

## HIAS HOME LEARNING RESOURCE

# Engaging activities to support handwriting strengths at home

**KS1**

HIAS English team  
Spring 2020  
Final version

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# Background

You might think that improving handwriting just comes from doing more handwriting; however, fluency and neatness also come from having the right strengths in the body. Again, you may think this comes from just hand strength, but it requires more than that. For children to achieve beautiful, fluent handwriting they need strength in their core, shoulder, elbow, wrist and hand. If any one of these is missing, children may struggle to write neatly, or it may hurt their hand.

The nature of lockdown means children will spend more time 'contained' and potentially leading a more sedentary lifestyle than normal. In addition, children are likely to be writing less often than normal. The good news is that activities that support the development of the physical strengths needed for handwriting are fun, wide ranging, family friendly and possible in confined spaces.

## The materials:

- Each booklet contains ideas of age appropriate activities.
- The more frequent the activity is carried out the greater the impact.

## How can parents, carers and siblings help?

- Try a variety of activities over time, but also return to the same ones to develop the strength, notice improvement and ensure the movements are becoming more automatic and smoother.
- Adapt any of the resources and materials as you feel necessary to support your child's needs or the items you have available at home.
- Adapt the games depending on the resources you have available at home – be creative!
- If your child has a competitive nature, include this over time:  
Can they do it faster?  
Can they sustain the activity for longer?  
Can they build it taller / longer?  
Can they knock more / hold more in the same time limit?
- Join in with the session and make it fun!

## Glossary




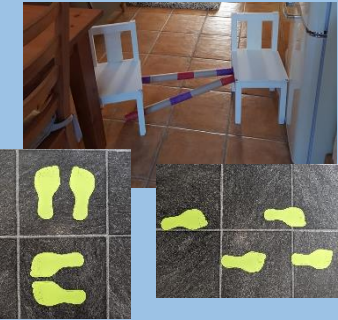




**Gross motor skills:** games to strengthen the core ie pelvis, stomach, back. Supports balance and coordination between left and right side of the body, to ensure equal strength on both sides. Encourage children to cross from one side of their body to the other ie make sure their right arm crosses over the midline to their left etc. Crawling, walking, jumping, leaping, hopping, skipping, running, and balancing all require strength and increasing accuracy without them even knowing!

**Fine motor skills:** hand and finger games to improve hand strength. Developing coordination to enable pencil to be held without the hand tiring / hurting. Eg cutting with scissors, tracing, drawing, squeezing, sticking, folding paper, colouring, threading.

# Fine motor activities

<p><b>Lego / building toys</b> Utilise toys at home. Why not print off a '30 day Lego challenge'!</p> 	<p><b>Craft activities</b> Any idea that requires cutting and sticking is going to develop hand strength and coordination. Choose ideas from books and online. This website is very useful: <a href="https://thehappyhandwriter.co.za/fine-motor-skills-practice/">https://thehappyhandwriter.co.za/fine-motor-skills-practice/</a></p> 	<p><b>Hama beads</b> Any games requiring fine finger movements are excellent. How about picking up beads with tweezers to sort the colours?</p> 
<p><b>Pegging</b> Take pegs / bull dog clips, stationery clips etc on and off an item. The smaller the harder! The more the harder! The faster the harder!</p> 	<p><b>Sewing</b> Find sets from home or create from items around the house. The smaller the threads and needles the harder it is!</p> 	<p><b>Threading</b> Try a variety of items available in the house.  Eating a cereal necklace can be the reward!</p> 
<p><b>Play Dough</b> Use a small amount to roll between each finger into a ball /skinny sausages / make an animal etc.</p> <p><b>Salt Dough Recipe</b> 500g plain flour 250g salt 2 tablespoons of oil 300ml of water</p> 	<p><b>Artwork / craft</b> Use any materials available at home to paint, draw, colour, trace. Use felt tips, crayons, colouring pencils which all require different pressures and skills with the hand. Cutting with age appropriate scissors is vital.</p> 	<p><b>Elastic bands</b> Take bands on and off a tub. Can they twist, stretch, put on and take off? Hairbands could be used instead.</p> 

# Gross motor activities

<p><b>Balancing</b></p> <p>Stand on one leg whilst doing various games eg Throw a ball against a wall; throw and catch to someone else; throw and catch in the air.</p> <p>Switch to do both legs equally!</p> 	<p><b>Play Dough</b></p> <p>Use a large amount that is heavy to encourage shoulder strength. Splat, cut, saw, squeeze, stretch, rip apart.</p> <p><b>Salt Dough Recipe</b></p> <p>500g plain flour 250g salt 2 tablespoons of oil 300ml of water</p>	<p><b>Making bread / cooking</b></p> <p>Bread should be kneaded for at least 10 minutes – this requires lots of shoulder and wrist strength. Any cooking requiring stirring develops strength.</p> 
<p><b>Dance</b></p> <p>Follow / learn a routine from online, or just have a disco at home!</p> <p>Encourage jumping, balancing and crossing the body with control.</p> 	<p><b>Indoor obstacle course</b></p> <p>Use items from around the home that require a range of movements such as jumping, leaping, hopping.</p> 	<p><b>Outdoor obstacle course</b></p> <p>Create a course eg crawl under a chair, jump over something, balance on a wobbly item, throw a ball into a bucket, stepping stones, run around a loop and repeat.</p> 
<p><b>General games</b></p> <p>Any game already owned at home is likely to be helpful eg football tricks, playing in goal, balance boards, tennis, badminton, cricket, catch, skipping, hula hoop.</p> 	<p><b>Walking a tightrope</b></p> <p>Using rope / skipping rope encourage the child to accurately walk a route placing heel of next foot in front of toe of first foot, with their arms out to balance.</p> 	<p><b>Hop, skip and a jump!</b></p> <p>Mark a route on the floor, varying difficulty depending on age and ability. Accurately hop around it, skip and or jump around it. Why not mix it up too!</p> 

Try <https://www.teachhandwriting.co.uk/teach-handwriting-parents.html> or <https://www.teachhandwriting.co.uk/gross-and-fine-motor-skills-games.html> for more free ideas and information.

# HIAS English Team

The HIAS English team offer a wide range of high-quality services to support schools in improving outcomes for learners, including courses, bespoke consultancy and in-house training.

**During the current school closures, we are still offering school support in a variety of ways such as video conferencing, phone calls and bespoke creation of resources remotely. Coming soon will be teacher training via virtual classrooms. We would be happy to discuss your needs.**

For further details referring to English, please contact:

Emma Tarrant : [emma.tarrant@hants.gov.uk](mailto:emma.tarrant@hants.gov.uk)

For further details on the full range of services available please contact us using the following details:

Tel: 01962 874820 or email: [hias.enquiries@hants.gov.uk](mailto:hias.enquiries@hants.gov.uk)