

Watermill School Fine Motor and Handwriting Continuum

Step 1: Sensory and Exploratory: Tactile exploration, hand-to-object interaction, minimal control or intent.			
INTERVENTIONS: <i>Intensive Interaction, sensory bins, tactile books, Dough Disco.</i>			
ADAPTATIONS: <i>Positioning, sensory trays, slanted surfaces.</i>			
EQUALS PATHWAY	EQUALS AREA	ACTIVITIES	PURPOSE
Informal	My Sensory Play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track lights / toys with eyes or hands. Finger painting in sand, gloop, jelly, dough in various stages of plasticity. Sensory painting (foil, bubble wrap, textured rollers). 	Encourages tactile exploration, hand awareness, sensory engagement.
Informal	Food/ Sensory Play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Squishing fruit/ foods. 	Develops hand strength and manipulation.
Informal/ Semi Formal	My Music/ My Sensory Play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner-supported rhythmic movements with music. 	Develop motor control, coordination and hand function.
Step 2: Early Motor Control: Beginning cause-effect, reaching, grasping, early tool use.			
INTERVENTIONS: <i>Squiggle While You Wiggle.</i>			
ADAPTATIONS: <i>Adaptive tools, vertical surfaces, chunky crayons, switch toys.</i>			
EQUALS PATHWAY	EQUALS AREA	ACTIVITIES	PURPOSE

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Informal/ Semi-Formal	My Sensory Play/ Life Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scooping, pouring, filling trays (rice, water, lentils). • Hiding and finding objects in sensory trays. • Using paint rollers, big crayons with music. • Pinching, squeezing, and moulding malleable materials (dough, clay, foam). • Switches and large buttons. 	Encourages controlled hand movement, hand-eye coordination, cause-effect understanding. Develop gross-to-fine hand coordination, shoulder stability and prewriting strokes.
Semi-Formal	My Physical Wellbeing/ My Play & Leisure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threading beads or pasta. • Using tweezers, tongs, or spoons in games. • ‘Push and Pull’ games. Vertical surfaces for exploration: drawing/ mark-making (chalkboard, whiteboard). 	Supports pincer grasp, enhance finger control, bilateral coordination, eye-hand coordination. Promote wrist extension, shoulder stability, smooth arm- hand movements in preparation for writing. Functional fine motor skill; improves hand strength and coordination.
Semi-Formal	My Independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pegging clothes/ Velcro practice • Stacking games. 	Functional fine motor skill; improves hand strength and coordination.

Step 3: Pre- Writing Patterns: Scribbling with intent, copying shapes, early visual-motor integration.

INTERVENTIONS: *Write Dance, Squiggle While you Wiggle, Write from the Start, Teodorescu Programme, Sensory Circuits.*

ADAPTATIONS: *Pre-writing books, hand guides, marker boards, fidget support.*

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EQUALS PATHWAY	EQUALS AREA	ACTIVITIES	PURPOSE
Semi-Formal	My Sensory Play/ Art & Drama	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dough/ clay mark-making (lines, circles) 	Prepares for writing; develops wrist stability, grip, and control.
Semi-Formal	Art & Drama	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using stamps, brushes, rollers 	Encourages repetitive motions, pattern formation, and fine motor precision.
Semi-Formal/ Formal	My Independence/ Art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cutting along thick lines and around shapes with scissors. Threading, lacing, posting games. 	Refines hand strength, bilateral coordination, scissor control.
Semi-Formal/ Formal	Art & Drama/ Early Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tracing lines/ Shapes (zig zags, arches etc.) Dot to dot pattern completion. Exploration of letter formation in sensory media (foam, sand). 	Supports pencil control and early writing readiness.
Step 4: Letter Formation: Controlled drawing, forming letters, spatial awareness.			
INTERVENTIONS: <i>Nelson Handwriting, Air Writing, Multi-sensory Letter Work, Dough Disco.</i>			
ADAPTATIONS: <i>Pencil grips, ruled/raised line paper, guided tracing.</i>			
Semi-Formal	My Independence/ Cooking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holding cutlery. Cutting soft foods with support. Pouring drinks. 	Develops tripod grasp, wrist stability, enhances hand-eye coordination. Improves bilateral coordination (coordinating movements of both hands). and graded force control (using the right amount of force).
Semi-Formal/ Formal	Communication/ Art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holding pencils/ crayons for mark making. 	Begins to form letters and shapes; improves tripod grasp and stability.

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Semi-Formal/ Formal	My Independence/ Life Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baking/ cooking tasks (spreading, stirring, cutting soft foods) 	Strengthens hand control and precision; functional hand use.
Formal	Early Literacy/ Handwriting Sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing letters/ numbers. Using multi-sensory routes to write (chalk, pens, air-writing). Daily fine motor warmups ('walking' pencils along lines or over fingers to practise control/ using fingers to flick small objects such as counters or pom poms/ dough work). Writing simple captions. 	Refines letter formation, grip, and pencil control; moves toward legible writing.

Step 5: Fluid & Functional Writing: Writing with speed, legibility, and purpose. Use of writing to communicate.

INTERVENTIONS: *Functional Literacy, Sentence Construction Apps, AAC if needed.*

ADAPTATIONS: *Laptops, Clicker, scribe support, graphic organisers, word processing apps/ software, using sentence starters to reduce cognitive load.*

EQUALS PATHWAY	EQUALS AREA	ACTIVITIES	PURPOSE
Semi-Formal/ Formal	My Independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brushing hair. Washing hands. Brushing teeth. 	Develops bilateral coordination (coordinating movements of both hands). Strengthens pincer grasp, developed tripod grasp and wrist stability.
Semi-Formal/ Formal	My Independence/ ICT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Typing on keyboard/ using tech switches. Composing emails. 	Modern functional skills, supports independence and fine motor precision.

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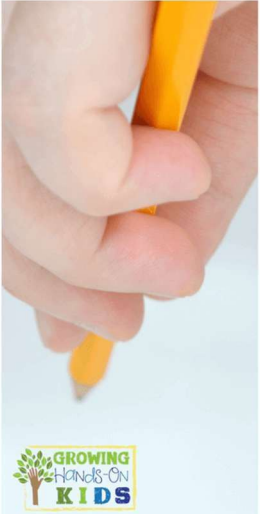
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dictating sentences using voice tech. 	
Formal	Early Literacy/ My Independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functional writing (lists, labels, forms) • Composing stories, menus, CVs etc. • Filling forms. • Co-creating class books or visual stories. 	Develops practical writing skills for daily life and school tasks.
Step 1: Sensory & Exploratory		Step 2: Early Motor Control	

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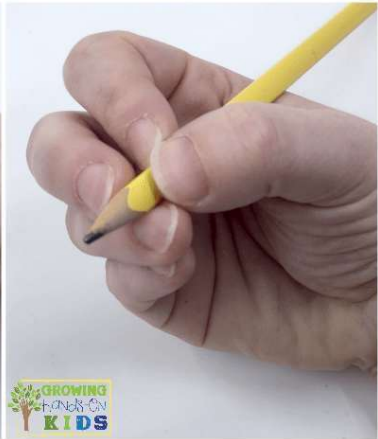


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Step 3: Pre-Writing Patterns



Step 4: Letter Formation








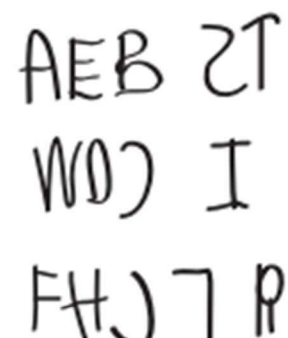
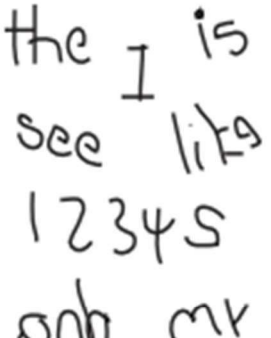
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Step 5: Fluent & Functional Writing

Dynamic Tripod Grasp



HeidiSongs' Chart of the Developmental Progression of A Child's Writing

 <p>1. Pictures</p>	 <p>2. Random Scribbling</p>	 <p>3. Scribble Writing (Written in linear fashion to mimic real writing.)</p>	 <p>4. Symbols That Represent Letters</p>
 <p>5. Random Letters (No relationship between sounds of letters and what the child is trying to say.)</p>	 <p>6. Letter Strings (Progresses from left to right and top to bottom when the child "reads" his writing.)</p>	 <p>7. Letter Groups (The groups have spaces in between to resemble words.)</p>	 <p>8. Environmental Print (Child copies print found in the room, often without knowing what the words are.)</p>
<p>Theh can r (The horse can run.)</p> <p>9. Beginning Sounds (Child begins to write simple sentences using sight words and just the beginning sounds of words.)</p>	<p>We wn to the s (We went to the store.)</p> <p>10. Early Inventive Spelling (Includes the same elements as the previous level, but with more consonant sounds represented and spaces between words.)</p>	<p>To daye i wot to play withf the white board and the shapES and I won to play with My fen (Today I want to play with the white board and the shapes, and I want to play with my friend.)</p> <p>11. Inventive Spelling (Has the same elements as the previous level, but with more sounds per word written, including the vowels. Some conventional spelling patterns may appear.)</p>	<p>One day I saw my Frid it was Israel and Antonio and They got lost I fad Thim. The end (One day, I saw my friends. It was Israel and Anthony and they got lost. I found them. The end.)</p> <p>12. Transitional Writing (Includes all of the previous elements, plus some real spellings of words with silent letters and other spelling patterns. Punctuation is beginning to appear.)</p>

