

preschool

FINE

MOTOR

SKILLS

starter kit



Hey There!



I'm Joy...a Pediatric OT, mom, pet lover and certified black thumb gardener.

I'm so excited to share with you all of my OT tips for improving fine motor skills and resources for creative hands-on learning activities. Plus I get to cheer you on as you watch your kiddo grow in independence through fine motor play.





INCLUDED IN THIS KIT

Part 1 : Kindergarten Readiness Checklist

Part 2 : Fine Motor Milestones

Part 3 : Top 10 Preschool Learning Tips

Part 4 : Child Learning Posters

Part 5 : Tips for Using Coloring Pages



Early Learning Standards

As you know, each state has its own Early Learning Standards for preschool, but they're all somewhat similar. This list was developed using the standards from my home state of PA. Every state has its own resource page online if you want to find out the exact standards for your state.

There's also a great resource from the federal government's CDC that is a quick screen tool to fine out if a child is on track in regards to their developmental milestones. You can learn more about it here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones-app.html>

Kindergarten Readiness Checklist

A PRESCHOOLER CAN...

- ASK QUESTIONS TO UNDERSTAND SOMETHING
- FOCUS IN ORDER TO LEARN A NEW SKILL
- ENGAGE IN SIMPLE GAMES WITH RULES
- TRY TO SOLVE A TASK IN MORE THAN ONE WAY
- IDENTIFY PATTERNS
- PARTICIPATE IN A VARIETY OF CREATIVE ACTIVITIES
- ENGAGE IN MEMORY GAMES
- RECOGNIZE AND NAME SOME UPPER AND LOWER CASE LETTERS
- ANSWER WHO, WHAT, WHY AND HOW QUESTIONS FROM A STORY
- RETELL A STORY IN SEQUENTIAL ORDER
- WRITE SYMBOLS, LETTERS OR LETTER-LIKE SHAPES
- ATTEMPT TO REPRODUCE OWN NAME WITH MOST LETTERS CORRECT
- FOLLOW 2-STEP DIRECTIONS
- SPEAK IN COMPLETE SENTENCES WITH AT LEAST 3 WORDS
- NAME NUMERALS UP TO 10 WHILE POINTING TO OBJECTS
- IDENTIFY GROUPS THAT ARE GREATER AND LESS THAN
- USE FORMS OF NUMERICAL REPRESENTATION
- UNDERSTAND THE CONCEPT OF BASIC SHAPES
- ENGAGE IN ACTIVITIES THAT INVOLVE MEASURING AND UNDERSTANDING DATA
- CATEGORIZE LIVING THINGS BY ANIMAL OR PLANT

Kindergarten Readiness Checklist

A PRESCHOOLER CAN...

- TELL THE PARTS OF A PERSON, PLANT OR ANIMAL
- DRAW A RECOGNIZABLE PERSON
- MATCH TYPES OF CLOTHING WITH SEASONS AND WEATHER CONDITIONS
- REQUEST TO HELP THE TEACHER
- CAN EXPLAIN A CONSEQUENCE FOR BREAKING A RULE
- SING FAMILIAR SONGS, CHANTS AND FINGER PLAYS
- USE PROPS AND COSTUMES DURING DRAMATIC PLAY
- DRAW A SOMEWHAT RECOGNIZABLE SELF-PORTRAIT
- PARTICIPATE IN BASIC HYGIENE ROUTINES
- PRACTICE IN EMERGENCY PROCEDURES
- COMPLETE SELF-HELP TASKS SUCH AS ZIP, SNAP AND BUTTON
- MANIPULATE SMALL OBJECTS
- USE SCISSORS TO CUT ON A LINE
- HOLD WRITING UTENSILS USING A FUNCTIONAL GRASP (PINCER GRASP)
- USE EATING UTENSILS PROPERLY
- USE AN OPEN CUP FOR DRINKING
- RECOGNIZE AND LABEL BASIC FEELINGS
- SHARE AND TAKE TURNS
- RECOGNIZE UNSAFE SITUATIONS AND TELL AN ADULT
- PLAY COOPERATIVELY WITH A FEW PEERS FOR A SUSTAINED PERIOD OF TIME

1-2 years

- Scribbles
- Places rings on a post and stacks 3 blocks
- Paints with whole arm movements
- Drinks from a cup and feeds self with help

2-3 years

- Begins to demonstrate hand dominance
- Paints with a wrist motion (rather than arm)
- Eats without assistance
- Rolls, pounds, squeezes and pulls play dough

2-3 years

- Strings large beads
- Turns pages of a book one at a time
- Snips with scissors
- Holds crayons with fingers and thumb (not fist)
- Imitates circular, horizontal and vertical strokes
- Washes hands independently

3-4 years

- Builds a tower of 9 blocks
- Copies circle and cross shapes
- Uses hands together efficiently
- Snips paper with scissors

4-5 years

- Writes name
- Cuts on a line continuously
- Writes numbers 1-5

4-5 years

- Copies x and square shapes
- Dresses and undresses independently
- Copies letters
- Manipulates clothing fasteners

Fine Motor Milestones

Typical fine motor development by age

PRESCHOOL LEARNING TIPS

1

Set Realistic Expectations - We often try to introduce learning concepts before a child is developmentally ready to master the task. This only leads to failure and frustration.

2

Move at a Reasonable Pace - Remember that each child learns at his/her own pace. Meet each child where they are and move forward from there.

3

Always Encourage - Use positive language and encouraging words when teaching. The goal is to build up, not break down. There's always something to praise.

4

Add Movement - Preschoolers are not wired to sit for long periods of time. Take lots of breaks and reduce seated time in lieu of movement activities.

PRESCHOOL LEARNING TIPS

5

Focus on PLAY - It's a proven fact that kids learn best when engaged in play. When a child plays they learn motor, academic, social and emotional skills all at the same time.

6

Build a Strong Foundation - You wouldn't build a house on sand, and you can't build advanced skills in any child without first developing a sturdy foundation.

7

Be Consistent - It's going to take more than once or twice for a child to do an activity before it's mastered. So, give them lots of exposure and stick with it.

8

Don't Be Afraid to Be Silly- Above all else, kids just want to have fun. So, have fun with them! Learning doesn't have to be such a serious business.

PRESCHOOL LEARNING TIPS

9

Put First Things First - Before a child can be ready to learn, they have to have basic needs met first. Make sure they have had a healthy breakfast, get good sleep and that you have addressed any sensory regulation needs.

10

Get Those Little Hands Involved - Avoid plain old worksheets and traditional seated classroom work. Instead focus on hands-on learning activities that engage all of the senses. Plus, it'll build essential fine motor skills while they learn.



**IT IS
A HAPPY
TALENT
TO KNOW
HOW TO
PLAY.**

~RALPH WALDO EMERSON



CHILD
REN

LEARN

• AS THEY •

PLAY

MOST
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IN PLAY,
CHILDREN LEARN
HOW TO LEARN.

-O. FRED
DONALDSON



COLORING PAGE TIPS FROM AN OT

1

Break those crayons - By breaking the crayons you'll be promoting a more mature grasp pattern. Since there is less crayon to hold onto, a child is more likely to grab it with fingertips rather than a fist grasp.

2

Skip fat crayons - This is for the same reason that we break the crayons. With smaller crayons, a child is more likely to hold it using fingertips rather than a full fist, moving toward a mature tripod grasp pattern.

3

Tape the coloring page to the wall - When placing the coloring page on a vertical surface, a kiddo will naturally be practicing shoulder and arm strengthening just from changing up the positioning.

4

Glue around the edges and let it dry- or use wikki stix on the edges. This tactile border helps children begin to develop visual perceptual skills (coloring inside the lines) with a little assistance from the sense of touch.

COLORING PAGE TIPS FROM AN OT

5

Add sensory elements- Include elements like salt, sand, cotton, beads, or whatever you have on hands and glue it onto your picture. Or simply put a piece of rough sandpaper or plastic grid under the picture as you color.

6

Change up body position- To improve core strength while coloring, simply change up body position. Lay on your stomach with the coloring page placed in front of you on the floor. This is also great for shoulder strength.

7

Turn it into a mosaic- Instead of coloring the page, tear pieces of colored paper into small pieces. Then glue them into place on the picture to form a mosaic. This is great for practicing a mature pinch, as well as bilateral coordination.

8

Introduce academic concepts- The best way to introduce academic concepts is through experience and play. So, while coloring, counting out items in the picture, sound out words, talk about the colors, etc.