

# Welcome to Occupational Therapy with Mrs. Atkinson

## What is an Occupational Therapist?

An Occupational Therapist is a person who helps students improve their motor, visual motor, perceptual, self care and sensory processing skills.



### MOTOR SKILLS

Your **MOTOR SKILLS** are what you use to make your muscles move your body to do the things you need to do. In order to do this, you need good **UPPER BODY MOTOR SKILLS** and **FINE MOTOR SKILLS**

#### UPPER BODY MOTOR SKILLS

Your upper body includes your trunk, or your tummy and your back, your neck and your shoulders.



You need a strong upper body to sit upright at your desk.

You also need a strong upper body to sit cross cross at the carpet.



#### FINE MOTOR SKILLS

Your fine motor body parts are your arms, wrists, fingers and thumbs. You all of these muscles to be strong - but you also need them to do other things.

**GRASPING SKILLS** allow you to use your hand and finger muscles for tasks that involve strength - like holding your pencil and squeezing glue.



**PRECISION SKILLS** allow you to move your fingers in controlled movements for coloring, drawing and printing.

**BILATERAL SKILLS** allow you to move your two arms together, like for cutting and buttoning.



**DEXTERITY SKILLS** allow you to coordinate your fingers quickly and accurately, like for tying your shoes.



### VISUAL MOTOR SKILLS

In order to do our "jobs" at school - like reading, writing, coloring, cutting and drawing - our eyes and our hands must work together. **EYE HAND COORDINATION** is what enables us to print on a writing line, color in a specific area, or cut along a given line.



### SELF CARE SKILLS

You use your motor, visual motor and perceptual skills together to do all of the activities that take care of yourself. Feeding yourself (opening food packages and handling utensils) and dressing yourself (knowing front/back, managing buttons, zippers and laces) all require the teaming up of your brain, eyes and fingers.



### PERCEPTUAL SKILLS

**VISUAL PERCEPTUAL SKILLS** allows your brain to understand what it is you are seeing.



You need to be able to recognize symbols (like letters and numbers) no matter how they are presented.



You need to understand how pieces fit together to make a whole.

You need to use your eyes to locate things in a busy background, like finding a word in a book.



You need to be able to identify the direction of an object - like if it is reversed or upside down.



### SENSORY SKILLS

**SENSORY SKILLS** are how your brain understands how your body fits into your world. These skills help you understand what is going on around you and tells you how to move your body to respond appropriately.

#### SENSORY PROCESSING SKILLS

Your brain needs to make sense of what you hear, see, touch, smell and taste. When you hear a loud noise, your brain tells you to be alert. When you reach into your pocket, your brain tells you if you are touching a key or a penny.

A good **SENSORY PROCESSING SYSTEM** allows you to ignore unimportant information and focus on what is important. You need it to pay attention and store information to memory.



#### SENSORY MOTOR SKILLS

Your brain uses information from your senses to determine how to move. It judges how close things are to you, how heavy something is, and how to move your body to get a task done.



Good **SENSORY MOTOR SKILLS** allows you to balance and coordinate your movements. Sensory motor skills are especially needed for sports, gym and recess.