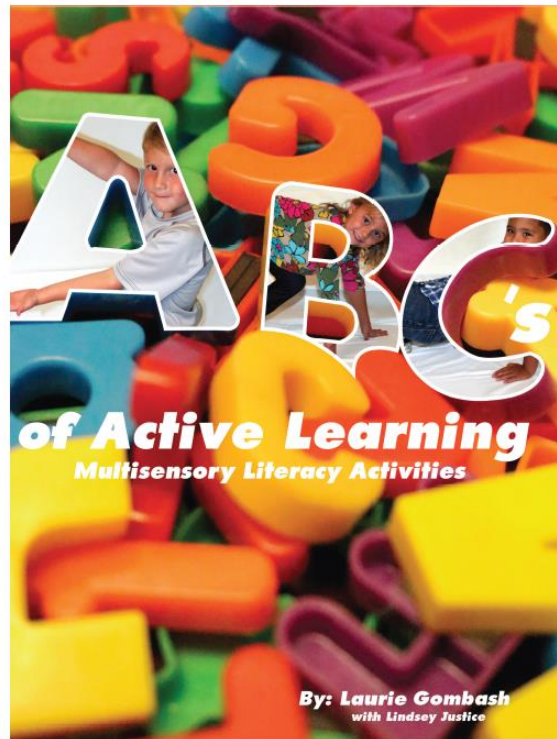


Learning the letters of the alphabet is not as simple as one may think. Children may be shown flashcard after flashcard but not retain the letter information. Or perhaps a child can write all the letters of their name by rote, but cannot identify each letter. When children are starting to learn their letters, it is important to know that there are four components of letter recognition.

- > Letter recognition – the ability to recognize the shape and size of the letter.
- > Letter naming – recognizing that the shape of the letter is associated with a letter name.
- > Letter sound knowledge – determining what sound corresponds to the shape or name of the letter.
- > Letter writing – the ability to trace or write the letter with a pen in accordance with its shape and direction.

Children need to learn the shape of a letter, what the letter's name is, what the letter sounds like and how to write a letter. Providing students with multisensory lessons may help to improve letter recognition. Multisensory lessons can include visual input (looking at the shape and size of the letter), auditory input (listening to the sounds of letters, visual motor input (writing the letter) and kinesthetic input (moving like the letter).

The [ABC's of Active Learning](#) © offers readers tons of multisensory literacy activities based on each alphabet letter. This book, based on years of experience as school-based therapists, is written by Laurie Gombash, PT with a Master's degree in Education and Lindsey Justice, OT. [FIND OUT MORE](#).



Read more about [Handwriting and Literacy](#).

Reference: Bara, F., & Bonneton-Botté, N. (2017). Learning Letters With the Whole Body: Visuomotor Versus Visual Teaching in Kindergarten. *Perceptual and motor skills*, 0031512517742284.



HOW TO INCREASE ENGAGEMENT IN MOTOR SKILL STATIONS



Do you create motor skill stations to provide movement opportunities at your school? Do you struggle with what activities to use to increase engagement in motor skill stations? It can be difficult to create motor skill stations that students engage with long enough to make gains in motor skill level or physical activity levels. Recently, research was completed to answer these exact problems.

What Does the Research Say?

Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy published research to answer questions such as: what is the range of engagement across different activity stations, what activities have a strong or weak attractiveness to increase practice time, and what activities are able to hold the children's attention? The study included 12 four-year-olds who participated in a 2x/week motor program for 10 weeks. The motor program included six to eight motor-skill stations designed to promote locomotor and object-control skills, core balance, spatial awareness, as well as leg and arm strength. Using wall-mounted video cameras, the total and percentage of time each child spent directly engaged 'in' each station was determined. In addition, the person (self, peer, or teacher) responsible for redirection of activity was also noted. To determine attraction power, the number of different children who visited a station at least one time during a lesson was measured but holding power was measured as the mean time per focal child entry.

The results from the study on ways to increase engagement in motor skill stations indicated the following:

86.1% of station entries were spontaneously instigated by the children themselves.

on average they visited 4.43 different stations per 30-minute session.

there was a wide range of setting differences in holding power, extending from just a little under a minute's average stay at kicking stations to involvement lasting four times as long at jumping stations.

The researchers found 3 key components that made the motor skill stations attractive to the children. The motor skill stations that were the most attractive had elements of:

NOVELTY

AUTHENTICITY

MATCHED THE SKILL OF THE CHILDREN

Do you find that motor skill stations that offer novelty, are relatable and a just right activity level are more attractive and engaging for your students? As pediatric therapists, we can strive to focus on these three areas. The novelty factor is huge for us. We try to keep motor skill ideas fresh and engaging through the use of fun therapy equipment, upcycled toys, and fun games. Therapy interventions are authentic since we attempt to relate motor skill sessions to functional skills. And finally matching the skill of the children is rooted in our abilities to create just right activities to challenge a child in addition to create success.

When the motor skill stations were built for success and if the motor skill station had to the potential of modification, the researchers found an increase in holding power. By creating "just right" activities the children increased holding power (aka sustained attention).

What else can help increase engagement in motor skill stations?

Intrinsic motivation can also increase engagement in motor skill stations. Intrinsic motivation is completing a skill or activity based on personal interest and enjoyment not for external rewards. Many times young children need external motivation to complete activities during therapy sessions. Therapists may use [different reward systems](#) such as [Punch Cards and Reward Cards for](#)

[Therapy](#) to encourage children to participate in therapy sessions. Intrinsic motivation can be harder to facilitate in children.

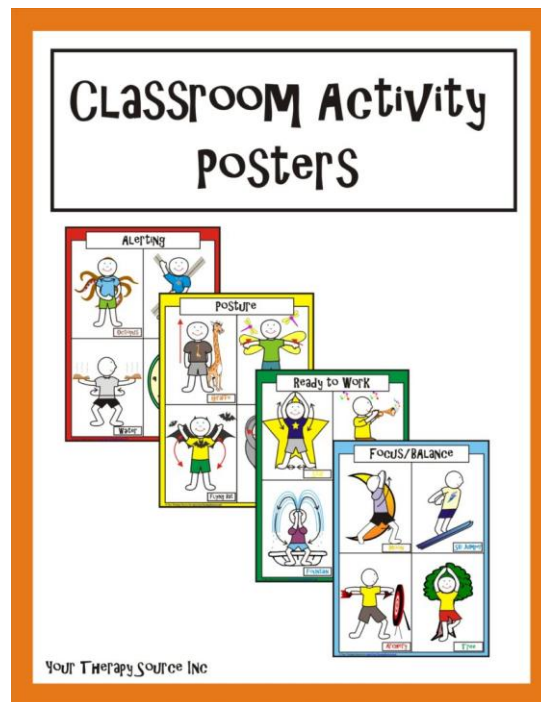
Tips to increase intrinsic motivation in children

1. Independent thinking: Allow the student to work on a certain skill and report back to you how they have improved that skill. They can improve or change it any way that they think will help.
2. Provide choices: Children can be more intrinsically motivated if they have a say in how they are accomplishing a goal. Try not to make any activity a requirement.
3. Teach self-direction: Everyone feels a larger sense of accomplishment when you are able to do something all by yourself.
4. Power of positive thinking: Having an “I can” attitude can help tremendously and build up a student’s confidence. Check out [Positive Affirmations Posters and Cards](#) for ideas.
5. Cooperative learning: Students may feel more motivated when they can work with other students to help or teach them a skill
6. Ask questions: Encourage students to think for themselves rather than provide answers for them. For example – what suggestions do you have to increase your handwriting speed?
7. Keep it fun with some competition: Most kids like to win and feel a sense of pride when they do . Therapeutic activities can be intertwined with games.
8. Shoot for your personal best: Don’t compare your abilities to others but rather that you improve each time. Teach the student to track his/her own goals to visually represent improvements over time. Check out [My Goal Tracker](#) at for student-generated data collection.
9. Plan together: Ask the student how they would like to reach a goal? Explain what options are available (ie different types of strengthening or aerobic exercises) and plan together what may work best.
10. Educate the student: When you are working on a certain activity, explain to the student why you are doing that specific activity and how it will help him/her in their everyday life.

What have you found to be your most successful motor skill stations for preschoolers?

Reference: Hastie, P. A., Johnson, J. L., & Rudisill, M. E. (2018). An analysis of the attraction and holding power of motor skill stations used in a mastery motivational physical education climate for preschool children. *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy*, 23(1), 37-53.

Need NO PREP activities for a simple motor skill station?



Check out the [Classroom Activity Posters](#). The digital download is a collection of 16 exercise activities, 4 large posters and a brief, simple video demonstration of each exercise. The posters are divided into four groups: posture, alerting, ready to work and focus/balance. All of the exercises are performed in standing. Try these activities prior to starting fine motor activities, for posture breaks, to refocus students attention and for vestibular/ proprioceptive input in the classroom. [FIND OUT MORE.](#)

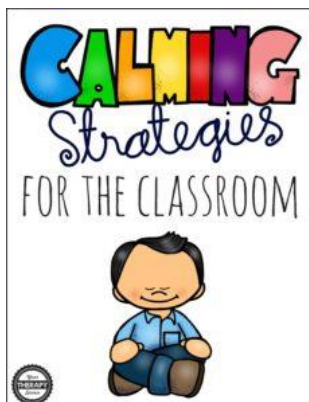
HOW TO HELP A CHILD DURING A MELTDOWN



Have you ever experienced a child when they start to spiral out of control? Maybe it is out of frustration, lack of [self-regulation](#), increased anger or they are experiencing overload but regardless of the reason it can be difficult to calm that child down. Perhaps you try the art of distraction or you demand them to stop but instead their behaviors may escalate further. When a child is in a complete “meltdown” an adult can act as a teacher to help them to self-regulate and practice controlling their emotions.

First, one of the easiest ways to stop a meltdown is to prevent it in the first place. Children thrive on routine and predictable expectations. Read more about [ways to reduce stress in the classroom here](#).

When a child is in a calm state, help to problem solve what activities help the child to self-calm. Download [5 free printables to help children calm down here](#). Some suggested activities are [yoga](#), [deep breathing](#), [calm down cards](#), etc. Discuss and review with children different [emotions](#). Use visual supports to help the child determine what may work in the [classroom for calming strategies](#).



Try filling out the [Calm-O-Meter](#) to get a basic idea of what activities may help the child to calm down. Page one of the FREE download includes 6 self-calming ideas with picture

symbols. On page two, children and/or adults can write down their own ideas and reflect on what techniques are successful.

Self-Calming Activity Ideas	Color in the face to reflect how you feel about the self-calming activity idea
Count to 10 	    
Exercise 	    
book 	    
Do yoga 	    
Take a walk 	    

When a child is already in a meltdown, children can call on the information they learned previously to learn how to self-calm with various techniques. Hang up the calming inventory Calm-O-Meter form to help a child remember what has been effective in the past to help with self-regulation and calming down.

Once the child has achieved a calm state, here are some steps you can take to help the child grow and learn from the situation.

Acknowledge that there was a problem. In a calm voice, say the problem to the child.

Start a conversation to problem solve the situation. Begin your phrase with “Let’s”. For example – “Let’s think of what we can do next” or “Let’s talk about what might help”. Don’t provide the solution yourself. Stick to problem-solving the situation together. Discuss solutions and alternative solutions. Talk about how the child is interpreting the situation making sure he/she can see the bigger picture or understand a different perspective.

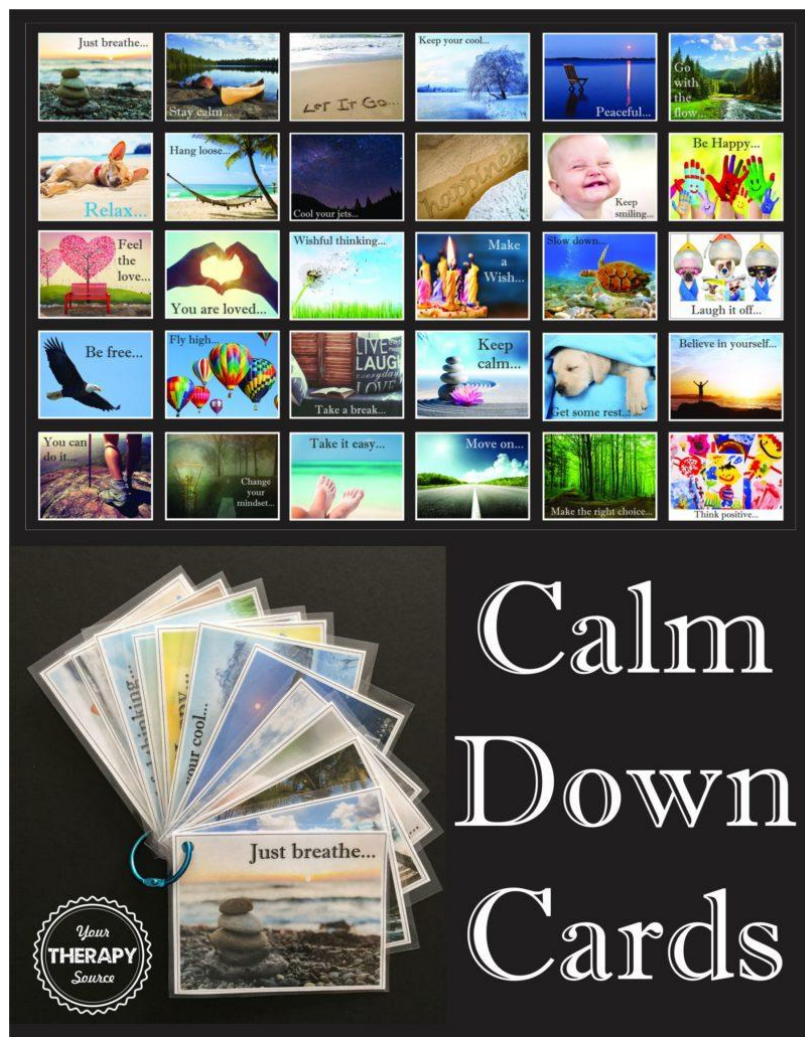
Discuss what self-calming techniques the child utilized.

Reinforce with the child how the technique was successful.

What is your most successful tip to help a child calm down? Send us an email to let us know!

Reference: Self-Regulation/ Self Control Tips and Strategies. Retrieved from the web on 4/12/18 at

<https://www.cdd.unm.edu/ecln/PSN/common/pdfs/ECNInclResourceGuide/SelfRegulationTipsandStrategies.pdf>.



Use visual imagery to self-calm with this digital collection of [Calm Down Cards](#).

PREDICTIVE POWER OF EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS, VISUAL-MOTOR COORDINATION AND PHYSICAL FITNESS ON LATER ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Predictive Power of Executive Functions, Visual-Motor Coordination and Physical Fitness on Later Academic Achievement



Are you concerned when you see young children enter kindergarten who may not be ready? The concern is usually for a good reason. When children do not arrive with school readiness skills it can affect later academic achievement. *Human Movement Science* recently explored the predictive power of executive functions, visual-motor coordination and physical fitness on later academic achievement.

The participants of the study included 134 children who completed different physical fitness and executive function tasks in kindergarten and in second grade. Early academic achievement was also assessed. For executive function, three tasks were used to measure inhibition, shifting and updating. To evaluate visual-motor coordination each child completed the Drawing Trail, Posting Coins, and Threading Beads. The six-minute run, standing long jump and jumping sideways tasks were used to determine physical fitness level. Finally, standardized tests were used to assess mathematical and reading achievement.

Statistical analysis of the predictive power of executive functions, visual-motor coordination and physical fitness on later academic achievement indicated the following:

- all three tasks within the same dimension (executive functions, visual-motor coordination, physical fitness) were substantially interrelated in kindergarten.
- all academic achievement tasks were related to each other in second grade.
- substantial correlation between executive functions, visual-motor coordination, and later achievement were found.
- the relationship between physical fitness and academic achievement appeared to be mediated through executive functions.

The researchers concluded that further research should be conducted to determine the specific longitudinal relationship between visual-motor coordination in kindergarten and early academic achievement. In addition, the influence of physical fitness on academic achievement should be investigated further to show that it is an indirect effect via executive functions.

Reference: Oberer, N., Gashaj, V., & Roebbers, C. M. (2018). Executive functions, visual-motor coordination, physical fitness and academic achievement: Longitudinal relations in typically developing children. *Human movement science*, 58, 69-79.

Encourage visual-motor coordination, physical fitness and executive function skills with this fun, creative, NO PREP packet – [Motor Minute Challenges](#).

This digital download includes 20 fine motor, gross motor and visual motor challenges to complete. Complete each challenge sheet by finishing pictures, mazes, physical activities and more. Time the tasks for 1-3 minutes or let the child complete each one at his/her own pace. These pages are great for challenges at home, indoor recess time, rainy day activities and push in or pull out therapy sessions.

Read more on:

[Motor Skills and Executive Function](#)

[Acute Exercise and Executive Function in Children](#)

[Link Between Visual-Motor, Executive Function, and Social Behavior](#)



RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, WEIGHT, AND MOTOR SKILL DEVELOPMENT



Children seem to move less and sit more. Did you know that in the United States, only 22% of children meet the current physical activity guidelines of 60 minutes per day of moderate to vigorous physical activity? In addition, 63% of children participate in more than 2 hours of screen time per day? All of this lack of movement has the potential to affect weight and motor skill development. *Perceptual Motor Skills* published research on the relationship between physical activity, weight, and motor skill development.

The study examined the relationships between 96 children's physical activity levels, body mass index (BMI), and motor skills. Each participant was evaluated using the Movement Assessment Battery for Children-2nd edition (MABC-2), height and weight measurements and accelerometry for physical activity levels. The results indicated the following for the children:

- more time in moderate and moderate-to-vigorous physical activity had higher Total motor skill scores on the MABC-2.
- higher moderate physical activity levels had higher Balance scores.

- moderate-to-vigorous physical activity levels demonstrated higher [Aiming and Catching](#) scores.
- healthier BMI and more time spent in physical activity, regardless of intensity, was related to higher [Aiming and Catching](#) scores.
- BMI scores suggestive of overweight/obesity, both moderate and moderate-to-vigorous physical activity levels were positively related to Balance scores.

The researchers came to three conclusions: BMI scores were not directly related to motor skills, physical activity levels were positively related to motor skills and weight status mediated the relationship between physical activity levels and specific components of motor skills.

Read more about:

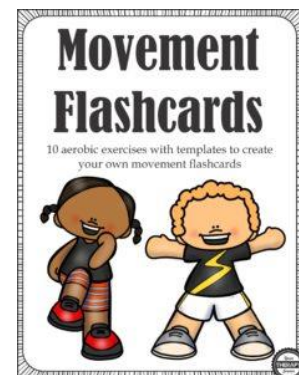
[Children's Physical Activity Level and Depression](#)

[Physical Activity, Self-Regulation, and Preschoolers](#)

[10 Classroom Jobs that Require Physical Activity](#)

[Extra Physical Activity and Academic Achievement](#)

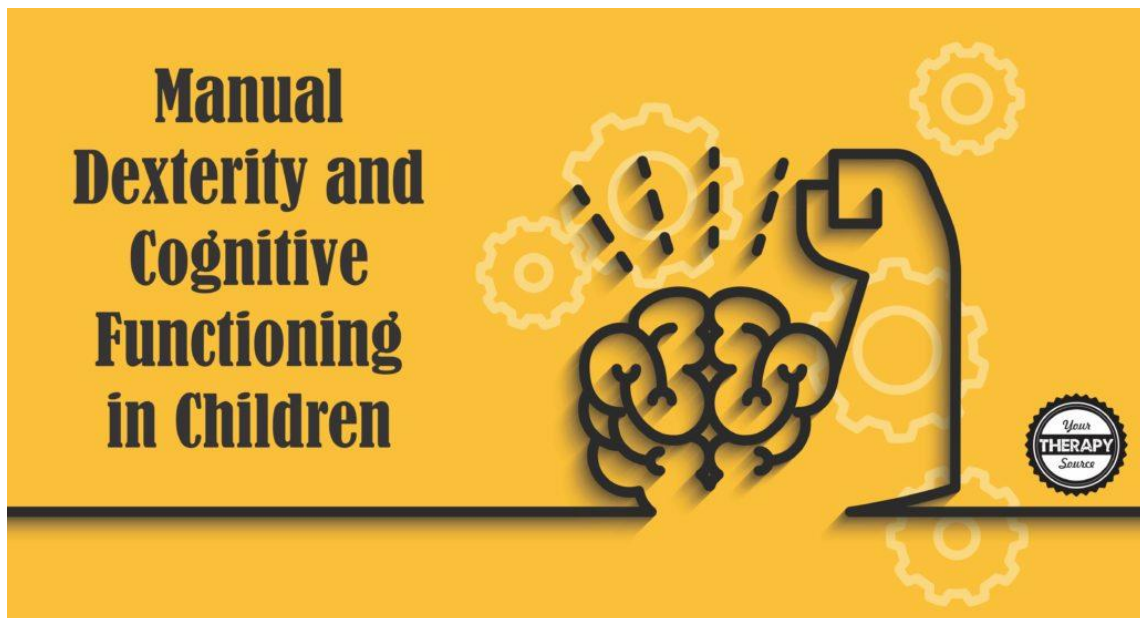
[Movement Flashcards](#) – Movement Flashcards digital download includes 10 aerobic exercises with flashcards templates. Students can get physical activity while reviewing material. The 10 aerobic activities include: run in place, jumping, hopping, squats, lunges, skipping, twists, cross crawls, jumping jacks and marching. Each page includes a picture image of the aerobic exercise along with a blank template to type in 18 flashcards. You choose what to work on for academic material.



References:

- DuBose, K. D., Gross McMillan, A., Wood, A. P., & Sisson, S. B. (2018). Joint Relationship Between Physical Activity, Weight Status, and Motor Skills in Children Aged 3 to 10 Years. *Perceptual and motor skills*, 0031512518767008.
- Katzmarzyk, P. T., Denstel, K. D., Beals, K., Bolling, C., Wright, C., Crouter, S. E., ... & Stanish, H. I. (2016). Results from the United States of America's 2016 report card on physical activity for children and youth. *Journal of physical activity and health*, 13(11 Suppl 2), S307-S313.

MANUAL DEXTERITY AND COGNITIVE FUNCTIONING IN CHILDREN



Developmental Medicine and Child Neurology published research examining the relationship of manual dexterity and cognitive functioning in children after neonatal arterial ischemic stroke regardless of a diagnosis of cerebral palsy. The participants included 60 children with a past history of neonatal arterial ischemic stroke without epilepsy. Fifteen children had a diagnosis of cerebral palsy which was clinically assessed at an average age of 7 years 2 months.

The following tests were used:

- Nine-Hole Peg Test to assess finger dexterity.
- Box and Blocks Test to assess hand dexterity.
- Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children to assess cognitive functioning.

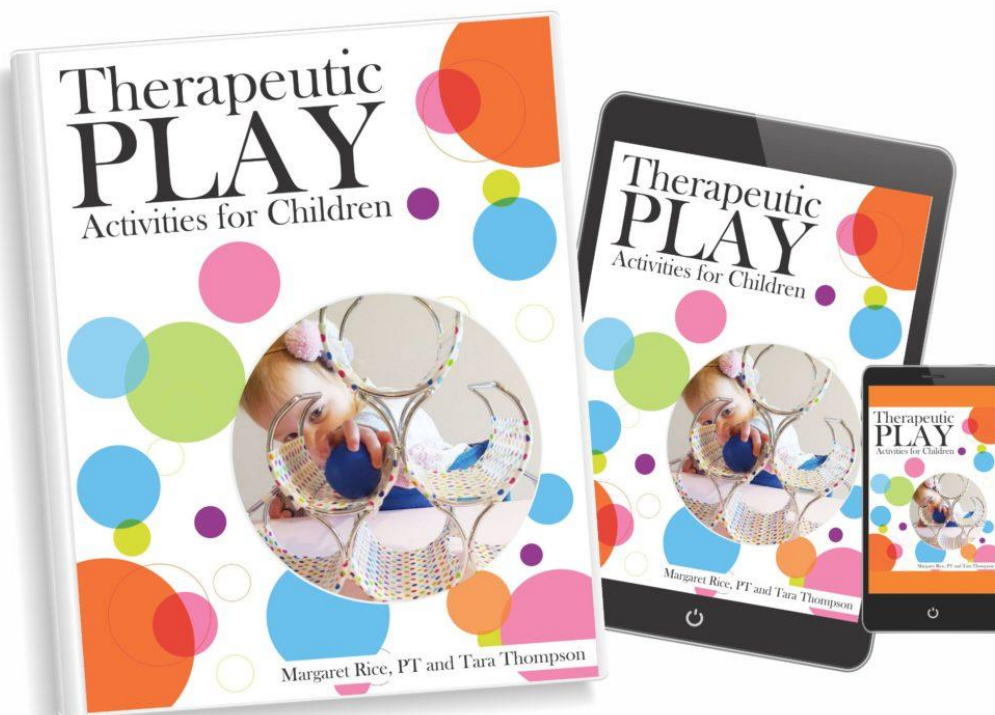
Simple and multiple linear regression models were completed while controlling for socioeconomic status, lesion side, and sex. Statistical analysis revealed the following regarding manual dexterity and cognitive functioning:

In simple regression models, both manual dexterity and cerebral palsy were associated with cognitive functioning.

In multiple regression models, manual dexterity was the **ONLY** associated variable of cognitive functioning whether or not a child had cerebral palsy.

The researchers concluded that just like typically developing children, manual dexterity is related to cognitive functioning when children have a past history of a focal brain insult during the neonatal period. It was determined that manual dexterity predicts cognitive functioning after neonatal arterial ischaemic stroke, therefore, motor ability may support cognitive functioning.

Reference: Thébault, G., Martin, S., Brouillet, D., Brunel, L., Dinomais, M., Presles, É., ... & AVCnn Study Group. (2018). Manual dexterity, but not cerebral palsy, predicts cognitive functioning after neonatal stroke. *Developmental Medicine & Child Neurology*.



Therapeutic PLAY Activities for Children

Available for immediate download at YourTherapySource.com

[Therapeutic Play Activities for Children](#) digital download includes 100 play activity pages and 12 tip sheets. The play activities encourage the development of fine motor skills, bimanual skills, rolling, crawling, tall kneeling, standing balance and cruising with a strong focus on children with cerebral palsy. [FIND OUT MORE INFORMATION.](#)

5 STEPS TO PROMOTE SOCIAL INTERACTION FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

One of the goals of early childhood education is to encourage social interaction and communication among the children. When a child with a disability participates in an inclusive setting, social competence is foundational for peer relationships and learning. Inclusive classrooms are an excellent location to begin to foster these skills. Teachers and therapists



need effective, evidence-based strategies to facilitate social skills. Here are 5 steps to promote social interaction for young children.

Child Choice – Observe what the child prefers during free play time. Look for what activities the child engages with the most. Find peers who also enjoy these activities who might be a good match to increase social interaction. If the child is not engaging in an activity, then find a preferred activity to offer next that may be more motivating.

Shared Control – Offer and arrange materials so that both participants share control over the items and have to make exchanges in order to continue playing. Encourage independent play without needing an adult to interact. For example, provide supplies that encourage the children to take turns. If children are using [play dough](#), give one child scissors and a rolling pin and the other child cookie cutters and molds to another child. The children will have to exchange tools to use with their own play dough.

Clear Instruction – Once you have determined the preferred play items and how the children will share control, provide clear and concise prompts to encourage social interaction. Model appropriate responses for the children to follow. Ask questions or hold up objects to elicit responses from the children. Teach a peer prompts or responses so adult prompts can fade.

Contingent Natural Reinforcement – Ensure that the desired response i.e. giving the child a toy occurs immediately following the child's appropriate response or initiation of a response. For example, if a child asks the peer for the rolling pin,

make sure that the child receives the rolling pin in the early stages of learning social interaction and communication. As the child progresses with social interaction, determine appropriate ways to naturally provide reinforcement.

Adult Proximity and Communication – Stay close by to monitor social interaction without interfering with natural child-peer interaction. Try not to communicate with their children i.e. narrating or commenting unless you are providing prompts to facilitate social communication between the children. Redirect children as needed to communicate with each other rather than with the adult. For example, if the child asks you a question, prompt him/her to ask a friend instead.

It is important for teachers and therapists to self-assess as they encourage social interaction in an inclusive setting. When a child is having difficulties in this area, collect data on whether you are implementing each strategy to encourage peer interaction. Videotaping free play time may help to provide insight into where improvement is needed.

Whether it be in an inclusive classroom setting or a group therapy session, providing solid, evidence-based social skill interventions are crucial for children to develop social interaction and communication with their peers.

Reference: Robinson, S., & Myck-Wayne, J. (2016). A Teacher Training Model for Improving Social Facilitation in the Inclusive Program. *Young Exceptional Children*, 19(1), 16-26.

Tuned Into Learning Volume 1 Social Skills & Pragmatics Book/CD Download Set

This comprehensive program integrates evidence-based techniques from the fields of special education, applied behavior analysis, and music therapy, and gives you the tools to bring students from initial learning, to mastery, and finally generalization.



Each targeted social skill or script is paired with an easy to remember song that is entertaining for a variety of ages, making it fun for students to learn eye contact, emotions, conversation, body language, turn-taking, greetings, compliments, imitation, and self-regulation.

[FIND OUT MORE.](#)

FIDGET SPINNERS AND ADHD – WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH SAY?



Do you have students who are still crazy about fidget spinners? Perhaps you have teachers asking what is the benefit to the fidget spinners? Or maybe you have teachers ready to take the fidget spinners and throw them in the garbage!

The *Journal of Attention Disorders* published research to determine how fidget spinners affect children with ADHD. More specifically, the researchers looked at the extent to which fidget spinners (a) increase gross motor activity, (b) improve children's behavioral and attentional functioning in class, and (c) distract other children in class. Sixty children diagnosed with ADHD participated in the study on fidget spinners and ADHD.

Children from different classrooms wore accelerometers and were videotaped for 5 min and attentional data was coded. In addition to the use of fidget spinners the students also participated in an intensive, evidence-based, multimodal behavior modification program for children with ADHD and related problems. The results of the study on fidget spinners and ADHD indicated the following:

- the use of fidget spinners was associated with a decrease in activity levels only during the initial phase of treatment.
- children's use of fidget spinners was associated with poorer attention across both phases of treatment (children committed more than double the number of "attention" violations when using the fidget spinner compared with their baseline functioning).

- use of fidget spinners did not appear to affect other children in the classroom.

The researchers concluded that fidget spinners negatively influence young children with ADHD's attentional functioning, even in the context of an evidence-based classroom intervention.

Put your fidget spinners to better use with these fun printables to get kids moving during a brain break or anytime:

[Fidget Spinner Yoga](#)
[Fidget Spinner Workout](#)

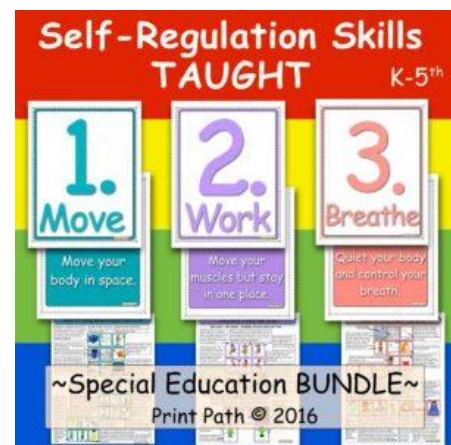
Read more on increasing attention span:

[10 Sensory Quick Fixes to Increase Attention Span](#)
[Auditory and Visual Attention in Children with ADHD](#)

Reference: Graziano, P. A., Garcia, A. M., & Landis, T. D. (2018). To Fidget or Not to Fidget, That Is the Question: A Systematic Classroom Evaluation of Fidget Spinners Among Young Children With ADHD. *Journal of Attention Disorders*, 1087054718770009.

Do you need ideas to teach self-regulation skills to children? Check out the [Self Regulation Skills Curriculum](#).

[Self- Regulation Skills Taught](#): This curriculum provides an effective, time-efficient structured system to provide classroom breaks, improve self-awareness and self advocacy and teach specific self-regulation skills so that kids have tools to use in their classrooms. This system will get kids moving, give them the benefits of a brain power boost [from getting their heart rate up], give them heavy work and isometrics to help them calm down, and help them learn techniques to quiet and control their bodies in order to return to their academic work. [FIND OUT MORE.](#)



50 BIMANUAL ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING – FREE PRINTABLE



Bimanual activities are skills that we use two hands to complete. All children benefit from practicing bimanual skills to help develop coordination skills, crossing midline, and functional life skills. Children with cerebral palsy, especially hemiplegia, are often encouraged to participate in bimanual activities. Many times following a period of constraint therapy, bimanual exercises are recommended. This list of 50 bimanual activities of daily living makes it a little easier to facilitate these skills.

With the busy schedules of today's families, it can be so difficult to allocate time to practice all the skills necessary. This list of 50 bimanual activities of daily living, the skills can be practiced throughout the normal routine of the day at home and school.

Here are 50 Bimanual Activities of Daily Living divided into 5 categories –

Kitchen Tasks:

1. Wash dishes with two hands.
2. Carry tray.
3. Open containers.
4. Carry heavy items.
5. Use a rolling pin with two hands.
6. Hold the bowl with one hand and stir with the other hand.
7. Knead dough with two hands.
8. Push chairs in and out at the table.

9. Drink from a cup with two handles.
10. Hold dish in one hand and dry it off with the dish towel in the other hand.

Personal Hygiene:

1. Washing hair with two hands.
2. Wring out washcloth with two hands.
3. Towel dry off with two hands.
4. Get dressed.
5. Carry pile of dirty laundry.
6. Fold laundry.
7. Open and close drawers.
8. Hold toothpaste tube with one hand and use the other hand to open toothpaste cap.
9. Squeeze toothpaste with one hand and hold toothbrush with the other hand.
10. Zip a zipper.

Chores:

1. Hang laundry on a clothesline.
2. Transfer heavy, wet clothes to the dryer.
3. Sweep the floor.
4. Mop the floor.
5. Clean up large toys and games that require two hands to lift.
6. Push wheelbarrow.
7. Rip up junk mail using two hands.
8. Cut coupons out – one hand to hold paper one to use the scissors.
9. Carry recycles out to the trash.
10. Wash tables using two hands on the cloth or two clothes at one time.

School Day:

1. Getting coat on and off.
2. Zipping up backpack or pencil pouch.
3. Carrying large textbooks.
4. Squeezing glue out with two hands.
5. Scissor use – hold paper with one hand and use the scissors with the other hand.
6. Sharpen pencils with a manual pencil sharpener.
7. Hold book with one hand and turn pages of book with the other hand.
8. Drawing lines with a ruler.
9. Using stencils – hold the stencil down with one hand, trace around it with the

other hand.

10. Writing, coloring, or painting on paper – hold the paper with one hand and make marks with the other hand.

Playtime:

1. Uncap and cap markers for coloring.
2. Hold the paper with one hand while coloring on the paper with the other hand.
3. Use play dough – squeeze, roll, and squish it with two hands.
4. Play with a slinky toy between both hands.
5. Play musical instruments that require two hands – cymbals, drums, etc.
6. Throwing and catching large balls.
7. Pulling interlocking blocks apart or putting interlocking blocks together.
8. Pouring large containers of water or sand using two hands.
9. Organized sports or extra-curricular activities such as swimming, volleyball or martial arts.
10. Weight-bearing activities with both hands i.e. wheelbarrow walking, bear walking, and crab walking.

If you need more bimanual activity ideas, check out [Therapeutic PLAY Activities for Children](#). The digital download includes 100 play activity pages and 12 tip sheets. The play activities encourage the development of fine motor skills, bimanual skills, rolling, crawling, tall kneeling, standing balance and cruising with a strong focus on children with cerebral palsy.



Therapeutic PLAY Activities for Children
Available for immediate download at YourTherapySource.com

Read more on bimanual activities for children:

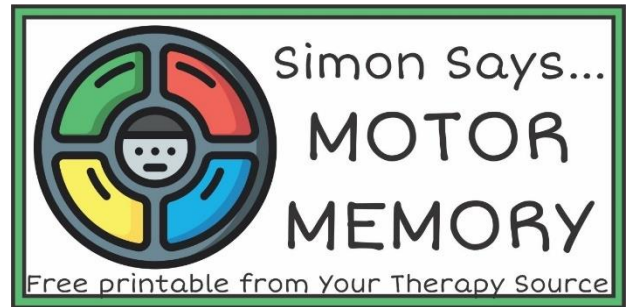
[Research Review on CIMIT and Bimanual Therapy for Children with Cerebral Palsy](#)

[CIMIT, Bimanual Therapy, and OT Home Programs](#)

[CIMIT and Bimanual Therapy are Complimentary](#)

SIMON SAYS MOTOR MEMORY CHALLENGE FREE PRINTABLE

Do you need a challenging motor memory and body awareness activity? This Simon Says Motor Memory Challenge game is a super easy activity to prepare although it is not so super easy to play. Challenge yourself to see if you can remember all the moves.



Here is how you play:

Download and print the Simon Says Motor Memory Challenge game below.

Cut apart the 10 strips on the page.

Stack the strips with action #1 at the top.

Staple the strips together to form a thin “book” of strips.

Perform action #1: Tap your head with both hands 2 times.

Turn the page and without looking back, perform action #1 followed by action #2. Tap your head with both hands 2 times and touch both hands to your right knee.

Turn the page and without looking back perform three actions: Tap your head with both hands 2 times, touch both hands to your right knee AND jump up three times.

Continue to move through the book remembering each of the actions and adding the new one.

Can you remember all 10 actions?

[DOWNLOAD YOUR FREE SIMON SAYS MOTOR MEMORY CHALLENGE HERE.](#)



MORE BODY AWARENESS ACTIVITIES:

[Personal Space Journey](#)

MULTISENSORY ALPHABET FREEBIE

Teaching children to learn all the letters of the alphabet is not an easy task. Research indicates that children need visual, auditory, oral and kinesthetic input to achieve letter recognition. This multisensory alphabet freebie provides all of that input on one NO PREP activity sheet (download at the bottom of the post). Just print in color or set your printer to grayscale. Students need to perform the following activities for the Letter Aa:

Rainbow write the letters

Practice writing the letters

Air write the letters

Sign the letter using their hand

Move like the letter

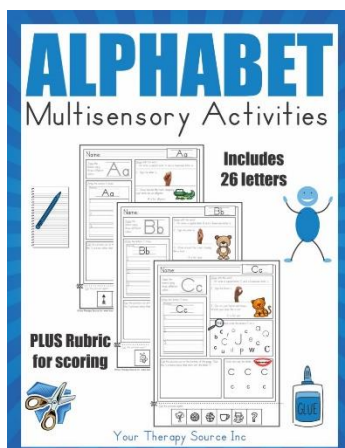
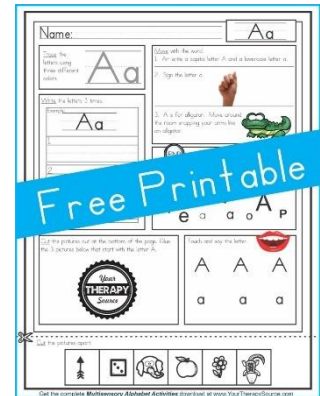
Find and circle the correct letters (in different fonts and compared to other letters)

Say the letter

Cut out pictures that start with the letter

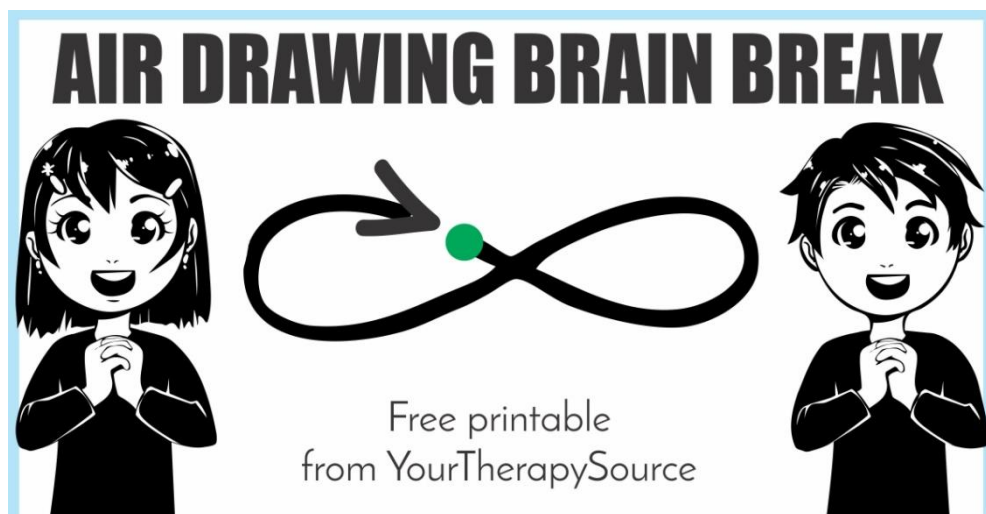
Paste the correct pictures

This freebie is from the [*Multisensory Alphabet Activities*](#) digital download packet. [FIND OUT MORE.](#)



[DOWNLOAD YOUR COPY OF THE LETTER A
MULTISENSORY ALPHABET FREEBIE](#)

AIR DRAWING BRAIN BREAK FREEBIE



Do you need a quick brain break activity? This air drawing brain break addresses so many skills and requires NO PREP. Just print (download at the end of the post) and start moving. Or don't even print, show it on the projection screen in the classroom for a whole class brain break.

There are several reasons that make this air drawing brain break awesome. First of all, it requires zero preparation. We all know that is HUGE! Second of all, it addresses many skills so it is not just a break from academic learning. The children should be instructed to pretend to draw the arrows on an imaginary wall in front of them. Each child should clasp their hands together (the word clasp may be difficult to understand for some children so provide a demonstration or say "put your hands together"). Hold your hands out in front of you with your arms at about 90 degrees, starting off with elbows straight.

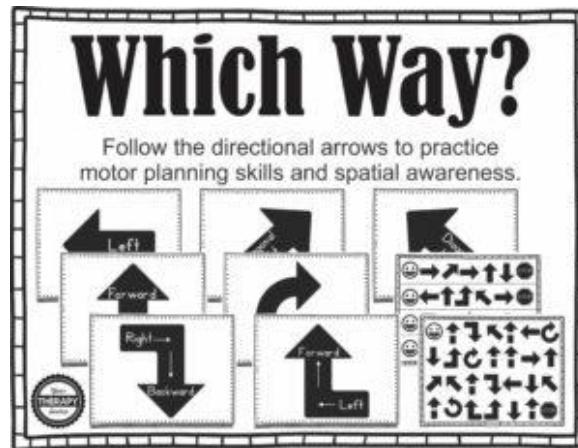
Instruct the child to imagine they are starting at the green dot, and air draw along the direction of the arrow. For the first arrow directions, you could name it "wavy". The students should go from left to right and then right to left. For the second arrow, the children should air draw a clockwise circle. The third arrow is a zig-zag pattern from left to right and up. The fourth arrow is the infinity sign. The fifth arrow starts at the upper left-hand side, going down and around twice. Finally, the sixth arrow glides and loops from top to bottom. As you move your arms along the path, encourage the students to visually track their hands.

The air drawing brain break allows children to practice the following:

- directionality from left to right and top to bottom.

- visual-spatial skills.
- kinesthetic awareness of hands and arms (where your hands and arms are in space).
- visual tracking.
- eye-hand coordination.
- crossing midline.
- bilateral coordination (moving both sides of the body together).
- motor planning

If you need more activities like this, check out the HUGE assortment of [brain breaks here](#).

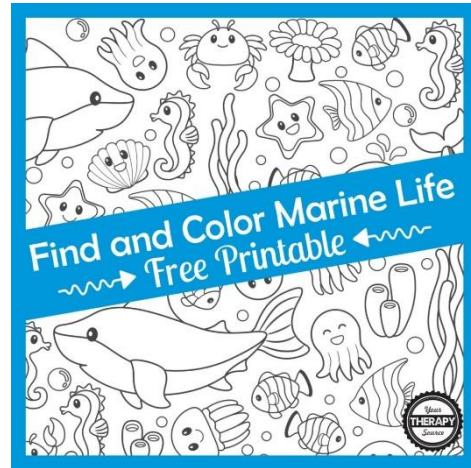


If students need more practice following directions, [Which Way?](#) includes 16 directional arrow pages (large and small size) plus 6 boards to follow. The activities are available in varying degrees of difficulty. Children will practice moving right, left, diagonally, forwards, backwards, clockwise, down and up. Practice motor planning skills, visually scanning from right to left, understanding prepositional phrases and spatial awareness with this movement activity. [FIND OUT MORE.](#)

Get the [FREE Air Drawing Brain Break here](#).

FIND AND COLOR MARINE LIFE VISUAL MOTOR FREEBIE

Here is a fun FREEBIE to challenge visual perceptual and fine motor skills – find and color marine life. Students need to find the marine life and color it according to the key on the activity page. Add an additional challenge by having the students count each type of marine life. You can download your FREE copy of the Find and Color Marine Life visual motor activity page at the end of this post.



The find and color marine life visual motor activity encourages:

- visual discrimination skills: the ability to recognize similarities and differences between shapes, size, colors, objects, and patterns.
- visual motor skills: the ability to interpret visual information and respond with a motor action.
- counting skills
- attention to detail
- visual scanning: the ability to visually search for something i.e. going from left to right and top to bottom

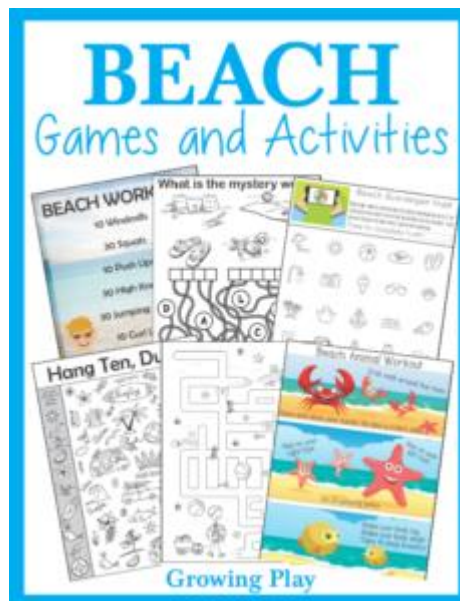
This activity is suitable for early finishers, visual perceptual “homework”, therapy session activity or marine life theme lesson. See below to access the FREE download. Once you download the activity, print and distribute to students. Instruct the children to read the code and color the marine life animals the correct color. If the child is unable to read yet, color the animal at the top of the page the correct color as a guide instead of having the child read the word. Provide children with crayons, colored pencils or watercolors for them to complete the activity.

[DOWNLOAD THE FIND AND COLOR MARINE LIFE ACTIVITY PAGE](#)

If you need additional sensory-motor, puzzles, and mazes with a marine and beach theme check out these titles:



[A to Z Marine Animal Movement Cards](#): This digital download includes 26 marine animal movement cards, 20 game ideas and 3 pages to use for Write The Room activity to get children moving through the alphabet.



[Beach Sensory Motor Packet](#) – Fine, Gross and Visual Motor Packet: This digital download includes 20+ puzzles, mazes, games and physical activities all with a beach theme. This is an excellent activity packet for in-class activities, therapy sessions, class parties, carryover activities, brain breaks, early finishers and summer “homework”.

PENGUIN FINE MOTOR ACTIVITY – FREE PRINTABLE ACTIVITY

There has been a lot of press lately about children entering school lacking fine motor skills. Occupational therapists and other professionals speculate that it is from a lack of fine motor skill practice and increased screen time for young children. The huge problem with this decrease in fine motor skill ability, is that fine motor skills are SUPER IMPORTANT for everyday tasks that are required for students such as zipping a coat, tying shoes, handwriting and keyboarding to name just a few. In addition, research indicates that [fine motor skills play a role in cognition, language development, and early reading](#). Therefore, it is crucial that children are provided with opportunities for fine motor skill practice throughout the day.



You can start practicing with this Perky Penguin fine motor activity from the [Fine Motor Stations Series 1](#) digital download. Download and print the activity pages below. You will need black film canisters (adult cuts an X at the top for bean insertion) with googly eyes and foam body parts and assorted beans (smaller requires more precision and strength and larger requires less precision and strength). If you do not have any black film canisters, you could use a recycled play dough, coffee or sour cream container and paint it black or cover it with black duct tape.

When you set up the fine motor station, provide the full-page picture of the activity as a visual support so the students can be independent during the task.

Have the children simply work on feeding the penguin(s) as many assorted beans through the top slot as possible. Allow for hand rest breaks or work to increase endurance by feeding them more beans than the child fed them at the last attempt.

Extend the Perky Penguin fine motor activity by playing a game. Roll a die and feed penguins that number of beans. (Make sure to cup hands together and shake the die for arch development.)

The Perky Penguin Fine Motor Activity encourages:

- Finger strength/endurance
- Fine motor coordination and control
- Precision skills
- In-hand manipulation
- Bilateral hand coordination
- Grasp patterns
- Eye-hand coordination skills

[DOWNLOAD YOUR FREE TWO PAGE PRINTABLE – PERKY PENGUIN FINE MOTOR ACTIVITY.](#)



Check out the complete [Fine Motor Stations Series 1](#) digital download. It includes 25 fun and engaging fine motor activities for children using simple and easily obtained materials. Written by Regina Parsons-Allen, COTA, the activities are designed to be intrinsically motivating and quickly engaging while maintaining child interest. Most items are readily available in schools and home. Suggestions and modifications are provided to be inclusive of many skill levels. [FIND OUT MORE.](#)

If you love PENGUINS, check out the [Penguin Pencil Challenges](#). The download includes 40+ visual motor pencil challenges with varying degrees of difficulty (available in color and black and white) with a penguin theme. [FIND OUT MORE.](#)