

Teacher Checklist: Classroom Postural Control Screening Tool

Purpose:

This checklist helps teachers identify students who may demonstrate reduced postural stability that could impact handwriting, attention, and classroom performance. Postural control provides the foundation for efficient fine motor skills and endurance during seated tasks.

This checklist is not a diagnostic tool but helps determine when classroom supports or an occupational therapy referral may be beneficial.

Student Information:

Student Name: _____ Teacher: _____ Grade: _____ Date: _____

Observed during (check all that apply):

- ☐ Writing
- ☐ Deskwork
- ☐ Testing
- ☐ Centers
- ☐ Other: _____

Section 1: Seating Stability

<u>Skill</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>No</u>
Feet remain flat on floor or supported surface	☐	☐	☐
Hips positioned fully back in chair	☐	☐	☐
Maintains upright trunk posture	☐	☐	☐
Head remains upright (not resting on hand)	☐	☐	☐
Body remains centered in chair	☐	☐	☐

Section 2: Postural Endurance

<u>Skill</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>No</u>
Maintains upright posture throughout writing task	☐	☐	☐
Demonstrates stable body position while writing	☐	☐	☐
Does not frequently reposition body	☐	☐	☐
Maintains posture without excessive effort	☐	☐	☐
Completes writing tasks without visible fatigue	☐	☐	☐

Section 3: Observable Compensation Behaviors

Check any observed:

- ☐ Slouches or collapses posture
- ☐ Leans heavily on desk
- ☐ Supports head with hand
- ☐ Wraps feet around chair legs
- ☐ Slides forward in chair
- ☐ Frequently shifts position
- ☐ Appears fatigued during writing
- ☐ Switches hands during writing
- ☐ Uses excessive body movement while writing

Section 4: Impact on Classroom Performance

<u>Area</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>No</u>
Posture affects handwriting quality	☐	☐	☐
Posture affects writing endurance	☐	☐	☐
Posture affects attention	☐	☐	☐
Posture affects task completion	☐	☐	☐

Teacher Interpretation Guide

If the student demonstrates:

- Mostly YES → Postural stability appears adequate
- Multiple SOMETIMES → Monitor and provide classroom supports
- Multiple NO or many compensations → Consider occupational therapy consultation

Classroom Supports to Try First

These evidence-based strategies may improve postural stability:

- Ensure feet are supported (footrest, yoga block, books)
- Ensure hips are fully back in chair
- Adjust desk height (at elbow level)
- Provide movement breaks
- Check chair size and positioning
- Ensure paper is properly positioned

Research shows proper positioning improves handwriting efficiency and endurance (Parush et al., 1998; Feder & Majnemer, 2007).

OT Consultation/Referral May Be Appropriate If Student Demonstrates:

- Frequent postural instability
- Poor handwriting endurance
- Excessive fatigue during writing
- Significant leaning, slouching, or instability
- Difficulty maintaining seated posture

Professional Note:

Postural control provides the foundation for handwriting, fine motor skills, and attention. When the trunk is stable, the hands can work efficiently. When postural stability is reduced, students may use additional effort to stabilize their body, which can impact writing performance and classroom participation.

School-Based Occupational Therapy Resources
www.writeexpectations.com

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