

## Pre-braille Readiness Activities Video Transcript, March, 2021

### Pre-braille Readiness Activities.

Developing fine motor skills is important for the visually impaired student that will learn to read and write Braille. Increasing tactile sensitivity, strength, dexterity and coordination in the hands will prepare the visually impaired learner for tracking, scanning and reading Braille, as well as writing using a Perkins Braille.

When the early learner is given objects to explore, encourage the child to manipulate the objects by banging, shaking, squeezing, poking, pushing and moving its various parts. The following are just a few age neutral activities to help develop fine motor skills.

Playing with play-doh is a fun activity that helps strengthen and increase flexibility of the palm, hand, thumb, fingers and wrists. With hand over hand support the teacher can demonstrate how to shape the play-doh into balls, roll logs and flatten the shapes into pancakes, model how to use cookie cutters to create different shapes and show the learner how to create textures and patterns by pressing holes, drawing lines and creating indentations into the play-doh using a plastic fork.

Sorting small objects like lentils and rice is a great way to practice using fine motor skills and increased tactile sensitization. To enrich this activity the teacher could include a story and puppets for imaginary play.

Beading is another activity that can begin with the young learner manipulating objects with large holes then moving to large beads and gradually progressing to smaller beads. The learner can explore the shapes sizes and textures all while developing their fine motor skills when sorting selecting and stringing the beads to create a variety of satisfying projects. The learner will require initial support by the teacher to the understanding of a hole in a bead and threading the string through it. Teachers can again extend this tactile activity by introducing counting and pattern making.

Lacing cards is another satisfying art activity. The student can begin by using a hole puncher to create various patterns in card stock paper. Squeezing the hole puncher helps to build strength in the fingers hands and wrists. The lacing activity can be a challenging task as the learner uses

their fingers to track and find the holes in the cards as well as navigate the ribbon in and out of each hole to create a tactile pattern.

There are many more stimulating motivating and movement-based activities that help build readiness for Braille reading and writing. While these activities are excellent for continued practice of fine motor skills they are also purposeful and provide needed sensory and tactile input.