

LETTER FORMATION PROGRAMME

This programme focuses on utilising the sense of touch to help a child to develop an understanding and awareness of the way letters are formed



EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- Chalkboard
- Chalk
- Plastercine
- Sandpaper
- Coloured pens / pencils / crayons

ACTIVITIES:

- ☺ Using some plastercine the child should roll out into a long snake using both hands together. Use the snake to form letters. Use a different coloured dot of plastercine to mark the starting point of the letter. CONCENTRATE ON 1 LETTER AT A TIME YO AVOID CONFUSION.
- ☺ The child runs their finger over the letter several times, as they do so talk about the shape of the letter with the child. Ask them to feel the shape of it. Starting with their eyes open at first and then with their eyes closed.
- ☺ Using a sheet of sandpaper and a dot on it as a starting point. Ask the child to draw with their finger the shape which they have just made with plastercine and have been feeling. Repeat several times. At first work with the plastercine letter present so they can check on it.
- ☺ As progress is made, remove the shape and ask the child to draw with their finger from memory on the sandpaper.
- ☺ Using the plastercine letters, which the child makes fresh each time, place the letter(s) on enlarged lined paper with the ascenders and descenders in the right places. Ask the child to copy these letters. Mark on the paper the starting point for each letter and encourage the child to always start in the right place and make the letter in the correct position. If they are uncertain about the direction use the tactile method again to reinforce how the letter is formed.
- ☺ Once the child has the formation the letter clear when copying, remove the prompts and ask the child to make and draw different letters from memory. Vary the writing implements to make it more interesting e.g. crayons, gel pens, felt tips, coloured pencils etc.
- ☺ While making individual letters talk about the sounds they make and find words/objects that start with that letter.

Other methods which can be used to help re-inforce correct letter formation include the following:

-  Sky Writing – the child holds their arm out in front of them and writes the letter in the sky using large arm movements, describing the direction and order of the strokes as they do so. Repeat several times. Do this with eyes open at first and then with eyes closed.
-  Rainbow writing – draw a large letter on a blackboard or a large piece of paper stuck onto a wall. At the same time describe how the letter is formed, where it starts, the direction of the strokes and where it stops. Also say the name and sound of the letter. The child traces over the letter several times with a different coloured piece of chalk/pencil each time. As they do so get them to describe the direction and order of strokes again and the name and sound of the letter.

GENERAL POINTERS:

- Work at the child's pace.
- Go back over previously learnt work to make sure it has been retained.
- Keep sessions short and focused.
- Praise effort as well as success.
- Allow child to feel a sense of achievement in what they are doing.

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