



Cindy's Corner

Spooky Halloween Hand

This simple Halloween-themed activity is a motivating hands-on activity that can be used to teach basic concepts, functional hand skills and introduction to a microwave.

You will need:

- One or more latex-free gloves for each student
- A sturdy container (to support the glove while inserting the popcorn)
- Microwave popcorn (use precooked popcorn to simplify the activity)
- A bowl
- A tray with sides
- Candy corn
- Plastic spider rings (optional)
- Ribbon, or rubber bands for fastening the finished glove

Start by exploring the microwave. This is a lesson in itself. Begin with a simple definition, e.g., “This is a microwave, microwaves are machines, a microwave’s job is to heat things up quickly (*Technology & Engineering*). Take time to explore the microwave, identify what shape it is (*Geometry*) and what it’s made out of (*Properties of Matter*). Work on *spatial concepts* as you explore the microwave. Clearly label each concept, e.g., “Look, the microwave is a box, it has a top, a bottom, a left side and a right side, it has a front and a back. It has a door on the front we can open and close. It has an inside and an outside. We have to open the door to get to the inside. Constant labeling of basic concepts will help your students incorporate them and generalize them to novel settings.

Before cooking the popcorn, spend some time adapting your microwave. Apply adhesive “bumps,” or different textures for nonreaders. Many of your students will need to begin by working on simply opening and closing the door and pushing the adapted start button (*finger isolation* and *pushing with strength*). For nonreaders, eager to operate the microwave more independently, try using a sequenced card with the matching textures in a row to out-line the sequence of buttons to push. For Braille readers, encourage independence by using a Braille Dymo Labeler.

Provide as much physical support and modeling as needed as you go from step-to-step in this activity. Tearing a bag of cooked popcorn open can be a challenging hand skill for many students. It involves *two hands together, using symmetrical movement while maintaining grasp*. Emptying a bag of popcorn into a bowl can also be challenging. It involves using *one hand to stabilize the bowl and one hand to manipulate the bag*.

Remember to label each action as you perform it. Be encouraging and keep each step fun and successful.

To assemble, drop one piece of candy corn into the each finger of the glove (*one-to-one correspondence*) to simulate fingernails. You can incorporate *scanning*, by placing one piece of candy corn on a tray with a high contrast background and directing your student to find the candy corn.

After inserting the candy corn, stretch the opening of the glove over a sturdy container to stabilize it (this will make it easy to stuff with popcorn). Spread some of the popcorn onto a tray and put the container in the middle of the tray. To fill the glove with popcorn, focus on simple *grasp and release* (picking up a handful of popcorn and releasing it purposefully into the glove). Developmentally, you will notice that students with beginning hand skills will typically use their whole hand (*palmar grasp*) to pick up the popcorn. Students with more advanced hand skills can be encouraged to use their thumb and index finger (*pincer grasp*) to pick up each piece. Picking up one piece of popcorn at a time is a fun way to work on the concept of “just spider ring into the little Halloween optional.



Make filling the *counting* how popcorn it takes to estimates starting. Give the closest a free

the glove is full, remove it from the container. Assist as needed with sealing the glove, tie it with a ribbon, or fasten it with rubber band. Compare the spooky hand with the student’s own hand (*compare and contrast*). Label the names of each finger on the glove and help the student identify the names of their own fingers (*finger identification*).

to work on the *one.*” Inserting a ring finger adds a “bling,” but this is

glove exciting. Try many pieces of fill the glove. Take (*estimation*) before student who comes spider ring. When

Options: Make lots of spooky hands. Tie them onto a piece of rope, or fasten them on with clothespins (good pincer grasp skill) and hang as garlands for Halloween decorations. Place one spooky hand in every Teacher’s mailbox (*one-to-one correspondence & spatial concepts*) with a note wishing them Happy Halloween (*composition*). Deliver the spooky hands to classrooms, friends or neighbors (*social skills*). Sell from a cart for ten cents apiece (*money skills*). Package supplies (*sequencing*) to make your own spooky hand, insert instructions and count out the needed number of packaged supplies for the number of students in each classroom or family (*counting skills*).

Enjoy!