

# The Weight of Success: OT in the Classroom



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## **Purpose**

Many children find it difficult to sit and focus which makes it harder to be successful in the classroom. One of the reasons children may find it difficult is if they are a proprioceptive seeker. Proprioceptive seekers require more deep pressure input from the environment than a person typically requires. Lacking this input leads to fidgeting and lack of attention.

This project aims to show some options to help these students. A weighted lap pad helps them to receive more deep pressure input which increases attention and focus. This project uses the lap pad and adds additional covers to help the student work on tasks while receiving the benefit of the weight.

# Activities

## Loops Lap Pad

### Materials:

- Lap pad cover with 10 loops
- Tags to place on the loops (numbers 1-10, numbers 11-20, letters of student's name)

### Steps:

- Place the appropriate tags on the loops in a random order.
- Instruct to move the horse through the loops in the appropriate order.
- Correct this order as needed.



### Grading:

- This activity can be made easier by placing the tags on the lap pad in order or harder by randomizing the order
- The activity can be made more difficult by not using the ribbon so they cannot see which loops they have already been through

### What this activity works on:

- Recognition of numbers and letters.
- Sequencing of numbers and spelling the student's name.
- Attention to task as the student moves through the loops.
- Hand eye coordination moving the toy through the loops.
- Scanning as the student finds the correct loop to move through next.

## Felt Letter Puzzles

### Materials:

- Felt lap pad cover
- Felt pieces of the puzzles (M, O, or Y)
- Optional: template to work the puzzle on

### Steps:

- Place the pieces together to form the letter



### Grading:

- This activity can be made easier by using the letter template to build the puzzle on.
- The task can be made harder by using felt that is one color instead of the two-color letter pieces.

### What this activity works on:

- Letter formation
- Attention to task
- Problem solving

# Plexiglass Lap Pad

## Materials:

- Lap pad cover with plexiglass insert
- Activity sheet inserts (found in the notebook)
- Dry erase marker
- Pop emz

## Steps:

- Insert activity sheet under the plexiglass
- Place pop emz in the appropriate spots for the activity
- Use the dry erase markers to trace the shape when desired for the activity sheet
- Pull the pop emz off of the plexiglass

## Examples of activities:

### Flower letter activity sheet:

- Direct where to place the pop emz by saying the letter to place it on
- Additional options are to direct a certain order such as the order of the alphabet or spelling a word
- Once the activity is finished direct the student to pull the pop emz off of the plexiglass
- The caterpillar and flower activity sheets are similar as the student places the pop emz inside the circles indicated



### Letter activity sheet:

- Student places the pop emz along the outline of the letter

- Place the pop emz close together so that when the student is finished there is a complete outline of the letter
- Once finished the student will use a dry erase marker to trace the letter while the pop emz acts as a bumper for the marker
- Erase the outline in the same way that you would be drawing the letter
- Remove the pop emz
- You can just use the pop emz or just trace the letters if the student does not need the bumper to stay on the path
- The shape activity sheets work the same way

**This activity works on:**

- Letter recognition
- Letter formation
- Shape recognition
- Shape formation
- Eye hand coordination
- Pencil grasp
- Pincer grasp
- Hand Strengthening
- Muscle memory

## Kite Lap Pad

**Materials:**

- Kite Lap Pad Cover
- Felt butterfly cut outs

**Steps:**

- Wind the string (kite tail) around the buttons
- Button on the butterflies

**What this activity works on:**

- Visual attention
- Hand eye coordination
- Working button for dressing



## I spy

### Materials:

- The I spy activity bag
- List of the items in the bag



### Activity 1:

- Search the bag and see what you can find.

### Activity 2:

- Use the list provided of what is in the bag and try to find the items from the list.

### What this activity works on:

- Visual focus
- Figure ground discrimination

## Writing Activities

### Materials:

- Sand or gel pack

### Steps:

- Write in the sand or on the gel pack (this could be letters or shapes) using your finger



### What this activity works on:

- Muscle memory
- Letter formation

# Playdough Activity Sheets

**Materials:**

- Activity sheets
- Playdough

**Steps:**

- Roll out the playdough
- Place playdough in the outline of the activity sheets

# How to make it

# Lap Pad Base

## Materials:

- Fabric of your choice
- Thread
- Rice or other weighted filling

## Supplies:

- Scissors
- Sewing machine
- Pins
- Needle



## Steps:

- Cut 2 pieces of fabric 13" x 17"
- Pin right sides together
- Sew 3 sides together leaving 1 short side open
- Turn the lap pad right side out
- Divide fabric into 9 equal sections (3 squares x 3 squares)
- Sew the 2 lines along the long side (right side out) to divide the lap pad into 3 parts
- Divide the rice into 9 equal parts
- Pour one part into each of the columns you have made
- Sew along this segment to close in the rice in these sections
- Repeat the previous 2 steps
- Pour the remaining rice into each of the final segments
- Sew the final seam to finish the lap pad

## Lap Pad Covers

### Materials:

- Material of your choice
- Thread
- Fastener of your choice

### Supplies:

- Sewing machine
- Scissors

### Steps:

- Cut out 2 pieces of material that are 18" x 14"
- Pin the right sides together
- Sew three sides together leaving one short side open
- Turn the cover right side out
- Hem the open side
- Attach fastener to close the lap pad cover

## Loops Lap Pad Cover

### Materials:

- Completed lap pad cover
- Thread
- Ribbon
- Felt
- Loops (shower curtain rods will do)
- Plastic animal toy
- Velcro

### Supplies:

- Needle
- Permanent marker



**Steps:**

- Cut short lengths of ribbon (approximately 1 inch)
- Sew the ribbon on to the lap pad cover in a random fashion
- Attach the loops to the ribbon
- Cut little flags out of the felt
- Write on the flags a logical sequence (this could be numbers, the child's name, etc.)
- Attach flags to loops with Velcro
- Optional: Attach a long length of ribbon to the lap pad and attach the toy to the end of the ribbon

## Felt Letter Puzzles

**Materials:**

- Felt
- Thread

**Supplies:**

- Scissors
- Needle
- Letter pattern

**Steps:**

- Pin the pattern to the felt
- Cut out the felt letter
- Cut the letter into 3-4 pieces
- Optional: to make it two-colored cut out 2 colors of felt and cut them in the same places for the pieces and sew them together



## Kite Lap Pad Cover

### Materials:

- Buttons
- Lap Pad Cover
- Felt
- String
- Ribbon

### Supplies:

- Scissors
- Needle

### Steps:

- Cut out a kite from the felt
- Sew the kite onto the lap pad cover
- Sew buttons around the cover
- Sew a string onto the bottom of the kite
- Tie bows with ribbon
- Attach the ribbon to the buttons

## Plexiglass Lap Pad Cover

### Materials:

- Lap pad cover
- Additional piece of material for the cover measuring 18" x 14"
- Plexiglass 8" x 10"
- Large snaps
- Thread
- Packing tape

### Supplies:

- hot glue
- needle
- scissors
- sewing machine



**Steps:**

- Cut a 6" x 8" hole in the middle of the additional piece of material
- Hem the edges of the hole and one long edge on the outside. This long edge will be the opening to insert the plexiglass.
- Pin the material you just hemmed to the top piece of the lap pad right side out
- Sew a trim about 1 inch around the sides and bottom of the window. This will help hold the plexiglass in place.
- Now pin the bottom cover to the top with wrong sides facing out
- Sew all three pieces together along two sides. Leaving one short edge and the long side you hemmed the 3<sup>rd</sup> piece on unsewn
- Sew the remaining long edge being sure to only sew the 2 pieces for the lap pad base (not the piece you hemmed)
- Turn right side out
- Hem the remaining short edge
- Attach any fastener you desire to close the lap pad
- Place packing tape along the edge of the plexiglass to cover sharp edges
- Hot glue a snap onto the plexiglass in each of the four corners
- Sew the other sides of the snaps into the four corners of the opening for the plexiglass
- Slide the plexiglass into the opening
- Fasten all snaps



# I Spy

## Materials:

- Thread
- Needle

## Supplies:

- Pencil case
- Scissors
- Styrofoam balls or filling of your choice
- Various items such as small plastic toys, dice, letters, bouncy balls, etc.

## Steps:

- Fill the pencil case with the styrofoam balls and various items to be found
- Close the zipper
- Optional: sew the zipper shut so that the contents of the bag cannot be spilled
- Create a list of items you placed in the bag in order for others to know what to find



# Gel Pack

## Materials:

- Laminating sheet
- 1 bottle of Glue
- Optional: food coloring to color the glue

## Supplies:

- Iron
- Scissors

## Steps:

- Iron the laminating sheet closed on 3 sides
- Pour in the glue
- Squeeze air out of laminating sheet
- Iron the fourth side closed
- Trim the excess laminating sheet while rounding the corners

