



*Carla Grobler*  
*Arbeidsterapeut*  
*Occupational Therapist*



🏠 Elturion Christian School  
256 Tipperary road  
Hennospark  
Centurion

Pr No. 066000080136

☎ 084 581 0644  
✉ carla.grobler@vodamail.co.za  
[www.carlagrobler.co.za](http://www.carlagrobler.co.za)

## **Why is the correct pencil grasp important?**

### **What is the correct grip?**

The dynamic tripod grasp.

The pencil is held between the thumb and index finger, with the pencil resting on the middle finger.

An efficient pencil grasp facilitates legibility, letter formation, speed and endurance. An efficient pencil grasp is one in which the writing tool is controlled only through finger movements. This occurs when the pinkie side of the hand supports the whole hand against the writing surface, allowing the other fingers to hold and move the pencil/pen/crayon.

Children use unusual and often inefficient grasp patterns for a variety of reasons: muscle weakness, joint laxity, poor sensory feedback, or lack of experience with writing tools. It is important to try to modify the pencil grasp as early as possible.

### **Stages of development**

This is the progression of grasp development although there are big differences as to what age children acquire the skills. A few children will jump stages while others go through a phase of using a combination of grasps.



Fist Grasp



Digital pronate



Static Tripod



Dynamic Tripod

### **How to change a clumsy grip?**

An adaptive pencil grips may be helpful in teaching children to modify their grasp. Please use this grip as often as possible to teach your child the correct pencil grasp. The stetro pencil grip is the most helpful and will facilitate the tripod-grasp.



### **Correct use of grip:**

The arrow on the grips must point to the tip of the pencil. The arrow should be between the thumb and index finger. Place your thumb on the star.

**And if the handwriting doesn't improve?**

After 4 weeks of using the stetro pencil grip and the handwriting still doesn't improve it may be time to look for underlying reasons for the untidy handwriting.

Here are some possibilities:

- Poor postural control
- Poor fine eye-hand coordination
- Poor hand function
- Poor visual perceptual skills

If other fine motor tasks are also proving problematic, please refer the child to an occupational therapist for an assessment.