📘 STRAND 1.0 — MYSELF

Focus: Self-expression through early mark-making and fine motor skills

SUB-STRAND 1.1 — SCRIBBLING

Pages 1–25

Scribbling is the first step in a child's journey of creative expression and writing readiness. It is a natural and joyful activity that allows children to explore movement, tools, and materials while building hand strength, coordination, and confidence. Scribbling is not random — it is a meaningful way for children to communicate their thoughts, feelings, and experiences before they can write words. Every mark a child makes tells a story and shows their growing ability to control their hands and coordinate their eyes with their movements.

Children begin scribbling using a variety of tools. They start with thick, easy-to-grip crayons, markers, and chalk that fit comfortably in small hands. Large wax crayons are ideal because they are bold, bright, and do not break easily. Children learn to hold the tool in different ways — first with a full fist grip, then gradually moving toward a more controlled finger grip. They experiment with making marks on different surfaces: large sheets of paper on the floor or table, cardboard, brown paper bags, and even the chalkboard. The larger the surface, the more freely children can move their arms and bodies.

Children explore different types of scribbles and movements. They make big, circular scribbles by moving their whole arm in wide sweeping motions. They make straight, wavy, and zigzag lines by moving their hands back and forth, up and down, and side to side. They make dots and short strokes by tapping and pressing the tool. They discover that pressing hard makes dark, thick lines while pressing lightly makes faint, thin lines. They learn that moving fast creates loose, wild marks while

moving slowly creates controlled, careful marks. Each movement teaches children cause and effect — how their actions create visible results.

Scribbling helps children develop essential physical skills. It strengthens the small muscles in the fingers, hands, and wrists — muscles needed later for holding a pencil, writing, and tying shoelaces. It improves hand-eye coordination — the ability to look at what they are drawing while guiding their hand to make marks where they want them. It develops grip control — learning how tightly to hold a tool so it does not slip but not so tightly that the hand gets tired. It also builds bilateral coordination — using one hand to hold the paper steady while the other hand draws. These foundational skills are built through repeated, joyful practice.

Children learn to give meaning to their scribbles. As they draw, they begin to tell stories about their marks — “This is me running,” “This is the sun,” “This is my dog.” They start with pure movement and gradually attach ideas and images to what they have made. Teachers and parents should always ask children to tell about their work rather than guessing. Saying “Tell me about your picture” shows respect for their ideas and encourages language development. Children begin to understand that marks on paper can represent people, places, things, and feelings — this is the very beginning of reading and writing.

Children explore different colours and materials while scribbling. They experiment with red, blue, yellow, green, and other bright colours, choosing colours that match what they are thinking or feeling. They discover that colours can be mixed or placed next to each other to create new effects. They try different tools — thick markers make bold lines, thin crayons make delicate lines, chalk glides smoothly on rough surfaces, and paint brushes create flowing marks. They learn that different tools and materials produce different results, giving them choices and control over their creative work.

Children scribble freely and without fear of making mistakes. There is no “right” or “wrong” way to scribble — every mark is good and every child’s work is unique. Teachers encourage children to express themselves freely, praising their effort, their ideas, and their enjoyment rather than judging how “good” the picture looks. This builds confidence and a positive attitude toward learning. Children learn that their ideas matter and that they are capable of creating something of value. This early confidence stays with them as they move into more complex writing and drawing activities.