Eye Hand Coordination Activities

Skill Practice
Drawing/prewriting activities
Below are approximations for the developmental sequence for drawing strokes. This varies highly as all children develop differently.

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(age 2 to 3) (age 3 to 4) (age 5 to 6) (age 6)

- Children begin drawing by scribbling randomly. Some may scribble up and down in a vertical direction, side to side, and in circles. Scribbling is a healthy way to explore drawing tools. Use all types of media: crayons, markers, pencils, paint, chalk, etc. Scribble with sidewalk chalk or washable paint outdoors.
- To teach strokes, it makes sense to draw them within context. For example, for vertical lines draw a picture of a picket fence minus the pickets. Have the child draw in the vertical lines after you’ve modelled a few. Or draw train tracks without the RXR ties, or cars without tires, etc. There are commercially available workbooks with "finish-the-drawing" activities for purchase.
- Drawing within a large space, such as on a wall chalkboard, dry erase board or easel, helps children learn about the movement involved in the shapes and strokes they are learning.
- Draw shapes within square boxes for using the attributes of a square as landmarks. For example, cut the box in half by drawing a vertical line through the middle of it, then a horizontal line to make a cross. Instruct child to draw a line from one corner to the opposite corner for a diagonal line and do it again to draw an X. Try a variety of shapes inside boxes. Remember to encourage drawing strokes from top to bottom-- This will help when learning to write letters.
- Drawing diagonals is the most challenging to learn. Play games that involve diagonal relationships such as checkers, Chinese Checkers, Tic-Tac-Toe or Connect Four, as examples.
- Draw shapes with a highlighter for the child to trace over
• Make shapes with sticks (toothpicks, popsicle sticks, Wikki Stix, etc.) for child to trace beside
• Have child use various materials (toothpicks, popsicle sticks, Wikki Stix, etc.) to make shapes
• Trace over shapes and simple pictures with tracing paper
• Draw around stencils of shapes and simple objects
• Create simple drawings by putting 2 to 3 shapes together to make common objects. As examples: a circle and stick to make a flower or a lollipop, a triangle and a square make a house, a small square next to a large square with 2 circles underneath make a truck, a series of circles make a caterpillar. There are several commercially available books of add-on drawings available in teachers stores, book stores and on the internet.
• Half-to-Whole drawings: draw half of a simple picture (pizza, house, person, tree) and child draws the other half
• Connect-the-Dots activities
• Mazes: trace the way out first with your finger, then with a pencil or crayon
• Coloring books: children over age 4 should be encouraged to color inside the lines

**Non-drawing activities**

• Lacing cards: try different ways to lace around the edges
• Stringing beads: copy bead patterns or create repeating patterns
• Geoboards: copy shapes and letters using rubber bands on geoboards
• Copy pegboard and Lite Brite designs
• String macaroni, cut straws, Fruit Loops: create patterns as appropriate to medium used
• Etch-A-Sketch: draw lines to connect several stickers; draw a maze on transparent paper and tape on the Etch-A-Sketch; diagonal lines are particularly challenging
• Dress up dolls

**Building Block Activities**

**Large motor activities**

• Ball play: medium and large balls to catch and throw; smaller balls for older children
• Bouncing medium and large balls
• Beanbag toss games: go for a target such as a container or bin; large at first and then smaller as skill improves
• Balloon volleyball; for added challenge place a marble or penny inside the balloon-- it will make more unpredictable
• Hit a balloon with a tennis racket or paddle
• Rolling ball with 2 hands: bowling by knocking over 2-liter soda bottles
• Flashlight tag: while lying on your back in a darkened room, play tag or follow the leader with your flashlight beams
• "Speed Stacks": a fun cup stacking game, the cups come in regular size for large grasp and small cups for finger grasp

**Right and Left side awareness**

• Play the Hokey Pokey or Simon Says; emphasize the right or left side
• Play games that incorporate movement and stamping the feet: military marching while calling out "left-right-left-right"
• Centipede game: children crouch-sit on the floor in a line and hold the ankles of the child behind them; call out "left-right" so that each moves the left foot forward in unison, then right foot. Divide the group up for Centipede races; challenging and best for older children
• Put a sticker on the back of the right hand or a rubber band on the right wrist. Or have child wear a wristwatch.
• Play "I Spy" games and emphasize the right or left sides of the room, or on the page if using a book.

**Compensatory Strategies**

• Coloring inside the lines: Draw (outlining) over the lines first with a crayon, then color it in (child can be taught to outline their own picture to color first before coloring it in with just a reminder--"outline first")
• Coloring inside the lines: Use Wikki Stix or glue yarn around the area to be colored in; this acts as a boundary to contain coloring
• Difficulty stringing beads: Use plastic gimp or pipe cleaners instead of string
• Difficulty lining up math equations: use graph paper which can be modified with enlarged squares on a copy machine
• Hand-over-hand guidance is often needed to help a child get the feel for drawing a stroke or writing a letter.
• Writing and drawing on a vertical or slanted surface improves viewing, head position and hand/wrist position. Drawing can be done on an easel or even on paper taped to a wall. A slant board can be placed on a desktop for writing tasks.
• Tummy writing: helps with developing shoulder stability and an upright head. This can be done for writing, drawing and play activities.
• Alternatives to writing by hand for children with significant challenges: learning computer skills, dictating to a scribe, having a peer note-taker or getting a copy of notes,