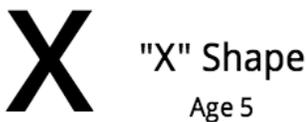


Pre-Writing Skills

What are pre-writing skills?

- Skills that children need to learn before they are able to write letters.
- Skills that contribute to how to hold a pencil, and the ability to color, draw, copy, and write.
- Pre-writing shapes are a main part of pre-writing skills.
- Pre-writing shapes are lines and strokes that most letters, numbers, and shapes are made of.

PRE-WRITING LINE DEVELOPMENT FOR KIDS



Imitate = you show them and they do it
Copy = you give them a picture and they copy it

What other skills are necessary to develop pre-writing skills?

- The ability to sit upright in a chair.
- Hand and finger strength to hold and move the pencil.
- Hand eye coordination to process information and move the hands.
- Visual perception to see images such as shapes, letters, and numbers.
- The ability to use two hands together to hold a pencil in one hand and hold the paper with the other hand.
- The ability to cross midline to write or draw.

Pencil Grasp

- Children begin to work on their pencil grasp development from the time they start to reach for objects with their hands.
- Around the age of one, children begin to scribble on paper.
- The picture below shows what typical pencil grasp development looks like and when your child should be reaching these milestones.

TYPICAL PENCIL GRASP DEVELOPMENT FOR HANDWRITING



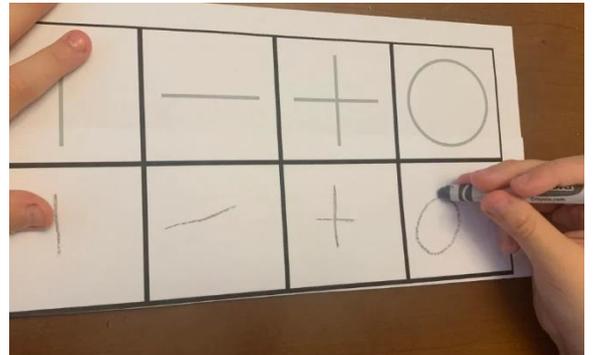
Learning the Alphabet

- Knowing the alphabet is an important skill for learning how to write and read later in life.
- Around the age of 2 years old, children start recognizing some letters of the alphabet and can sing or say the ABC song.
- Around the age of 3 years old, children may recognize about half of the letters in the alphabet and start to connect letters to their sounds.
- In preschool, many children begin to write their name in capital letters and know about 2/3 of the letters.
- Remember that children learn capital letters first and then lowercase.

Home Activities to Work on Pre-Writing Skills and Learning the Alphabet

Drawing on Paper

- Drawing on paper is an easy and simple activity to work on those pre-writing shapes and letters.
- Let your child use a marker, crayon, or pencil to draw with.
- Demonstrate how to make the pre-writing shapes or letters and encourage your child to imitate or copy.
- Sing songs or come up with different sayings to motivate your child to participate. For example, The Wheels on the Bus song is a great way to teach horizontal and vertical lines and circles.



Sensory Board Writing

- Try using a variety of different textures to draw in such as:
 - Shaving cream
 - Sand
 - Flour
 - Sugar
 - Salt
 - Rice
 - Pudding
 - Yogurt
 - Applesauce
 - Whipped cream
- Spread the item on a tray, pan, or other surface that is easy to clean.
- Encourage your child to use their finger to draw pre-writing shapes and eventually start to work on some letters once they are older.
- If they do not want to use their finger, they can use different kitchen utensils, a Q-tip, straw, stick, pencil, or any other items in your home.
- Remember, you can sing different songs such as The Wheels on the Bus, to help your child make these motions.



Sensory Bag Writing

- Use Ziploc bags to create a sensory bag.
- Fill the Ziploc bag with an item such as paint, shaving cream, gel or shampoo.
- Zip the bag shut and use duct tape around the edges. Cover all four edges with tape, folding over the edge to help strengthen the bag. To prevent any holes or leaks in the bag, you can use two Ziploc bags and then tape the edges.
- Give your child individual bags to play with or create a grid on hardwood floor by taping the bags to the floor.
- Let your child use the eraser side of a pencil, an eraser, their finger, or any other objects to draw pre-writing shapes or letters. Remember, you do not want the item to be too sharp or it will cut open the bag.
- Check out this fun sensory iPad to practice pre-writing.
 - Just cut a piece of cardboard into a rectangle shape.
 - Place the Ziploc bag on the cardboard.
 - Cut another piece of cardboard with the middle cut out.
 - Place this piece of cardboard on top so the sensory bag is shown through the middle of the cut out and glue or tape it down.
 - Let your child use this iPad to draw on.



Bubble Wrap

- Save leftover bubble wrap.
- Use a sharpie to draw pre-writing shapes or letters on the bubble wrap.
- Let your child pop the bubbles to start to learn pre-writing shapes and letters.
- This is also a great fine motor activity!



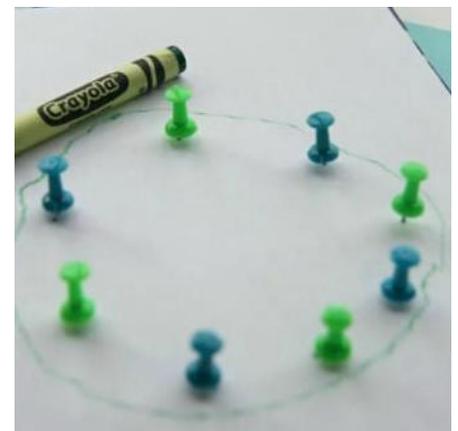
Playing with Tape

- Make pre-writing shapes or letters out of tape. You can place the tape on the floor, a tray, table, or any other surface you wish.
- Encourage your child to trace over these designs in a variety of ways:
 - Use a pencil, marker, or crayon to trace over it.
 - Drive objects or toys over it.
 - Line up objects or toys on it.
- You can also try to draw the pre-writing shapes or letters on paper and have your child place the tape over top of it.



Connect the Objects

- Place small objects on paper or cardboard. You can use small pieces of food (Cereal, Puffs, etc.), push pins, buttons, bottle caps, or anything else you have. Place the objects in different pre-writing shapes or letter designs.
- Use a pencil, crayon, marker to draw with.
- Encourage your child to connect the objects by drawing on the paper.
- This is a great way to practice drawing pre-writing shapes and letters.



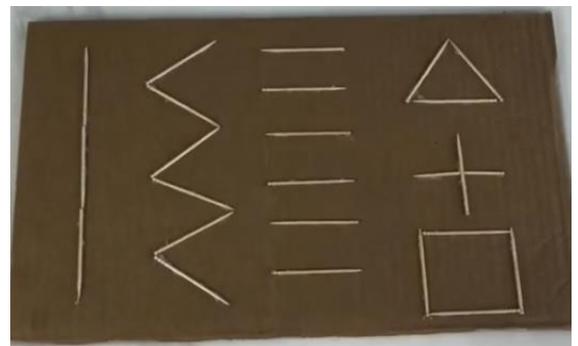
Pre-Writing Tracing Board

- Use a piece of cardboard to make a tracing board.
- Draw pre-writing shapes or letters on the cardboard and then cut out the designs to make your board.
- Place the tracing board over a piece of paper or a piece of cardboard and allow your child to use a pencil, marker, or crayon to trace.
- You can also create a reusable board by using tape and dry erase markers. Just cover another piece of cardboard in tape, use a dry erase marker to trace, and wipe it off with a tissue or paper towel.



Pre-Writing Maze

- Use a piece of cardboard to make a pre-writing maze.
- Use items such as toothpicks, Q-tips, or straws to make the maze.
- Glue or tape these items into the board. Make different pre-writing shapes out of these materials.
- Allow your child to draw through the maze using pencil, marker, or crayon.
- You can also create a reusable board by using tape and dry erase markers. Just cover the cardboard in tape before creating the maze, use a dry erase marker to trace, and wipe it off with a tissue or paper towel.



Pre-Writing Tracing Card

- Cut out a piece of plastic. Using the lid of fruit containers (strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, etc.) is a great example. Just remove any stickers and wash it off.
- Cut out a piece of cardboard that is the same size of the piece of plastic you are using.
- Place the plastic over top of the cardboard and use tape, staples, or push pins on the four corners to hold the plastic in place.
- On pieces of paper, draw prewriting shapes and letters.
- Slide the pieces of paper under the plastic to create a tracing card.
- Have your child use dry erase markers to trace the shapes and letters.



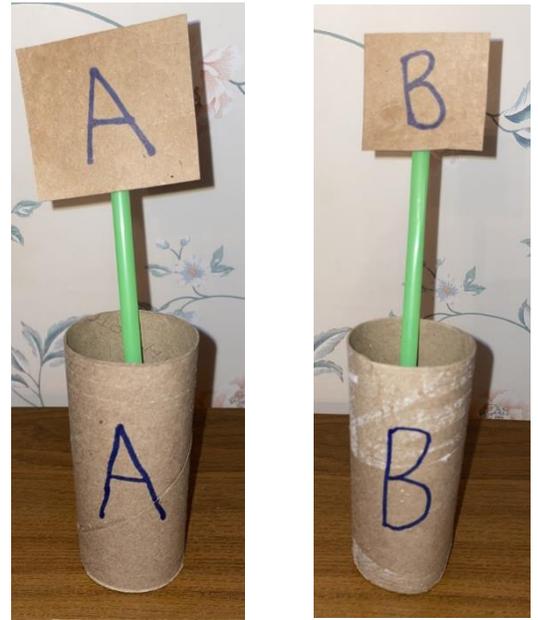
Alphabet Match with Cardboard Box

- Use a cardboard box for this activity. Try and use a longer box if you have one available.
- Write the letters of the alphabet on the box.
- Cut slits into the cardboard box above each letter.
- Find something to write on that can also fit into the slits of the box. For example, you can use plastic spoons or popsicle sticks. Write a letter of the alphabet on each of these items.
- Have your child match the letters.
- This is great way to learn and recognize letters while also working on fine motor skills.



Alphabet Match with Cardboard Rolls

- Save your toilet paper rolls to make this letter matching activity.
- Write letters of the alphabet on toilet paper rolls.
- Use popsicle sticks with letters written on them or cut up small pieces of cardboard and write letters on them and tape them to a straw.
- Have your child match the letters.



Alphabet Clothesline

- Use a piece of yarn or string to make a clothesline.
- Tie the clothesline to two objects in your house (such as a chair) so it is hanging.
- Use index cards, pieces of paper, or pieces of cardboard and write the letters of the alphabet on them.
- Use clothespins or chip clips and have your child place the letters on the clothesline.
- This is a great way to start to learn the alphabet and also works on fine motor skills by opening and closing the clothespins or chip clips.



Alphabet Match Cardboard Puzzle

- Use a piece of cardboard and make a grid to write each letter of the alphabet in.
- Cut up small square pieces of cardboard and write letters on those.
- Remember that children learn capital letters first, so start with all capital letters. As they get older, you can write lowercase letters on the cardboard squares to match uppercase and lowercase letters.
- Have your child match the alphabet by placing the pieces on the board.



Alphabet Match with Clothespins

- Use a paper plate and write the letters of the alphabet around the edges. If you do not have a paper plate, you can use a piece of paper or cardboard and write letters around the edges.
- Use clothespins and write the letters of the alphabet on them.
- Have your child match the clothespin to the correct letter.
- This is a great way to start to learn the alphabet and also works on fine motor skills by opening and closing the clothespins.



Name Recognition

- Save bottle caps from water bottles or cartons of milk or juice.
- Use a piece of cardboard to write on. You can write your child's name or other words.
- Write the letters on the bottle caps.
- Glue the bottom part of the caps to the cardboard below each letter.
- Have your child match the letters by twisting the bottles cap onto the correct place. This is also great for working on fine motor skills.
- If you do not want to glue the bottoms of the caps down, just have your child match the tops of the caps by placing them on the cardboard.



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