

Home Learning Challenge 2 - Secret Writing

In this week's Home Learning Challenge, we will explore how you can make even the most reluctant mark makers begin practising their writing skills. Best of all, you only need one ingredient-lemon juice! You can extend the activity further by using fresh lemons and encouraging your child to cut and squeeze their own juice (which is amazing for building strength in the hands!), or bottled juice works just as well!



Pour some juice into a cup-it doesn't have to be a lot. Then your child can use either a cotton bud or a paintbrush, dipping it into the lemon juice and then painting it onto their page. Younger children can make a series of marks, practising their gross motor skills by making lines and circles, while older children might want to think about practising letters or numerals. When your child is satisfied with their work, pop the sheet of paper under a hot grill for 1-2 minutes, then take it out and have a look! The lemon juice should have browned, revealing the work that they created!



This activity is so helpful for young learners for so many reasons. Firstly, in terms of physical development, it not only lets them develop both gross and fine motor skills through holding the writing tool and the shapes that they create, but also links into health and self-care as children are given opportunities to manage risk (the grill). It also has clear benefits for writing and reading skills, and can link to maths if they are encouraged to create 2d shapes or numerals.

It also has good science links as it can be a platform to discuss reversible and irreversible changes-will this lemon juice ever be able to go back to how it was? You might want to think about doing a freezing and melting activity alongside this one to help children understand that while some things can change back to their original state, others can't. Finally, it links to Expressive Arts and Design as children can use the activity to create their own pictures. Best of all, the activity is so open ended and has so many possibilities that your child will be busy for hours!

