



Moving On To School Information Sheet

Pencil Grasp

Like anything in life, learning how to hold a pencil will take practice. First, your child will hold a crayon with a fistful hand - called a palmer grasp.

This is the typical starting point for learning how to use a pencil. It is important to let your child have experience of mark-making. Give them crayons, pens, pencils, paint and chalk, and let them scribble!



It is also important that you give your child lots of different activities. This will strengthen their hands and to help them learn how to move their fingers.

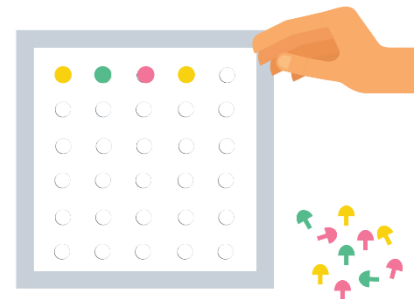
Here are some activities you might want to try:



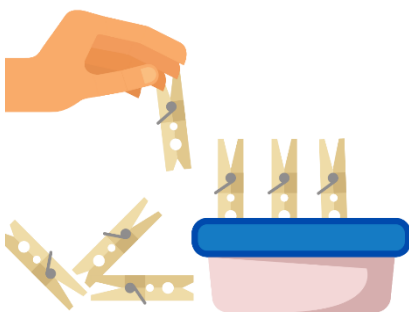
Finding objects in
playdough



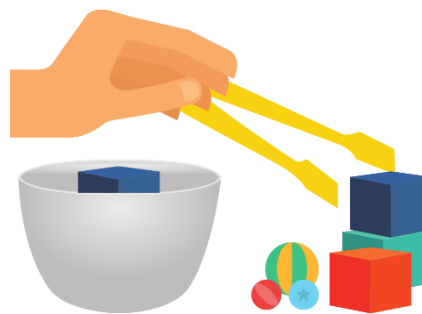
Posting coins in
a money box



Taking pegs out
of a pegboard



Putting clothes
pegs on to a tub



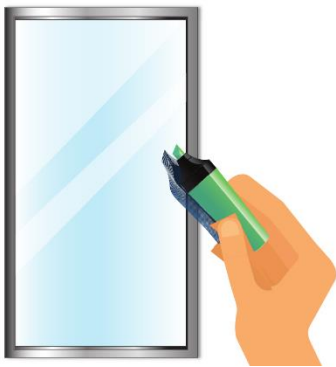
Using tweezers to pick
up different objects

There are more activity suggestions on our [pincer grasp activity sheet](#). By doing these activities, you should begin to see your child holding their pencil more with their fingers as their hands are getting stronger and more co-ordinated.



Here are some typical ways children explore holding a pencil. This is part of the learning experience. Some of these positions might look awkward. But with time and practice it is expected that children will progress. They will start to hold their pencil between their thumb, index and middle finger.

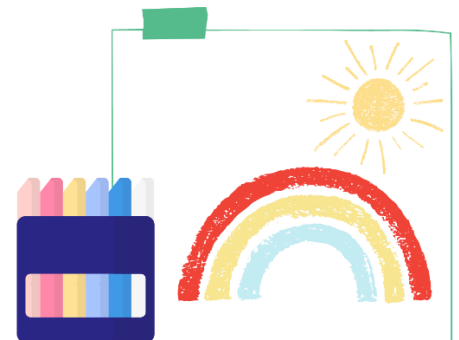
The important thing is to encourage enjoyment in mark-making. Here are some other ideas of activities to try which can help with pencil grasp.



Drawing on a mirror
whilst standing up



Sponging with
paint



Drawing with
chalk

All children develop at different rates. Don't worry if your child hasn't decided which hand to hold their pencil in before they go to school. This can take time to develop. Try not to hand your child different writing tools instead, let them choose. If they have still not decided which hand to use by the end of Primary 1, it would be worth speaking to school staff.