

# Fit to Write



‘Mighty oaks from tiny acorns grow’

# Objectives for this Session

- ▶ To understand the skills and strength needed before writing can happen
- ▶ To identify ways to support your child's pre-writing and then writing at home
- ▶ To introduce letter formation at Padnell through Twinkl phonics



# Writing Facts

- ▶ Writing is one of the most demanding movement skills that a child is expected to master. Writing is a complex skill involving a range of cognitive, linguistic, perceptual and motor abilities.
- ▶ A flexible, fluent and legible handwriting style empowers children to write with confidence and creativity.

# Successful Writers

I gelled my hair with my own gel. Now when I look in the mirror I am super Frank Lampard.

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# Early Learning Goals

Physical Development	<b>Gross Motor Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others.</li><li>• Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing.</li><li>• Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping and climbing.</li></ul>
	<b>Fine Motor Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases.</li><li>• Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paintbrushes and cutlery.</li><li>• Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.</li></ul>

	<b>Writing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed.</li><li>• Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters.</li><li>• Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.</li></ul>
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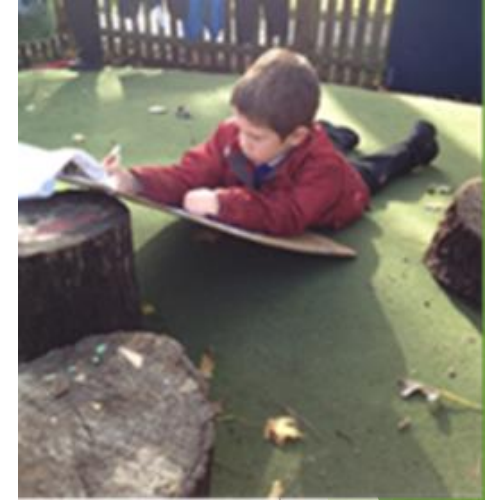
# Physicality

Lies at the heart of the Foundation Stage's Prime Areas of Learning, driving both Communication & Language and PSED

- ▶ Children have an overwhelming need to move. They learn through their bodies first.
- ▶ Brain rewards movement with a pleasure response
- ▶ Movement produces a chemical which creates growth

## Reactive fist to dextrous hand...

- ▶ Strength and mobility in fingers and hands
- ▶ Use of the hand is integrated with wrist and elbow management
- ▶ Development of shoulder is critical to the deployment of the elbow
- ▶ Shoulder is dependent on **core stability**





# Lifestyle challenges...





# Ideas to develop the Proprioceptive System

*Experiencing resistance and tension*

- ▶ Pulling
- ▶ Stretching
- ▶ Hanging -arms/feet
- ▶ Throwing
- ▶ Walking uphill
- ▶ Swimming
- ▶ Carrying/back packs
- ▶ Pushing
- ▶ Lifting - bulky awkward items
- ▶ Weight bearing on hands& arms
- ▶ Crunching vegetables
- ▶ Wrestling - rough and tumble
- ▶ MESSY PLAY



# Ideas to develop the Vestibular System

- ▶ *Twisting*
- ▶ *Turning*
- ▶ *Spinning*
- ▶ *Rolling*
- ▶ *Rocking*
- ▶ *Tilting*
- ▶ *Wobbling*
- ▶ *Tipping*
- ▶ *Jumping*
- ▶ *Bouncing*
- ▶ *Falling*
- ▶ *Sliding*
- ▶ *Dancing*
- ▶ *Swirling*
- ▶ *Moving at speed*
- ▶ *Barefoot play -texture*
- ▶ *Learn large movement so they can refine them*



# Crossing the midline

One hand spontaneously moves to the other side of the body to work there

In order to write there must be a dominant strong hand (specialised for controlling a pencil) and an assistant hand.

- ▶ Messy play - both hands/one hand smearing mud/yoghurt/custard/paint
- ▶ Scrubbing motion
- ▶ Window scrapers/squeegees
- ▶ Lazy 8 race tracks





# Bi-lateral Activity

*How alternating actions help both sides of the brain and body work together in a co-ordinated way.*

- ▶ *Back and tummy play*
- ▶ *Clambering*
- ▶ *Climbing*
- ▶ *Balance bikes*
- ▶ *Peddalling*
- ▶ *Running*
- ▶ *Using steps*
- ▶ *Stepping stones*
- ▶ *Drumming*
- ▶ **CRAWLING**



# Trunk and Shoulder Strength and Stability

*developing low load control*

- ▶ Hands and feet races
- ▶ Handling and transporting
- ▶ Sweeping
- ▶ Digging
- ▶ Fishing rods
- ▶ Tug of war
- ▶ Ribbons
- ▶ Pom poms
- ▶ Magic wands
- ▶ Darts / target boards





# Wrist Extension and Stability

(wrist bent slightly upwards - better control of finger muscles)

- ▶ Window washing
- ▶ Playing waiter
- ▶ Tiddly winks
- ▶ Mixing
- ▶ Washing up



Vertical surfaces bring wrist and hand into better positions



# Grip Strength Activities

- ▶ Tug of war
- ▶ Wring out sponges/cloths
- ▶ Squeezing
- ▶ Messy play - sculpting  
porridge, newspaper pulp, clay,  
ingredients, soap flakes, dough,  
mashed potato, mud pies,  
bread and PVA glue



# Hand and Finger Strength

- ▶ Squeezy bottle - ping pong race
- ▶ Water pistol/squeezy bottle targets
- ▶ Spray bottles
- ▶ Tearing paper
- ▶ Pulling magnets apart
- ▶ Tennis ball puppet
- ▶ Hidden treasure in dough
- ▶ Scrunching paper - flicking football
- ▶ Cloths pegs on own clothes
- ▶ Grabbers





# Funky Fingers Fine Motor Skills



# Writing Sequence

- ▶ **Gross motor shoulder pivoters**

(pivot from shoulder straight arm, stiff wrist, palm grip)

- ▶ **Elbow pivoters**

(use shoulder to support, movement shifted to elbow, stiff wrist palm grip)

- ▶ **Wrist pivoters**

(smaller movement in elbow, using shoulder to support, movement comes from wrist)

- ▶ **Fine motor triangulators**

(triangulates grip, uses fingers as pivots, wrist, elbow, shoulder act as support)

# Pincer Grip

moving from pads to finger tips

- ▶ Length of Velcro
- ▶ Tweezers
- ▶ Bubble wrap
- ▶ Wind up toys
- ▶ Elastic bands
- ▶ Gadgets



# Before Letter Formation

*Talk always comes first*









- ▶ Recognise pattern
- ▶ Language to talk about shape and movement
  
- ▶ Round and round
- ▶ Springing up
- ▶ Sliding down
- ▶ Curving round
- ▶ Jumping up






# Pre-writing shapes

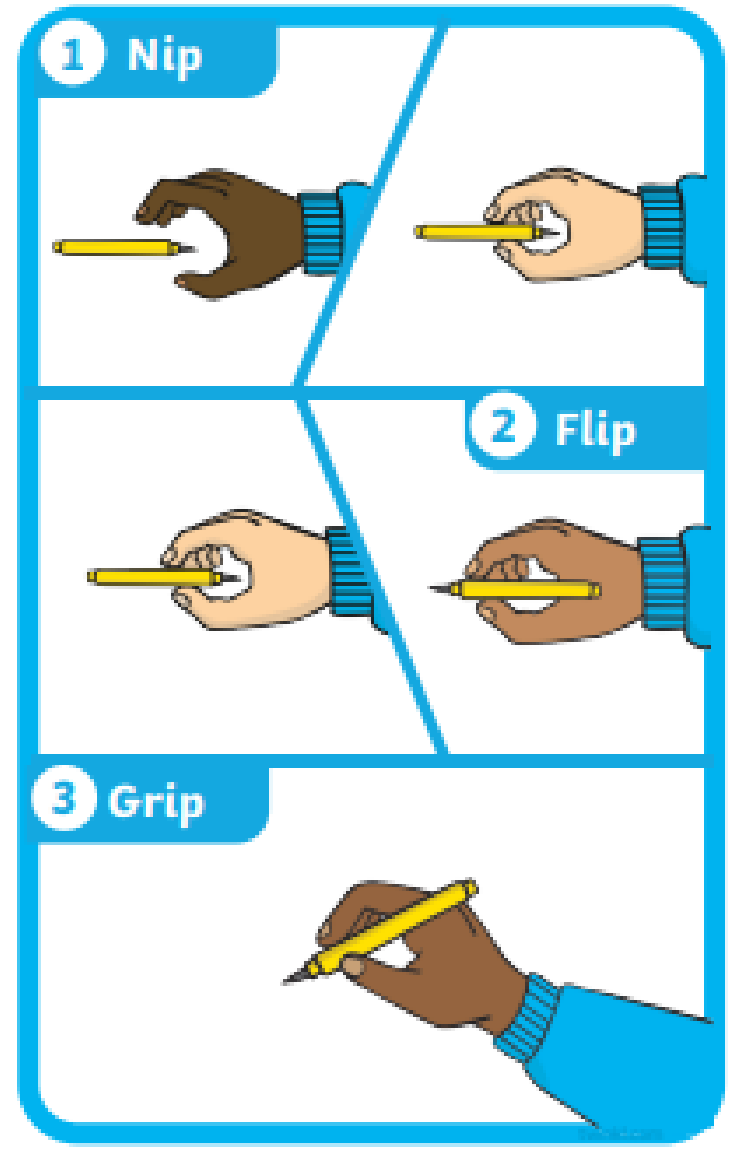
**Pre-Writing Shapes**

		
about 2 years old	about 2.5 years old	about 3 years old
		
about 3.5 years old	about 4 years old	about 4.5 years old
		
about 5 years old	about 5 years old	

Please note, each child's progress at their own rate so, not all children will develop the patterns in the same order all ages shown are approximate.  
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# Pencil Grip



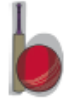
# Phonics and Letter Formation

- ▶ Children learn the correct formation by building a strong mental picture of the letter - they recognise the pattern
- ▶ In phonics, children are introduced to the letter shape (lower and upper-case).
- ▶ In Year R we encourage the children to rhythmically chant the formation rhyme as they practice. In the early stages, the movement is more important than the appearance of the writing.
- ▶ Digraphs and trigraphs are introduced as joined to reinforce them as a unit. i.e. *th*, *ai*, *igh*
- ▶ As the children move into KS1 they follow Twinkl's handwriting scheme to refine the size, orientation and formation of their writing to eventually produce a joined-up, efficient handwriting style

# Twinkl Handwriting



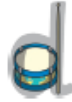
Around the apple, up the stalk and down the leaf.



Down the bat, up and around the ball.



Curl around the caterpillar.



Around the drum, up and down the stick.



Around the egg and under the cup.



Over the fairy's head, down her dress and give her a wand.



Around Gabi's head and wrap her scarf.



Down the chimney to the floor, up and over the new front door.



Down the insect's body and tail, dot the head.



Down the jet, around its trail and dot the sun.



Down Kit, up and around the kite and down its tail.



Down the lolly and lick!



Down the fork, over and over the meatballs.



Down the leaf, up and over the nut.



Around the orange.



Down the puppy's neck and leg, up and around his head.



Around the queen's head, down and up her arm.



Down the robot's body, up and over its arm.



Curl around and around the snake's body.



Down the teaspoon and under the teacup, then across the top.



Down one umbrella handle, up and down the other.



Down the neck, up the neck.



Down the wave, up the wave, down the wave, up the wave.



Criss, cross.



Swing the yoyo up, drop it all the way down and underneath.



Zig, zag, path.

# In summary...

- ▶ The focus in the Autumn Term in Year R is placed on the improvement of gross motor skills
- ▶ Opportunities for fine motor movements are planned in to eventually enable the pencil control necessary for the formation of letters.
- ▶ Each individual letter shape is taught through a rhyme at the point of learning the phonic sound in our phonics sessions and children should be saying these out loud as they write/form their letters.
- ▶ By the end of Year R our aim is that children have a correct, comfortable pencil grip and pencils are held effectively to form recognisable letters that are correctly formed.

# Helping Your Child at Home

- ▶ Remember everything that is necessary before a child can write and encourage these activities at home. See the lists of ideas in this hand-out. We would love to see photos on Tapestry.
- ▶ Support your child by providing him/her with a variety of tools such as felt-tips, chalk and paint as writing requires a lot of practice.
- ▶ Remember children are at very different stages in Year R so don't expect him or her to be writing just because others are.
- ▶ Reluctant writers



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Thank you  
for coming!