

# Developing Scissor Skills

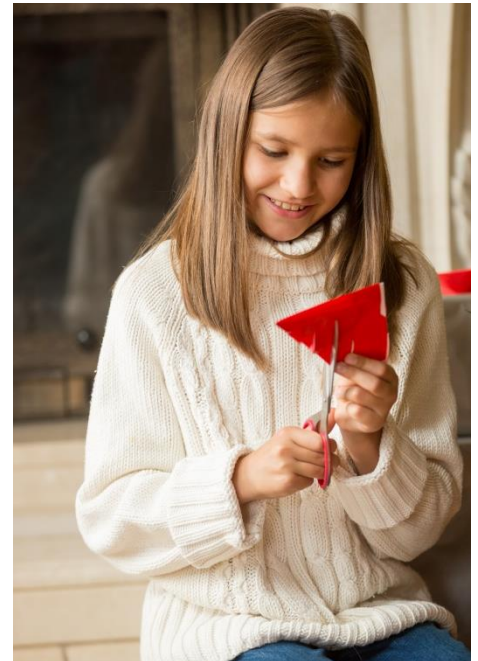
Quick reference  
**SHEET #8**

Scissor skills are an important part of a child's early education.

The following are some ideas on how to teach scissor skills and some considerations for the different types of scissors available.

## Get the position right first!

- ✓ Check the learner is sitting in a stable position
- ✓ The ideal sitting position is:
  - Feet flat on the floor (you could use a box or telephone book for a higher chair)
  - Knees and hips at 90 degrees
  - Trunk supported by the backrest of the chair (a cushion behind could help)
  - The table should be about 2cms below elbow height, when the elbow is bent to 90 degrees and the learner is sitting up straight. If the table is too high, you could place a firm cushion or piece of foam on the learner's chair



## Alternative types of scissors

- ✓ Try different scissors by asking the learner to cut along a straight line
- ✓ The results can then be compared to see which scissors gave the best result - Also ask the child which one they found most comfortable to use?
- ✓ If the child has difficulty using their fingers separately to open and close the scissors, try using 'Easi-grip' Scissors or spring assisted scissors - These scissors automatically open when pressure is released
- ✓ If the learner is having difficulty with the opening and closing movement of scissors, try using dual control scissors. These scissors allow an adult to assist the child by encouraging the movement needed when cutting. These may be useful as the child is learning to cut, but they then may like to progress onto one of the other scissors shown
- ✓ Start with firmer paper as it is easier to cut.
- ✓ Then progress to thinner, less resistant paper
- ✓ Start with small pieces as they are easier to manipulate and progress to larger sizes of paper
- ✓ Use the right tools for the job e.g. if the child is left-handed – provide left-handed scissors
- ✓ Provide reasonable opportunities for regular practise
- ✓ Do hand strengthening exercises – such as playing with dough, or threading to help

