

# Developing fine motor skills



**Herts SpLD Outreach Service; promoting the expertise of schools to meet the needs of learners with specific learning difficulties through advisory work, training and exemplar teaching.**

- ✓ Tiddly Winks - using both hands to flick the counter.
- ✓ Sewing - threading
- ✓ Using pegs or playdough - rolling it and making pots or nests and rolling small pieces to make eggs or peas for the pot.

## Dexterity exercises

- ✓ Twiddle thumbs with hands laced together, wrists resting on desk.
- ✓ Inch fingers up and down a pencil using a tripod grip.
- ✓ Rotate a pencil with fingers, do not rest against desktop or body.
- ✓ Squeeze a firm (but not hard) rubber ball. Hold for an increasing number of seconds.
- ✓ Press hands together as hard as possible - elbows out.
- ✓ Thumb pull/ tug of war. Make an 'O' by touching thumb tip to tip of index finger. Do the same with the other hand, then link both 'O' together like a chain. Try to

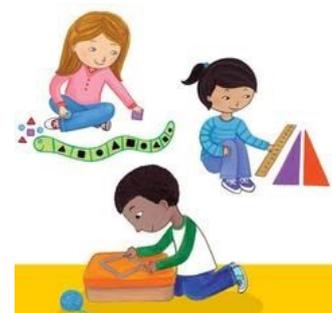


have a tug of war to pull them apart. Try using the thumbs with other fingers to do the same thing. This can also be done with a partner.

- ✓ Put fingers and thumbs together in a steeple. Press. Spread/ close fingers.
- ✓ Adopt good sitting position, feet flat on floor, back against backrest of chair
- ✓ Hold edge of chair with 2 hands
- ✓ Push self up - lean right and lean left. Shrug 2 shoulders, alternate shoulders
- ✓ Shake 2 hands up in air.
- ✓ Wiggle fingers and thumbs
- ✓ Tearing paper into strips and then squares
- ✓ Touch each finger on right hand with right thumb, as fast as possible. Repeat with left thumb and left fingers
- ✓ Put a row of counters, coins on desk. Turn them over as fast as possible using thumb and index finger only.
- ✓ Hold several small objects in the palm of one hand, manipulate them, isolating each one in turn, between thumb and forefinger before putting it on the table.
- ✓ Crumpling tissue paper into tiny balls using one hand and throwing them into a bin, exercises the fingers against the thumb. Keep a score of 'hits'.
- ✓ Rolling a tennis ball up one leg across the tummy and down the other leg using a walking motion with the fingers is a great hand exercise. Have races to see who can do it without dropping the ball.
- ✓ Rubber band rings - put small rubber bands (for hair) on the fingers like rings. Then they have to use their thumb to get the rings off without help from the other hand.
- ✓ Make mazes in a sand tray using pebbles to create barriers. The child then follows the maze.
- ✓ Make a duck beak with your fingers and quack at your friends and teacher.

## Activities to try at home

- ✓ Using a ruler
- ✓ Baking, kneading, rolling
- ✓ Modelling clay
- ✓ Sticklebricks
- ✓ Marble run
- ✓ Lego
- ✓ Constructo-straws
- ✓ Glove puppets
- ✓ Peg board patterns
- ✓ Playing cards, dealing, flipping over and sorting
- ✓ Screwing and unscrewing jars
- ✓ Fastening buttons and zips



- ✓ Pelmanism - spread the cards out as this is good for scanning
- ✓ Jigsaws
- ✓ Sewing, threading
- ✓ Winding toys, yoyos
- ✓ Tracing

