



Wee Learners(4 - 5 years): Writing Readiness (Pre Writing) Skills

Pre-writing skills are the fundamental skills children need to develop before they are able to write. These skills contribute to the child's ability to hold and use a pencil, and the ability to draw, write, copy, and colour. Why are writing readiness (pre-writing) skills important?

Pre-writing skills are essential for the child to be able to develop the ability to hold and move a pencil fluently and effectively and therefore produce legible writing.

What are the building blocks necessary to develop writing readiness (pre-writing)?

- Hand and finger strength: An ability to allow the necessary muscle power for controlled movement of the pencil.
- Pencil grasp: The efficiency of how the pencil is held, allowing age-appropriate pencil movement generation.
- Hand eye coordination: The ability to process information received from the eyes to the hands.
- Upper body strength: The strength and stability provided by the shoulder to allow controlled hand movement for good pencil control.
- Visual perception: The brain's ability to interpret visual images seen by the eyes, such as letters and numbers.
- Hand dominance: The consistent use of one (usually the same) hand.
- Hand division: Using just the thumb, index and middle finger for manipulation.

If a child has difficulties with writing readiness they might:

- Have an awkward pencil grasp.
- Have difficulty controlling a pencil for colouring, drawing, or writing.
- Show a tendency to use their whole hand to manipulate objects rather than just a few fingers.
- Have difficulty staying within the lines when colouring.
- Have difficulty coordinating both hands together for two handed tasks.
- Have poor hand-eye coordination.

What can be done to improve writing readiness (pre-writing) skills?

- Hand dominance
- Experience
- Poking and pointing
- Praise
- Sensory play
- Hand-eye coordination

What activities can help improve writing readiness (pre-writing) skills?

- Threading and lacing
- Play-doh (playdough)
- Scissor cutting
- Tongs or teabag squeezers
- Drawing or writing
- Prewriting shapes
- Finger games
- Craft
- Construction and building

Source: <https://bit.ly/3n4FVXQ>

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