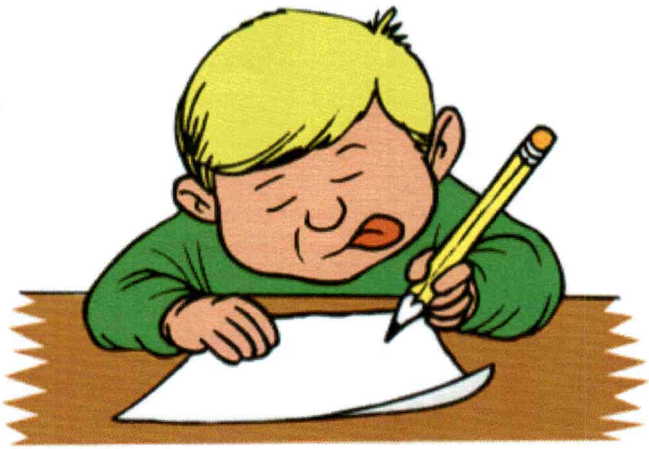
Helping Your Child at Home

An activity guide to support writing in EYFS

THE FEDERATION OF ABBEY INFANT AND JUNIOR SCHOOL



Get Ready For Writing!

Helping your child gain the skills needed for writing is fun for all the family!!

Writing is a complex skill that is made up of several fundamental skills:

Core strength and stability – This is the ability to control the position and movement of the trunk (the central part of the body). A strong 'core' creates a solid, stable base which is needed for us to make controlled and co-ordinated movements of our arms and legs.

Body Awareness – This is the ability to understand where our bodies are in space and how they move.

Crossing the Midline – This is an important part of child development. It is the ability to reach across the midline (an imaginary vertical line down the centre of the body) to the opposite side. It is needed for reading from left to right, and writing from left to right.

Bi-lateral Co-ordination – This is the ability to use both sides of the body together in a controlled and organised way. It is needed when writing, using scissors and when turning the pages of a book.

Spatial Awareness – This is the skill of knowing where we are in relation to everything around us, and how objects are placed in relation to each other. It is needed when positioning words on the page.

Auditory and Visual Perception – This is how we make sense of the information brought to our brains from what we hear (auditory) and see (visual).

Eye Tracking – This is the smooth co-ordinated movement of the eyes to follow objects and people in the environment. It allows us to read without getting lost on the page and to copy work from a whiteboard without getting lost.

Rhythm, Visual and Auditory Sequencing – These are skills which allow us to remember, in order, information we have seen or heard. They are needed for activities such as learning spellings and getting dressed.

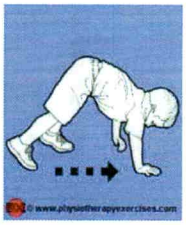
Hand/Eye Co-ordination – This is the ability to process information received from the eyes to control and direct hand movement to complete a task such as writing.

Fine Motor and Manipulation Skills – these skills involve the use of the smaller muscles in the hands for tasks such as doing up buttons, cleaning teeth, using cutlery, writing, drawing and colouring.

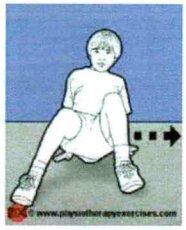
Writing is not just about putting pen to paper.

The following fun activities will help your child to gain the skills they need to become a confident writer. You will probably find that you are already doing lots of them.

- A visit to a playground – climbing frames and swings
- Crawling through play tunnels
- Rolling down a grassy slope
- Jumping on a trampoline
- Swimming
- Obstacle courses
- Riding bikes and scooters
- Animal walks:



Bear walk



Crab walk

- Also kangaroo jumps, frog jumps, bunny hops, lions (crawl on hands and knees), crocodiles (commando crawl), flamingo (stand on 1 leg).
- Tug of War
- Wheelbarrow walks and races
- **Giant footsteps** – stamp loudly. It can be done barefoot over different textures e.g. grass, bubble wrap, carpet, tiled floors, smooth fabrics such as velvet.
- Pushing trollies or pushchairs with lightweights in them (appropriate to the age of the child).
- **Mirroring** – stand opposite your child and get them to mirror your movements.
- **Crossover marching** – use your hand to tap the opposite knee when marching.

- **Thigh taps** – use your hands to tap a simple pattern on your thighs, you can cross the midline by tapping the right hand on the left thigh, and the left hand on the right thigh. Ask your child to copy the pattern.

- **Hand clapping rhymes** (there are lots of ideas on the internet)

- **Arm Dancing** – think 70's disco style!!

- **Ball games** – throwing and catching the ball with both hands, start with a large ball (beach ball) and then use smaller balls as co-ordination improves.

- **Balloon games** – pass a balloon between your legs or over your head using both hands.

- Balloon keepy uppy

- **Hoops** – have a go at hula hooping. Climb through hoops, jump in and out of hoops.

- **Jigsaws** – talk through finding pieces and how they fit together.

- Blow bubbles for your child and get them to try and catch them.

- Play with toy cars and trains moving them around a track

- Play a game of skittles

- Marble run

- Dot to dots, mazes, word searches or letter searches, spot the difference, colouring books

- **Memory pairs games** (picture cards) and Kim's game (objects)

- **Memory games** e.g. 'I went to the shops and I bought....'

- **Find it books** e.g. 'Where's Wally?'

- **Action songs and rhymes** e.g. 'Heads, shoulders, knees and toes', 'If you're happy and you know it', 'The Hokey Cokey', ' Row row your boat'

- **Finger rhymes** e.g. 'Tommy Thumb', 'Two little dicky birds'
- **Sound lotto** – matching pictures to sounds
- **Building** with Lego and other construction toys
- Pegs on a washing line
- Use pegs to pick up small items like pom poms or beads
- **Pegs in a pegboard**. You could get your child to copy a simple pattern using different coloured pegs
- **Playdough** – roll into balls and make animals, use a rolling pin with both hands to roll the dough out flat and then cut out shapes using cookie cutters
- Peel stickers and then put them between two lines or in a letter shape
- Squeeze glitter glue onto pre-drawn lines
- Use a paintbrush in sand to draw shapes and letters
- Draw shapes and letters in shaving foam/cream using a finger
- Use fingers/ sticks/ paintbrushes in mud or snow to make patterns and shapes
- Cover paper, which has shapes drawn on, with rice, sand, couscous or quinoa (uncooked!). Trace the lines of the shapes with a finger
- Put glue on paper in a letter shape. Children stick rice, pom poms, glitter on the glue
- Bath crayons

This list gives you some activities to try but they are not the only ones out there. A search for fine motor activities for young children on the internet will give you plenty more ideas and feel free to adapt and create new ones yourself from the list.

Most importantly writing should be fun!

Activities for crossing the midline (right handed)

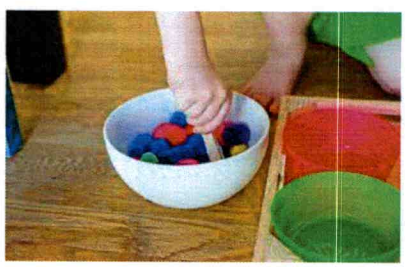
Crossing the midline is a key building block in developing pre-writing and pre-reading skills and is an important aspect of child development.

The midline referred to is an imaginary line that goes vertically down the centre of the body. Crossing this line through movement, such as reaching one hand across the body to pick something up, is an example of crossing the midline.

1. Use scissor scoops to move the beads from one bowl to the other.
   Place the bowls on each side, so that you have to cross the midline.



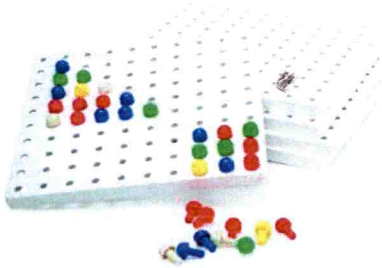
2. Use tweezers to move the beads from one bowl to the other.
   Place the bowls on each side, so that you have to cross the midline.



3. Hold the base of the bolt with your left hand. Then use your right hand to screw and unscrew the nut.



4. Spread pegs across the table, to the left and right. Use your right hand to pick up pegs and place them in the peg board.
Try and make different patterns.



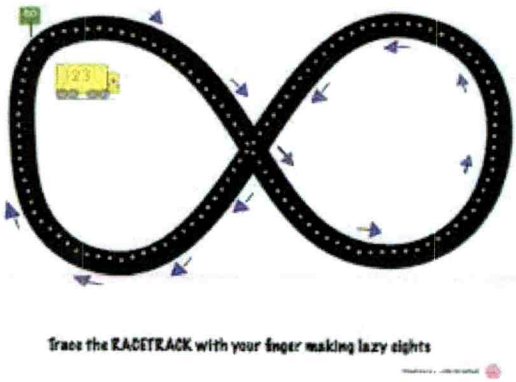
Next, place all the pegs on the left side and use your right hand to pick up and position the pegs.

5. Cross-over marching on the spot:
Start by marching on the spot. Next, touch right hand to left knee and then left hand to right knee in a repetitive sequence. Repeat 10 times.



This exercise can also be done sitting on a chair.

6. Lazy eights:
Draw or print out a 'lazy eight.'
Trace the racetrack using your finger.
Make sure you follow the direction of the arrows.
Try different size 'lazy eights'. The 'lazy eight' can be placed on a table top, the floor (lie on tummy), or stuck to a wall.
Instead of using your finger you could try using a toy car.



Activities for crossing the midline (left handed)

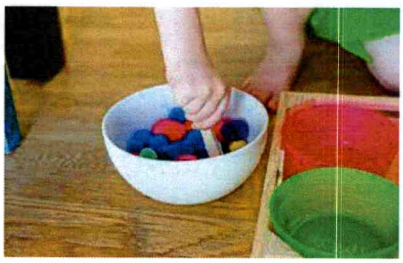
Crossing the midline is a key building block in developing pre-writing and pre-reading skills and is an important aspect of child development.

The midline referred to is an imaginary line that goes vertically down the centre of the body. Crossing this line through movement, such as reaching one hand across the body to pick something up, is an example of crossing the midline.

1. Use scissor scoops to move the beads from one bowl to the other.
   Place the bowls on each side, so that you have to cross the midline.



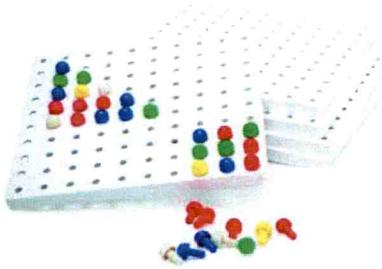
2. Use tweezers to move the beads from one bowl to the other.
   Place the bowls on each side, so that you have to cross the midline.



3. Hold the base of the bolt with your right hand. Then use your left hand to screw and unscrew the nut.



4. Spread pegs across the table, to the left and right. Use your left hand to pick up pegs and place them in the peg board.
Try and make different patterns.



Next, place all the pegs on the right side and use your left hand to pick up and position the pegs.

5. Cross-over marching on the spot:
Start by marching on the spot. Next, touch right hand to left knee and then left hand to right knee in a repetitive sequence. Repeat 10 times.



This exercise can also be done sitting on a chair.

6. Lazy eights:
Draw or print out a 'lazy eight.'
Trace the racetrack using your finger.
Make sure you follow the direction of the arrows.
Try different size 'lazy eights'. The 'lazy eight' can be placed on a table top, the floor (lie on tummy), or stuck to a wall.
Instead of using your finger you could try using a toy car.

