

Mark making ideas for you to try at home

Here are some mark making ideas that you can do at home with your child. You can choose to do them all or just a selection. These activities are designed to help build and develop the skills needed for writing. These activities will benefit both your child's fine motor and gross motor skills.

You might need to do lots of modelling, to begin with, but these activities will help provide opportunities to increase your child's confidence with mark making. You can also do these activities more than once and extend their learning, by keeping the activity but adding different utensils, different materials etc. You can also adapt these activities to include your child's interests.

Messy Play Activities

- Mark making in different types of food with a range of utensils; angel delight, porridge oats, rice, flour, hot chocolate powder, icing sugar etc
- Mark make in different materials; compost, sand, cornflour with water makes a gloop
- Using different objects as "pencils" to make marks with e.g carrots, sticks, cutlery, paintbrushes etc
- Make potato prints or prints with vegetables in paint
- If you have an old shower curtain or wipeable tablecloth can you hook it up outside and use shaving foam/squirty cream/bath foam to make marks? – This activity will encourage big movements and because it is vertical it will encourage them to work at a different angle – you could also encourage them to clean it afterwards!
- Zip lock bags with different things in such as paint or hair gel to make patterns
- Try finger painting – can they isolate the different fingers
- Put paint or food colouring into the bottom of an ice cube tray, fill with water and freeze. You can then use these as paints and mark make on paper. Alternatively, you could make a big lump of ice by putting some water in a bowl, freeze and then get the paints out for your child to paint and decorate the ice.

Chalk or felt tips

- Have they got a chalk board or whiteboard that they can draw on?
- Use chalk on the floor outside or on walls
- Attach chalk or felt tips to cars with masking tape and stick paper to the floor, see what marks they can make when pushing and playing with the cars
- Can you tape paper to the wall if they don't have an easel? Encourage drawing with felt tips vertically

Writing in play

- Use mark making in your role play e.g playing shops write a shopping list, playing kitchens or cafes write a menu or take an order

- Take some photos then print them out or look at them, use their communication aids to help them talk about what they are doing, did they like/not like it then mark make alongside the picture
- Stick paper underneath a small table and encourage your child to draw on the paper under the table – stretching will help use those shoulder muscles
- Have they got a doodle board that they can make marks on?
- Could they write a letter or draw a picture and post it to a local care home – the residents love receiving post at the moment and they could use their daily walk to go and post it. They could also send a card or picture to their own grandparents or family as I'm sure they will love this too!
- At school we have an oversized keyboard, it doesn't need to be oversized but they like to tap the keyboard to write and an adult will sit with them and sound out the letters that they are pressing. This might be something that you can do at home

Activities that help to develop gross motor skills

- Do some heavy muscle work to help strengthen those arms and shoulders such as sweeping the floor, digging, moving a little wheelbarrow around
- Do you have pom poms or scarves at home? You could encourage them to do some dancing to help strengthen those muscles. Focus on moving those arms up and down (big arm movements) little circles with your wrists, big circles with your arms and up and down in front of you (for more inspiration look at squiggle while you wiggle from Shonette Spread the Happiness)
- Using water sprays and sponges to clean windows, wash cars, clean outside play toys will help to build the muscles in the shoulders and benefit gross motor skills. It can also help with regulation
- Painting with water outside on walls, fences, windows and the floor

Activities that help to develop fine motor skills

- Do some dough disco (Shonette Spread the Happiness on Youtube) This will help to work those fingers and wrists. Or play with playdough you can squash and squeeze it, make finger marks in it, roll it into a ball or sausage etc. You could even collect some leaves, flowers etc from outside to put into the playdough. Or use herbs and press it into the dough
- Make some pastry or dough, lots of prodding, squeezing, kneading etc and then use stamps or cutters to make patterns
- Painting on tin foil allows your child to paint on a different texture, they might want to scrunch and feel it as they do it
- Use natural materials to make your own paintbrushes e.g sticks or leaves attached to paintbrushes by string or elastic bands.
- Do you have any bingo doobers or stampers that they can use? This will allow them to explore making marks with different tools and develop fine motor skills
- On the ipad you can download touchscreen drawing apps or cause and effect apps

- Making collages, cutting pictures out of catalogues, newspapers and magazines, ripping scrap paper, gluing and sticking

Please send Miss Evans photos of any activities you choose to do either to her email or on Evidence For Learning. We love to see your pictures!