

SETTING UP YOUR CLASSROOM: KINDERGARTEN

TIP 1: Choose writing tools that are larger in diameter and shorter in length.

- Larger diameter tools are easier for little hands to grasp and use.
- Shorter length tools (1-2 inches) encourage the students to use a proper 3-finger grasp and hold the tool lower down in the correct spot.



Primary Pencils
(cut them in two or three)

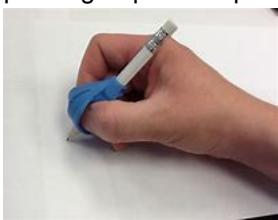


Broken Crayons

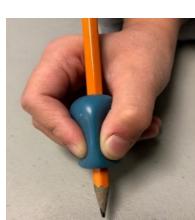


Pip-Squeak Markers

- Consider having a variety of pencil grips available when students need more help with their pencil grasp development.



(The Grotto Grip)



(The Pencil Grip)



(Sakolla)

TIP 2: Incorporate working on vertical or slanted surfaces.

- Vertical surfaces may increase visual attention and improve posture, wrist and hand position.
 - Use easels, chalkboards and/or Smart Boards.
 - Encourage students to complete activities while lying on their stomachs (propped up on their elbows).
 - Use slant boards (make by placing a clipboard on top of an empty four-inch binder).
 - Secure a Lego base plate to a wall, which allows students to build out from a vertical surface.
 - Write on mirrors or windows with dry erase markers.
 - Use iPads propped on a slant board or by using the prop provided on the case.



TIP 3: Choose cutting supplies that are easy for beginners.

- Consider using thicker paper like construction paper, card stock or paint colour cards which are easier to manipulate.
- Create "eyes" on the scissor thumb loop (the "eyes" should be looking upward at the student, the scissor blades are the "mouth" and should always point away from the student's body).



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- Use spring-loaded or self-opening scissors (e.g. Loop or Koopy) for students who have a difficult time opening and closing regular scissors.



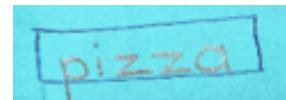
TIP 4: Set up classroom with a universal design that addresses different student needs.

- Have different table and chair heights available in the classroom. When seated, a student's feet should be flat on the floor and the table should be 1-2 inches above their bent elbow.
- Some students may benefit from their cubby/locker being at the end of the row to allow for more space and easier access.
- Incorporate regular movement breaks throughout the day to help your students stay calm, alert and focused. Save the last few minutes of every lesson to get your students moving before starting the next activity.
- Set up an area with comfortable seating and access to calming activities (e.g. reading, listening to music with headphones or deep breathing).



TIP 5: Choose centre activities that incorporate fine motor and visual motor skills.

- Use a variety of tools to build hand and finger control, strength and coordination (e.g. tweezers, clothespins, stamps, stencils, play dough, scissors, cutters or rollers).
- As students develop their printing, provide paper that has large boxes or bold spaces for letter placement.



TIP 6: Contact the Occupational Therapist at your school for more suggestions.