

## **Can you try out a new way of making marks that you haven't tried before?**

**Mark making ideas for babies and toddlers:** parent needs to encourage babies and young children to mark make from an early age as this gives them the foundations that will later help them with early literacy skills.

Painting with Cotton Wool: if you have a child that is into messy play you may need to think of alternative activities e.g. using cotton wool fastened to pegs to paint with. You can introduce an activity your child is interested in to encourage participation e.g. cars making tracks in paint or dinosaurs making footprints across a page.

Mark making on sandpaper: This activity opens up children's experiences instead of painting on paper, children can feel the texture of sandpaper. Encourage the children to use the paint brushes to make marks on the sandpaper.

- Mark-making with Shaving Foam: you need a tray, Shaving Foam, Additional resource such as food colouring glitter. When the foam is spread on the tray you can encourage marks to be made with fingers or tools/toys etc. This activity can be further enhanced by adding glitter or food colouring to allow children the opportunity to mix colours. Allow the child time to experience and experiment and absorb the sensory elements to this play.
- Painting on Foil: you need Table, Tray or Floor, Different coloured Paints and Paintbrushes. This activity can be done by either sticking the roll of foil on the floor or putting sheets of foil on a table or tray. Again allow the child to paint on the foil as this will offer opportunities to experience different results than just painting on paper.
- Follow the link below for more mark making activities for babies.  
<https://www.earlyyearscares.com/eyc/latest-news/activities-to-support-babies-mark-making/>.

### **Mark making ideas for pre-schooler children:**

Taping down wall paper and giving a selection of mark making tools. Children love this as they feel they're writing on the table.

To develop stronger pencil grasp – taping paper to the underside of a table, child lays on their back under the table and makes marks, this encourages them to press more firmly to make marks, and develops control!

Using paintbrushes and water to make big marks on walls and the floor outdoors.

Magnifying glasses outside to hunt for words and write them.

Writing invitation cards, provide envelope and paper cards. Children love envelopes and love the responsibility of using one and posting into the mailbox.

### **Mark making activities from CBeebies**

There are lots of mark making activities on the [CBeebies website](#) and the [CBeebies Playtime App](#). There are also [Make a Picture](#) games for many CBeebies shows, which are a great introduction to mark making for children - they can create pictures and greetings cards featuring their favourite characters using paint, crayons, pencils and even glitter!

See the [Get Squiggling programme](#) and [the Get Squiggling Letters game](#) on the CBeebies website, designed for children who are starting to make the transition from mark-making to letter formation, preparing for writing.

### **The importance of mark making for children in early years setting**

Mark making is much more than just a scribble! Young children learn and begin to make sense of the world through mark making. It is the beginning of a child's journey towards writing and is an important step in a child's development for handwriting, creativity and coordination. Mark making simply refers to the creation of different patterns, lines, textures and shapes. This term is typically used to describe the scribbles that early years children make on a piece of paper with pens, pencils or crayons. However, mark making doesn't just refer to squiggles made with stationery, children are still mark making if they use their hands, paintbrushes or sticks.... By giving children the opportunity to explore different mediums of mark making, it engages them in sensory play and allows them to discover new exciting materials. This helps to enhance a child's critical thinking, brain development and language development, which gives them the ability to build towards more complex learning tasks in the future