

Handwriting Difficulties in the Classroom

April 28, 2015

Classroom Modifications for Improving Handwriting

How many times have you asked the question, "how can I help this student make their writing legible?" Try some of the following strategies...

Problem: Poor spacing, floating letters, and decreased line adherence.

Solutions:

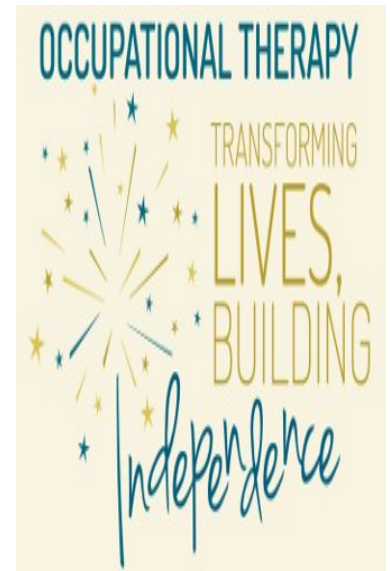
Use different types of adaptive paper (i.e. enlarged graph paper, raised line paper, sky to ground paper) to provide visual cues.

Use pencil, finger, or Popsicle stick to indicate spaces between words.

Pre-highlight or color top and bottom lines differently to provide visual cue.

Provide visual cue for starting point when writing letters.

Provide a model of print or cursive letters at the student's desks. For Math problems, provide student with graph paper or use lined paper horizontally.



Poor Pencil Grasp

Problem: Poor pencil grasp, such as all five fingers on the writing instrument, wrist bent towards the palm, elbow is not resting on the table, fingers wrapped around writing instrument.

Solutions:

At developmental age of 6.5 years a student demonstrates a tripod grasp with a writing instrument which is with the thumb and index finger pinching the writing instrument supported the

middle finger and it resting in the web space (i.e. eraser pointed toward the body). However, there are acceptable alternative grasps for some students. Suggested grip is "The Pencil Grip" or "Grotto Grip" Use a small object to be held by the student's ring and pinkie fingers

Poor Posture

Problem: Poor posture, student falls out of chair, slumps in the chair, decreased posture doing table top activity.

Solutions:

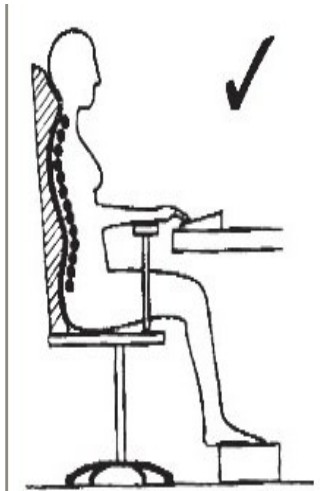
Desk height should be 2 inches above the elbow when the student's arms are at their sides.

Use a three inch binder as a slant board in order to bring

material up higher for the student visually.

Feet should be placed flatly on the floor. A box or phone book can be secured to the floor with tape or Velcro.

The student's hips and knees should be at a 90 degree bend.



Poor Pencil Pressure

Problem: Pencil pressure either is too light, or too dark

Solutions:

Use alternative writing instruments for too light pressure such as markers, and soft lead pencils, or dycem mat under the paper.

Use alternative writing instruments for too dark pressure such as mechanical pencils, and maintaining a tripod grip.

Student should participate in hand strengthening exercises. Just ask your OT !!

