Enhancing Handwriting Through Gross Motor Skill Intervention

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Introduction

The development of gross motor skills within the context of an international school is increasingly influenced by high levels of indoor screen use among children, which may limit opportunities for outdoor play and the associated natural progression of gross motor skill acquisition.

Background

The motivation for undertaking the piece of research surrounding gross motor skills and handwriting came from moderators' perception of children's work based on handwriting. This led me to explore different strategies that could be implemented informally within the classroom to boost children's handwriting without the loss of lesson time. The driving piece of literature came from Ziviani, J. M and Wallen, M (2006) 'The Development of Graphomotor Skills'.

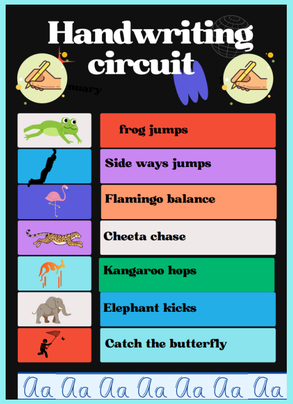
Research Questions

- Do children within Year 2 currently have the core strength required to improve handwriting?
- Do children in Year 2 have bilateral coordination needed for proficient handwriting?
- Can handwriting be improved from developing gross motor skills?

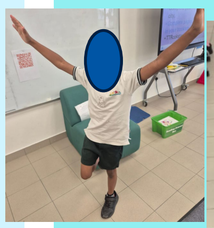
Research

Research Action

Strategies taken:



- Daily handwriting circuit.
- Handwriting circuit carried out before extended pieces of writing.
- Animal references when writing 'sit tall like when you are a flamingo'.



Analysis

Children were able to sit for longer periods of time and write with sustained legible handwriting. Children were able to maintain better posture whilst sitting at a table to write. Children reported a higher enjoyment of handwriting sessions as they were not sat at the table. The informal nature of the strategies were the key driving force of the project.

Methodology

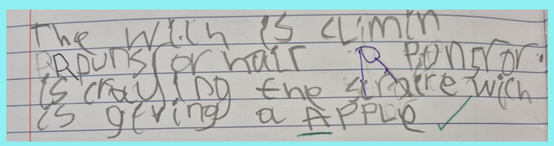
Sample
- 22 Year 2 children
- Focus group of 2 male students.

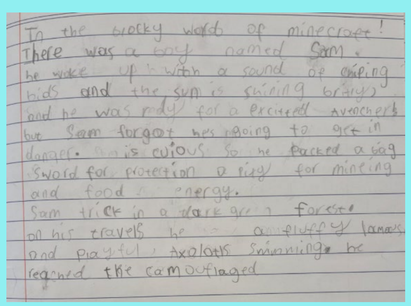
Data collection

Observational data collected through comparison of written work over a period of time.

Results

The impact on handwriting was observed during lessons, also during moderation with other members of staff. Two focus children asked daily to do their handwriting circuit as motivation and engagement for improved handwriting increased.





Conclusion

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Gross motor skills are the foundation of all movement within the classroom. Without them children are not able to sit for extended periods of time at a table nor have the core strength for bilateral coordination needed to become sufficient in handwriting. Whilst carrying out a very time conscious intervention handwriting and engagement improved.

Reflections

This research project has demonstrated that meaningful educational change can be achieved without requiring extensive additional teacher input or costly resources. The findings suggest that designing interventions which are accessible to all learners can significantly enhance students' ability to write legibly for sustained periods. A brief, consistent daily intervention has the potential to yield measurable improvements. It is essential to monitor the impact of such interventions to ensure their effectiveness, and to draw upon academic literature and evidence-based research to inform their design and implementation within the classroom context.

References

- Ziviani, J. M., & Wallen, M. (2006). The development of graphomotor skills. Mosby Elsevier
- Case-Smith, J. (2002) Effectiveness of School-Based Occupational Therapy Intervention on Handwriting. American Journal of Occupational Therapy, 56, 17-25.