



Month 6: Developing Functional Hand Skills School Age Activities

Snowflakes

A fun way for the children to help decorate the classroom for winter. Using a 8”X8” piece of paper (office paper works the best), and a pair of scissors every child can make their own unique snowflake. Instruct the child to fold one sheet of square paper in half, then in half again the other direction. Then instruct the child to fold the sheet again on the diagonal to make a triangle. Next have the child cut around the outside edges, with any desired designs. Make sure the child maintains the wrist in a “thumb-up” position while cutting. After the child has finished cutting, unfold the paper to reveal a snowflake. Finished snowflakes can be hung up around the room as decorations.

Beautiful Bugs

Everyone loves insects, especially ones you can create yourself! In order to make a bug the child will need 2-4 sheets of construction paper, markers, glue, hole punch, pipe cleaners or anything else to “decorate” their bugs. Have a template of an oval (a head and body together), or of two ovals of different sizes (one for a head and one for a body), and a template of strips of 1” the width of the construction paper for legs. Now making sure the child using a “thumbs up” pattern with the scissors have them cut out their desired number of legs and shape of body for their bug. Once everything is cut out have the child be creative with what their bug will look like, spots, glitter, eyes, etc. Then have them choose the number of legs their bug will have. For the legs instruct and demonstrate how to accordion fold the paper strips. Then using glue its time to assemble their bugs. Poking two holes in the bug’s back have the child lace a string through so they can hang them from the ceiling.

Picture Puzzles

Encourage the children to draw and colour pictures large enough to cover or fill most of their construction paper (or use a colouring page with a ready made picture for them to colour in). As each child finishes his picture, ask him to help you draw several lines and curves from edge to edge thus making a puzzle design. Let the children cut out their pieces following the line. Now the children can put the pieces together to remake their pictures.

Hand Manipulators Activities

Set up a spot in the classroom with an assortment of manipulatives to help develop the children’s fine motor skills.

1. Slide paper clips on a piece of cardstock.

2. Place plastic clothespins on an ice cream container.
3. Pin large safety pins into felt or material squares.
4. Place 12 pegs on a string tied between two chairs. Remove pegs using only one hand. Repeat with the other hand. How many pegs can you collect without dropping any?
5. Stack building blocks or similar objects one on top of each other. Create other ways of stacking blocks.
6. Use a pair of tweezers to pick up different objects and place in a container.

Match Castles

Child will need about 30 matches (CAUTION: Remove the heads of the matches.) Have child use preferred hand, to pick up one match at a time and lay carefully in a square pattern as shown. Build up the layers in this way. How high can you construct your castle before it collapses? Variation: use tweezers to pick up matches.

Beads in a Bottle

To complete this activity you will need 5 beads (about ½” diameter) and a small bottle such as a spice jar or hotel shampoo bottle. Have the child hold 5 beads in the palm of one hand (dominant hand). Hold the bottle in your other hand. Work one bead at a time from your palm to holding the bead with your thumb and first finger. Then drop the bead into the small bottle. Do this with all 5 beads. Try not to let any beads fall!

Coin & Water Drops

To start you will need some coins (quarters, nickels, or pennies), an eye dropper, water and paper towel. The goal of the activity is to see how many drops of water will a coin hold before the water run over the edge? Prepare the area by placing a paper towel on the table, and fill the eye dropper with water. Hold the coin with the fingertips of your other hand. Add drops of water, one at a time. Keep count of the drops until the water goes off the coin.

Dot to Dot

Using a Dot to Dot board (see attached sheet) and 2 different colour markers, two players can start the game of dot to dot. On the dot board the first player draws a line with one colour marker to connect two of the dots. The second player uses a different colour marker to connect two more of the dots. The object of the game is to complete a square, and to keep the other person from completing his square. When you finish a square, put a dot of your own colour or your initial in it. At the end, count up how many squares each person made.

Flippers

Using a plastic milk/juice container cap is all you need to get the game of Flippers started. The goal of the game is to see how far you can flip a milk top. Make a fist with your hand and have your thumb tucked in. Place bottle top on side of index finger and thumb. Flick your thumb out and see how far the top goes. Try this 10 times to see if you can make it go further. Be sure to position wrist so the cap flies away from body. To make the game more challenging try to flip the caps into a can.

Hole Punch Art

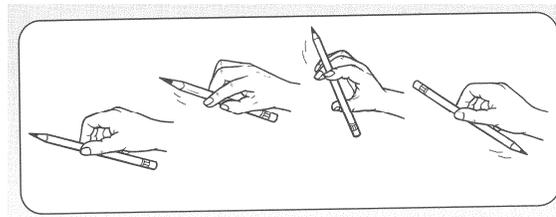
Using a 3" X 3" piece of paper and a hole punch a child is ready to create some art. Have the child draw a picture or a design on a piece of paper or imagine one in their minds. Use a hole punch to create or outline that picture. You can create letters or numbers this way. Or for holidays you can make hearts, pumpkins, or trees.

Paper Chains

These are always a great activity the children can do to help decorate for a party or for the Christmas tree. Give each child a piece of paper that's 3 inches wide, on it draw a line every $\frac{1}{2}$ ". With "thumbs up" have the child cut along the lines. Then using some glue, glue both ends of the first strip together to make a circle. Loop the second strip through the first and then glue those ends together, so that the two circles are chained together. Keep going until all the strips are in a chain. Make sure while cutting the last two fingers are curled into the palm. If not, have the student hold a pom pom with the last two fingers.

Pencil Twirl

While the children are seated at their desks and ready to work on writing have them perform some pencil twirls to start. To make a pencil twirl start by holding a pencil in the hand you write with and try to turn it over and over with that hand only, using your thumb, index and middle fingers. First, make the pencil go in a clockwise direction. Then make it twirl in a counter-clockwise direction.



Merry Mice

Whether used as gift tags or just given as sweet presents all by themselves, these candy Christmas mice are sure to cause a stir.



To make a mouse you will need: red and green felt, scissors, glue, pom-poms, candy canes, googly eyes, and tape.

<p>Cut a 6-inch-long teardrop-shaped body from red felt. Near the centre, cut 2 parallel slits that are 1 inch long and ½ inch apart.</p>	
<p>For a pair of ears, cut a 5-inch-long rounded bow-tie shape from green felt. This will be used to make the ears.</p>	
<p>To put the mouse together, fit the ears through the slits in the body. Glue on googly eyes and a pom-pom nose.</p>	
<p>Finally, add a curly tail by slipping a candy cane beneath the mouse and tucking the straight end between the body and the ears to hold it in place.</p>	

Paper Drops

These graceful paper shapes come together with two snaps of a stapler.



To make a paper drop you will need coloured construction paper, stapler and ribbon.

Ornament	Cut two 12-inch strips, two 10-inch strips, and one 8 ¾ - inch strip. Line them up in this order: 12, 10, 8 ¾ , 10, 12, with one set of ends even. Staple this end. Line up the other ends evenly (bending the outer strips as needed) and staple.
Heart	Cut two 12-inch strips and two 9 ½ inch strips. Line them up in this order: 9 ½ , 12, 12, 9 ½, with one set of ends even. Staple this end. Now bend the unstapled ends into a heart shape, so a small heart lies inside a larger heart. Align the ends and staple together.
Teardrop	Cut two 12-inch strips, two 10 ½ inch strips, and one 9-inch strip. Line them up in this order: 12, 10 ½, 9, 10 ½, 12, with one set of ends even. Staple this end. Next,

	<p>make a crease 1 inch from the unstapled ends of the 12 and 10 ½ inch strips. Finally, align the ends of all the strips and staple them together.</p>
--	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Use the completed shapes to dress up a window or spin in midair from a light fixture or a ribbon. To hand each, knot the end of the gold cord and place it between the loose strips of paper at the top. Staple it all together.

Remember to let each child cut the strips of paper. Just make a template so they have a line to cut along.

3D Snowflakes



To make these 3D snowflakes you will need white paper, scissors, tape, glue and yarn. To make them you will need a template of strips about ¾” to 1” wide and have the child cut along the line to make the paper strips. Roll each strip into circles, tape to secure. Make some circles big and some small. Glue your circles together to make your own unique snowflake.

Make a bunch of these snowflakes and string them with yarn or twine, they make a great winter decoration for the home or classroom.

Foot Print Penguin



This Foot Print Penguin is so easy to make. Even though Penguins live in the snow all year round, we often associate them with winter time. To make a penguin you will need construction paper, pencil, scissors, glue, black marker and googly eyes.

<p>You will need to trace the child’s foot print and have them cut it out. You will need 2 black and one white foot print. Tracing around a foot with the shoe on will make a better Penguin shape. You will also need to cut out two penguin feet.</p>	
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Glue your two black foot prints onto a piece of construction paper. You will need to over-lap them. Next glue on your penguin's feet, underneath the black body. Glue your white foot print over your black foot prints and your ready to draw on your penguin's face!



Cutting Shapes

Now that scissor skills are developing challenge the children to cut out shapes, circles, squares, triangles, etc. As always emphasize the importance of thumbs up with the cutting hand and manipulate the paper with the non-cutting hand. Go slow and follow the line. In order to have greater success have thicker lines to target and use sturdier paper until the children become skilled at cutting. Once the shapes are cut build something, an animal, a bug, a truck or a train!



Concertina Shapes

(This is a great challenging craft, so in order to encourage success make sure students have refined scissor skills.)

To create a concertina shape each child will need paper, scissors, pencil, a stencils, cereal box card (or similar), and sticky putty. Before you start ensure that you have adequate paper for each child, plus some extra paper as they are bound to make mistakes or want to make more than one set of shapes in this cutting activity. Place the stencil patterns (shapes, people, trees, etc.) on card and trace around the edges to make a stencil. Each child or group of 4 children should have one stencil. You may need to pre-fold the paper for younger children.

Using a sheet of paper, concertina fold the paper. Ensure that the panels are wide enough to fit the stencil and that all the folds are equal width. This is very important.



Place the stencil on the fold of the paper with the straight edge of the pattern along the folded edges of the paper. Trace around the stencil. You can use the sticky putty to hold the stencil in place while tracing, if necessary.



Holding the paper securely, cut along the traced lines.	
Unfold the row of concertina shapes and decorate or colour them if desired.	

Here is an assortment of concertina shapes you can do. Remember if scissor skills are just developing keep the shapes simple.



Piggy Puppets

To make a piggy puppet each child will need one paper plate, pink constructions paper, paint, crayons, markers and glue. Have the children paint or colour their paper plates pink. Cut out a 3 inch circle (have children cut out following the line). Then cut that circle in half. This will be the ears. Also cut a two inch circle, this will be the nose. When the plate is dry (if you painted) glue on the ears and the nose. Then add the remaining facial features.

Pieraccini, V & Vance, D (2001). Handprints: Home Programs for Hand Skills. Austin (TX):Pro-ed.

Cleveland, A., Caton, B. & Adler, L (1994). Activities Unlimited. Elgin (IL): Building Blocks.

Bridgeman, M (2002). The Fine Motor Olympics Activities. Framingham (MA):Therapro Inc.

Marsh, N (1998). Start to Finish: Developmentally Sequenced Fine Motor Activities for Preschool Children. Austin (TX): Pro-ed.

Settles-Strode, P & Portner-Rhodes, C (2002). Ready, Set, Go! Building Readiness for Visual, Sensory and Motor Skills. Austin (TX): Pro-ed.

Landy, J & Burridge, K. (1999). Ready-to-Use Fine Motor Skills & Handwriting Activities for Young Children. West Nyack (NY): The Center for Applied Research in Education.

Preschool Education Arts & Crafts <http://www.preschooleducation.com>

Family Fun June 2009 www.familyfun.com

DLTK's Winter Scissor Skills Projects <http://www.dltk-holidays.com>

Busy Bee Kids Crafts www.busybeekidscrafts.com

Shirley's Preschool Cutting Activities www.shirleys-preschool-activities.com