

Week 2 March 23:

You got to move in order to learn!

Hi families,

I am sure everyone is enjoying getting their young ones to sit down and do work. So much fun right? Well, we have the same difficulty at times at school. Kid's bodies naturally want to move. That is how their bodies develop. OT puts a lot of movement in our therapy sessions to help those bodies develop and to work on lots of other things like eye-hand coordination, visual skills, vestibular systems and so on. I will always throw out some fun ideas each week as well as table work, so let's start with the fun ones first:

Balloon fun: All you need is a balloon. They make the perfect toy for eye-hand coordination and motor planning. Play to keep it off the floor. The game is simple. You bat the balloon back and forth with the goal not to let it hit the floor. If it hits the floor there is an explosion and you have to drop to the floor. I like to add in explosion sounds! The nice thing about this very simple game is you can change it up. Instead of two hands, only one hand can be used. Forget hands, use only your head or just knees or feet. Make sure that if the balloon breaks it is properly disposed of, because it can be a chokable.

Clean up with your toes: All you need for this game is some small items to pick up with your child's flexed toes and a basket or bowl to drop the toys in. This game works on motor planning and core strength. The student basically picks up an item from the floor with their toes and drops them in a basket. This can be done sitting, standing, or from a crab position with the student holding their bum off the floor while resting on their hands and feet. It doesn't take long before your kid will feel it in their abdomen how hard they are working. If you have a really active kid, have them crab walk over to items spread around the room that they can put in their hand until they are in front of the basket. Once there, they have to pick it up again with their toes. You can add in colors if you have enough items on different colors. The student has to scan and pick up only one color at a time.

Chain moves: This game is another really simple but fun one. All it takes is two or more people. This is how it works. One person does a movement like jumping in the air. The next person does the same jump and adds another movement. The first person jumps, adds the last movement, and makes a new one. You can keep this up until the chain is broken because a movement is forgotten. This game works on visual memory, motor planning, and focus. It also gives your child the movement their bodies need.

Okay, now for the table work.

First and Second Graders- work on letter dive letters p and h. Just like r, n, and m, these letters start with a line down. You can print off the Handwriting Without Tears page I have sent. If you don't have a printer, use the first grade paper and follow the same steps, but start at the middle, split line for p, the top line for h. With p, dive down under the bottom line, swim back up to the middle line, curve over and make a belly that lands on the bottom line. With h, again you can either print out the form I have sent you or again, use the first grade paper. Start at the top line. Dive down till you bump the bottom line. Swim up to the split middle line. Go up and over with a hill that bumps the bottom line.

Third Grade- Same thing as above but I have sent you pages to work on that are off the HWT second grade printing book. If you don't have a printer, don't sweat. Just practice with regular lined paper. What is most important is to make sure lower case p has a tail that goes under the bottom line and the belly lands on the bottom line. With h, make sure your child starts high enough that when they finish it doesn't look like a n. Starting top down is key for future speed when writing. Practice words that have h and p in them like

hop hip happy hope hoppy hamper hippy happen

Check the letters size and placement. The student can trace them and then write them. Make sure you are watching them when they write, so you know they are using correct direction.

I love Handwriting Without Tears for writing practice. It was written by an OT and is multisensory. You can get 90 days free access to their learning materials if you go to lwtears.com First grade get the yellow book. Second and third, use the green. There is also keyboarding without tears work, so check it out.

Take care guys. I will be sending more visual perceptual and visual motor work midweek. Keep checking back for my posts on the Hull Public schools webpage.

Thanks,

Ms. Faherty