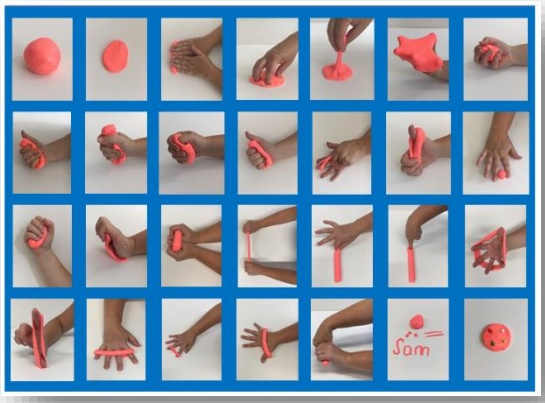
4 Week Theraputty Programme

Theraputty activities will help to develop your hand strength and ability to control fine finger movements.



Place the putty on a clean smooth surface, preferably a table. When the theraputty is excessively stretched it can break down into fine strands; care should be taken with these as they can 'stick' to carpets and clothing.

Theraputty should be kept in an air tight container.

Theraputty Advice

- Use theraputty as advised with the activity sheet provided.
- Wash hands before and after using theraputty to keep it clean and avoid cross contamination and/or infection.
- Ideally each child should use the same piece of theraputty at each session.
- Place the theraputty on a clean smooth surface preferably a table. When the theraputty is excessively stretched it can break down into fine strands; care should be taken with these as they 'stick' to carpets and clothing.
- To remove fine bits of putty from the table surface daub with a large blob of theraputty.
- Theraputty is available in a range of strengths or resistances. The different strengths are colour coded as follows:
    - Tan: extra-extra soft
    - Yellow: extra soft
    - Red: soft
    - Green: medium
    - Blue: firm
    - Black: extra firm

    We normally only work with yellow, red and green theraputty when working with children and young people. As a rule of thumb we would use yellow with nursery and early years primary school children, red with mid to late primary school children, and green with older children. Obviously some children may be stronger than others but it is better to start with a softer resistance and work up to a firmer strength.
- There are a number of suppliers online who can provide the various colours in different quantities ranging from individual sized tubs up to pots containing enough for an entire class.

Sitting Posture

Follow these tips for the best posture when carrying out table top activities:

- Sit at a table (preferably for your height)
- Feet flat on floor, (use a box to rest your feet on if your feet don't quite touch the floor)
- Ankles, knees and hips should all be at 90º angles
- Ensure your bottom is right back on the chair, sit up tall with back straight



Hand Warm Up Exercises

Carrying out the following hand exercises prior to fine motor or drawing tasks helps the child's hands prepare for activity. The exercises are aimed at increasing the tactile and proprioceptive sensory messages the child receives from their hands. By doing this the child will have an increased sensory awareness of what their hand muscles and joints are doing. This should help improve motor control and aid motor memory for learning movements involved in fine motor tasks such as writing.

1. Briefly rub hands, palms together, then the back of each hand. If tolerated hand cream can be used.




2. Press hands and fingers together with palms flat, squeeze then stretch fingers out wide. Repeat 5 times.




3. Hook fingers of both hands together and pull in opposite directions.



4. With palms together and fingers straight, press fingers together firmly. Hold for 10 seconds, and then shake out the hands to relax fingers.

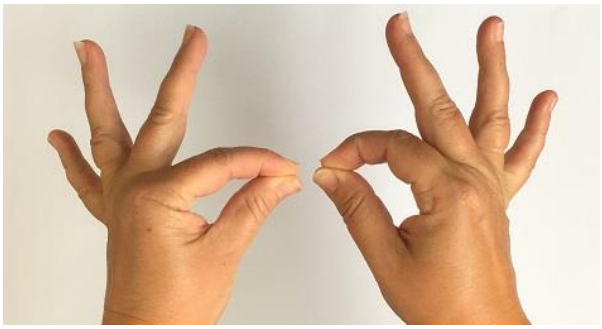


5. Place palms together, fingers straight, separate palms slightly, keeping finger tips touching. Rotate thumbs around each other, away from the body then towards body. Ten times each way.



6. With hands separated, preferred hand first, ask the child to touch their thumb with each fingertip in turn, beginning with the index finger and back again. When mastered separately, carry out with both hands at the same time.





7. Put your hands on the table (palms down). Now copy your partner who is pretending to play the piano, by lifting one finger at a time from the table.

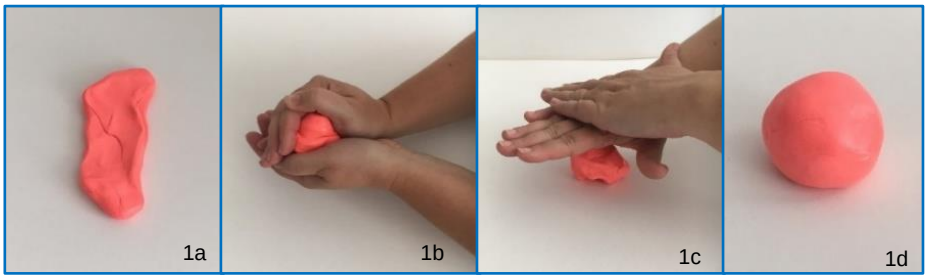




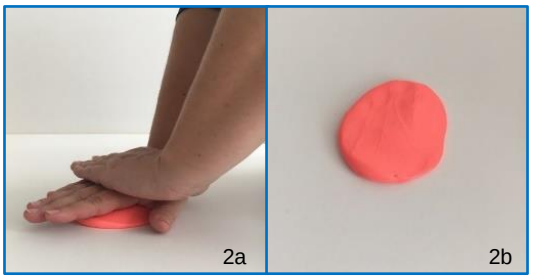
Note: It may be beneficial to have a break during fine motor tasks and carry out hand aerobics to help maintain a high level of sensory messages.

Week 1

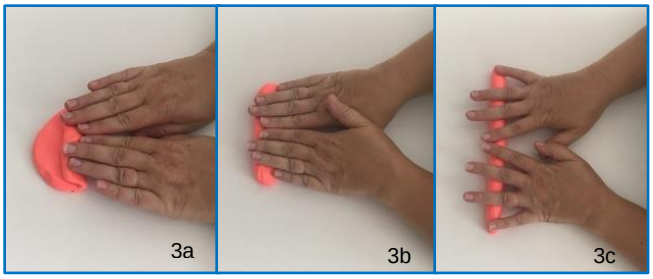
1. Rolling a ball: Start to mold the putty between both hands into a ball shape. Place the putty on a table/smooth surface and roll the putty into a large ball using both hands together.



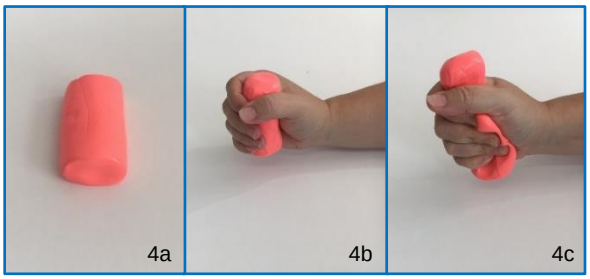
2. Pancake: Flatten the ball to make a pancake (from a standing position) with one hand on top of the other and arms straight. Shoulders should be immediately above hands and the child should not be leaning too far forward i.e. arms should be at 90^{o} to hands.



3. Sausage: Start to roll the edge of the pancake together into a sausage using both hands. Roll the putty forwards and backwards (arms and hands moving only, do not rock body back and forth while rolling). Start with fingers together when rolling then begin to spread these out as you continue to roll.



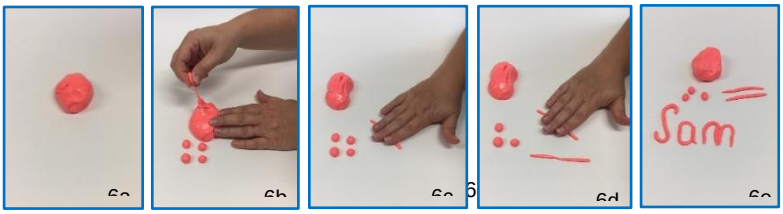
4. Squeeze: Form the putty into a barrel shape (4a) and place in palm of your hand. Bend fingers around it making a fist and squeeze (4b). Carry out exercise with both hands.



5. Full Grip: Gather all the putty into the palm of your hand. Squeeze the putty with the fingers against the palm of the hand in a kneading motion, rolling it over and around in the hand while exerting as much pressure as possible against the resistance of the putty.

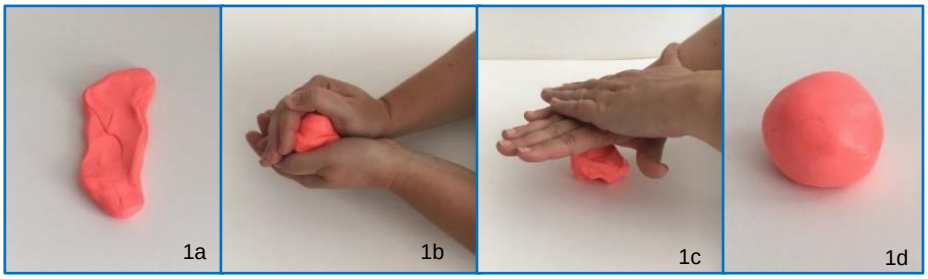


6. Make Your Name: Create a ball and with your thumb and finger pads pinch off small equal sized pieces of putty by twisting and pinching. Then roll into small pea shapes. Take the pea shapes and then roll into long sausages. Use the long sausages to create your name.

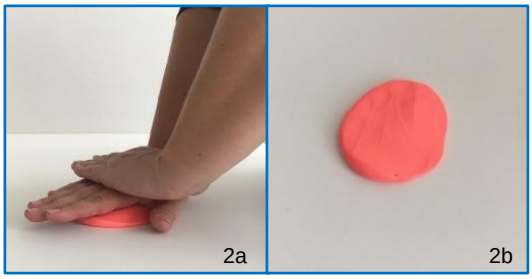


Week 2

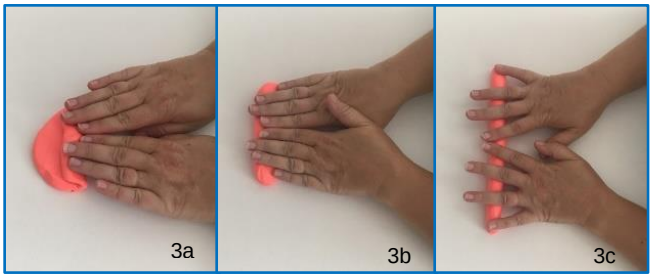
1. Rolling a ball: Start to mold the putty between both hands into a ball shape. Place the putty on a table/smooth surface and roll the putty into a large ball using both hands together.



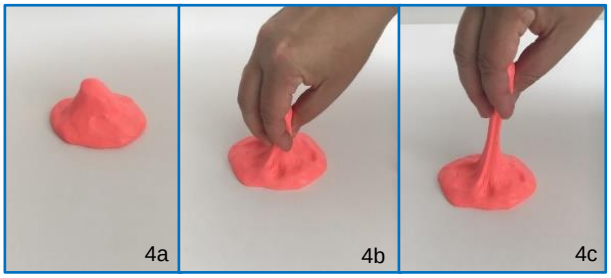
2. Pancake: Flatten the ball to make a pancake (from a standing position) with one hand on top of the other and arms straight. Shoulders should be immediately above hands and the child should not be leaning too far forward i.e. arms should be at 90^{o} to hands.



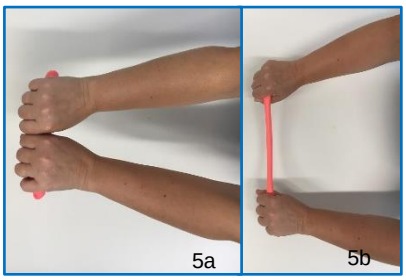
3. Sausage: Start to roll the edge of the pancake together into a sausage using both hands. Roll the putty forwards and backwards (arms and hands moving only, do not rock body back and forth while rolling). Start with fingers together when rolling then begin to spread these out as you continue to roll.



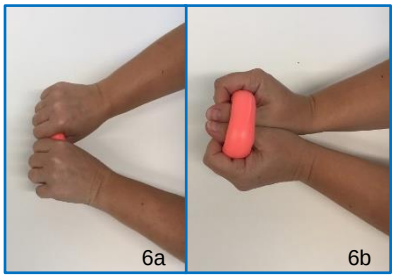
4. Cone: Create a pancake with a cone in the middle and stick it to the table (4a) by slightly pressing down around the edges. Place fingers and thumb over the top of the cone and lightly hold the putty (4b). Pull up on the cone, bringing the thumb and fingers together (4c). Carry out exercise with both hands.



5. Stretch: Hold a sausage shape with both hands in front of your chest (keeping arms out straight). Pull it apart until it is thin.

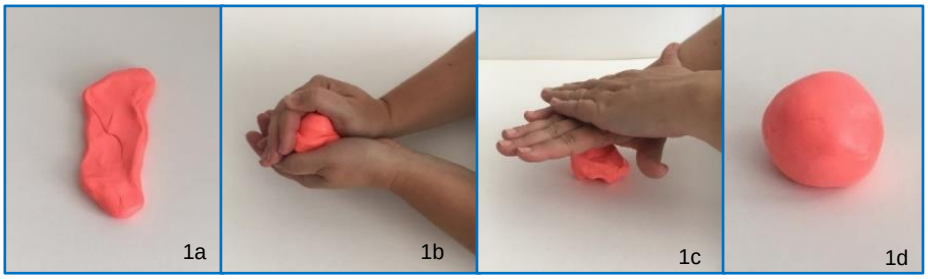


6. Rainbow: Hold a sausage shape with both hands in front of your chest (keeping arms out straight). Bend the putty so that both palms are facing inwards and make the putty into a rainbow shape.

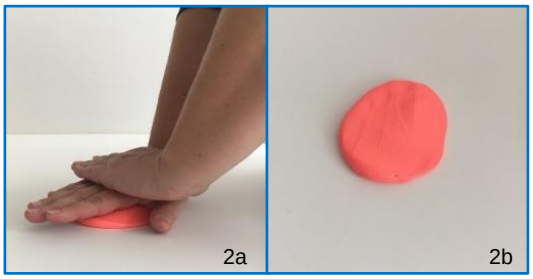


Week 3

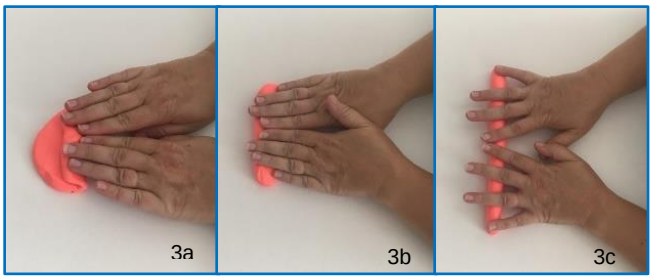
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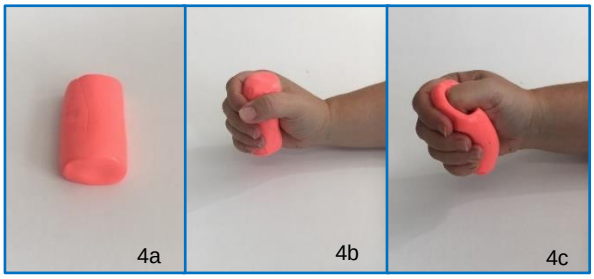
2. Pancake: Flatten the ball to make a pancake (from a standing position) with one hand on top of the other and arms straight. Shoulders should be immediately above hands and the child should not be leaning too far forward i.e. arms should be at 90^{o} to hands.



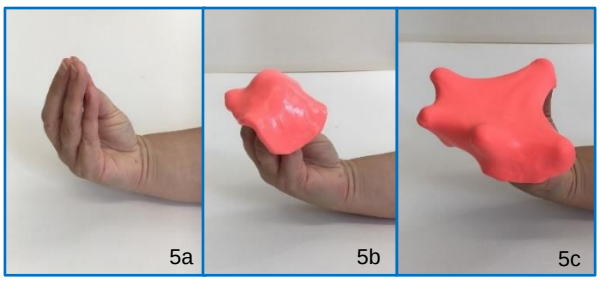
3. Sausage: Start to roll the edge of the pancake together into a sausage using both hands. Roll the putty forwards and backwards (arms and hands moving only, do not rock body back and forth while rolling). Start with fingers together when rolling then begin to spread these out as you continue to roll.



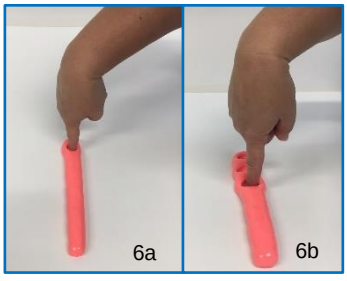
4. Thumb Press: Form the putty into a barrel shape as per picture 4(a) and place in palm of hand. Press thumb into the putty with as much force as possibly until the thumb has pressed through to the palm. Reform and repeat. Carry out exercise with both hands.



5. Finger Spread: Pick up a pancake from the table and close one set of fingers together (5a). Place the pancake over the top of closed fingers (5b). Start to slowing open out fingers spreading putty out (5c). Open fingers out as wide as your can. Carry out exercise with both hands.

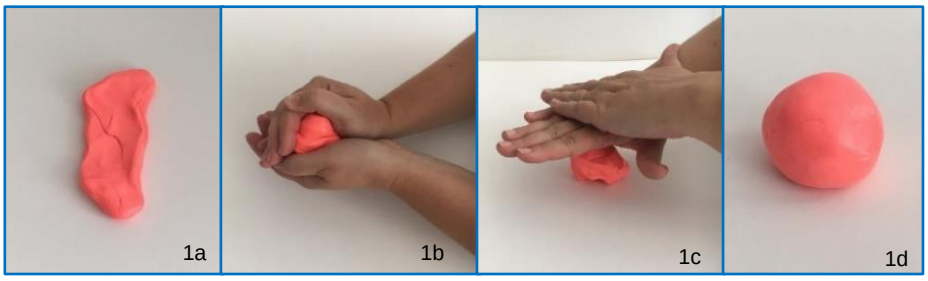


6. Finger Press: Push the index finger into the putty repeatedly along the entire length of a sausage. Roll out a new sausage and repeat instructions until all fingers (e.g. index, middle, ring and pinkie) have been pushed into the sausage of putty. Carry out exercise with both hands.

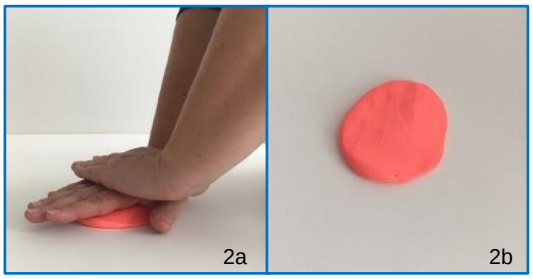


Week 4

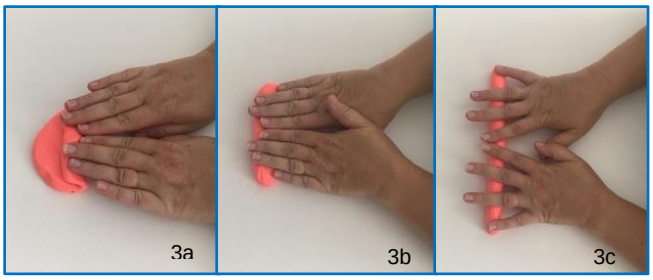
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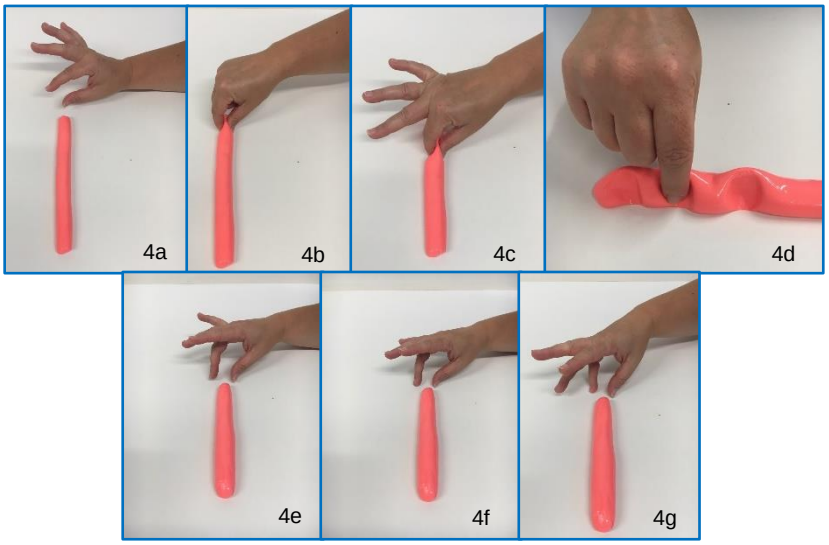
2. Pancake: Flatten the ball to make a pancake (from a standing position) with one hand on top of the other and arms straight. Shoulders should be immediately above hands and the child should not be leaning too far forward i.e. arms should be at 90º to hands.



3. Sausage: Start to roll the edge of the pancake together into a sausage using both hands. Roll the putty forwards and backwards (arms and hands moving only, do not rock body back and forth while rolling). Start with fingers together when rolling then begin to spread these out as you continue to roll.



4. Pinching: Using the tip of thumb and index fingers, start pinching with the fingers held vertically above the putty, and continue to pinch along the entire sausage. Roll out a new sausage and repeat instructions above with the tip of the thumb and the next finger (until all fingers (e.g. index, middle, ring and pinkie) have pinched the sausage of putty). Carry this exercise out twice with both hands.



5. Volcano: Firmly secure the pancake to the table by pressing the edges down, then place fingers and thumb lightly around the edge of the pancake. Press fingers and thumb into putty and slowly pull fingers together towards the center. Carry out exercise with both hands.

