

## **DOMINANCE RETRAINING PROGRAMME**

This is an 8-week programme, which serves as a guideline for the rehabilitation of patients who have lost the function of their dominant arm.

Each week is laid out on a separate page and can be combined if time is limited. Each week also has a section of writing exercises, which can be printed out and given as a home-programme if necessary.

Activities can be adapted or replaced by other similar level tasks to suit the patient's abilities or preferences.

# **WEEK 1**

## **A. GROSS MOTOR EXERCISES**

- Catch a ball or bean bag with the non-dominant hand
- Playing basketball, throwing, bouncing and catching with the hand
- Balloon Volleyball
- Following large shapes with hand drawn on a blackboard, white board or large sheet of paper
- Approximately 10 min or more should be spent on 1 or more of these activities. Activities can be substituted by similar level activities to the discretion of the OT and dependent on the patient's preferences and abilities.

## **B. ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING**

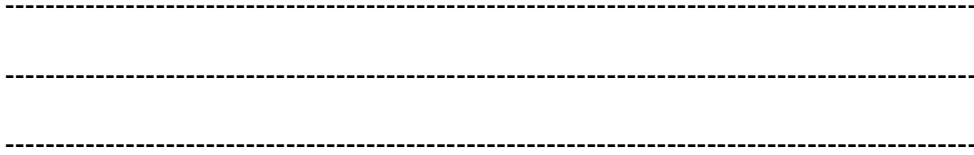
- Eating tasks (bring food to the mouth using fingers, fork or spoon). Plate rim can be provided.
- Stirring food in a pot (pot holder can be provided)
- Washing of face and body (can provide a washing mitten)
- Drying of own body, face and hands (can provide a towel drying aid).

## **C. PENMANSHIP**

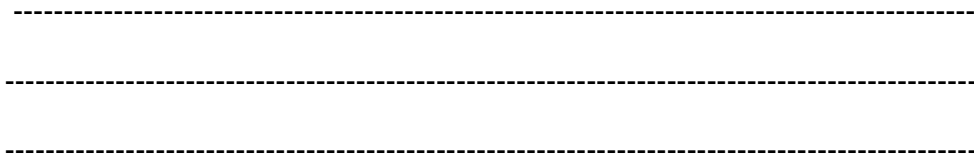
- Provide a writing splint as illustrated on Addendum A if necessary
- Encourage writer not to attach the paper to the table, but rather to practice writing with the paper free
- Ensure the writer is relaxed and understands that the aim is free-flowing handwriting
- In this early stage. Discourage any attempt to write actual letters or words! (This results in development of bad writing habits)
- Use a felt-tip pen as much as possible while learning
- Ensure the page is sufficiently slanted, pen grasp is correct and that the writer does not hold hand cramped over the page.

## **EXERCISES**

1. Piles of horizontal lines. Do not remove your pen from the paper.



2. This is the same as exercise 1 – but do shorter lines.



3. Alternate piles of underswing and overswing lines. Don't lift the pen.



# WEEK 2

## A. GROSS MOTOR EXERCISES

- Carpet bowls
- “Jukskei”
- Ringboard
- Fingerboard
- Scrunch paper with non-dominant hand and throw it through a hoop or into a basket.

## B. ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING

Teach various 1-handed dressing techniques (Do not attempt buttons, belts or laces at this stage).

## C. PENMANSHIP

1. Alternate ovals of underswing and overswing

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2. Ovals, with horizontal lines in them. Do them complete, one at a time (i.e.DON'T do first all the ovals, then the lines)

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# WEEK 3

## A. GROSS MOTOR EXERCISES

- Playing solitaire using large grasps
- Gross motor objects in the Moberg Pick Up Test can be timed and practised
- Bat and Ball
- Tenpin bowling with a tennis ball
- Various putty exercises requiring 2-point pinch, 3 point pinch, opposition, finger extension, rolling small balls or snakes.

## B. ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING

- Practice doing and undoing buttons, zips, belts and shoe laces (one handed techniques can be taught or assistive devices provided)
- For females, bra straps can be practised.

## C. PENMANSHIP

1. Don't try to do these too neatly; they should give you some idea as to how your writing will slant. Note which angle is the easiest for you.

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2. Do these in groups of ten until they begin to look uniform. As many row as you wish.

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# WEEK 4

## A. GROSS MOTOR EXERCISES

- Table Tennis
- Popping bubble wrap between thumb and index fingers
- Hold ruler between thumb and index fingers, let it drop and catch it again between the same 2 fingers before it hits the ground
- Spinning coins or a spinning top.

## B. ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING

- Practise washing, drying and holding dishes of various different shapes, sizes and weights
- Mopping and sweeping.

## C. PENMANSHIP

1. A combination of vertical lines, and ovals. First two lines – do ovals first, then fill in the vertical lines. Do them completely, one at a time. Next two lines do the vertical first, then surround them with an oval. Again, do them completely one at a time.

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2. Do two rows of a alternate verticals ovals.

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# WEEK 5

## A. GROSS MOTOR EXERCISES

- Playing solitaire with pins and other fine pieces
- Practise fine motor objects in Moberg Pick Up Test while being timed.

## B. ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING

- Cutting soft food with blunt knife (Can provide chopping board if necessary)
- Making easy meals (e.g. sandwiches, coffee)

## C. PENMANSHIP

1. Write alternate oval and slant exercises, in word-long groups.

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2. This is a smaller version of the last exercise, except the ovals/slants are about one-third the height. This exercise will be helpful for work with lower case letters, and in achieving more exact pen control.

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# WEEK 6

## A. GROSS MOTOR EXERCISES

- Darts
- Dot to Dot using a crayon or other thick pen. (Grade size of dots, distances and directions according to writer's abilities)

## B. ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING

- Peeling, chopping, grating
- Making more complex meals

## C. PENMANSHIP

1. Figure eights, written in alternate horizontal and vertical positions provide a somewhat relaxing exercise, while helping to develop greater skill.

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2. Start at the line with a loose overhand curve and continue to wind the line into a spiral – to add precision to pen-work.

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# WEEK 7

## A. GROSS MOTOR EXERCISES

- “Finger fun”
- “Tiddliwinks”
- Nine hole peg test (while being timed)
- “Topsy Towers/Jenga”
- Elastics stretched over a grid of nails to make certain pictures.

## B. ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING

- Hair Care
- Brushing Teeth

## C. PENMANSHIP

1. A continuous line made up of overhand and underhand curves, will give practice in pen movements that are basic to a number of letters.

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2. Do one line or more, of each of the following:

a) ----- (this is for the letters: )

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b) ----- (this is for the letters: )

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c) ----- (this is for the letters: )

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d) ----- (this is for the letters: )

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e) ----- (this is for the letters: )

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f) ----- (this is for the letters: )

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g) ----- (this is for the letters: )

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# WEEK 8

## A. GROSS MOTOR EXERCISES

- “Pick-Up-Sticks”
- Hold coins in hand, drop them 1 by 1, while holding the rest in the hand still.

## B. ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING

- For men: shaving (practice using soap or cream but no blade)
- Nail care.

## C. PENMANSHIP

The following sentences provide excellent early writing practice. This is because they contain every letter in the alphabet.

Write each of the following sentences three times:

- a) The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

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- b) What did the squadron of Jap Zero flyers conquer during those extensive operations behind thick cloud formations?

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# ADDENDUM A

The image shows a large rectangular frame with a stepped right side. The frame is defined by a solid black border. Inside the frame, there are four horizontal bars of varying lengths, positioned at different vertical levels. The bars are arranged from top to bottom as follows: a short bar near the top, a medium-length bar below it, a long bar below that, and a short bar near the bottom. The bars are drawn with thin black lines and are empty, serving as a template for text or data entry.