



Foundations for Handwriting

1. Strength and stability -proximal to distal

- In order for us to develop control over the smaller muscles of the hand we must have support or control in our trunk and in all of our other joints leading up to the hand.
- The hand itself needs adequate strength to hold onto a writing utensil and isolate control in individual muscles.

2. Fine motor coordination

- Finger isolation: separating finger movements from the rest of the arm. Separating finger and thumb movements from each other.
- Accuracy of movement: starting and stopping, adjusting size and space, drawing straight and curved lines in different directions.
- Bilateral coordination: using both hands together such as using non-dominant hand to assist in holding and turning paper when cutting, tying shoes, buttoning, zipping, stringing beads, stabilizing paper when coloring or writing.
- Lateralization: developing hand dominance. Age varies but if not established in kindergarten we should have a systematic observation in place to collect data to see what hand may be emerging. What hand does the student use to pick up pencils, scissors, spoon, food? Students may benefit from more bilateral activities.

3. Visual motor perception

- visual tracking is being able to move eyes in a controlled manner
- visual spatial awareness is awareness of directionality, how close objects are, up/down/left/right.
- Visual memory is the ability to remember for immediate recall characteristics of a form.

4. Cognition

- Concepts needed for handwriting are directionality such as up, down, top, bottom, around, on, left, right.
- The ability to sustain attention for learning activities.
- The desire or need for written communication.

Developed from PowerPoint presentations from Steve Maddox, Kellie Sadowski, Suzanne Toner, Nancy Hitchcock -HDESD OT's.

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