

# Open web space

The web space is the space that is found between the thumb and index finger on the hand. In order for a child to move towards a more efficient and mature pencil grasp, this space needs to be open, in what is often called a C-shape.

Without this C-shape, it is hard for the small muscles of the hand to work efficiently together for movement and control. It also limits a child's ability to regulate and control pressure and to receive good sensory feedback from the small muscles of the hand.

**Activities that may help to develop this skill include:**

- **Threading and lacing**

*Children can make their own lacing cards using thin cardboard and single hole punchers. Lacing using a large plastic needle can be quite effective.*



- **Using thick textas and crayons**

*In a small hand, these implements will often naturally open the webspace. Crayons that have a bulbous end will also encourage an open web space, especially when used in combination with a vertical surface. If you find that children tend to stick their fingers in the hole at the end of these crayons, try filling the hole with blutac or cotton wool.*

- **Using an eyedropper**

*Placing eyedroppers in water play troughs and outdoor water play can be a good way of introducing children to how they work without demanding control of drops at this stage.*

- **Manipulating small objects in games**

*Examples include playing with coins in dramatic play or using counters such as those found in commercially available games such as Connect 4.*

- **Opening and closing zip-lock and snap-lock bags**

*This can be encouraged by placing items for a group time game in bags that have to be opened or closed on each turn. Alternatively, necessary items for an activity may be presented in this way.*