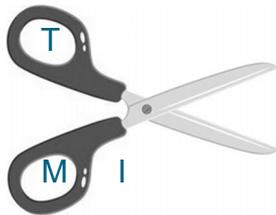


CUTTING AND SCISSOR SKILLS

INTRODUCTION

Cutting is an important pre-writing skill as it develops the same muscles needed to actively hold the pencil. Cutting develops the active and stabilising sides of the hand.

It is important for the child to achieve and experience a controlled grasp/release cutting action. This will help them produce a satisfactory end product and will develop their confidence and motivation. It is therefore important to carefully grade cutting tasks. Allow the child to practice and succeed at each level before the next stage is introduced. The mature scissor grasp is as follows:



T= Thumb

M= Middle Finger

I= Index Finger

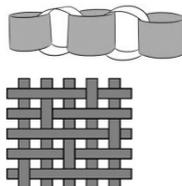
TREATMENT AIMS

- To encourage a smooth and controlled grasp/release cutting action.
- Through cutting, to develop the components necessary for a functional pencil grip.

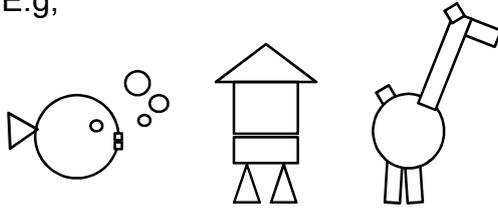
Graded Activities:

1. Prior to cutting paper, practice cutting thin plasticine sausages or straws. Progress to cutting short random snips which involves simply opening and closing scissors. Snip paper to make collages, leaves for trees etc.
2. Begin by cutting thin card. The added support and resistance assists with control. Once the child has mastered this progress to finer paper.
3. Mark lines for the child to cut along. Initially make the cutting lines thick so that it does not require as much skill to cut on the line. Once the child has more control over the scissors make the lines thinner.
4. Begin cutting straight lines. Practice these until the child can achieve a smooth, neat edge and a controlled grasp / release cutting action. The card ends can be used to make a variety of things. For example, by stapling the ends together you can make;

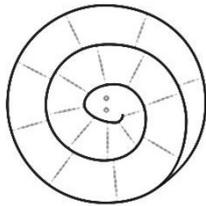
- a. A paper chain
- b. A funny face
- c. A worm
- d. Weaving



5. Once the straight lines have been mastered move onto circles, then triangles, then irregular shapes. Keep the shapes big to begin with. The shapes can be used to make pictures. E.g;

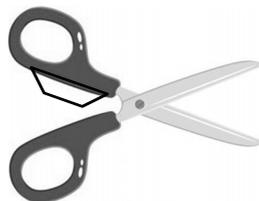


6. Once the child can cut out angular shapes introduce a spiral/ whirly line/ snake to cut along.



7. Provide verbal cueing and promoting initially, talking the child through the cutting process. For example, remind the child to “open and close” the scissors, or to keep moving their assisting hand when cutting out a circle.
8. Many children close the scissors completely on each cut, which makes it difficult to achieve a smooth edge. It results in a stop/start action rather than a sliding fluid movement. Demonstrate how to open the scissors again before they close the whole way.

To assist the child with learning this action, a small piece of eraser can be taped onto the handles to prevent the scissors closing fully.



9. Through practice, a child learns to manipulate scissors well and is able to cut out simple figure shapes. Introduce drawing around stencils and cutting out the shapes/forms. Encourage free play activities like cutting out pictures from a magazine to stick in a scrapbook.

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