

# PRE-WRITING SKILLS

BILATERAL INTEGRATION



FREE  
dice &  
spinners

LIZS-EARLY-LEARNING-SPOT.COM

## 2-handed activities!

## BILATERAL INTEGRATION

Being able to coordinate our two hands truly helps with writing because it is a two-handed task. We write with one hand and we steady our paper with the other. We might need to move our paper around to a more comfortable position. We also need to be able to use an eraser and sharpen our pencils – definitely two-handed skills!

Since it's one of the more complex fine motor abilities it takes time to develop and kids need lots of practice. Encouraging a child's independence can really help. For example, putting toothpaste on their toothbrush, doing up zips and buttons, taking the lid off the peanut butter jar. If we constantly step in and do these tasks for them, we're giving them less practice time. So let them have a go as often as you can!

## USING THIS ACTIVITY

The idea behind this post is to give children the opportunity to practice bilateral integration by setting up a small area with 6 tasks that they can do quickly.

Decide which item you want your child to use from the following pages and print it onto card. Construct the die if you're using that. If you want to use a spinner you can add a brad if you have one, or teach your child to spin a paper clip held in place by the tip of a pencil (this is also a brilliant 2-handed task, but pretty tricky for little ones). The spinner will probably work better / last longer if it's laminated.

Lay out an area near your child with 6 different bilateral integration activities that are challenging for your child, but not so hard they'll get frustrated and quit.

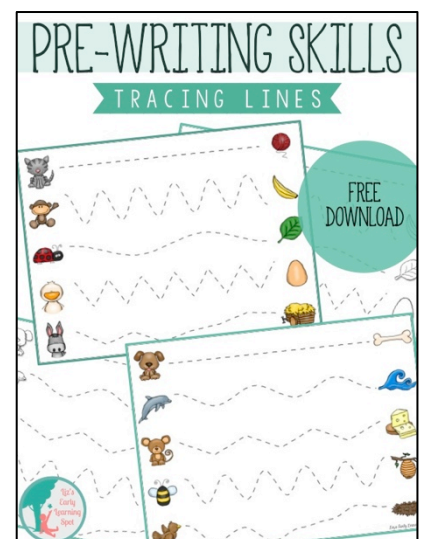
Have them roll the die or flick the spinner and see what it lands on. Then pick up that activity and work on it for a bit before spinning again and trying another activity. Children can work on these activities for a very short time, say 20-30 seconds, or they can go for a few minutes depending on their attention span and how much they enjoy each specific activity. It's not a race!

## CHOOSE YOUR ACTIVITIES

I have listed some ideas on the next page, but feel free to design your own fun activities!

I hope your children enjoy this activity and get tons of practice using their hands!

**If you get the urge to share this document with your friends, please resist! Send them along to the blog instead to download it for themselves. It really helps protect my work and 'keep the lights on,' as it were.**





## TWO-HANDED ACTIVITIES

There are 6 bilateral integration activities indicated on the dice and spinners: pulling a zip up and down, twisting lids on and off, threading objects onto string, clipping pegs onto paper, tearing or cutting and writing or drawing. There are examples of each activity listed below but feel free to adapt them any way you like!

### ZIP

If you have a zipper on its own, this is perfect since it's small and doesn't have the bulk of clothes getting in the way. But if not, just grab an item that has a zipper and place it nearby. For most very young children actually lining up the zipper and connecting it will be too difficult, so just encourage them to move the zip up and down, with one hand manipulating the zip and the other steadying the clothing or stabilising the base of the zip.

### TWIST

Find a bottle or jar that has a lid to twist on and off. Consider the size of your child's hands and whether they'd be better off with a smaller or larger item. I like to use herb bottles such as the one in the main graphic above because not only can you twist the lid on and off, kids can also flip the top of the lid up and down which gives them another activity. Of course, it's your decision whether you give them a bottle that's empty or not!!

### THREAD

Threading one object onto string takes enormous concentration and effort for little ones and a great deal of coordination. Fortunately we can make it simpler or more challenging depending on what our children need.

Simpler: Use pipe cleaners (chenille sticks) or a chopstick or pencil rather than string so it's easier to manipulate and hold in place. Use items with larger holes such as pasta, straws, circular-type breakfast cereals.

More difficult: Use thin wire as a stepping stone from the simpler items and then progress to string or wool. Use smaller pasta or beads.

### CLIP

Use small pegs, paperclips or kid versions of bulldog clips that they can attach to paper or card. They'll need to use one hand for the peg and the other to steady the paper.

### TEAR AND CUT

Using 2 hands to tear paper or card is great fun and much easier than cutting, so if your child is too young for scissors get them tearing first. They may need help with the first little rip. It's a great way to use recycle paper / newspapers / magazines etc. If you are using scissors, make sure they're child friendly and age appropriate!

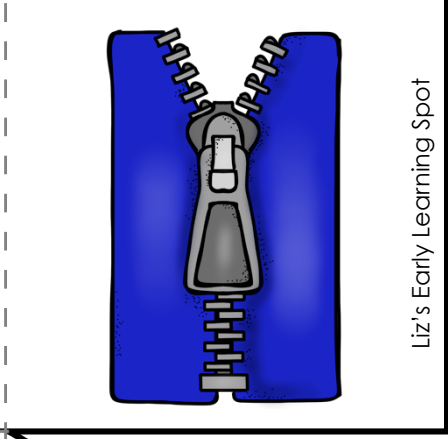
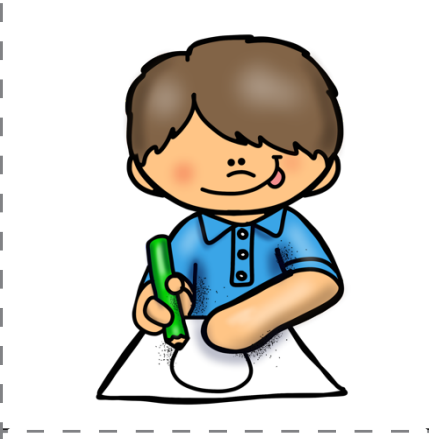
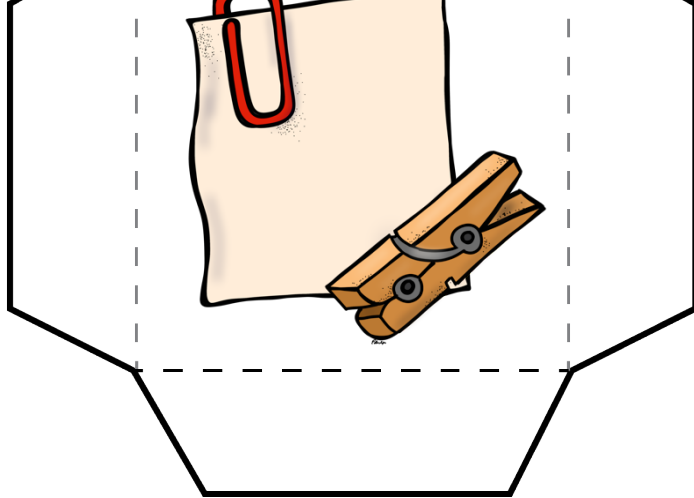
### WRITE AND DRAW

Choose writing tools your child enjoys (crayons, markers, charcoal?) and have them nearby. They can 'write' and draw all over the recycled paper they're ripping and cutting!



Instructions:

- Print on cardstock
- Cut around die
- Fold all dotted edges to form cube
- Glue tabs to inner sides



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