

Reading Is
Fundamental

Home-Visit Idea Guide

2012-2013

Section 2





Using the Five Senses & Fine Motor Skills: The Basics

What are the Five Senses?

📖 The five senses are sight, smell, touch, taste and hearing.

What are Fine Motor Skills?

📖 Fine motor skills are small muscle movements that occur in the finger(s) in coordination with the eyes. These skills do not develop overnight but rather with time and practice.

Using the Five Senses & Fine Motor Skills: The Benefits

Sensory Exploration & Fine Motor Development...

- 📖 helps a baby connect with the objects in the environment. Actively using their senses helps a baby know what objects are all about. Through feel, taste, smell, sight, and sound, a child learns about the world.
- 📖 allows babies to observe the world around them. They are interested in what people around them are doing. By watching how adults move their hands precisely to complete different tasks, the babies brains prepare to perform certain movements.
- 📖 helps children gain knowledge, build concepts, and sharpen perceptions.
- 📖 leads children to discover what objects are all about through their five senses. As a child learns language, they can talk about what they are experiencing through taste, touch, hearing, sight and smell.
- 📖 develops the motor skills that the child will need in preparation for reading and writing such as turning the pages of a book without tearing them and picking up a pencil or crayon.



Using the Five Senses & Fine Motor Skills: Activities

- 1. Mesmerizing Mobiles:** Newborns are able to see at birth, but only up to about 12 inches. Between 2-6 months, they can begin to see color, perceive depth, and adjust to varying distances. Around 4 months, babies are able to connect what they see with what they taste, feel, and hear. With this in mind, parents can decide how to make mobiles for their babies.
 - For infants, include black/white pictures, drawings or photos for contrast.
 - For older babies, include colorful pictures of food, nature, or people. Use varying lengths of string to aid in depth perception.
- 2. Have a Noise Party!** Not only do children like to make noise, they need to make noise. It is a way of exploring and discovering the world of sound. A noise party allows the child self-expression and the ability to release energy in a controlled environment. Set a timer for this activity!
 - Gather or make kid friendly instruments. All instruments should be safe and parent approved. Some examples of instruments you can use are:
 - tambourine, bell, rattle, maracas, cymbals, cowbell, drums
 - wood blocks, whistle, kazoo, wooden spoons to hit plastic pots and pans
 - Permit the child to explore and make all kinds of noise with the instruments.
 - For very young children, some modeling may be needed.
 - After the party is over, children should have a quiet, calmer time that follows. Try playing some soft jazz or classical music in the background to help children shift gears.



- 3. Sound Safari:** This activity is simply “I Spy” for the ears. A parent and child can explore sounds anytime and any place. However, it is wonderful to liven it up by “hunting” for sounds in places where there are many different sounds..
 - Explain that you will be listening for different sounds today.
 - Begin by listening for familiar sounds.
 - Be aware of sounds that you do not normally pay attention to, especially those that the child may not have heard before.
 - Point out the noises you hear and what they sound like to you. Example: “Did you hear that whoosh as the bus went by?”
 - Remember, children are very sound sensitive and they may not like some sounds. They will try to block them by covering their ears. This is a normal reaction.

Here are some suggestions of places to go sound hunting:

Swimming pool
Museum

Hair salon
Restaurant

Grocery store
Laundromat

Airport
Kitchen

Park
School



Sensory Sand: Sand discoveries can be made in a large bin or plastic tub. You don't need a sandbox. Children need the opportunity to mix, mold, pour, and dig in sand. Parents can provide measuring cups and spoon, shovels or funnels. Try the following:

- Add different amounts of water to sand; discuss changes in sand's consistency.(feel)
- Use measuring cups as molds to create "big, bigger, biggest" sand cakes; use the comparative vocabulary words to describe the cakes.
- Model making mountains and digging holes.
- Sift the sand through a strainer, or just through your fingers.

4. **Water Ways:** Water is readily available and versatile. Parents can set up water play in a bathtub, sink or wading pool. Again, children will need tools for discovery such as sponges, funnels, measuring cups, medicine droppers, etc...Try the following:

- Wash dolls, clothing, dishes, rocks (pretend they are household objects.)
- Beat soapy water with an egg beater; talk about what happens.
- Experiment with placing corks, feathers, coins, or rocks in the water; find out which items sink and which float.
- Paint pictures on the sidewalk with a brush and water.

Water play always requires adult supervision.



5. **Play Dough Letters:** Everyone loves play dough! This activity is appropriate for children ages 3 and up. Make coil letters. Roll the play dough into long coils like snakes. Form the letters out of the long coils (snakes)

- If children are familiar with the letters of their name, they can shape the dough into the appropriate letters that spell out their name. (This is advanced.)
- If a child is too young for this, then a template should be provided to him/her. (Write the child's name on a piece of construction paper.)
- A young child can simply start by making the first letter of their name

2. **Tasty Fingers:** Place several dabs of finger-tasting foods on a paper plate. After washing hands, have the child dip each finger of one hand into a different food. Provide them with cups of water to drink between the tasting of "each finger" so as to remove the former taste from their mouths. Choose foods that will stick to a finger (chocolate sauce, different flavored jellies/jams, catsup, etc). Consider having sweet, salty and savory flavors for the children to compare and talk about.

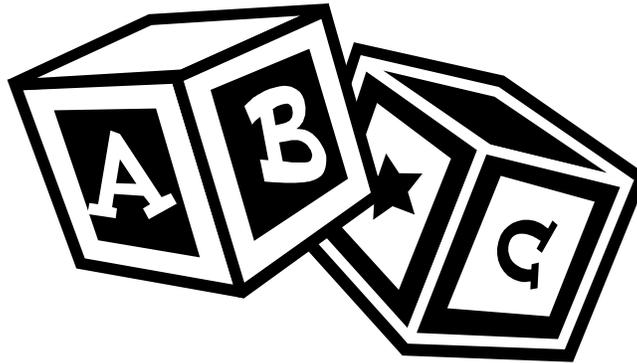
3. **Sensational Smells:** Using containers that can be closed (baby food jars, small plastic bowls with lids,) Place a "smelly" item in each container. If the item is liquid, soak a cotton ball in it instead of pouring liquid into the jar. You can do this activity blindfolded, or in full sight. Have the child smell each container and talk about the smell. What does it remind you of? Does it smell like food or flowers? Does it smell sweet? Some great smells parents might have around the house are: perfume, cinnamon, soap, vanilla, fresh fruit, peanut butter, crayons or play dough.



Critical Thinking Skills: The Benefits

Classifying, Sequencing, and Predicting...

- 📖 begin to show children how language concepts work and how to read.
- 📖 introduce children to the world around us. When children know where objects belong, they are better equipped to function in the environment and are enabled to be more independent.
- 📖 overlap into the area of language development and skills that are important for pre-readers to master.
- 📖 relate to reading because every word, sentence, paragraph, and story has a beginning, middle, and an end. Sequence is also closely related to prediction which is crucial in reading comprehension.
- 📖 allow children to anticipate a sequence of events; whether in a song, story or in daily life.

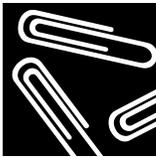


Critical Thinking Skills: Activities

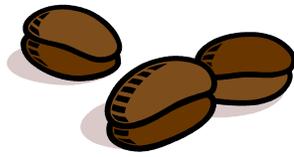
1. **Category Collage:** Children love to look at pictures in newspapers and magazines. Have the child look at print materials for pictures from a particular category. Categories could be people, food, toys, or animals. The child, or parent when appropriate, can cut out the pictures. Glue the pictures onto a sheet of construction paper. Parents can keep these collages to make a category scrapbook. The collages can be put into a binder, placed on the refrigerator or stapled to make a book.



2. **Sensational Sorting:** What may seem like a chore to parents can be exciting, thinking-skill practice for your child. Kitchens, laundry rooms, and garages are full of neat things for children to sort. Let children sort items such as
- utensils: spoons, forks, spatulas, or plastic dishes by size
 - Clothing/socks: match socks or clothing by owner, color, fabric, or type
 - Small items, buttons, bolts, nuts, nails. (for pre-schoolers with supervision)
3. **Muffin Tin Sort:** This activity not only allows the child to classify items, but to use the pincher grip while doing so (fine motor skill.) If a muffin tin is unavailable, an empty egg carton will do the trick.
- Mix up handfuls of small items: macaroni, buttons, pebbles, paper clips, bobby pins, pennies, beads or marbles. (Supervision is required as these small items may be choking hazards.)
 - Place and name a sample item in a section of the muffin tin.
 - Let your child sort the rest of the items into the correct sections.



paper clips



beans



pennies



marbles

4. **People Pictures:** Collect photographs of different people from newspapers, magazines, or family albums. Write or print category labels on index cards. Be sure that you place a sample photo under each category card. Let the child make columns of pictures under each heading by focusing certain characteristics. This is a beginner's graph!
5. **Beans, Buttons, Pennies:** Objects found in the house can be great for teaching patterns. Repeat a pattern of objects for a child. Make sure to give the example at least twice. Then, ask the child to repeat or complete the pattern.



Communication through Print: The Basics

Reading has value because it is both enjoyable and functional. Children value reading when they understand why people read. Since reading is a process requiring the decoding of a message, and writing is simply the process of encoding messages, writing is the simpler of the two activities; thus, early writing is intimately related to the acquisition of reading skills.

Communication through Print: The Benefits

Reading and Writing...

-  when they occur frequently, lead children to understand that reading and writing are forms of communication.
-  develop vocabulary, background knowledge and a framework for future information.
-  aid children in recognizing letters. Letter recognition is one of the tools the child will use to recognize particular words.
-  are vital to carrying and relaying information to function in life and lead to success in school.

Communication through Print: Activities

1. **Alphabet Activity:** On a piece of looseleaf, printer or construction paper, write 1 letter – very large. You can cut the letter out, or leave it on the paper. Together with a child, draw, paint or glue on items/pictures of things that start with that letter. For example:

R Glue on some grains of rice, draw a rabbit, paint a red dot....

The parent can display these around the house or use them to make a very special alphabet book for the child.

2. **Wonderful Words:** Label the child's environment. Together parent and child can label furniture, belongings, body parts, pets and even people by using index cards or post it notes to name objects the child knows in their home. The index card can lean against foods during snack time such as juice, milk, or cookie. "Rachel's Room" can be taped on the bedroom door. Head, arm, or leg sticky notes can be temporarily stuck to the child and parent. ☺ Replacing the labels or adding them for new items can be done quickly and continually.





3. Envelope Mailboxes: Mail is always fun to send and receive, especially for children. Mail does not have to be through the United Postal Service! It can be done at home.

-  Let a child decorate a 9”X12” envelope, or a shoebox to create simple a mailbox, one for each bedroom of the home.
-  Once decorated, they should be labeled such as Mommy’s Mailbox or Rachel’s Mailbox and taped or set outside to the bedroom doors.
-  Mail can be sent back and forth between family members. All forms of mail, not just formal letters, should be encouraged such as letter shapes, phrases, pictures, single words and even scribbles.



4. Treasure Hunt: Parents hide a favorite object, such as a toy or special snack, somewhere in their house. Clues are given to the child to find the object. A series of notes is a perfect way to give the clues. Children may need adult help in reading the words, but including pictures on the notes is very helpful and empowering to a child.

For example:

-  Look on your bed.  (On the bed have another note.)
-  Check behind the couch.  (On the couch have another note.)
-  The next clue is on the refrigerator.  (Continue the notes until finished.)
-  Start slowly by using just 2 or 3 notes. As the child learns the game, increase the challenge. (For preschoolers, limit to 5 steps.)



BookSpring Reading Recommendations:

For rhyme and repetition:

Silly Sally by Audrey Wood

One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish by Dr. Seuss

Read Aloud Rhymes for the Very Young, selected by Jack Prelutsky

Aserrín, Aserrán: Las canciones de la abuela by Alejandra Longo

Rin, Rin, Rin-Do, Re, Mi by Jose Luis Orozco

Great to read aloud!

Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak

The Cow That Went OINK by Bernard Most

Over in the Meadow by Olive A. Wadsworth

Is Your Mama a Llama? By Deborah Guarino

The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle

How Do Dinosaurs Say Goodnight? by Jane Yolen

For exploring, the senses and/or categorizing:

My Five Senses by Aiki

Hello Ocean by Pam Muñoz Ryan

Busy, Busy Town books by Richard Scarry

Richard Scarry's Best Word Book Ever by Richard Scarry

Baby Animals Touch and Feel Series by DK Publishing

Wild Animals/animales salvajes Touch and Feel Series by DK Publishing (bilingual)

For predicting, counting, or categorizing:

Mouse Count by Ellen Stoll Walsh

Are You My Mother? by P.D. Eastman

How Do Dinosaurs Count to Ten? by Jane Yolen & Mark Teague

The Hokey Pokey by Larry La Prise, Charles P. Macak, Taftt Baker

Goldilocks by James Marshall

The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle



BookSpring Website Recommendations:

www.bookspring.org

If you need to access the handbook or any other forms, this is the place to go. You will also find updates on BookSpring's events and lesson plan ideas.

<http://www.rif.org/parents/>

<http://www.rif.org/kids/leadingtoreading/en/grown-ups/articles/dearrif5.htm>

The first link is RIF National's Parent Website. It contains a wealth of information on book selection, developmental literacy milestones, and other resources. The second link contains age specific targeted tips and activities for parents on sharing books with their children. It also has on-line games for children.

<http://www.pbs.org/parents/>

<http://www.pbs.org/parents/readinglanguage/>

The first link is PBS's Parent Website, which has all kinds of great parenting advice (from health to games to advice on talking to kids.) The second address is their specific page on reading. It has all kinds of useful and interesting information, and by clicking on "en español" in the right corner, the entire site is available in Spanish as well. Has insight around what is best for certain age children when it comes to success in reading and writing. Also has a "book finder," option where you can search with parents by age, interest, and intended use for an appropriate book for their child.

<http://www.familit.org/>

This is the website of National Center for Family Literacy. It is fairly academic, but it has lots of good techniques and research on early literacy.

<http://www.bornlearning.org/default.aspx?id=33>

"Born Learning," is one of United Way's major initiatives. The entire page is accessible in Spanish and it contains all kinds of ideas for parents and educators about extending learning opportunities.

<http://www.211centraltexas.org/>

211 is an excellent place to begin the search for appropriate referrals. It is a free community helpline with information about a wide range of services that may be of assistance to our community and clients. You can also reach them via telephone by dialing: 2-1-1

