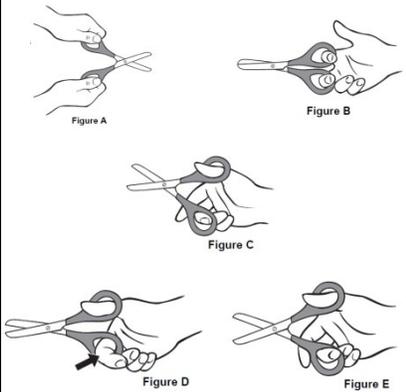
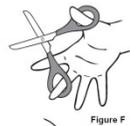


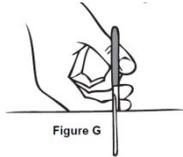
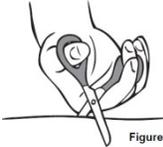
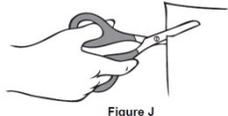
## Scissor Skills

### Pre-Requisite Skills

- ✂ Good sitting balance so they can use their arms and hands freely
- ✂ Strong wrist and hand muscles to open and close the scissors
- ✂ The ability to use his/her dominant hand to hold the scissors while the other turns the paper
- ✂ Good hand-eye coordination for cutting around shapes
- ✂ An ability to use the thumb, index and middle fingers while the other fingers remain fairly still
- ✂ Shoulder, forearm, and wrist stability

### Development of Scissor Skills

<p><b>STAGE 1: How to Hold Scissors (18-19 months)</b></p>	
<p>Initially, many children try to manipulate scissors using both hands to open and close the blades (Figure A).</p> <p>Children will then attempt to place their fingers in the loops. Often children will place the index and middle fingers in the loops but not the thumb (Figure B).</p> <p>The most efficient grasp is the thumb in the top loop and middle finger in the bottom loop (or middle and ring fingers, depending on the size of the hole). Placing the index finger below the bottom loop provides stabilization and directional guidance (Figure C).</p> <p>If children do not have the necessary shoulder, forearm, and wrist stabilization, or if the scissors are too big for their hands, they will hold the scissors close to the knuckles of the hand rather than near the middle joints of the fingers (Figure D). Holding the scissors near the middle joint of the fingers provides better scissor control (Figure E).</p>	
<p><b>STAGE 2: How to Open and Close Scissors (20-23 months)</b></p>	
<p>Once children can hold the scissors correctly, they are ready to practice opening and shutting the scissors. At this point, children are not ready to use paper. Additional tools to practice opening and shutting include picking up items with tongs, using a small squirt gun or spray bottle, and using a small, hand-held hole punch.</p>	
<p><b>STAGE 3: How to Snip Paper (23-29 months)</b></p>	
<p>In this stage, children make random snips on paper. Cutting is not directional and there is no forward of the scissors. During this stage, children often open and shut the entire hand, which causes an exaggerated opening and closing of the scissors (Figure F).</p>	

<b>STAGE 4: How to Snip Paper (30-35 months)</b>	
<p>During this stage, children begin to push the scissors forward to cut across a piece of paper. To start, children often do well cutting a one inch strip of heavyweight paper (such as an index card). This allows the child to cut across the paper with one snip. Heavyweight paper provides additional stability, allowing the student to concentrate on manipulating the scissors rather than stabilizing the paper. As the child's ability progresses, increase the width of the paper.</p>	 <p>Figure G</p>
<b>STAGE 5: Cut on a Straight Line (36-41 months)</b>	
<p>In this stage, children begin to manipulate the direction of the scissors to stay on a line. Manipulation of the paper is still limited mainly to stabilization. Scissors cut most efficiently when held at 90 degrees to the paper (Figure G). This requires forearm stability, as children must hold their hand with the thumb up and their arm in mid-position between pronation (palms down) and supination (palms up) (Figure H). Children with decreased forearm stability often have a hard time keeping the scissors at 90 degrees to the paper which leads to the bending and tearing of the paper (Figure I).</p>	 <p>Figure H</p>  <p>Figure I</p>
<b>STAGE 6: Cut on a Curve Line (41-47 months)</b>	
<p>Children are now learning to turn and manipulate the paper as well as the scissors to stay on lines. During this stage, children often have better control opening and shutting the scissors, generally only opening the scissors half way which provides a smoother, less jagged and more controlled cut (See Figure J).</p>	 <p>Figure J</p>
<b>STAGE 7: Cut out Simple Shapes (42-47 months)</b>	
<p>The child cuts out simple shapes like circles and squares. Once children have mastered this stage, they are ready to cut various weights of paper and non-paper materials. Easiest to cut is heavy paper like index cards, then thinner paper such as copy paper, and lastly, non-paper materials.</p>	
<b>STAGE 8: Cut Complex Shapes and Figures (48-57 months)</b>	

Reference:  
 Calder, T. (2007). *Developing coordination for scissor skills*. Super Duper Publications.