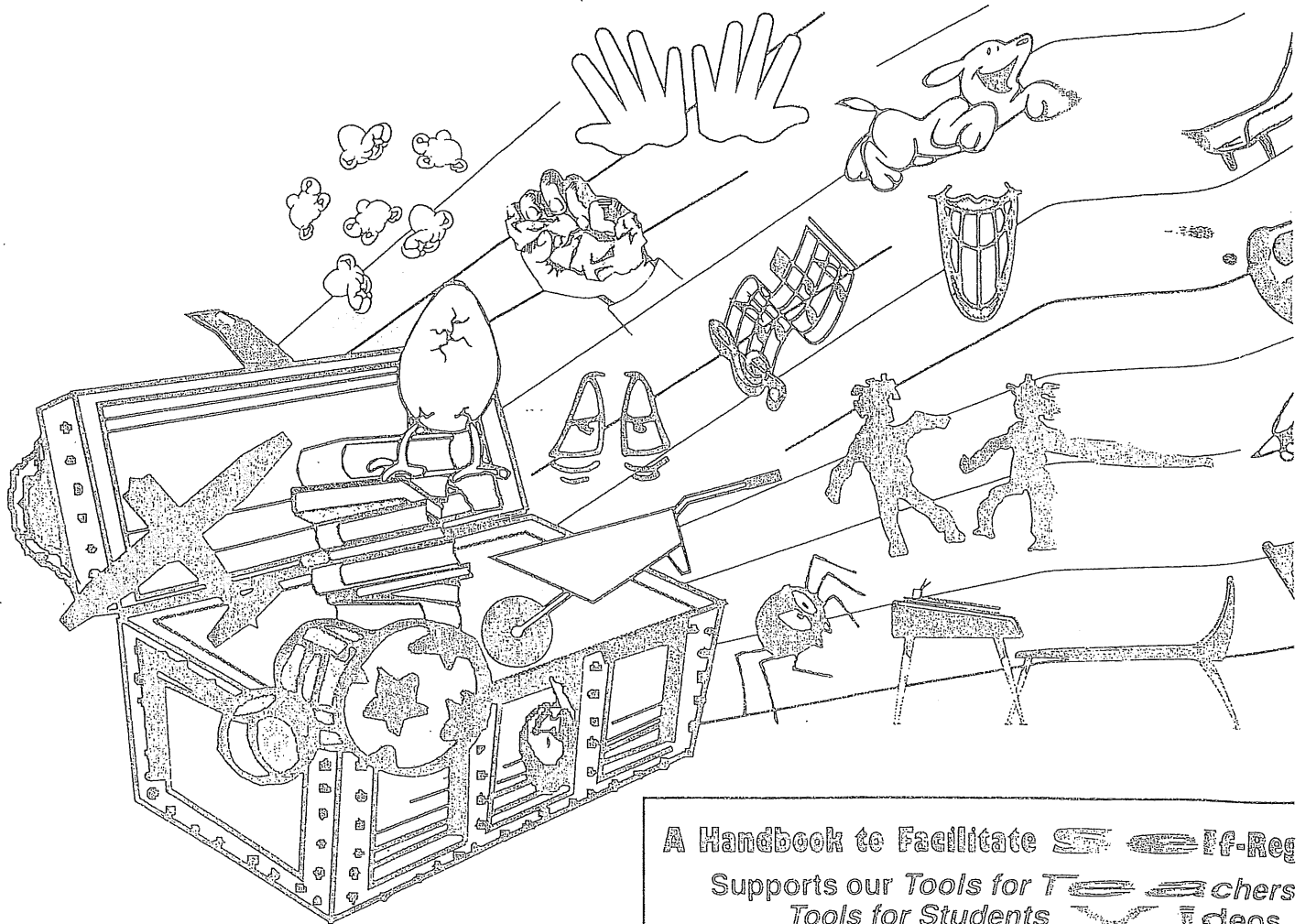


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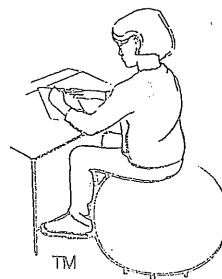
TM

For Teachers, Parents & Students



A Handbook to Facilitate **Self-Reg**
Supports our Tools for **Teachers**
Tools for Students **Videos**

HENRY
Occupational Therapy Services, Inc.



TM

Acknowledgement

I am grateful to the many people who contributed to this handbook through their labor. Special thanks to Cherie Stafford who transformed medical terminology into user friendly words, Marie Arters who with creativity developed the graphic design, Rick Ruess who patiently provided much needed illustrations, Lisa Koschka who edited the manuscript with care, Patricia Hageman who supportingly reviewed the content, Carla Norris who lovingly transported the manuscript between all of us, and Barry Van Patten who kept me going with many affirmations including "Enthusiasm is the mental sunshine that keeps everything in us alive and growing¹".

I have been guided and influenced by many great thinkers and I have often returned to my clinic and school districts with new concepts and new activities to share with children, teachers and parents. This project is a result of all the great ideas and suggestions provided by fellow colleagues. Although I have attempted to list many of the individuals and publications in the bibliography, there are too many to name. You are nonetheless honored and recognized.

Special thanks are due to Eunice Kennedy Shriver who started me on my journey with the Special Olympics in France, Lorna Jean King my mentor, Paula Flanders Amphlett and Charlotte Basic Royeen my forever college friends, Lucy Jane Miller and Susanne Smith Roley who inspired me to move forward, and Lisa Ottman who encouraged me to "go for it" myself.

And then there are the children, teachers and parents who have taught me that sometimes the right way is often found outside the box.

The second printing contains some additions and edits provided by my colleagues Sheila Frick and Tamara J. Wheeler.

Dedication

This handbook is dedicated to my French Daumen family and to my American Henry family. They have taught me how to honor and enjoy each others' differences.

What is *Tool Chest: For Teachers, Parents & Students*?

Tool Chest: For Teachers, Parents & Students is filled with activities that are designed to be used at school and at home with students from ages 4 to 13. The activities can be adapted to meet your children's individual needs. Our handbook is user friendly and helps to solve problems by using "over-the-counter" occupational therapy activities. As even the most difficult child responds to these techniques, teaching becomes easier and more enjoyable. Children are happier, more confident, and more accepting of others' differences. *Tool Chest* also supports our *TOOLS FOR TEACHERS* and *TOOLS FOR STUDENTS* videos.

Why You Need *Tool Chest: For Teachers, Parents & Students*:

Some children are easily overstimulated or distracted by sounds, others by touch or visual stimulation. Some need motion – of their hands, legs, or mouth for example – to focus their attention. All need an appropriate environment, including proper seating. *Tool Chest: For Teachers, Parents & Students* provides 26 fun, practical activities to assist children in developing their optimal range for paying attention, performing fine motor skills, improving self-esteem, and more. Our self-guided handbook is easy for teachers and parents to use in the classroom and at home.

When to use *Tool Chest: For Teachers, Parents & Students*:

Now! Teachers, parents and students can use *Tool Chest* to support the Individuals with Disability Act of 1997 (P.L.105.17)

Tool Chest can be used to assist in identifying the possible function of behavior, especially when behavior communicates the need for self-regulation.

Tool Chest can be used in the Behavioral Support, Strategies and Positive Intervention Checklist to address accommodations, environmental changes, proactive strategies and positive behavioral interventions.

Various teams can collaborate to use *Tool Chest* including the IEP team, the 504 Accommodation Team and the Teacher Assistance / Child Study Team. The goal is to assist in building supportive environments and teaching alternative skills. A Personalized Tool Chest (Activity #27) can be placed in the student's cumulative file to be shared with teachers, from one year to the next.

Who is Henry of Henry OT Services Inc.?

Diana Henry, founder and president of Henry Occupational Therapy Services, Inc., opened her clinic specializing in sensory integration in 1984. She has since been developing occupational therapy (OT) programs for various school districts in Arizona, emphasizing a collaborative model. Ms. Henry earned the 1997 Outstanding Occupational Therapist award from the Arizona Occupational Therapy Association.

Ms. Henry is both SCSIT and SIPT certified. She received her B.S. in occupational therapy from Tufts University in Boston, and her M.S. in sensory integration from Rush University in Chicago. She has taught at Arizona State University, in Germany and in the Netherlands, emphasizing the early identification of students at risk for coordination disorders and sensory integration problems.



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Frequently Asked Questions:

How can Tool Chest be used in a classroom with 25 children?

Watch the *Tools For Students* video while using this *Tool Chest*. Each activity in the video is numbered and correlates with the activity and page number found in *Tool Chest*.

Ask your occupational therapist to help you create different spaces and make the tools available. Through collaborative efforts, you and your children can develop personalized Tool Chests (Activity #27). Provide individual *sensory diets* (coined by Patricia Wilbarger, M.Ed., OTR) throughout the school day.

At the beginning of each activity, share with your children, the contents in the BENEFITS box. These statements are written for them.

How do you know which tools to use, and for how long?

You learn to become detectives, especially as you learn more about brain circuitry, sensation, and your children's optimal range of arousal for performance, learning and attention.

When to use?

What time of the day?

What to expect?

How long will it take?

As *Tool Chest* presents "non prescriptive" activities for teachers and parents to use, there are no rules except **SAFETY! SAFETY! And SAFETY...!**

The child is your guide. Optimally, these activities can be used throughout the day to assist the children in maintaining the various appropriate **levels of attention needed throughout the day.**

Collaboration is the key. Together, the child, teacher and parents will develop a personalized *Tool Chest*. Activities can be used individually and/or in a group to meet each child's sensory needs. This will help the child be successful in all environments throughout the day, both at school and at home.

Always be alert to the child's response. **Never** push the child into an activity he/she does not want to do. **OBSERVE! OBSERVE! OBSERVE!** If there are any indications that the activity does not fit the child's need **at that time**, discontinue immediately. Ask for professional expertise before continuing.

Occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech therapists, music therapists and other health professionals, who have received training in the area of sensory processing, sensory modulation and sensory integration, should be consulted and included in the collaborative team.



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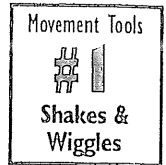
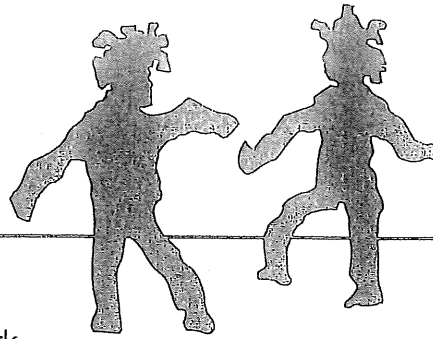
TEAM COLLABORATION (Student, Teacher, Parent, Therapist and other team members)

Together, develop a child's sensory-motor Tool Chest.

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Shakes and Wiggles



BENEFITS

This will help you tune in, be ready to work and get those wiggles out.

TO BEGIN

- Arrange children with at least an arm's length between them.
- While standing, give verbal instructions to children.
- Then have children begin movement following your example.
- Continue with each body part (see movement instructions below).

Remember the object of this movement is to remove the shakes and wiggles. This activity can be used prior to beginning a sit-down task and/or as a movement break to regain attention.

SHAKES AND WIGGLES INSTRUCTIONS

1. While standing, reach your arms up high and catch an invisible ball.
2. Put the wiggles on one arm and then on the other arm. Your arms will begin shaking. Only your arms, everything else is still and quiet.
3. Now take the wiggles off your arms and put them first on one leg, then on the other leg (shift weight). Only your legs shake. Keep everything else still and quiet.
4. Now take the wiggles off your legs and put them on your face. Your face muscles will shake. Only your face. Everything else is still and quiet.
5. Take the wiggles off your face and throw the invisible ball back up into the air.
6. Slowly lower your arms to your sides and sit back in your chair quietly.

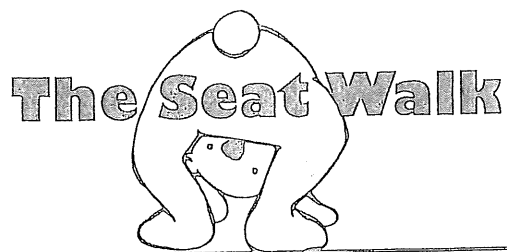
The shakes and wiggles are gone from your entire body. We are now ready to learn!

Additional Project

Have children draw a picture of themselves getting rid of the shakes and wiggles.

Supplies needed:

Children will need paper, crayons or markers for creating their drawings.



BENEFITS

The Seat Walk gets all the parts of your body working together. It develops coordinated reciprocal movements.

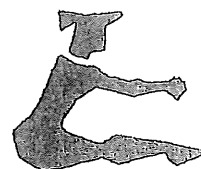
TO BEGIN

- You will need enough room to move freely back and forth across the floor.
- Have the children begin The Seat Walk following your example.
- You could pretend you are doing this walk for a special reason (like there is something up high, so you have to stay low).

THE SEAT WALK INSTRUCTIONS

1. Sit on the floor with your legs straight in front of you.
2. From the shoulder your arms are straight out in front.
3. Lift up one side of your bottom by tilting to the side a little and pushing forward a little.
4. Then shift and do the same thing on the other side.
5. You will move forward a little at a time this way.
6. As you get better you'll be able to go a little faster.

NOTE: At first, going backwards may be easier!



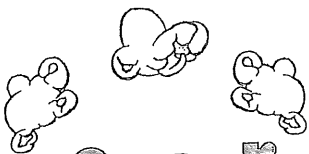
Additional Project

Have children draw a picture of their seat walk or their favorite "fun" way of walking.

Supplies needed:

Children will need paper, crayons or markers for creating their drawings.





The Popcorn Maker

BENEFITS

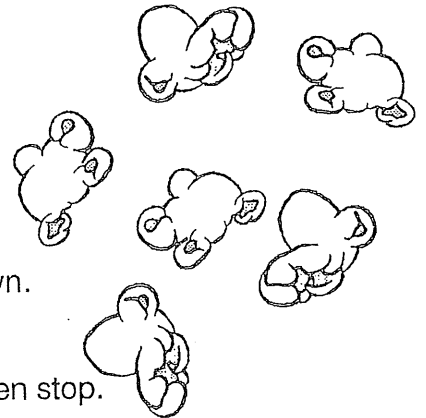
This is a quick way to get going and then calm down.

TO BEGIN

- Give verbal instructions to children.
- Then have the children begin the movements following your example.

POPCORN MAKER INSTRUCTIONS

1. Sit in a chair with your feet flat on the floor.
2. Put your hands on the chair at your sides.
3. Now begin to slowly bounce up and down like a piece of popcorn beginning to warm up.
4. Use your hands and feet to help push you up and down.
5. Go faster and faster as the popcorn begins to pop.
6. When it is almost all popped, start to slow down and then stop.
7. "The popcorn is now ready."

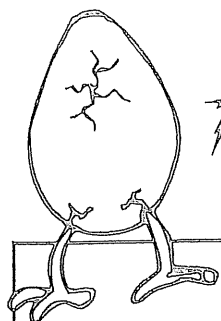


Additional Project

You can put popcorn in a popcorn maker to be popped. Start it when you begin the activity with the children. When it is finished popping, the children can do Hand Games (Activity #14) with it and then eat it.

Supplies needed:

Popcorn maker and popcorn.



THE FRAGILE EGG

Movement Tools

#3

The Fragile Egg

BENEFITS

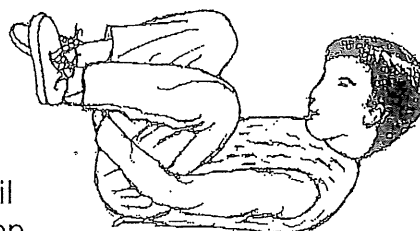
This is a fun way to work on the muscles that help you curl up. The rocking movement calms you down.

TO BEGIN

- You will need enough room to allow children to rock back and forth.
- To start the game, check that each of the children have enough space behind them to be safe.
- If the floor is hard, a small pillow or towel should be placed behind the child's lower back.

EGG GAME INSTRUCTIONS

1. Begin in a sitting position with knees bent and feet flat on floor.
2. Place arms and hands under the knees.
3. Keep the chin tucked into the chest and slowly rock back onto the back.
4. Keep the chin tucked in as the feet come off the floor in a rocking motion.
5. Continue rocking by bringing the body up, still "curled up" until the feet are flat on the floor. Keep going back and forth.

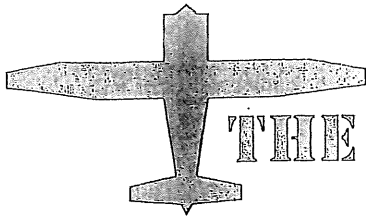


Additional Project

Trace the egg shape on paper. Have the children add the face, arms and legs to the egg shape. You could also have them use colors to show how doing this game made them feel.

Supplies needed:

Paper for egg
shape, crayons
and markers



THE AIRPLANE

BENEFITS

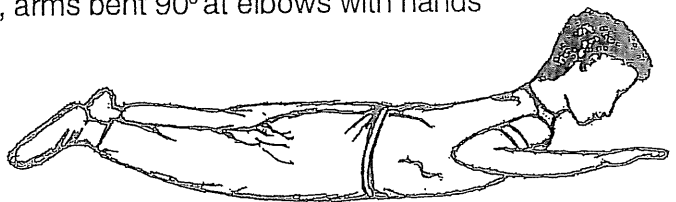
You get to fly like a quiet airplane today! The Airplane helps tone your neck and back muscles for sitting at your desk.

TO BEGIN

- The children will need enough room to stretch freely while lying on the floor.
- Give verbal instructions to children while they are standing.
- Then have the children begin movement following your example.

THE AIRPLANE INSTRUCTIONS

1. Lie on your stomach on the floor. Legs straight and together.
2. Arms are stretched out at shoulders, arms bent 90° at elbows with hands and fingers open pointing forward.
3. Bring your head, arms and chest up at the same time with your legs by lifting them at the hips and knees. The thighs are off the floor.
4. Keep the legs straight. Do not bend them at the knees.
5. Do not arch the neck, simply look straight ahead.
6. Breathe.
7. When tired of holding this position, "land" softly, rest and try again.

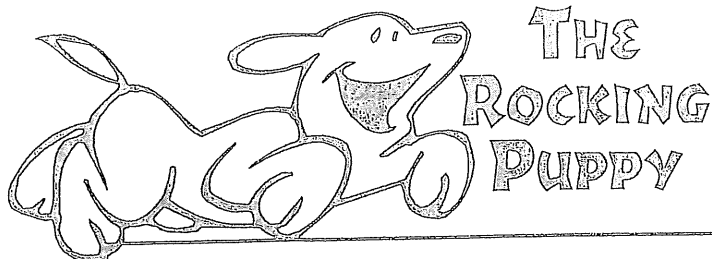


Additional Project

Have children draw a picture of how their house or school would look if they were an airplane flying overhead.

Supplies needed:

Children will need paper, crayons or markers for creating their drawings.



BENEFITS

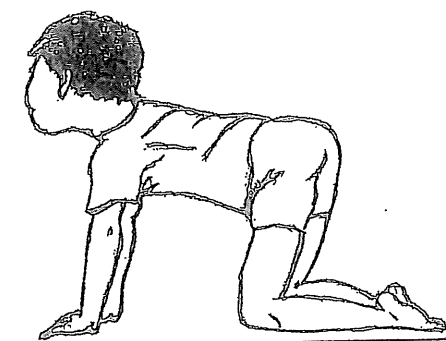
The Rocking Puppy is important for all muscles including the head, neck, shoulders, hands, fingers and hips. It can help "quiet" your body because it is rhythmical and repetitive.

TO BEGIN

- Provide enough room for the children to rock back and forth on their hands and knees.
- Explain how everyone will become a puppy - a quiet puppy. Give instructions for the Rocking Puppy.

ROCKING PUPPY INSTRUCTIONS

1. Get down on your hands and knees.
2. Arms and hands are under your shoulders.
3. Knees are under your hips, toes flat against the floor (e.g. shoelaces on floor).
4. Hands are flat, palms on the floor, fingers are forward.
5. Elbows are slightly bent. Do not let the arms "lock" at the elbows.
6. Now rock slowly, forward and back.



Additional Project

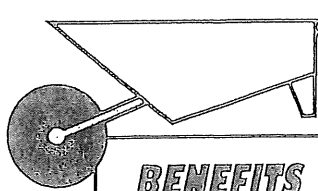
Draw a picture of a puppy dog or of your favorite animal.

Supplies needed:

Children will need paper, crayons or markers for creating their drawings.

Wheelbarrow

Walk



Muscle Tools

#6

Wheelbarrow
Walk

BENEFITS

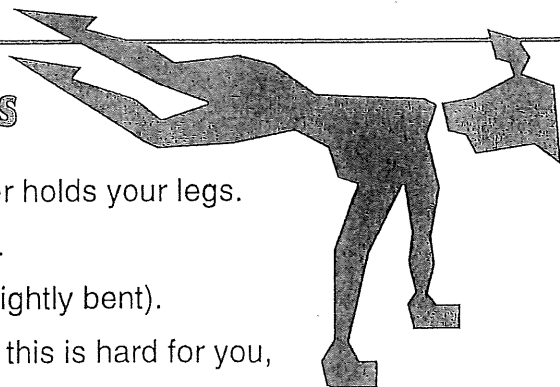
The Wheelbarrow Walk will help give you the shoulder stability needed for writing and cutting.

TO BEGIN

- Provide enough room for children to move across the room in a wheelbarrow position.
- Children will need a strong partner.
- With everyone standing, explain what is required in the Wheelbarrow Walk.
- Then have children begin movement following your example.
- Start with just a few steps, practicing to go further each time.

WHEELBARROW WALK INSTRUCTIONS

1. You are the wheelbarrow and a strong helper holds your legs.
2. Begin on the floor on your hands and knees.
3. Keep your arms straight (with elbows only slightly bent).
4. The helper holds your ankles up in the air. If this is hard for you, your helper can hold you at the knees.
5. "Walk" on your hands without collapsing onto your forearms.
6. Start with a few steps and continue practicing to travel longer distances.



Additional Project

Each child can record his progress by counting the additional number of steps performed each time.

Draw a picture using a wheelbarrow as the main subject or draw a "wheelbarrow person."

Supplies needed:

Children will need paper, crayons or markers for creating their drawings.

BELLY ON THE BALL

Muscle Tools

#7

Belly on
the Ball

BENEFITS

Belly on the Ball combines the benefits of the Airplane (Activity #5) and the Wheelbarrow Walk (Activity #6) into one. It also helps strengthen the muscles of your neck, back and shoulders.

TO BEGIN

- Be sure the children have a large enough area to be able to rock back and forth on a ball.
- The ball size should be about:

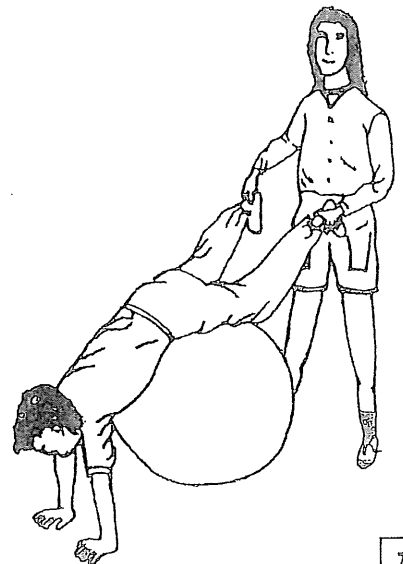
Preschool	13"-19"
K-1st	17"-22"
2nd grade and up	21"-26"

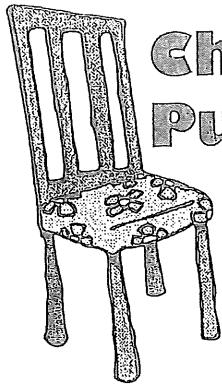
BELLY ON THE BALL INSTRUCTIONS

1. Lie with your chest and stomach over the ball. Another person should help you get on the ball.
2. Your arms should be out in front, ready to catch you.
3. Your helper will stand or kneel behind you, and hold your ankles, knees, or hips.
4. Your helper will help you rock forward so you "catch" yourself on your open palms.
5. Push off the floor with your palms.
6. Keep going back and forth, without collapsing onto your forearms.

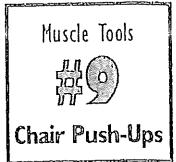
Supplies Needed:

If a ball chair with feet is used, simply lie on the ball so the feet are out to the side.





Chair Push-Ups



BENEFITS

You've done push-ups in physical education class, but these Chair Push-Ups are different. They prepare your arms for writing by working the shoulders and hands.

TO BEGIN

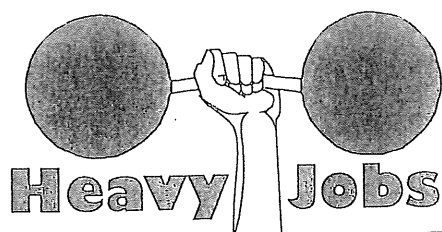
- This exercise requires each child to have his own chair. Be sure the chair is the right size so the feet can be flat on the floor.
- Allow enough room between children and chairs to participate in this movement effectively.
- Then have the children begin movement following your example.
- Help those who are having difficulty by supporting them under the legs at the thighs as they push with their palms against the chair seat.

CHAIR PUSH-UPS INSTRUCTIONS

1. Sit in a chair with your feet flat on the floor.
2. Put your hands to your sides with palms flat and fingers curled around the edge of the chair.
3. Push up so that your bottom comes off the chair seat and feet come up off the floor.
4. Use your arms and hands to help push you up and lower you down.
5. Whatever your age, do that many Chair Push-Ups.

Supplies needed:

You will need a chair that properly fits each child. Feet need to be flat on the floor and the chair seat needs to be wide enough for the child to put his hands on the sides for pushing up.



BENEFITS

When you do big Heavy Jobs like carrying large books, you get to use many of your muscles. This helps your brain work better so you can focus on your projects. This is also a good "movement break."

TO BEGIN

- Have a discussion regarding Heavy Jobs, and prepare a list of possible Heavy Jobs.
- After a Heavy Job is chosen, prepare to help complete the task at hand.
- This exercise can be done at any time during the school day to help focus for other big projects.
- Your Heavy Jobs list could become part of your everyday routine. Allowing a temporary break from academics has many additional benefits.

As a group or individually, have children decide on some Heavy Jobs.
Is there a big Heavy Job you wish the teacher would let you do? What is it?

SAMPLE Heavy Job List

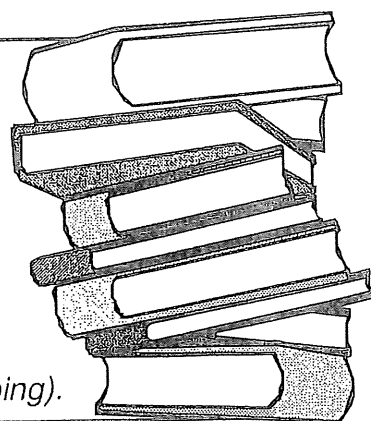
Carry something like a stack of books or a large box to another room.

Clean the chalk or white board, using large sweeping movements with both hands with one big long eraser.

Move tables or furniture for special projects or activities, using both hands.

Stack chairs, without making a sound.

Help the custodian with cleaning projects (e.g. sweeping).



Additional Project

Have children draw a picture of a Heavy Job that could be done in the classroom, around their school, or at home.

Supplies needed:

Children will need paper, crayons or markers for creating their drawings.

Traditional



BENEFITS

Let's learn and practice the best way to sit in our chairs when we write.

TO BEGIN

- Each child needs his own chair at a desk or table. He also needs a sheet of paper for writing and a pencil, marker or pen.

Now as a group let's practice sitting in our chairs and at our desks/tables:

1. Be sure the chair is the right size for you.

Sit in a chair. Your feet should be flat on the floor.

Your back is up against the back of the chair.

Your knees are bent.

Make sure the hips, knees, and ankles are at a 90 degree angle.

Now that you know your chair is the right size, practice this position in your chair.

2. Next, let's check that your desk or table is the right size.

While sitting in your chair, bend your arms at the elbows.

Your desk or table should be about 1 inch higher than where your elbows bend.

Now that you know your desk or table is the right size, practice this position in your chair at your desk or table.

3. Now let's practice positioning your writing paper on the desk or table (optional).

If you are left-handed, you may want to tilt your paper so that the upper left corner is higher. If right-handed, you may want to tilt your paper so that the upper right corner is higher. Use your free hand to hold the paper steady.

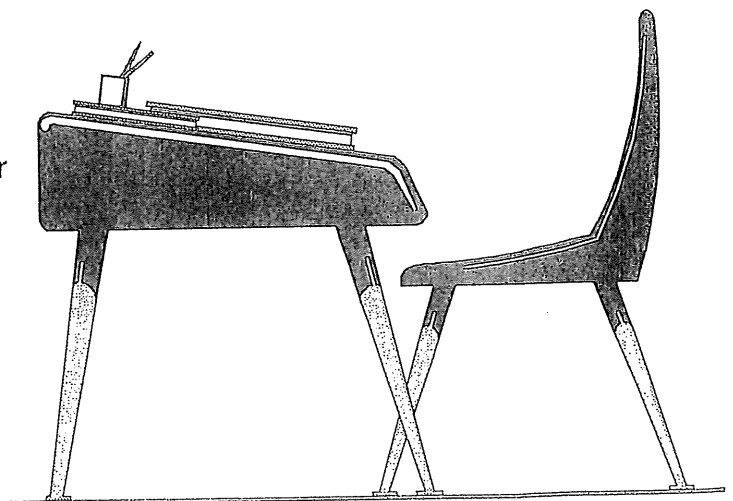
Now you are ready to write.

Additional Project

Draw a picture of yourself sitting at your desk or table.

Supplies needed:

Children will need paper, crayons or markers for creating their drawings.



ALTERNATIVES

BENEFITS

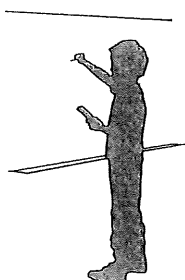
When studying it's important to be comfortable. Believe it or not, this way your thinking energy can be used on your work, rather than on keeping your body straight up in a chair.

TO BEGIN

- Explore with your children which different learning positions work for them.
- Be creative, open-minded; put aside pre-conceived ideas.
- Whatever position is chosen, make sure the neck is fairly straight and the chin is slightly down. The position of the head is important so the eyes can work best.

Alternative Learning and Writing Positions

Standing at the chalkboard
(This also strengthens the wrist for writing.)

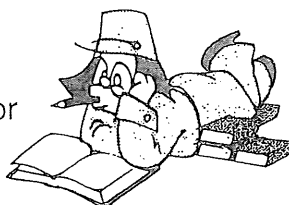


Standing at bookshelf



Sitting on a ball chair

Lying on stomach on the floor



Curled up in a beanbag chair

Kneeling at a low table

Additional Project

Have children draw a picture of their favorite position for learning.

Supplies needed:

Children will need paper, crayons or markers for creating their drawings.



The Ball Chair

BENEFITS

It can help take the wiggles out and help you sit up straight. It can also strengthen your back. This is called 'dynamic sitting'.

TO BEGIN

- It is best to have balls with feet. They are easier to carry and they stay in place when the student stands up. Sizes vary depending on the height of the children. Shorter children will need smaller balls. Generally for preschool use 14"-18", K-1st 18"-22", and 2nd grade and up 22"-26".
- Show children the ball chair and demonstrate how to sit on it properly.
- Give each child a blank sheet with lines and a pencil or marker.
- Have children list on their papers some safety rules for using the ball chair in their classroom.
- Once you are satisfied that everyone is clear on the ball chair rules, it's time to try it out.

SAMPLE Ball Chair Safety Rules


OK

*Bounce a little
Sit for 2 to 3 minutes
Pass it quietly to your neighbor
Put it up and out of the way
when not in use*

NOT OK

*Bounce a lot
Kick the ball
Poke the ball
Throw the ball
Disturb others*

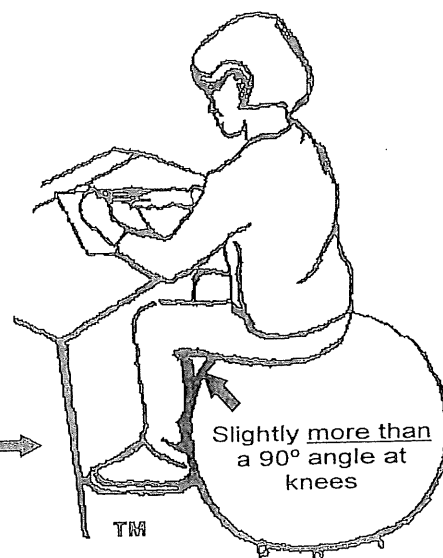
THE BALL CHAIR INSTRUCTIONS

- Look at the ball chair illustration. 
Notice that it is important to keep a 90° angle at the ankles and slightly above a 90° angle at the knees to create a slight anterior pelvic tilt.
- The feet are flat on the floor or supported.
- The desk/tabletop is no higher or lower than about 1" above the bent elbows.
- Stand up slowly keeping your hand on the ball so the feet stay on the floor.

Supplies needed:

Balls with feet, and pumps to inflate and deflate as needed.

90° angle 
at ankles



Slightly more than
a 90° angle at
knees



Hand Games

Writing/Cutting Tools

#14

Hand Games

BENEFITS

Hand games develop your hand muscles for using scissors, markers, and other writing tools. You are developing in-hand manipulation skills.

TO BEGIN

1. Gather the supplies needed (see below), and prepare your game area.
2. Have children stand, kneel, sit comfortably in their chairs or on their ball chairs.
3. Try these fun, one-handed games. They will make holding, cutting and writing easier.

HAND GAME LIST

***PINCER GRASP* to develop precision muscle function**

- Use an eye dropper to drop water one drop at a time on a plant or colored water into a jar.
- Pick up cotton balls or small things with tweezers.

***SHIFT* to be able to move the paper when cutting and to adjust a pencil when beginning to write**

- Take the cap off a pen with just one hand.
- Pick up a pencil with just one hand. Now walk up the pencil with your fingers to the eraser, turn the pencil around and with your fingers, walk up the pencil towards the point.
- Pretend you have chalk or sand on your fingers. Get it off by brushing the thumb across the fingers of just that hand. No shaking!

***FINGER TO PALM* to be able to manipulate and hold more than one object in one hand**

- Take coins from a purse, and move them with your fingers to your palm one at a time, using just that hand.

***ROTATION* to turn knobs and for opening a combination lock**

- Spin a small top or a jack.
- Make the hand sign for cookie.
- Twisting off and on a sports bottle cap.

***PALM TO FINGER* to be able to move objects in one's hand without dropping**

- Hold 4 or 5 pieces of popcorn in your hand. Feed yourself the popcorn bringing **one piece at a time from your palm to your fingers**, using just that hand.

Supplies needed:

This movement requires multiple supplies. To participate in all the games listed above you will need: eyedroppers, tweezers, pen with cap, chalk/sand, popped popcorn, pencil, coins, purse/container, food coloring, small jars/cups, small plant, cottonballs/ small candy, small top/jacks and sports bottle.

OT's Top Ten List for Pre-Handwriting Exercises*

1. **Mickey Mouse Ears** - Place fists next to ears, squeeze, fingers open and close, 10-15 times.
2. **Desk Push Ups** - Hands flat on desks, thumbs and pointer tips facing each other (creating a triangle), bend elbows, nose into triangle created between hands, then up 10-15 times.
3. **Windshield Wipers** - Arms above head, cross straight arms 10 times then put bottom arm over top hand and do 10 more.
4. **Scissor Cuts** - Same as above only arms are pointed straight down with palms up.
5. **Shoulder Shrugs** - Called the "I Don't Knows" palms up shoulder shrugs towards ears, release, 10-15 times.
6. **Throw Aways** - Elbows bent, fisted hands in front of shoulders, extend arms in a throwing motion, 10-15 times.
7. **Door Knob Turns** - Arms in front of you, elbows slightly bent, four fingers right next to each other, thumbs open, turn both hands toward thumbs at wrist, turn and return to mid position (not towards little finger), 10 -15 times.
8. **Good Morning America** - Hands hold opposite elbows, lift in a single motion over the head, return to waist and repeat, 10-15 times.
9. **Finger Opposition** - Hold fingers next to ears, have child touch thumb to each finger (i.e. pointer, middle, ring, pinkie) and back again, 10-15 times.
10. **Butterflies** - Hold arms straight in front of body, make an X with thumbs, palms facing out, make small circles 10 times to the right, then 10 times to the left.

Other Ideas: Donkey Kicks, Wheelbarrow Walks, Army Crawls, Itsy Bitsy Spider, Finger Shadows, Where Is Thumbkins, Finger Flicks.

**Contributed by Tere Bowen-Irish, OTR/L*



BENEFITS

You know your body needs to warm up before doing physical activities, like basketball. Writing and cutting are also physical activities. So you need to warm up for them as well.

TO BEGIN

- Have children sit in chairs at their desks or at a table.
- Demonstrate hand placement and movements for spider push-ups.
- This is a good warm up before starting a writing or cutting activity.

SPIDER PUSH-UPS INSTRUCTIONS

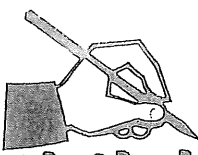
1. Place the back of one hand against the table top.
2. Place the other hand (the spider) on top, matching the fingers (*pinky to pinky, ring to ring, etc.*).
3. Extend the fingers from the bottom hand (*mirror*) up in the air finger tips together (*like a tee-pee*).
4. Then bring the fingers back down against the table.
5. Do this 5 times.
6. Then turn the hands over so now the spider is upside down. Repeat 5 times.

Additional Projects

Chair Push-Ups (Activity #9) are good warm ups and can be used before writing too. Why might a spider do push-ups? Make up a story with pictures and/or words.

Supplies needed:

Children will need paper, crayons or markers for creating their stories.



Pencil Holding

Writing/Cutting Tools
#16
Pencil Holding

BENEFITS

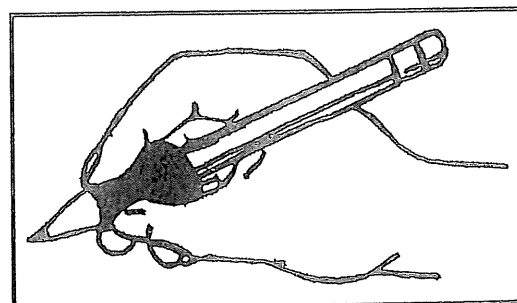
The best way to hold a pencil is by using a tripod grasp. Your hand gets less tired and your movements are more precise.

TO BEGIN

- Children need to be in their best writing/learning positions. (See Activity #11)
- Helping children achieve the best way to hold their writing tools takes practice. Try finding time each day to review, especially in Kindergarten and 1st grade.
- Every child should have writing paper and a pencil or pen. Short pencils can be used too, as they promote the tripod grasp.

PENCIL HOLDING INSTRUCTIONS

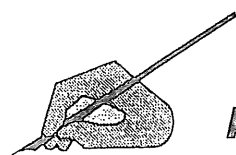
There are many pencil grips available. See which one works for you. You can use a grip to remind you how to keep your fingers in the best position. The "bulb" grip in the picture has the fatter part higher up the pencil than the skinny part. This helps to remind your fingers to keep an open web space between the thumb and pointing finger.



Grasp your pencil between the tips of your thumb and your pointing finger and support it against the side of your middle finger. You are using a tripod grasp.

OR

Make the "OK" sign with your writing hand. Drop the middle, ring, and pinky to be in line with the index finger. Open the index finger and thumb. Insert your pencil.



ADDITIONAL PENCIL HOLDINGS

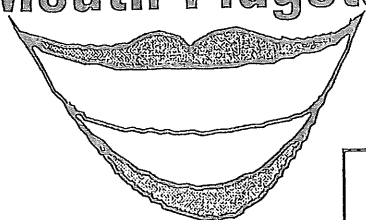
Sometimes when you pick up a pencil you have to twist and turn it all around to get it pointing the right way for writing. Try doing this a few times:

Put a pencil on a table or desk. Now pick it up with your writing hand only. Turn it around in your fingers until you are holding it the right way.

Would you like to know an easy way to pick up a pencil? Put the pencil again on a table/desk. Before you pick it up, turn it so the point is facing your pinky. Now see how easy it is to pick up!

For fun: Drop a pencil 10 times. How many times does it land with the point towards your pinky? How many times does it land with the point towards your thumb?

Mouth Fidgets



BENEFITS

We know mouth tools are sensory tools that can help the body work better and therefore help you pay attention.

TO BEGIN

- Non-nutritive oral stimulation (such as chewing on rubber bands or straws) are often used by adults. Children are often seen chewing on their clothing or pencils.
- Be creative and open-minded. Help children discover acceptable Mouth Tools which work for them.
- Discuss with the children which Mouth Tools their mouths would like when they are working.
- As a group come up with everyone's favorite Mouth Tools. Make a list. See sample list below. **Allergies may require substitutions.** You can be creative.
- Refrain from limiting mouth tools for rewards. For example a parent can give a drink with a straw for sucking to help a child maintain just the right level of attention when going down the grocery aisle.

SAMPLE - List of Favorite Mouth Tools

Crunchy (*pretzels or oatzels*)

Chewy (*tubing*)

Sucking (*water bottle*)

Biting (*apple or carrots*)

Pulling (*licorice strings or fruit roll ups*)

Licking (*lollipop or fruit popsicle*)



Salty (*popcorn*)

Blowing (*through a straw*)

Sweet (*candy or dried fruit*)

Sour (*sour candy or a pickle*)

Spicy (*cinnamon or salsa*)

Additional Project

Have children draw a picture of their favorite mouth tool that is not on the list.

Supplies needed:

Children will need paper, crayons or markers for creating their drawings.

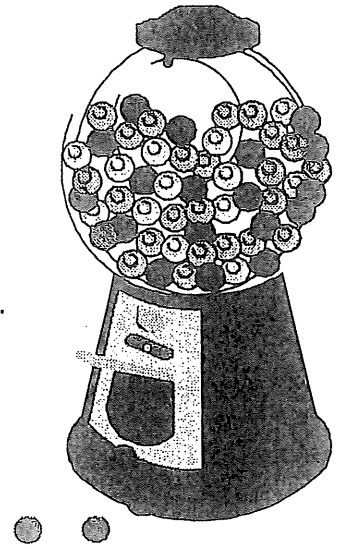
Gum Rules

BENEFITS

Chewing gum can also be a good mouth tool, when used properly.

TO BEGIN

- Ask why there is usually a 'no gum' rule at school.
- Chewing gum at school is usually not allowed because school custodians have had bad experiences.
- When used as a tool, gum needs its own special set of rules. Work as a group and decide on rules for using gum in your classroom.
- Establishing rules can result in success while using this Mouth Tool.



SAMPLE Gum Rules

Keep wrapper on desk/table to put gum back when ready to throw chewed gum away.

Throw chewed gum in this wrapper into the waste basket before leaving the classroom.

Keep gum inside the mouth, keep hands away from pulling.

Keep mouth closed while chewing.

Keep mouth quiet while chewing.

Blowing bubbles in class is not allowed.

Additional Project

Draw a picture of what it might be like if children chewed gum at school.

Supplies needed:

Children will need paper, crayons or markers for creating their drawings.



BENEFITS

These tactile or touch tools can relieve stress and help you to concentrate.

TO BEGIN

- Many people like to play with objects or hand fidgets with their fingers while they are thinking or listening. Adults fidget with their keys, paper clips, and even their hair.
- Doodling while talking on the telephone is common. Children's fidgets are frequently taken away because teachers fear they are distracting, and some are too noisy.
- Have children come up with a favorite hand fidget. See list below.
- Whatever the children choose, make sure it is used as a tool and not as a toy.
- Provide objects in classroom or have children also bring favorite objects from home.

Ideas for things your fingers can fidget with:

Beanie-like toy

Squishy hand balls

Plastic rings
around pop cans

Putty



Balloons stuffed with
flour or sand

Small bags stuffed with
beans or rice

Additional Project

Have children draw a picture of their teacher's or parent's favorite hand fidget.

Supplies needed:

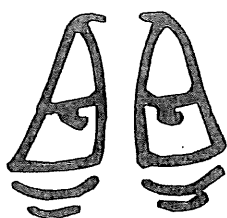
Children will need paper, crayons or markers for creating their drawings.

BENEFITS

Are the lights sometimes too dark or too bright? Eye Supplies can help lighting be just right for you.

TO BEGIN

- Provide each child with a piece of paper and crayons and markers for drawing.
- Ask if their eyes get tired? When? Have the children draw a picture of what their eyes look like when they are tired and overworked.
- If their eyes are sensitive to the sunlight, ask them to wear sunglasses. Are sunglasses available for both outside play, as well as indoor activities?
- Evaluate lighting in the classroom. Is natural light available? Minimize the amount of glare.
- Can a floor lamp be provided to replace the fluorescent lights?
- Are there small, darker places to move into?
- Can one of the fluorescent tracks be turned off when the activity requires a "quieter" environment?
- Try different colored paper. Sometimes the strong contrast between the black lettering and the white paper can appear to cause the writing to move.



Other things to try so your eyes are less tired:

A **slant board** (at a 15-25 degree angle).

A **small lamp** focused from the front on your work.

Colored acetate used with overhead projectors.

Anti-glare screen for computers.

The screen should be 15 degrees below eye level.
 Be sure to look away now and then.



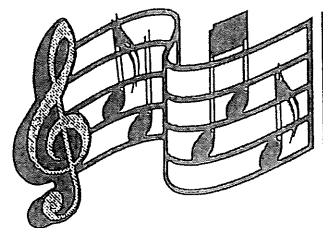
Ear Supplies

BENEFITS

Everyday classroom sounds can be distracting and may prevent you from learning. Using headphones may help keep you focused while working.

TO BEGIN

- "Recent research has shown that students who listened to 10 minutes of Mozart prior to testing improved scores on measures of spatial intelligence... These are the underlying processes for math, spelling and reading." (Frick 1998)
- Children need to be in the best writing/learning environments. "Noise" prevents that for certain children.
- Every child has his own unique reaction to everyday classroom sounds.
- Helping children achieve the best way to satisfy their personal needs in this area requires you to experiment - be creative and open-minded.
- Initially discuss with children what noises bother them in the classroom. Make a list. See "Sample List" below.
- Music through headphones should be ambient (string, piano, flute) and only played at quiet volumes (2-4 digital). Other sounds at high volumes can be dangerous to the ear (especially base and brass).
- Some students may need the environment quieter than others. Using headphones can be helpful in reducing extraneous sounds.
- Music that has a strong underlying rhythm as in marching band music, drumming and/or humming can help children **transition** from recess or gym to classroom work indoors.



SAMPLE - List of Classroom Noises **which can be distracting and even painful to some children**

Pencil sharpener	Centers area
Intercom/telephone	Air conditioner
Teacher's voice	Lights
Other students	Fire alarm/drill
Door closing	Computer/printer

Additional Project

Play different types of music for the children. While listening, have them illustrate what the music would look like if it was a picture.

Supplies needed:

Children will need paper, crayons or markers for creating their drawings.

Nose Supplies

BENEFITS

What your nose smells can change your mood and sometimes helps you to remember things.

TO BEGIN

- Discuss with the children what aromas they enjoy.
- As a group come up with everyone's favorite aroma/smell. Make a list.
- When children return to the classroom following physical education or recess, explore which smell they enjoy best to help them "settle" down (e.g. vanilla, banana or coconut).
- Citrus or pine can be used by some to keep them alert.
- As with all tools be aware of individual sensory needs. Some children with allergies or other respiratory difficulties may be uncomfortable with any smell. Commercial perfumes should be avoided.
- Aroma therapy has many benefits.

SAMPLE - List of Favorite Nose Tools

Pine, Citrus, and Peppermint	<i>Can help keep you alert</i>
Vanilla, Banana, and Coconut	<i>Can help you feel more relaxed</i>

Additional Project

At home, vanilla, banana or coconut could be used to complement Calming Activities (#23).

Have children draw a picture of something that is very smelly. It could be a good smell or a really horrible smell for them. Have them describe how that smell makes them feel.

Supplies needed:

Children will need paper, crayons or markers for creating their drawings.

Air fresheners, plug ins.



Calming Activities

Quieting Tools

#23

Calming Activities

BENEFITS

These tools can be used to help you feel relaxed.

TO BEGIN

- Discuss with children when is it OK to be active and noisy.
- Help children decide when they need to be calm and quiet.
- Give directions by singing them. This can help the children attend to your words.
- As you well know, touch is a very powerful sensory tool. As with other sensations, some students can be defensive to touch.
- Weighted vests, weighted backpacks and weighted blankets can produce a calming effect. Ask your OT.

CALM AND QUIET IDEAS

Try as many of these as you can to discover which ones help calm you down.

- Sit in a bean bag chair for a while and take some slow deep breaths.
- Sit in a quiet place surrounded and covered by heavy pillows.
- Rock slowly and gently in a rocking chair.
- Try the "Fragile Egg", Activity #3.
- Sit in a place where the lights, voices, and music are low and soft.
- Snuggle up in a sleeping bag or a blanket.
- Ask your teacher to spray vanilla scent.

ADDITIONAL "AT HOME" CALMING IDEAS

- Have someone read to you.
- Have someone give you long firm hugs.
- Exchange a massage with someone.
- Watch fish in a fish tank.



FLOPPY ON THE BALL

Quieting Tools

#24

Floppy
on the Ball

BENEFITS

Slow rhythmical rocking and the inverted position can be relaxing.

TO BEGIN

- During times when calming down is a necessity, using the tool Floppy on the Ball helps individual children reach a calmer level.
- You will need an area large enough to be able to rock back and forth on a large ball.
- You will need a large ball and a strong helper to assist you.

CAUTION: Check with your OT to be sure you are doing this correctly. This position can lower blood pressure. If your child's face starts to get red or white, immediately and slowly pull the child back up to his feet.

Floppy on the Ball Instructions

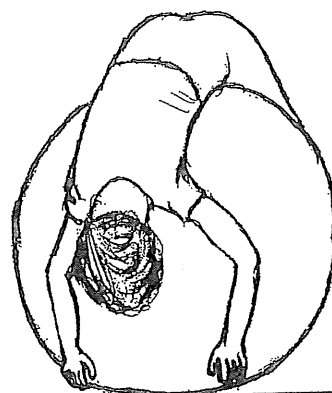
Your helper will steady the ball so you can lay across it.

Your arms will be relaxed along the side of the ball.

Your helper will place their hands gently on your back.

Turn your head to one side and let it hang.

The person helping you will rock you gently, forward and back, for a little while.



Supplies Needed:

A ball chair with feet can be used.
(Simply lie on the ball so the feet are out to the side.)

BENEFITS

Recess is fun! On the playground you can experiment with different ways to move your body. And recess gives your muscles the nutrition your brain needs to help you concentrate for school work.

TO BEGIN

- Share with all staff members that:
 1. Recess is one of the most important sensory tools available in school.
 2. Playground equipment provides a *sensory diet* for students to help them perform at their best throughout the day.
 3. If students are deprived of recess they can become sensory starved.
- Provide children with free time on the playground.
- Giving children time to play actually helps their performance during quiet times in the classroom.

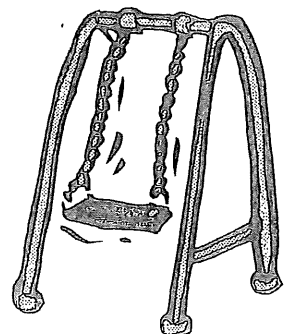
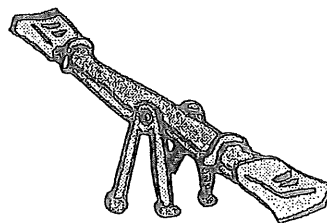
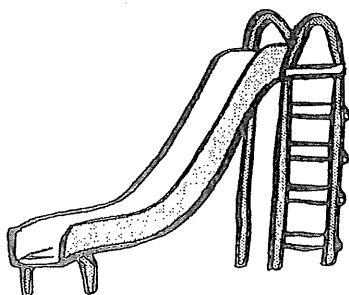
Additional Project

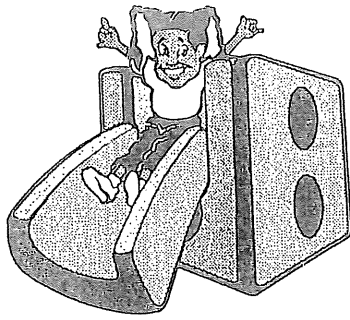
Sometimes recess is taken away for inappropriate behavior. Since movement is important, ask the children to list what other consequences they would suggest instead of taking recess away.

Have children draw a picture of what they like to play with on the playground or what they wish they had available on their dream playground.

Supplies needed:

Children will need paper, crayons or markers for creating their drawings.





Home Play

Survival Tools

#26

Home Play

BENEFITS

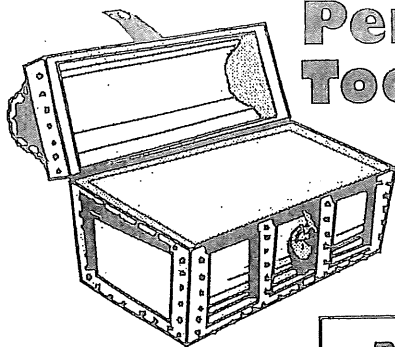
Before there is homework, there is home play. Just like recess, it prepares your body and mind for work.

TO BEGIN

- We know that for children, physical activity has been found to be the key building blocks for growth.
- Have a snack ready for children soon after they arrive home from school.
- After your snack, take a short play break. This will help prepare children for doing any homework they need to complete.
- Rough and tumble play, before sit down activities, provides the rich sensory diet needed to promote attention during work.
- Movement and muscle tools can be used as breaks throughout the homework time to keep the body and mind calm and alert.

Home Play Instructions Before Homework

After choosing the 'just right' movement and muscle tools, prepare the homework environment with the right positioning adjustments, functional writing warm ups, and mouth, hand, eye, ear and nose tools.



Personalized Tool Chest

BENEFITS

Now that you have learned about different tools, share them with your teachers and your parent(s). You are creating win-win partnerships.

TO BEGIN

- Use the Personalized Tool Chest to build a supportive environment and assist with self-regulation.
- Encourage each child to become a self-advocate by choosing which tools work in the classroom and at home.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Copy the following page and hand it to each child to complete in school or at home.
- Invite the children to share their Personalized Tool Chest with others.

OPTIONS

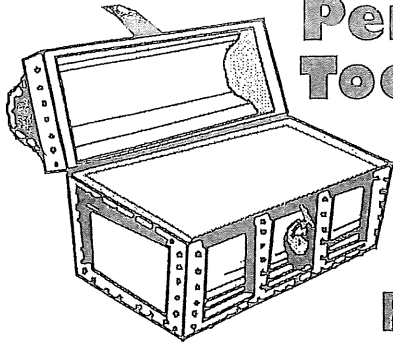
- Use as information to formulate goals for an IEP (Individualized Education Program).
- Attach to a 504 Accommodation Plan.
- Place in the cumulative folder and update each year as the child changes teachers and grade.

Additional Project

The teacher and the parent(s) complete their own Personalized Tool Chest form and share them with the children.

Supplies needed:

Copies of the Personalized Tool Chest form (Activity #27a) and writing tools.



Personalized Tool Chest

PERSONALIZED TOOL CHEST

Name _____ Grade _____

Date of Birth _____ School _____

Today's Date _____ Teacher(s) _____

Complete the blanks or make up your own

These tools help me be successful:

1. This helps me get ready for school (Activity # _____).

2. This helps me pay attention (Activity # _____).

3. This helps me in my work and study place (Activity # _____).

4. This helps me take tests (Activity # _____).

5. This helps me on the playground (Activity # _____).

6. This helps me in the cafeteria (Activity # _____).

These other activities also help:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

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Non-Print Media

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Web Sites

Brainy stuff ...

- www.brainpop.com (Brain POP is the leading producer of educational animated movies for K-12)
- www.thebrainstore.com (resources for growing minds)

Mouth stuff ...

- www.cnsfoundation.org/newsletter/newsletter_07/newsletter_08.html (Chewing Gum Improves Memory)
- www.coromega.com (omega & fatty acids)
- www.foodallergy.org
- www.gfcfdiet.com (gluten free, casein free)

Movement stuff ...

- www.vans.com (Vans Skate Park)

Musical stuff ...

- www.musictherapy.ca (Canadian Association for Music Therapy)
- www.musictherapy.org (American Music Therapy Association)
- www.vitalinks.com (continuing education on therapeutic listening)

Sensory Integration ...

- www.aota.org (The American Occupational Therapy Association)
- www.ateachabout.com (Henry OT workshops and materials)
- www.atready.com (Bonnie Hanschu's *Ready Reader* newsletter)
- www.centerforpediatrictherapy.com (Tara Glennon's clinics in CT)
- www.devdelay.org (Patricia Lemer's *New Developments* newsletter & Kelly Dorfman, nutritionist)
- www.developmentaltherapy.com (Linda King-Thomas's clinic, workshops and materials in NC)
- www.jump-in-products.com (Jackie Kilburn's clinic, workshops and materials in MI)
- www.kidzplay.org (Janet Stafford's clinic, workshops and materials in NH)
- www.lighthouseproject.com (Rondalyn Whitney's clinic, workshops and materials on NLD in CA)
- www.otawatertown.com (Jane Koomar's clinic, workshops and materials in MA)
- www.otexchange.com (Deanna Sava: resources supporting children with special needs)
- www.otrny.com (Angela Sallerson's clinic, workshops and materials in NY)
- www.out-of-sync-child.com (Carol Kranowitz author of the *Out-of-Sync Child*)
- www.pediatrictherapy.com (Zoe Mailloux's clinic, workshops and materials in CA)
- www.rehabdynamics.com (Maureen Kane's clinic, workshops and materials in OH)
- www.sensorystories.com (D. Marr & V. Nackley's *Sensory Stories*: Publication Pending)
- www.sifocus.com (Kathleen Morris's International magazine dedicated to improving SI)
- www.sinetwork.org (Lucy Jane Miller's DSI Parent Connection, SI/SIPD Resource Directory and more)
- www.southpawenterprises.com (SI products including the Bounce Pad)
- www.success-in-motion-therapy.com (Naomi Siegal's clinic in MN)
- www.thatkidscompany.com (Laurie Renke: chairperson for the DSI Parent Connection)
- www.thechildrenscenteraz.org (Lorna Jean King's state certified non profit school & therapy center)
- www.weacaretherapy.com (Susan Swindeman's clinic and workshops in IN)
- www.weightedvest.com (Barbara Dudley's innovative new weighted designs)
- www.wpspublish.com (SI certification: The Comprehensive Program in Sensory Integration)

Sleepy stuff ...

- www.brain.com (information from the National Sleep foundation)
- www.ctv.ca/servlet/ArticleNews/story/CTVNews/20020916/bmt_stress_020916/Health/story (article about University of Toronto's research on sleep and music)
- www.neuronic.com/insomniac.htm (lots of info on insomnia)
- www.sleepfoundation.org/default.html
- www.susankramer.com/spirituality (spirituality, prayers, meditation)

Spaces and Places stuff ...

- www.kompan.com (playground equipment)
- www.sitincomfort.com (furniture and more)