

Writing-A Physical Process

A Guide for Parents

Writing is a physical process-children are not born writers! We have produced this guide to outline the different stages your child will go through physically on their journey to becoming a writer. All children are different and they will progress through the stages at different speeds and times. We have included some suggestions for activities that will support your child's development-we would love to hear about any you have tried at home!

Stage 1-Shoulder pivot

At this stage the movement needed for writing will pivot from the shoulder-their arm and wrist will be stiff. If your child is at this stage the marks they will make are likely to be long and straight or large circular marks. They will hold a pencil in a tight palm grip.



Activities that will support your child at this stage:

- Sweeping leaves with brooms
- Gardening
- Using climbing equipment at the park
- Dancing
- Using large paper/cardboard/the ground for mark making



Stage 2-Elbow pivot

Now the movement needed for writing will pivot from the elbow which will bend. Their wrist will still be fairly stiff and your child will now be able to make horizontal as well as vertical marks. They will still hold a pencil in a palm grip but with their fingers loosely wrapped around it.

Activities that will support your child:

- Cleaning tables
- Mixing in a bowl
- Throwing and catching games
- Using a dustpan and brush
- Rolling dough



Stage 3-Wrist pivot

Now the movement for writing will pivot from the wrist. They will begin to use their fingers more in order to manipulate the pencil. The marks they make are now smaller and are likely to be recognisable drawings or even letter shapes.

Activities that will support your child at this stage:

- Providing smaller pieces of paper for writing
- Threading beads onto string
- Pouring jugs of water in the bath
- Using screwdrivers
- Twisting lids off jars



Stage 4-Finger pivot

Lastly your child will reach the stage where all of the movement for writing comes from their fingers. They will grip a pencil with three fingers with their first finger manipulating the end of it.



**Activities that will support
your child at this stage:**

- Pegging washing on a line
- Using finger puppets
- Singing finger rhymes such as 'Tommy Thumb'
- Picking up buttons/coins

