

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR
SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA STUDENTS
RECEIVING OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY SERVICES

The School District of Philadelphia encourages parents and caregivers to find ways to keep their children engaged in educational activities during this extended period of school closures.

The District is making Learning Guides available as a resource during this time. These optional Learning Guides (K-12) are offered for personal use. The Learning Guides are aligned to areas of support for students with disabilities, parents and students may select which Learning Guides to use.

Included within this learning guide are supplementary resources related to the area of occupational therapy.

Many students attending the School District of Philadelphia receive Occupational Therapy services to support their participation in their education. Below is a description of activities to help your child to continue to work toward achieving the goals on their IEP/504 plans. Pick and choose activities that will support your child's development.

Fine Motor, Visual Motor, and Perceptual Skills

Cutting Tips

- Bold the outline with a highlighter or marker.
- Hold scissors and paper with “thumbs on top.” You can place a sticker on your child’s thumb nail as a reminder.
- Begin first with cutting straight lines, then basic shapes, then complex shapes.
- Use hand-over-hand assistance as needed.

Hand Strengthening Activities

- Hand weight bearing activities, such as wheelbarrow walks, crab walks, push-ups, and crawling.
- Lego and Playdoh play: roll into balls, make a snake, press with stamps, hide and find pegs or beads, etc.
- Pinch clothespins, paint with eyedroppers, & pick up items with tweezers.
- Crafts, such as beading, lacing, ripping paper to make a collage, and hole punch activities.
- Use a spray bottle to play in the bath, help with cleaning, etc.
- For in-hand manipulation, place coins in a piggy bank or make your own with a coffee can with a slot in the top.

Visual Skills Activities

- When reading use an index card or ruler to help isolate one line or word at a time.
- Activities such as mazes, cryptograms, Dot to Dot, word finds, puzzles, ball or balloon toss, etc.
- To view more visual perceptual activities, visit the free website: www.eyecanlearn.com(Open external link)

Writing Skills

Proper Posture When Writing on a Table Top

- Feet flat on the floor (A footstool or thick book can be placed under the feet to assist if feet do not reach the floor.) Sit upright in chair.
- Wrist supported on table. Paper stabilized by nonwriting hand.



Letter Formation Practice

- Trace letters in Playdoh with beans, beads or small pegs.
- Trace letters with plastic toothpicks on cork board or styrofoam.
- Practice letter formations using small stickers.
- Practice letter formations with small buttons, macaroni, jewel rocks or pennies.
- Practice letter formations with pipe cleaners.
- Practice letter formations in shaving cream.
- Practice letter formations in finger paint.

Spacing between words

- Have child use their finger or a Popsicle stick after each word to create an appropriate space before beginning the next word.
- Use graph paper to give a visual cue for spacing out words and letters.



Letter and word placement

- Draw a green line along the left margin of the paper and a red line on the right to signal where to “start” and “stop.”
- If your child has difficulty writing on the line, darken the baseline with a marker.
- Use a highlighter to indicate where to write between lines.

Typing

- To work on typing skills, visit one of the free websites below:
 - www.freetypinggame.net(Open external link)
 - www.funtotype.com(Open external link) (Open external link)
 - <http://games.senselang.org>(Open external link)
 - <http://www.freetypinghaus.com>(Open external link) (Open external link)

Practice Writing Skills

- Schedule a 10 minute interval daily to practice writing.
- Encourage your child to write about a preferred topic of choice.
- Help your child make greeting cards for family and friends.
- Write a grocery list together.
- Make lists: favorite TV programs, movies, things to pack before a trip.

Home Program Improve Pencil Grasp

1.) Slanted Surface for written work

- Single best activity to improve hand strength and pencil grasp
- Work at a table-top easel, or simply get a fat (3") binder and turn it sideways to create a slanted surface
- Use a short pencil with pencil grip
- Can do mazes, dot-to-dots, coloring, writing, or whatever interests your child. When crayoning, use 1" length crayons to facilitate tripod grasp; can also use markers, which require less pressure

2.) Small manipulatives daily (encourage bent thumb during pinch activities) (or OT can develop hand strengthening program with putty)

- String small beads or noodles
- Play game with small pieces, ie Hi-Q, Othello, cards
- Pick-up sticks
- Playdough or clay– squeeze, roll, poke, make things
- Building toy, such as legos, k-nex
- Pick up cheerios with tweezers and place in container
- Put pennies on washcloth and pick-up one at a time and put in a bank; have a race with someone
- Twist nuts and bolts together and apart
- Squeeze a bubble pack with thumb and index finger to pop bubbles
- Place clothespin on box or ruler; see how many you can do in 3 minutes, then try to beat your record next time
- Projects such as weaving, potholder board
- Make a picture with little rubber stamps
- Help out in the kitchen, ie., stir/pour/open containers



Self Help Skills

Toilet Training

- Look for signs for readiness, like discomfort when wet or soiled or staying dry for several hours at a time.
- Have your child wear easy to manage clothing (i.e. sweatpants).
- Establish a schedule according to wetness pattern.
- Toileting symbol may be helpful for requests.
- Use charts for positive reinforcement and celebrate each success.

Shoe Tying

- Children typically require demonstration, explanation, and lots of practice to master tying their shoes.
- Remember there are two common methods for tying laces; the bunny ear approach using two loops, or the wrap-around technique, making one single loop then wrapping the other string around and tucking through. Try both and see what works best for your child.
- Be sure laces are long enough so that your child can make large loops if needed.
- Practicing knots on a jump rope or pipe cleaner can also make it easier and more fun.
- Check out this video for shoe tying on Youtube:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TqPCGGHoxsE>

Dressing

- Practice dressing skills through pretend play with dress-up clothes or dolls.
- Help your child up until the very last step to allow him/her to successfully complete the dressing task. Do less and less as your child can do more and more. For example:



- Assist with fastening the zipper but allow the child to pull it up.
- Help your child put each leg into his/her pants but have your child pull his/her pants up independently.
- Insert a button halfway into the hole, but let your child pull it fully through.
- Teach your child to locate the tag first to identify the front when putting on shirts or jackets.

Hand Washing

1. Use Soap
2. Scrub palm to palm
3. Scrub back of hands
4. Wash between fingers
5. Wash thumbs
6. Scrub fingernails
7. Wash wrists
8. Rinse hands
9. Dry Hands

It is recommended everyone washes his/her hands for at least 20 seconds. Sing "Happy Birthday" twice that is 20 seconds

WASH YOUR HANDS



1
WATER AND SOAP



2
PALM TO PALM



3
BETWEEN FINGERS



4
FOCUS ON THUMBS



5
BACK OF HANDS



6
FOCUS ON WHISTS

Self-Regulation and Sensory Processing

Self-regulation is the ability to control one's thoughts, emotional responses, actions and level of alertness/attention. It can be influenced by several different factors including sensory processing. **Sensory processing** is how we process information from the world around us as well as what is going on inside of us to produce an appropriate behavioral response. Many students in the School District of Philadelphia are receiving occupational therapy services to provide sensory strategies to improve students ability to participate in his/her education. Below is a list of sensory activities you can do at home to help your child with self-regulation and sensory processing.

1 || **Row, Row, Row Your Boat** – Have two children position themselves so that they're facing each other in a tailor sitting position (otherwise known as "criss cross applesauce" in my house:). Tell them to reach out and hold hands in front of their bodies and begin to alternately push and pull so that their upper bodies rock forward and backward with each motion, like they're rowing a boat.

2 || **Playing on Playground Equipment** – Playing on **swings**, slides, **seesaws**, and merry go rounds are great ways to stimulate the movement system!

3 || **Rolling, Tumbling, and Somersaulting** – We love laying out our **tumbling mat** and letting kids go wild, showing off their favorite acrobatic moves! Or, take it outside! The only mess in sight will be a few grass stains from rolling around in the yard!

4 || **Rough House Play** – Get kids upside down, spun around, and rolled around with some fun rough house play! Great fun!

5 || **Balance Activities** – See if kids can walk on the curb; walk across a bed, a couch, or a floor covered in cushions; walk while balancing items on their heads; or balance on some **stepping stones**! No fuss and no mess!

6 || **Movement Games** – Try games like **Twister** that get kids trying all kinds of movements and positions with their bodies.

7 || **Kids Yoga** – This is another great way to get kids into lots of different positions without any materials or mess at all! Check out Cosmic Kids Yoga on Youtube.

8 || **Playing With Couch Cushions** – No squishy shaving cream or gritty sand to clean up here – just throw the cushions back on the couch when you're done, and clean-up is complete! Kids will love these fun couch cushion games!



9 || [Jumping Activities](#) – Jumping off of a step or other raised surface, or [jumping rope](#) are great sensory activities.

10 || Climbing Activities – Get kids climbing trees, [stairs](#), and even [climbing up the slide](#) .

11 || [Making Your Own Roller Coaster](#) – Got a bed sheet and a few kids? That's all you'll need for this fun activity that requires kids to pull against resistance.

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12 || [Blindfold Play](#) – This is a great way to challenge the auditory system, as kids have to learn to move and navigate using only their sense of hearing.

13 || Making Your Own Musical Toys – Try [making your own instruments](#) or simply dropping different small objects (e.g. Legos, paper clips) in clean empty food containers to make your own simple mess-free shakers!

14 || [Playing Music That Gets Kids Moving](#) – Kids songs are great for encouraging kids to listen to and follow directions and to work on processing, timing, and sequencing.

15 || Smelling Scavenger Hunt – Take kids out into a garden and see which plants and flowers they can identify by smell!

16 || [Playing With Mouth Noises](#): Try buzzing like a bee, clicking your tongue, humming, or blowing raspberries!

17 || Making Funny Faces: Play with making silly faces in a mirror or imitating each other's funny faces: open your mouth wide, stick your tongue out, smile, frown, or fill your cheeks up with air!

18 || Drinking from a water bottle with a straw or drinking through silly straws

19 || [Playing With Flashlights!](#)



20 || Drawing and Tracing Activities – These activities are great for working on visual motor and visual perceptual skills.

21 || Playing Matching, Sorting and Categorizing Games – Sort or match by color, shape, size, or any other visual attribute!

22 || Playing I Spy – Play the old fashioned way, or try this [fun twist on the game!](#)

23 || Playing Follow the Leader Games – This is a great way to get kids to pay close attention to detail and a fun way to combine a movement activity with visual input! Try one of our favorites: [Mirror, Mirror!](#)

24 || Making Sensory Bottles – Like a miniature game of hide and seek, sensory bottles are a way to keep the mess contained, letting kids search with their eyes to find small objects. Just drop small letter beads, small toys, or other manipulatives into an empty water bottle and then fill it up the rest of the way with dry rice or beans.

25 || Taking a Bath – The ultimate way to get rid of the mess? Get in the tub! Check out these great activities for [bath time play](#) – an awesome way to target the tactile system!

26 || Putting the Mess in a Bag – You can still use shaving cream, finger paint, and other messy materials without making a huge mess. Simply seal the messy material inside a large sealable bag and let kids squish away!

27 || Encourage a variety of play/work positions such as standing, lying on the floor, kneeling.

28 || Offer your child a chewy snack to provide organizing sensory input (i.e. Twizzlers, dried fruits, bagels, etc.).

29 || “Heavy work” activities (carrying heavy items, push/pull activities, etc.)

30 || Push-ups on the floor or push-ups against the wall.



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Lowercase Formation Chart



Magic c up like a bump back down bump

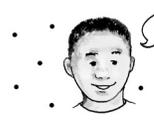
(Illustrations: a rabbit, a person jumping, and two shoes bumping)



dive down swim up and over down



dive down swim up and over around bump



Dots for you!

• dot

down bump



Magic c



Dots for you!

• dot

down

turn



Magic c up like a up higher back down bump

(Illustrations: a rabbit, a person jumping, and two shoes bumping)



down bump the line kick! slide away




start hit the ball run the bases stop



Start at the top!

down bump the line

(Illustration: two shoes bumping)



At first, curve up. Then go straight down.

up

down bump the line cross



start with n swim up and over down (m has two humps)



Magic c up like a bump back down bump

turn

(Illustrations: a rabbit, a person jumping, and two shoes bumping)



dive down swim up and over down (n has one hump)

Lowercase Formation Chart



Magic c keep on going stop



bump
down, travel, up back down bump




dive down swim up and over around bump



slide down slide up



Magic c bump
up like a back down U turn



slide down and up slide down and up




dive down swim up and over



slide down slide down



little Magic c little Magic c turn down curve around



slide down slide down



Start at the top!

down bump the line

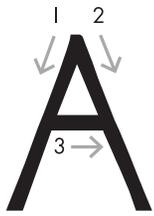
Directions for crossing †:
Left-handed Right-handed

cross



go across slide down go across

Capital Formation Chart



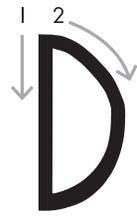
Big Line
Big Line
Little Line



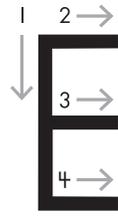
Big Line
Little Curve
Little Curve



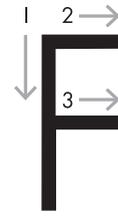
Big Curve



Big Line
Big Curve



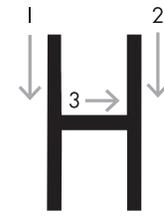
Big Line
Little Line
Little Line
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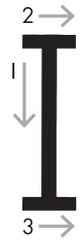
Big Line
Little Line
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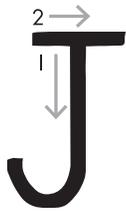
Big Curve
Little Line
Little Line



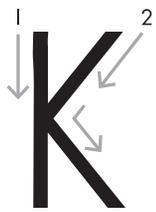
Big Line
Big Line
Little Line



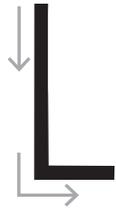
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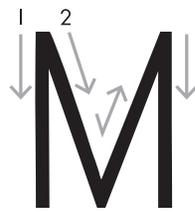
Big Line
Turn
Little Line



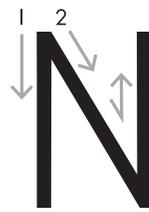
Big Line
Little Line
Little Line



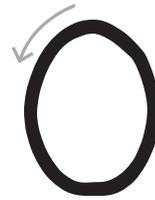
Big Line
Little Line



Big Line
Big Line
Big Line
Big Line



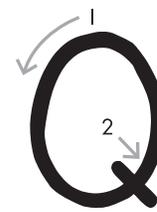
Big Line
Big Line
Big Line



Big Curve
Go around



Big Line
Little Curve



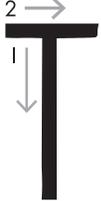
Big Curve
Go around
Little Line



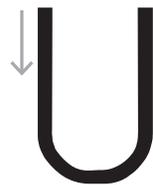
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Little Curve
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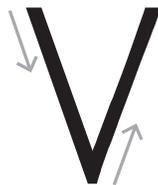
Little Curve
Turn
Little Curve



Big Line
Little Line



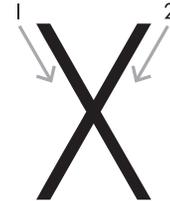
Big Line
Turn
Big Line



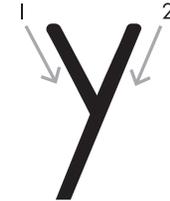
Big Line
Big Line



Big Line
Big Line
Big Line
Big Line



Big Line
Big Line



Little Line
Big Line



Little Line
Big Line
Little Line