10 Terrific Tips to Build Strong Fine Motor Skills For STEAM Activities

Presented by:

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Sensory Integration/Sensory Processing

- the organization of sensation for use
- visual, tactile, auditory gustatory
- the hidden senses: proprioceptive, vestibular, interoceptive
- the adaptive response
"All Learning has its basics in sensory development"
- Sensory Secrets
The Senses: Visual & Auditory Systems

- Visual System: acuity & perception
- Auditory System: acuity & perception
- Most commonly used systems for teaching
The Senses: Tactile System

- Light touch, pressure, vibration, temperature, pain
- Types of touch: protective & discriminative
The Senses: Vestibular System

- Movement, gravity & changing head position
- Impacts: vision, posture, balance, movement & helps regulate behavior
The Senses: Proprioceptive Input

- Information from muscles & joints: receptors located in muscles, tendons, joints and deep in skin
- Awareness of body position/helps create body scheme
- Certain types of prop. input help regulate the alert state
We need all our senses to help with fine motor skills!
1. Allow for Tummy Time!

- More of this!
- 1994 Back to Sleep/SIDS campaign side effects
- Helps build good head control and neck muscles: important for upright seat work later!
- Less of this!
- Helps build body awareness
1. Allow for Tummy Time!

- Some children may need extra support to maintain this position.
- You can also try using a rolled towel under the chest for extra support.
1. Allow for Tummy Time!

- Even older students benefit from Tummy Time!
2. Encourage Crawling Activities

- Crawling = heavy work input to the body which = improved body awareness skills
- Helps with handwriting later on!
3. Add Other Upper Body Weight Bearing Activities:

- Proprioceptive input to the muscles and joints helps build body awareness/body scheme:
  - Wheelbarrow walks
  - Prone on a ball
  - Chair push-ups
3. Add Other Upper Body Weight Bearing Activities:

- Downward Dog Stretch
- Other Benefits of Yoga
4. Add Visual Tracking Games

- Tracking Bubbles
- Hitting Balloons
- Flashlight Games
- Tossing a Beach Ball

- Good for work on large eye movements
- Help with visual plane changes
4. Add Visual Tracking Games

- Other great visual tracking ideas
5. Vary Use of Media for Drawing & Coloring

- Shaving/Whip Cream
- Soap Foam Paint Bottles
- Add Dry Jell-O Mix to Paints
- Sidewalk Chalk
- Kwik Stix Tempra Paint
- Wikki Stix
- Bubber!

- Lisa Murphy:
  - www.ooeygooeey.com
5. Vary Use of Media for Drawing & Coloring/Tracing

• Other Great Ideas:
  – Textured/Tactile Letters
  – Blocks/shapes to form alphabet
  – Boogie Boards
  – Apps like Kids Doodle, Doodle Buddy etc.
6. Build Strong Hand/Finger Muscles

- Jacks
- Clothespins and bucket
- GumFun!
- Hide n Go Fish
- Tongs
- Fish Sticks
- Play-doh or clay
- Egg Cartons or Muffin Tins
6. Build Strong Hand/Finger Muscles

- TheraPutty
  - Like PlayDoh only better!
  - Comes in 3 strengths:
    - Red=soft
    - Green=medium
    - Blue=firm
  - Gluten and Casein Free
7. Encourage Correct Grasp

- Whole hand Grasp
- Digital Pronate Grasp
- Dynamic Tripod Grasp
7. Encourage Correct Grasp

- Tools to Help Promote Tripod Grasp
8. Allow Movement
Activity First!

- Vestibular Input helps the sensory system organize and stay on task
- Play first then work!
- Set a timer if transitions are a problem
9. Work on Vertical Surfaces

- Helps with shoulder stability and wrist positioning for writing
- Slantboards may also be a good option
9a. Work in Alternate Positions!

- **Flexible Seating:**
  - Ball Chairs
  - Runtz Stool
  - Vidget Seat

- **Seat Cushions**
  - Core Disks/Bitty Bottoms

- **Stand to Work!**
10. Praise the Work Uniquely!

Instead of This
- Great work!
- Nice job!
- Good boy/girl
- Thank you!
- I love it when...
- Be mindful about what you say!

Try This:
- It’s beautiful the way you used your red and yellow colors for the trees to make it look like fall.
- I can tell you put a lot of effort into your drawing.
- Thank you for setting the table with all the correct silverware today.
References

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- Products: www.abilitations.com www.childcraft.com