



What do we have?

- > Materials for cutting (scrap paper, play dough, yarn, paint color samples, greeting cards, craft foam, ribbons or wrapping paper)
- > Large container
- > 2 pairs of safety scissors
- > Marker (optional)
- > Children's book



Book sharing

Repeating phrases or rhyming words from the story engages your child and builds his vocabulary. "Snip" phrases from the book by leaving off a word and ask him to repeat them back to you. "Jack and Jill went up the _____."

Scissors Station: Cutting and Snipping Practice

How do we do it?

1. Put the collected materials in the container.
2. Select a piece of material and show your child how to cut. Point out how one hand uses the scissors while the other holds and moves the paper.
3. Let your child choose what to cut. You may need to help him hold the materials.
4. If needed, show your child where to place his fingers. (If it's OK with your child, draw a smiley face on his thumbnail to remind him to keep the thumb facing upward.)
5. Use words to describe the actions. Cut while he cuts – this gives him a visual reference for what to do.
6. Notice the noise cutting makes. Ask, "What could we cut that would make a crunching sound?"
7. Allow your child to cut as long as he's interested or until his hands get tired.



Your child's brain

Most children show a strong hand preference at this age. This indicates a **dominant hemisphere**, which means one side of the brain has the ability to perform a skilled motor action better than the other.

What's in it for us?

Motor

- a. Cutting builds muscles in the fingers. At this age, children's fingers work in isolation as their wrists and hands guide the material.
- b. Children practice eye-hand coordination when they focus on cutting in a specific spot.
- c. Cutting involves muscles throughout the body. Muscles in the arms, back, shoulders and abdomen all work together to stabilize posture and cut precisely.

Connecting across development

- > **Cognitive:** As children cut, the brain processes what the hands are doing on both sides of the body (one cutting and one holding the paper).
- > **Language:** Conversations about materials and sounds build a vocabulary rich in descriptive words.
- > **Social-emotional:** Sharing materials helps children practice listening to others and helps them understand non-verbal cues.



Parenting behavior ...

Observing my child's development ...

Reflecting with my child ...

Continued learning

Cutting flimsy paper is difficult, so it may be best to start with resistive materials like cards or play dough.

If you find your child is not quite ready to use scissors on some of the materials, build his strength through other fine motor activities. Offer tools that he opens/closes or squeezes. Possibilities include hole punchers, spray bottles, clothespins, chip clips and tweezers.

Save the scraps for future crafts like collages that also use fine motor skills.

Keeping it going ...