

# Introduction

Strengthening visual discrimination and fine motor skills are critical elements in a young child's progress towards learning to read and write. The ability to distinguish visually between objects—eventually differentiating between letters and words—is essential to reading readiness. And although by the age of five most children have made gains in controlling the movements of small muscles, including eye-hand coordination and manual dexterity, developing the fine motor skills needed to write requires time and plenty of practice. *Cut, Color, Trace & Paste* provides a wide variety of engaging activities to increase visual discrimination and fine motor skills that will help build the foundation for early literacy success.

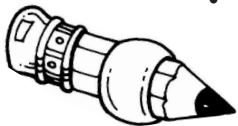
This book is divided into five levels of skill difficulty; each type of activity—cutting, coloring, tracing, and pasting—moves from simple to more complex. The following are a few examples of each skill's progression:



- **Cutting activities** begin with the short straight cuts of adding fringe to a rug, move to the angled lines of a bike race route, and, in level five, follow the spiral of a snail's shell.



- **Coloring activities** start with fun and simple objects and progress to more complicated scenes programmed with color keys to help children begin to recognize familiar color words.



- **Tracing activities** have children follow the straight lines of a rocket blastoff and a colony of climbing ants, make some waves at a pool party, and finish shapes and figures, including the creation of a self-portrait!



- **Pasting activities** challenge children as they accurately position and paste cutouts to complete simple scenes, several-piece puzzles, and even a paper bag bear puppet.

Also included is a section of innovative ideas for introducing each skill to children. With just a few supplies and minimal preparation, these projects will inspire creativity while helping children build strength and gain control of small muscles in their hands and wrists.

The activities in *Cut, Color, Trace & Paste* are fun, and will improve young children's visual discrimination and fine motor skills while gaining invaluable support for future learning.