MANIPULATION ACTIVITIES

AIMS: To improve manipulation skills

GOALS:
1. To improve tactile (touch) awareness in the hands to help with manipulation of objects.
2. To facilitate muscle tone in the arm and hands to help with posture, reach and manipulation of objects
3. To increase the hands ability to manoeuvre objects within it, smoothly and efficiently.

The following is a program that can be used within the classroom for 15-20 minutes per day to facilitate manipulation skills. Do the preparation activity and then choose one activity per day to complete within 10 minutes, prior to tabletop tasks.

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND.
1. Posture – make sure that the child is sitting with a proper posture
2. Use a visual or touch cue on the pencil where the pointer finger has to go. (rubberband, string under masking tape, velcro dot)
3. Short crayons, pencils and chalk help encourage an appropriate grasp and enhance control of the writing implement.
WEEK 1

1. PREPARATION ACTIVITIES.

   Songs with actions.

2. MANIPULATION ACTIVITY.

   - Using medium sized tokens (plastic pieces from board games, small drink bottle lids, marbles) have the child pick up one token (using thumb and pointer finger) from a low sided container, and use fingers of the same hand to move the object into their palm. Do not allow them to use their other hand. Then have them bring the object from their palm to the tips of their fingers and placed back in the container. Repeat 5 times.

   Games that can be used for this skill: Connect 4, Mastermind, Chess/Checkers (other similar games), and Bingo. However the main aim is the manipulation of the pieces not the game, the game just makes it more interesting to practice the skill.

   - Using a single-holed paper punch, have the child punch holes in coloured paper and use the “confetti” to glue on and decorate an art item (eg card, picture)

   - Using a plastic teabag squeezer, have the child practice transferring objects (cotton balls, paperclips) from one container to another.

   - Sticker fun – using small stickers (stars, smiley faces) have the child decorate the cover of a book, a spare container. They must remove and stick the stickers themselves using a pincer grasp.

   - Flicking marbles into a box
WEEK 2

1. PREPARATION ACTIVITIES.

Carry box of objects and materials to desk to start activity

2. MANIPULATION ACTIVITIES.

- Marble drop – play a game where your child has to pick up marbles and drop them into a container. Set a time limit (eg 30 seconds) and see if they can increase the amount of marbles they can pick up correctly and place in the container.

- Change closing on pencil case from a zipper to press studs to practice this skill. (Just add a flap of material and sew press studs to the opening)

- Opening a small jar – find a container with small opening and screw top lid (eg sample jam jar, small children’s drink container) Place objects inside (pasta, plastic tokens, and marbles). Have the child unscrew the lid and tip the contents into a low side box. Keeping the lid in their palm have them replace the objects into the container using their thumb and forefinger.

- Practice buttoning – Make a pouch which has 3-4 large buttons for the closure. Hide an object in the pouch and have your child undo the pouch to find out what it is. To make it more interesting have them try and guess what the object is first by asking you clues and feeling the object through the bag.
WEEK 3

1. PREPARATION ACTIVITY.
Hide and Seek – hide an object in a bowl of rice. Your child has to identify what the object is by feel alone.

2. MANIPULATION ACTIVITIES.

- Doing up and undoing nuts and bolts. To make the activity more interesting time how long it takes to do and undo a nut and bolt.

- Rubbing pictures – Place a piece of paper over different flat objects (leaves, coins) and have the child scribble over the top so the texture shows on the paper. Encourage an appropriate pencil grasp to do this.

- Drawing pin art – Using drawing pins have the child make a pattern on polystyrene or corkboard.

- Paper folding tasks. You can concertina fold two strips of paper to make legs and arms for a picture. Fold paper to make a pirate’s hat. These are just suggestions you may have some more appropriate activities depending on the age of your child and your class.

- Simon Says finger games – Child copies the positions of your fingers.
  - Making circles by touching each fingertip to the tip of the thumb
  - Moving thumbs up and down, wiggling thumbs, and moving them in a circle
  - Opening and closing hands
  - Spreading fingers apart and pulling them back together tightly
  - Bending all fingers at the knuckles, keeping fingers straight
  - Wiggling each finger by itself
WEEK 4

1. PREPARATION ACTIVITY

Rubbing lotion into hands – Using a lotion the child will not be allergic to, have them squeeze a small amount and then rub well into hands.

2. MANIPULATION ACTIVITIES.

- Paper clip chains – have the child join together paper clips and see how long they can make it. Measure with a ruler.
- Dominoes – it is manipulating the pieces that is the skill to practice
- Finger exercises:
  - With hands flat on the table lift fingers one at a time.
  - With hands flat make tents by bending at the knuckles whilst keeping fingers straight.
  - With hands flat move hands from side to side moving the wrists only, not the forearms.
- Leap frogs –using the plastic frogs that have a tab at the back which when pushed and released makes the frog jump along the table.
- Sand tray –using a low sided flat tray, place some sand in the bottom and use this for the child to draw patterns in (shapes, letters etc.) Get the child to talk about what they are drawing and how they are drawing it (a square goes up, stop, across, stop, down, stop, across, stop)
WEEK 5

1. PREPARATION ACTIVITY.

Rocking over hands whilst standing at table – Stand at edge of table and have child rock gently over the tops of their hands. Make sure their elbows are straight but not flexed.

2. MANIPULATION ACTIVITIES.

- Draw a simple shape on a piece of paper and have your child tear around the shape. They may need physical assistance to start them off.

- Memory game – using a standard deck of cards or cards you have made up yourself (with pictures, numbers letters, words) play a memory game. This involves the child turning over 2 cards. If they match they get another turn, if not it is your turn. Start with 16 cards (4 rows of 4 cards) and add as this skill improves. Once again it is the turning of the cards that is important here not the memory skill.

- Stick a sheet of paper to the wall. Have the child stick pictures onto the paper using blu-tac on the back.

- Fold a piece of paper as small as you can.

- Trace around coins and then cut them out. You can make this activity more interesting by cutting out the amount of money you would need to buy a certain item.
WEEK 6

1. PREPARATION ACTIVITY.

Stroking down either side of fingers (pretend you are putting on gloves)

2. MANIPULATION ACTIVITY.

- Using heavy cardboard cut the outline of a shoe. Punch holes where the shoelaces need to go. Have your child thread string through the holes like shoelaces (do not worry about tying a bow if your child is not up to this stage)

- Racing tracks – draw 2 parallel lines on a piece of paper. The child then has to draw between the lines. You can curve the lines, make them change direction and use them to practice shapes.

- Weaving – using 2 different colours of paper have the child cut along the dotted lines and then thread the paper together.

- Jigsaw puzzles

- Making a mobile – The child can either draw a picture that can be photocopied and then cut out or use photos from magazines. Staple the pictures to varying lengths of string. Hang the strings from a coathanger to make a mobile.
# EVALUATION OF MANIPULATION ACTIVITIES

**CHILD’S NAME: ________________________________**

## 1. SKILLS

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**COMMENTS:**
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## 2. PROGRAM

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**COMMENTS:**
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**SIGNED: ______________________________________ DATE: ________________**