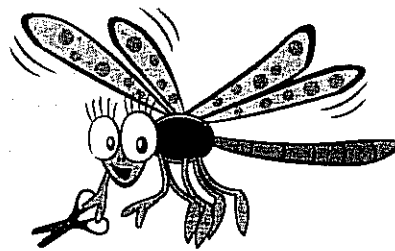


# Developmental Stages for Scissoring Skills

Children acquire the prerequisite skills for scissoring at different ages. To illustrate, between two and three years of age, children can snip small pieces of lightweight paper. By three to five years of age, children can cut strips of paper using a forward motion. Four- and five-year-olds can begin to cut basic shapes with solid or dotted lines while using one hand to control the paper. By five to six years of age, children have developed the skill to cut curves and geometric shapes.

## Ages 2-3 Years

- Capable of tearing and pasting scraps of paper
- Snips small pieces of lightweight paper
- May hold scissors with both hands
- Typically holds scissors and paper incorrectly
- Interested in using scissors as a tool
- Opens and closes scissors
- Approaches paper with open scissors



## Ages 3-4 Years

- May still lack correct grasp of scissors
- Lacks directional control
- Cuts using a forward motion across strips of paper
- Cuts strips the length of the paper
- Begins positioning the scissors toward fingertips to gain more control

## Ages 4-5 Years

- Holds scissors and paper correctly
- Capable of turning corners while cutting
- Cuts on lines while using one hand to control the paper
- Capable of rotating the direction of the paper with the helping hand while cutting
- Capable of cutting basic shapes with solid lines
- Beginning to cut shapes with dotted lines

## Ages 5-6 Years

- Cuts curvy lines, geometric shapes, and pictures from newspapers and magazines
- Capable of cutting solid or dotted line mazes

### Activities for Mastering Hand-Eye Coordination Skills:

**Flashlight Chase:** Turn the lights off. Move a flashlight beam from left to right and top to bottom and encourage the children to follow the light by moving only their eyes.

**Hidden Pictures:** Select storybooks with detailed pictures. Encourage the children to find and point to things in the pictures.

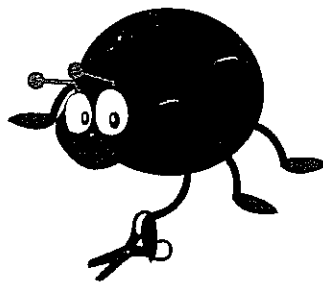
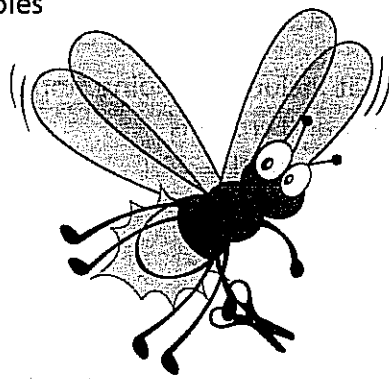
**Maze Activities:** Provide maze activities requiring a writing tool.

**Whiteboard Maze:** Draw a large maze with solid, thick lines and provide the child with a drawing tool to trace over the lines.

### Materials for Promoting Fine Motor Skills:

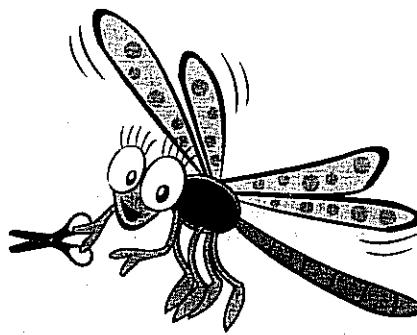
Fine motor activities are experiences that encourage children to use the small muscles in their hands, fingers, and wrists to move objects accurately and precisely. It is important to provide a variety of materials that attract children's interests. These materials help develop and exercise a child's fine motor skills.

- Building blocks
- Buttons and buttonholes
- Clay
- Easel paints
- Finger paints
- Interlocking blocks
- Magnetic letters
- Playdough
- Puzzles
- Sand play
- Snap beads
- Threading beads



## Activities for Promoting Wrist and Hand Development Skills:

- Cutting playdough using a toy pizza wheel or plastic knife
- Clamping clothespins around the top of a plastic can or bucket
- Climbing, hanging, and swinging from playground equipment
- Creating collages by wadding paper and gluing to construction paper
- Creating collages with stickers and labels
- Creating designs on pegboards
- Crumpling medium-weight paper into balls and tossing them into a bucket
- Cutting clay with blunt scissors
- Drawing with sidewalk chalk
- Manipulating tweezers to pick up environmental objects, such as small pebbles, leaves, twigs, and seashells
- Opening plastic bottles and jars
- Painting using a plastic spray bottle on the sidewalk or snow
- Rolling clay into small balls
- Snapping beads or interlocking blocks together
- Squeezing a stress ball
- Tearing paper for collages
- Tossing beanbags
- Using fingerplays that include snapping fingers
- Using felt-tip markers and crayons
- Wringing out sponges or cloths
- Zipping clothing or self-care boards

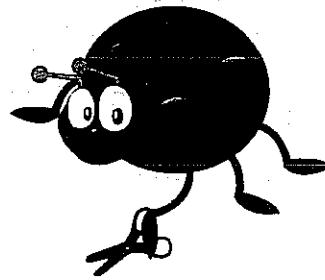


# Mastering Scissoring

To master scissoring, the child must develop skills in hand-eye coordination and fine motor coordination, including wrist and hand development. Hand-eye coordination activities help train the child's eye and hand to work together to accomplish a task. Hand-eye coordination is muscle control that allows the hand to do a task in a way the eye sees it done. Fine motor activities encourage children to use the small muscles in their hands and fingers. Practice should provide the children with the fine motor skills needed to manipulate the scissors.

## Activities for Promoting Hand-Eye Coordination Skills:

- Building with blocks
- Catching bubbles with hands
- Completing dot-to-dot activities
- Copying
- Drawing in wet sand
- Drawing vertical and horizontal lines
- Engaging in fingerplays involving opening and closing fingers
- Fastening zippers, snaps, and buttons
- Hammering
- Lacing
- Painting with fingers and other tools
- Pasting
- Placing pegs in a pegboard
- Putting puzzles together
- Stringing beads
- Tossing beanbags
- Tracing around stencils
- Tying
- Using squeeze-type clothespins
- Weaving
- Writing with chalk on a blackboard



# Strategies for Success

Consider the child's developmental abilities, needs, and interests when planning scissoring activities. Children progress along a developmental continuum. This includes cutting straight lines, wavy lines, large round circles, large shapes, smaller shapes, and complex shapes.

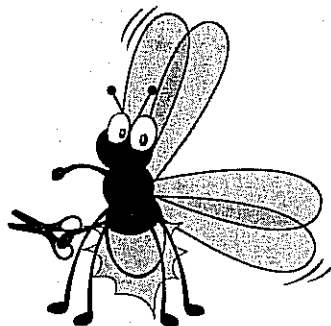
Select scissors that are appropriate for the child's skill level. Always observe carefully to meet the developmental needs of children. Make any necessary modifications in terms of cutting tool, paper weight, and activity. In addition, consider the following tips:

- Provide both right- and left-handed scissors for children.
- Check to see that the blades meet and are not sprung, and that the blades are free from glue or paste.
- Encourage children to hold both scissors and paper with their thumbs up while pointing the scissors forward.
- Encourage children to use one hand to hold the paper and the other hand to hold the scissors.
- Choose lightweight paper that scissors can easily penetrate.
- Encourage children to look at the point of the scissors when cutting. If needed, apply a dab of red fingernail polish to the scissors point to make it easier for children to focus.
- Left-handed children should be encouraged to cut in a clockwise direction around the large shapes. Likewise, right-handed children should be encouraged to cut in a counterclockwise direction.
- Encourage children to work from left to right and top to bottom to develop the prerequisite progression skills which are necessary for reading and writing.
- Provide easy-squeeze scissors when children are unable to make the open-closed motion.
- Provide dual-control training scissors when children need assistance.
- Provide adequate space between children so they have plenty of room to explore and practice cutting.
- Teach children the following song about scissors.

## Scissors Song

(tune: "This Old Man")

Open close, open close,  
That is how the scissors go.  
With your thumb on top  
And your pointer as a guide,  
Watch the scissors slowly glide.



# THE 14 STEPS IN SCISSOR SKILL DEVELOPMENT

1. CHILD ENJOYS TEARING PAPER DURING PLAY ACTIVITIES



2. CHILD SHOWS AN INTEREST IN AND UNDERSTANDS THE USE OF SCISSORS



3. CHILD ABLE TO MAINTAIN CORRECT GRIP WHEN POSITIONED BY ADULT



4. CHILD ABLE TO HOLD SCISSORS APPROPRIATELY WITHOUT ASSISTANCE



5. CHILD BEGINS TO OPEN AND CLOSE SCISSORS



6. CHILD ABLE TO OPEN AND CLOSE SCISSORS USING A CONTROLLED ACTION



7. CHILD ABLE TO HOLD PAPER AND MAKE RANDOM CUTS



8. CHILD ABLE TO MAKE CONSECUTIVE CUTS WITH A FORWARD MOVEMENT



9. CHILD ABLE TO CUT STRAIGHT LINES AVOIDING UNINTENTIONAL LATERAL MOVEMENT



10. CHILD ABLE TO CUT OUT SIMPLE SHAPES INVOLVING ONE CHANGE OF DIRECTION



11. CHILD ABLE TO CUT OUT SIMPLE SHAPES, MORE THAN ONE DIRECTIONAL CHANGE



12. CHILD ABLE TO CUT ALONG CURVED LINES

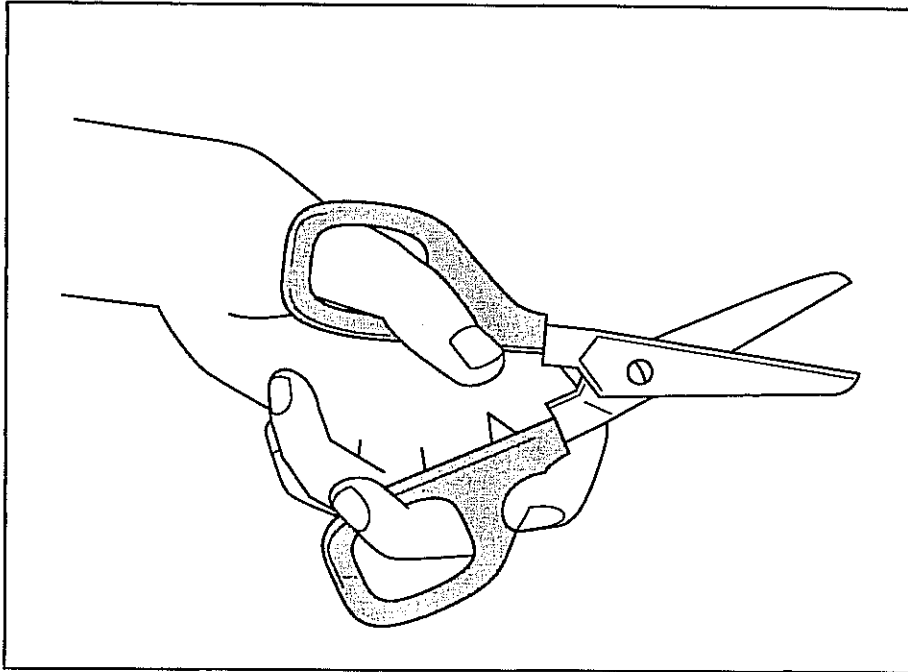


13. CHILD ABLE TO CUT OUT CIRCLES



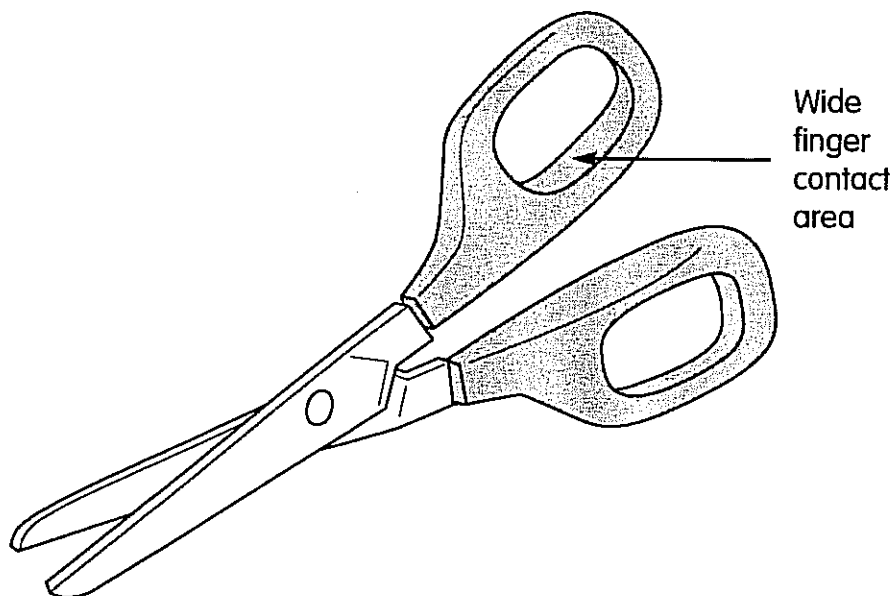
14. CHILD ABLE TO CUT MORE COMPLICATED SHAPES WITH STRAIGHT AND CURVED LINES

## HOW TO HOLD CONVENTIONAL SCISSORS



The optimum hand position in which to hold scissors is illustrated above. The child should be encouraged to put their thumb and middle finger through the loops rather than thumb and index finger. The index finger should be placed on the underside of the scissor, as it assists in directing the cutting movement whilst also providing support.

All Peta scissors have wide loops which provide a large finger contact area giving the child increased control of the cutting action.



## GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR USING THESE CARDS

These cards have been produced to help develop the level of motor control required for scissor skills, starting with exercises requiring hand and eye co-ordination and using fingers in isolation, to cutting out more complex, curved shapes.

**It is important that the child attains each skill level before progressing to the next.**

The exercises are shown in a repeated photocopiable fashion which allows the pupil to repeat the exercise twice or, for the simpler exercises, the page can be cut in half to allow two pupils to work simultaneously. The exercises are aimed at an average skill level but can be adjusted as follows:

### **To make the exercises easier:-**

- Set the photocopier to enlarge the copy thereby increasing the thickness of the lines given

### **To make the exercises harder:-**

- Set the photocopier to reduce the copy thereby reducing the thickness of the lines given
- Copy the exercise on to a smaller piece of paper (or simply cut in two to give to two children), this gives less paper to hold which increases the skill level required.

As the skill level develops the child can progress to cutting thinner paper. Once the child can operate scissors efficiently, the exercises can be repeated using craft scissors which give a zig-zag edge, such as paper-pinkas. When working with left-handed children it is important that left-handed scissors are provided.

**For the child with specific learning difficulties or a physical disability it is recommended that these work-cards be used in conjunction with Peta's book "DEVELOPING SCISSOR SKILLS - A Guide for Parents and Teachers of Children with Special Needs" (Mahoney/Markwell).**

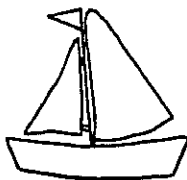
**IMPORTANT: SCISSOR ACTIVITIES SHOULD ALWAYS BE CONDUCTED UNDER AN APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF SUPERVISION!**



## **SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPING PRE-SCISSOR SKILLS**

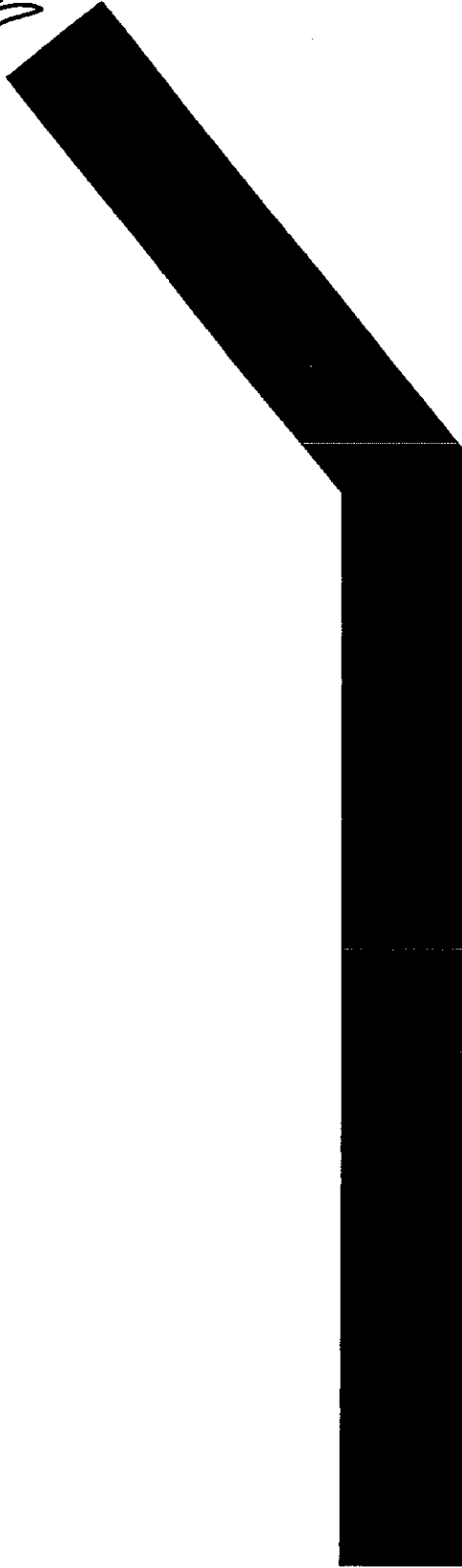
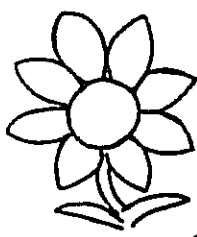
- ☞ Tearing and scrunching paper, for papier-maché and collage work
- ☞ Using a single or double hole-punch to make holes for lacing activities
- ☞ Squeezing empty plastic bottles to make bubbles in water or to blow feathers or ping-pong balls across a table
- ☞ Finger or glove puppets
- ☞ Hand and finger rhymes, eg- Incey Wincey Spider, Peter Pointer, Two Little Dicky Birds
- ☞ Modelling clay or dough – rolling, pinching
- ☞ Musical instruments – trumpets, castanets, finger-cymbals



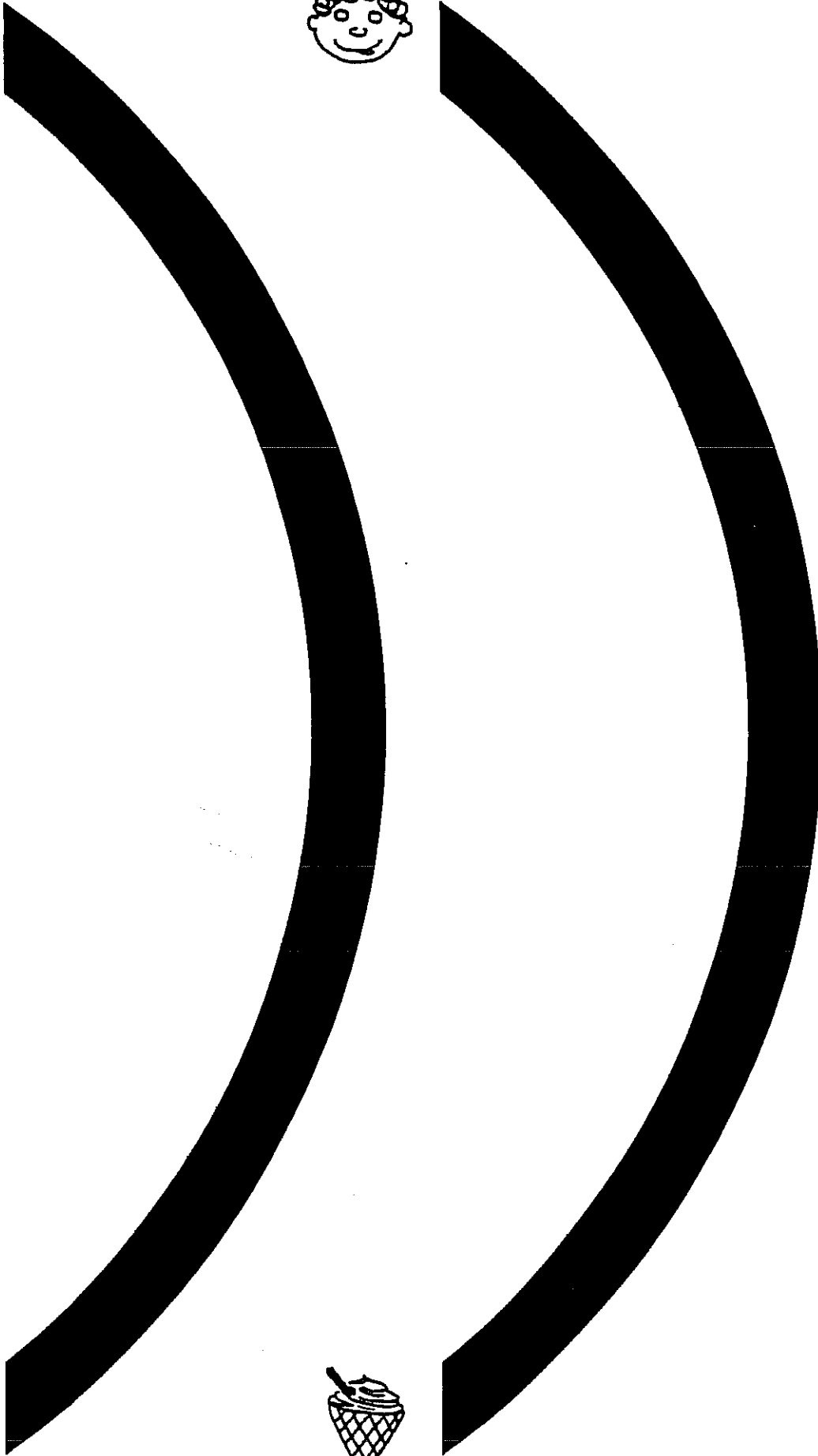


Cut along the black lines





Cut along the black lines



Cut along the black line