

# Fine Motor Skills

Hume Valley School Occupational Therapy Department

## 1. *Fine motor skills- Using tongs to sort small items:*

This activity works on developing fine motor skills and can either be used on its own for overall skill development or as a warm up before writing tasks (if using before writing tasks choose less challenging options because you won't want to make your child's fingers too tired before writing).

### WHAT YOU NEED:

- A set of tongs (2 if you would like to do this at the same time as your child)
- An empty plate/bowl/container (multiple if you will be sorting into multiple piles to make it more challenging)
- A container/plate/bowl of small items (approximately 10-20) such as:
  - Pom poms
  - Cotton balls
  - M&Ms
  - Dried pasta
  - Large dried beans
  - Marbles
  - Pieces of Lego or other small toys
  - Any other small items which can be picked up using tongs
- Optional: a timer



### ACTIVITY:

1. Place the bowl of items in front of your child.
2. Ask them to use the tongs to pick up one item at a time and place it into the empty bowl.
3. Repeat this until all items have been moved over.
4. Ask your child to move them back to the original container.

Suggested time: 5 minutes

### MORE OF A CHALLENGE:

- Use smaller items or items to sort into bowls with a rounder shape
- Set a timer and see how many items your child can pick up and move in a set time
- Use items with different colours/shapes/patterns and ask your child to sort them into piles of things which are similar (e.g. all of the red Lego blocks in one pile and the yellow ones in another pile).
- Add more items

### LESS OF A CHALLENGE:

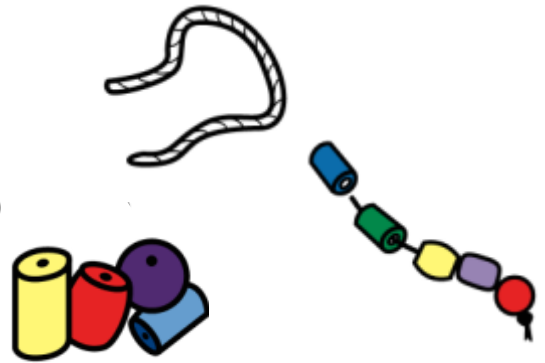
- Use larger items to sort into bowls which are easier to pick up (e.g. cotton balls, instead of beans or marbles)
- Use less items (e.g. only 5-10)

## 2. *Fine motor skills- Threading:*

This activity also works on developing fine motor skills and can either be used on its own for overall skill development or as a warm up before writing tasks (if using before writing tasks choose less challenging options because you won't want to make your child's fingers too tired before writing).

#### WHAT YOU NEED:

- A piece of string, thin ribbon or a shoelace
- Large beads or dried pasta with holes in it (e.g. penne)
- Optional: food colouring



#### ACTIVITY:

1. Help your child tie a knot around one bead/pasta at the end of the string to block any other beads/pasta from falling off the end of the string.
2. Ask your child to thread the beads/pasta onto the string one at a time until it is full. Your child will need to use both hands to successfully thread the beads/pasta onto the string.
3. Tie the ends of the string together if you wish to make this into a necklace.

If you wish to make this more interesting for your child you can dye the pasta using food colouring prior to completing this exercise (you will need to let the pasta dry again fully before threading to prevent making a mess). See video how to dye pasta with 3 ingredients dried pasta, rubbing alcohol and food colouring <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Edw-piedIV4>

Suggested time: 5 minutes

#### MORE OF A CHALLENGE:

- Ask your child to make a specific pattern from the beads/pasta if you have different colours or shapes available (e.g. red, blue, yellow, repeat)
- Use smaller beads
- Use a thinner string and one without a hard end (like the end on a shoelace which makes threading easier). The more flexible the string is the harder this activity will be.

#### LESS OF A CHALLENGE:

- Use a shoelace with a hard cover on the tip
- Use larger beads