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Visual and Fine Motor Development Activities

1. Roll out playdough with a rolling pin (regular way with hands positioned on top of the handles but also do it with hands positioned under the handles).
2. Pull playdough apart and squeeze back into a ball.
3. Dribble a basketball. Practice counting at the same time.
4. Circle all of a selected letter in a given paragraph of the newspaper.
5. Wall pushouts. Stand with feet about 6-12 inches from wall. Place palms flat on wall. Bend at elbows and bring face toward the wall. Push out. Repeat. Practice counting at the same time.
6. Screw nuts onto matching bolts. Use various sizes, beginning with large ones and moving to smaller.
7. Use water misters (squeeze trigger NOT push button). Mist plants or grass. Play with them in the tub at bath time.
8. Use kitchen tongs to pick up and sort small objects (beans, lego, toy cars). As proficiency develops move to using tweezers.
9. Play with lego & tinker toys.
10. Use a hole puncher to create confetti from "waste" paper.
11. Manipulate clothes pins.
 - Make it into a number game. Put numerals 0-10 on index cards. Place the correct number of pins on each card.
 - Use colored pins to create color patterns on index cards.
11. Play with "pick up" sticks or straws. Idea: At half to full arms distance, hold a straw with the fingers of one hand and a pick up stick or toothpick with the other. Raise the hand with the toothpick high above the head, then lower and drop it in the straw. Keep both items parallel to each other at all the time. This should be done vertically, horizontally and at a 45 degree angle for increase difficulty.
12. Use a Lite Brite and/or peg boards to create pictures, letters, patterns and numerals.
13. Play board games that have small pieces that need to be grasped and moved. (Ex. Chinese Checkers).
14. Practice cutting: straight lines, curved lines, zigzag lines.
15. Put coins (or buttons) in a "bank". Count as you do it to reinforce rote counting at the same time.
16. Twist bottle tops (and thermos tops) on and off.
17. Wring out rags.
18. Tear strips/pieces of paper and use them to create an art masterpiece.
19. Wind up musical toys.
20. Cut out coupons. More structured cutting activities will help those with weak writing skills.
21. Encourage them to play with a stress-relieving squeeze ball.

22. Use tongs, tweezers, salad or pasta spoons (the kind that are two handled), to pick up a variety of small items such as foam shapes, plastic packaging peanuts, wooden beads, etc.
23. At craft stores, you can purchase a sheet of plastic canvas used for embroidery. They come in a variety of colors, and are just a little bigger than a sheet of 8 ½" by 11" paper. Place the paper on top of the canvas, secure with large paper clips. Have your child write or draw with crayons, etc. on top of the paper. When you take the paper off, it will have a textured effect from the canvas. This is great when learning to make new letters.
24. Sorting/picking up objects and placing them into a container. (The size of the objects and openings of the containers can be graded. Suggested objects: blocks, spools, coins, beans, marbles, cotton balls, pins, buttons, straws, nails, nuts/bolts, popcorn)
25. Stacking objects (coins, cards, checkers, blocks).
26. Unscrewing nuts/bolts, unscrewing caps from various sized objects.
27. Stringing beads, running threaded needle through cloth, fastening a safety pin.
28. Playing the piano, typing.
29. Crumpling up pieces of paper with one hand and flicking them with a finger.
30. Shuffling cards, dealing cards one by one, turning cards over.
31. Rolling a pencil between thumb and fingers without dropping it.
32. Kneading dough.
33. Sticking small objects into play dough for the child to pull out.
34. Winding thread on a spool evenly.
35. Putting rubber bands around various size containers/objects.
36. Using tweezers to pick up small objects (nails, pins, paper clips).
37. Moving spoonfuls of small objects from one bowl to another without spillage.
38. Buttoning, zippering, hooking, tying shoelaces, etc.
39. Tracing/copying letters, connecting the dot tasks, solving mazes, and using a ruler, drawing straight lines on paper.
40. Manually sharpening pencils; using a manual can opener.
41. Putting keys in locks.
42. Putting paper clips on pages, stapling pages together, removing staples, etc.
43. Placing clothespins on edge of box/container.
44. Dialing on a telephone.
45. Setting a watch/clock.
46. Picking up marbles with coffee filter separator/pincers. They're bigger than tweezers and have little rubber tips on the edge. I find them in the "small kitchen gadgets" area and sometimes next to the coffee filters in stores. I have 4 – just enough for one center.
47. Picking up and moving marbles (or nut shells) using "melon ballers". This action doesn't use a pincer grasp but a balancing and twisting motion of the wrist.
48. Make up a project like at Christmas a large tree cut out of green and give them tiny beads and sequins to glue on for ornaments, they enjoy it and it doesn't seem like work. Having them do extensive amounts of finger plays.
49. Paint cardboard with just a brush and water. Easy clean up yet very young ones get to participate in a very valuable activity.