

*from the editors of*

\$14.95

**ADDITUDE**

# Your ADHD Homework Survival Guide

**A plan for getting assignments  
written down, completed, and  
handed in on time**



# ADDITUDE SPECIAL REPORT

A trusted source of advice and information for families touched by attention-deficit disorder—  
and a voice of inspiration to help people with ADHD find success at home, at school, and on the job.

**adhdreports.com**

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## Introduction

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*It's 3:30 pm. Your child flies off the bus and barrels into the yard. Even from a distance, you recognize that look in his eyes: He's mentally and physically drained from keeping ADHD symptoms under control all day at school, his medication is wearing off, he's hungry, and that 5th grader on the bus was being a jerk again. What's more, he's got soccer practice at 5 — and you know that backpack is full of worksheets and reading questions due tomorrow. You take a deep breath and emotionally prepare for yet another epic afternoon and/or evening battle over long division and this week's vocabulary list. There must be a better way, right? Right.*

In theory, homework makes sense. In a comfortable environment, kids review the day's learning and demonstrate their understanding (or confusion) so that teachers can adjust accordingly. But for kids with ADHD and LD — who struggle with executive functions, working memory, focus, retention, anger management, and restlessness — homework is very tough. And the daily grind of getting it home, done, and handed back in is enough to incite family feuds, tears, and meltdowns. Every darn night.

In this Special Report, you will find guidance from experts in ADHD and LD who understand the special challenges parents face. This eBook offers advice on setting up the best homework routines, guiding your child without doing her work, working through academic challenges, cooperating with teachers, and knowing when enough is enough. We hope it helps to establish the homework habits that will help everyone survive from Fall to Spring — and learn a thing or two, too.

The *ADDitude* Editors

# Your ADHD Homework Survival Guide

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## Chapter One

# 10 Unbendable Homework Rules

Routine. It is the answer to so many of our toughest parenting questions. And though it's not the quick fix we're secretly hoping for, a reliable routine is quite often exactly what our kids need to feel calm, confident, and clear-minded. This is certainly true when it comes to homework.

Dr. Michele Borba, author of 22 parenting books including *The Big Book of Parenting Solutions*, says that fixing your family's homework problems begins with establishing a healthy homework habit. "Instilling habits in an ADHD child is going to take a lot of routine and rituals," she says. "Never do for your child what your child can do for herself. You are there for guidance — to teach them the habits that will make homework successful."

### So what are these habits?

#### 1. Allow your child to decompress first.

Give her 30 minutes to relax, eat a snack, and regain a sense of calm after the school day. Many children arrive home from school disheveled and craving attention; as a result, their behavior falls apart quickly and dramatically. To stem this cycle, plan to carve out 30 minutes with your child to ask about her day, look over her school work, and get her set up with a snack in a quiet room with relaxing music playing. This is her time. Don't make any demands or try to squeeze in anything productive.

#### 2. Talk with your doctor about an afternoon dose.

Children taking Ritalin, Dexedrine, Adderall, or any of the stimulant medications for ADHD may experience a negative "rebound" about 30 minutes after their daytime dose wears off. They may become very irritable (or hyper or loud or aggressive) for roughly an hour — a window of time that usually coincides not-so-nicely with homework.

#### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Some of our favorite after-school snacks for kids with ADHD include:

- LÄRABARS
- Clif Kid Organic Zbars
- Mary's Gone Crackers
- Odwalla or Naked Juice
- Trail mix
- Fresh fruit with yogurt

“The solution might be to add an additional, short-acting dose so that the medication wears off only at bedtime, or to decrease your child’s last dose to see if the rebound is less severe,” says Dr. Larry Silver, author of *The Misunderstood Child*. “If giving an additional dose late in the afternoon, you should carefully monitor your child’s appetite in the evening (when many children with ADHD eat their largest meal), to ensure that appetite suppression doesn’t interfere with proper nutrition. If neither approach works, it may be necessary to try a different medication.”

### 3. No screen time after school.

Children with ADHD have difficulty with transitions and change. Moving from one activity to another is sometimes upsetting. Moving from video games to homework? That’s *always* upsetting. In addition, kids who slip easily into hyperfocus — losing themselves in a favorite TV show or video game — are often irritable and even violent when snapped out of that hyperfocus. Believe us, you don’t want to deal with this.

Make life easier for everyone by making screen time a reward for finishing homework — not a way to wind down after school. Keep all electronics off before and during homework time, everywhere in the house. “The more distractions, the most distracted the kid,” Borba says. “Computer and TV are the reward after they complete their homework.”

### 4. Music can help with focus.

Research shows that pleasurable music increases dopamine levels in the brain. This neurotransmitter — responsible for regulating attention, working memory, and motivation — is **in low supply in ADHD brains**. “Music shares neural networks with other cognitive processes,” says Patti Catalano, a neurologic music therapist at Music Works Northwest. “Through brain imaging, we can see how music lights up the left and right lobes.”

The bottom line: Some kids can concentrate better on their homework while listening to music. This is not true for everyone; in fact, music can sometimes have a very distracting effect, particularly when kids have sensory processing disorder. Experiment and see what works best for your child, and don’t assume that Beethoven and Bach are the only options. Some people swear by the focusing powers of electronica music or even Metallica.

### 5. Carve out a dedicated homework spot.

Generally speaking, a location with fewer distractions is better. Try to find a small space with no windows and little traffic, where your child can comfortably spread out his work and make use of a hanging white or bulletin board to stay organized. Consider using a yoga ball instead of a chair to allow for the fidgeting that helps our kids focus. If your child prefers sitting at the kitchen counter, try using a cardboard divider to keep him focused on his work.

**“Music facilitates multi-step processing when executive-function deficits may make it difficult.”**

— CONCETTA TOMAINO,  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF  
THE INSTITUTE FOR MUSIC AND  
NEUROLOGIC FUNCTION

“This will be a discovery period for you, to figure out what works for your child,” Borba says. “Set the stage for homework by involving your kids, and then keep revamping it so that it is the most successful place for your child.”

## 6. Begin together.

Unpack your child’s homework folder with her. Review the list of assignments and make sure she understands what is expected for each, and when — deadlines may dictate your list of priorities. Then ask her where she would like to begin. (Giving your child some choice in the process can help.) Finally, tell your child that you will help to get her started, but she’s got to take the reins after two problems or two minutes.

“Your role in your child’s homework is not doer; you are there for guidance only,” Borba says. “You might say, ‘You try the first problem and then I’ll help you with the second one.’” Build up his confidence and get him started in the right direction, then step back. Guide and check, but never do.

## 7. Praise the effort — not the end result.

“Your words really do matter, says Stanford and Columbia research,” Borba says. “Please remember to use those wonderful words for stressing the effort, not the end product. Say, ‘I like how hard you worked along the way’ or ‘I know that was challenging, but you stuck with it without getting frustrated. Great job!’”

## 8. Don’t assume finished work will get handed in.

Children with ADHD have difficulty **keeping track** of bits of information and paperwork. This problem is likely related to an underactive frontal lobe — the area of the brain that controls memory and processing. What this means is that they may forget something that just happened as their focus shifts from one task to another or from one class to another. It’s very easy for our kids to get interrupted along the way and forget to hand in the completed homework sitting in their backpacks.

Parents can increase the odds of homework submission by designating one folder for all completed work. A red folder for new assignments, a green one for completed assignments, for example. “Color coding seems to be really helpful,” Borba says. “Some parents also set up an ‘In’ box and an ‘Out’ box on the child’s desk. What’s important is that you create a ritual around getting the homework back to class.”

Finally, create a “launch pad” near the door where your child’s backpack, glasses, musical instrument, keys, and anything else she might need for the day always go before bed. That way, they are ready to go in the morning — no hunting or stressing required.

*“I cut my daughter’s homework folder into three flaps. We open one flap at a time so she can focus on just a couple questions — and not be distracted by the rest of the work.”*

— LAURA

## Chapter Two

# Useful Homework Accommodations

Homework is counterproductive for some kids. This is a fact, and one that we're hearing more and more parents and educators discussing today. Especially for young kids facing learning and attention challenges, the pressure of sitting down to complete worksheets and memorize vocabulary words after a full day of practicing impulse control and classroom focus can be enough to push them over the edge and to make them dislike — nay, despise — school.

This should be a fate avoided at all costs. If your child is so frustrated, worn out, and stressed by homework that it's impacting her interest and excitement for learning, that is counterproductive. And it's got to stop.

80 years of research shows that homework done while in tears will not improve your child's achievement and will likely have a negative effect on his attitude toward school in general. There is no strong correlation between homework and achievement. When assigned, homework should be at the right level, with the right amount of time spent reinforcing the right material.

If homework is a daily frustration for your child, speak with his teacher immediately about:

- How much time she expects students to spend on homework nightly
- How long it actually takes your child to complete assignments
- Developing modified homework assignments that cover the critical concepts in fewer problems and pages
- Leniency on completing and grading homework when an assignment is turning counterproductive

***“No research has ever found a benefit to assigning homework (of any kind or in any amount) in elementary school.”***

— ALFIE KOHN, AUTHOR OF *THE HOMEWORK MYTH*



If your child has an IEP or 504 Plan, it should include homework-specific accommodations. Here are a few of our favorites:

1. Your child is responsible for only the odd or even numbered math problems assigned
2. Your child will spend no more than 30 minutes each night on homework, with a parent signing off on time spent
3. Your child will not be expected to tackle new material in homework assignments; they will only cover concepts introduced in class
4. Homework will never be assigned as a punishment
5. Incomplete classroom work will not be sent home for finishing
6. Your child will get an extra set of books to keep at home so that missing materials is never a reason for missing homework
7. Your child's teacher will write homework assignments on the board, explain each one, and designate a time for all students to write them in a notebook or planner
8. Your child may submit complete assignments via email to ensure they are handed in on time, without rips or stains
9. Your child's grade will not suffer due to poor penmanship
10. Your child's teacher will use a Daily Report Card to communicate about missing assignments, classroom challenges, small victories, and upcoming deadlines
11. Your child's teacher will post homework assignments on her Web page so that parents can double check what's due when
12. Your child may submit a PowerPoint, audio file, or video instead of a long written assignment if handwriting and typing are a challenge
13. Your child will be assigned a homework buddy who will help him remember to write down assignments and turn in completed work
14. You will work with your child's teacher to devise incentives and rewards for completed homework
15. Homework will not be graded for perfection, but rather for effort
16. You will sign off on homework each night and note problem areas — like challenging problems or frustrating reading passages — so that the teacher can clearly see these red flags

\*\*\*For more information about establishing or updating an IEP or 504 Plan for your child, we recommend *The Complete IEP/504 Guide*:  
<http://additu.de/iep-504-ebook>

***“Last winter my 10-year-old daughter asked if she could wear her earmuffs during independent writing time, to drown out classroom chatter. It works!”***

— SUZANNE

## Chapter Three

# Getting Assignments from Home to School: Note-Taking and Organization Strategies

Homework is a misnomer. The hard work of completing any assignment begins at school, where kids are responsible for paying attention to lessons, logging homework due dates, and keeping materials organized. That's an annoyance for most kids; for students with ADHD, it's a consistent and formidable hurdle.

Why is that? In a word (actually two): executive functions.

Children with ADHD almost always suffer from executive function deficits. This means they lack the abilities to handle frustration, start and complete tasks, recall and follow multi-step directions, stay on track, plan, **organize**, and **self-monitor**. In other words, every skill required to log and track homework is more difficult for our kids. Here are some expert strategies designed to help — from the point of taking notes all the way through to boarding the school bus home.

### How to Keep Track of Assignments

Your child can't do her homework if she doesn't know what it is. But getting students with ADHD to shift gears and write down assignments at the end of a long school day can be a daily obstacle — one that is seldom vaulted without a teacher's help. If your child struggles to copy down the correct assignments each day, talk to her teacher about implementing one or more of the following strategies:

#### 1. Put It on the Calendar

Block out a chunk of time each day when students are required to copy down assignments. Posting the homework on the board — and reading it aloud

*“I find that a ‘To-Do’ list at the student’s desk (on a whiteboard, so they can wipe off as they complete each part of the assignment) works well.”*

— SUSAN

to reinforce the information — helps both auditory and visual learners. If language deficits make it difficult for children to copy down the information correctly, ask teachers to consider sending home a typed copy.

## 2. Buddy Up

Establishing “study buddies” not only boosts a child’s accountability, it’s also an easy way for kids with ADHD to build social skills in a low-pressure situation. Each buddy should check his or her partner’s planner at the end of the day, making sure all the homework has been written down correctly. Buddies can also help each other pack up the correct textbooks and additional materials they need to do their homework.

## 3. Accommodate Unique Learning Styles

Students are more enthusiastic about homework when they’re given some choice and creativity. Ask your child’s teacher to allow a little leeway in certain assignments. For example, instead of requiring every student to make flashcards to study vocabulary words, the teacher can ask that students write a rap or create a PowerPoint to study them. Every child is different, and homework shouldn’t be a one-size-fits-all process.

## 4. Never Make Homework a Punishment

Some teachers assign extra homework when a student misbehaves in class. If your child’s teacher does this, call a meeting with her and ask her to stop. It’s unfair to children — particularly those with ADHD, who may have trouble staying focused in class or controlling impulses during quiet time. If she refuses, consider getting it written into your child’s IEP.

## 5. Create a “Completed Work” Folder

Designate a special folder for completed work that comes back to school each day, and take some time at the beginning of the year to teach kids how to use it. If your child has particular trouble with it, ask her teacher to include a sheet for you to sign each night so you know that everything is getting done.

## 6. Use Visual Cues

Kids — especially visual learners — need visual cues to act as reminders. In the case of homework, a silly key chain on your child’s backpack or a sticker on her notebook could function as a visual reminder to write down assignments or gather homework materials at the end of the day. Visual cues really do work, but only when used in moderation. Too many, and your child will just tune them all out. So begin experimenting to figure out what will trigger your child’s memory at school, and prepare to adjust often.

## 7. Lighten the Load

Let’s be honest: kids these days have too much homework. For children with

**POWER OFF! BRAIN ON!**  
As your child’s main role model, curtail your own screen time if you expect him to do the same.

ADHD, this heavy workload can become downright unbearable. Ask the teacher to cut down the workload — by assigning just the odd numbered problems, for example. Your child can still demonstrate what he's learned without being overtaxed.

## 8. Work Together

If you and your child's teacher have tried everything and nothing works, ask him to consider emailing you the assignments each night. Most teachers will be willing to go the extra step for a child who is struggling.

## How to Take Better Notes

In theory, homework is a tool to reinforce classroom learning. But if your child is not paying attention in class, homework is not only ineffective — it is frustrating and sometimes grueling. Help your child build a strong foundation by learning to take notes — the right kind of notes that will help her think critically about the topic at hand and successfully apply it to her homework.

Traditional note-taking involves taking down as much information as possible. That strategy simply won't work for a child with ADHD (especially one who may suffer from additional learning disabilities like dyslexia or dysgraphia). Our kids learn best not by mindlessly recording facts, but by looking at information from various angles to see how it can be applied to real life.

Below are some note-taking tactics that work for kids with ADHD. Your child should mix and match to see what works best for his learning style. He'll not only better absorb the information the first time around, but also learn how to apply it effectively — to homework problems and to life.

## Note-Taking Rules

Regardless of what system your child uses to take notes, she should follow these rules without fail:

### 1. Date every page.

This will help your child know what information to study for upcoming tests and quizzes, and help her keep things in order even if her binder gets a little disorganized.

### 2. "This will be on the test."

Every time his teacher says this crucial phrase, your child should put a star in his notes. Same goes for "This is important," or "This is not in your textbook."

*"I like to use different colored pens and make drawings, graphics, or write at an angle. As a visual learner, it helps me to remember ideas that I might not have gotten down."*

— KELLY

### 3. Review within 2 days.

Every few nights, have your child go over his notes from the preceding days' lessons. He'll process the information better with breaks in between study sessions.

### 4. Leave blank spaces.

Make sure your child knows it's okay to miss things sometimes. Tell her to leave a blank space in her notes whenever she thinks she's missed something, so she can go over it later or talk to the teacher to figure out what she needs to know.

### 5. Spread out.

Remind your child that her notes only have to make sense to her. If she wants to spread them out over 30 pages — with illustrations — that's perfectly fine, as long as she's using them to learn the information.

## Strategies for Capturing Learning on Paper

### 1. Connect Ideas

ADHD brains dart quickly from topic to topic, which can be a disadvantage during long boring lectures. Connecting disparate ideas will strengthen your child's brain and — ultimately — make her a better student in every subject. How? By using a “mind map,” a visual tool that students can use to organize ideas, structure papers, or study for exams. Using key words, colors, arrows, symbols, and icons to create a *map* — essentially an elaborate diagram — ADHDers can show how different ideas relate to one another.

In its most basic form, a mind map is a series of ideas connected to a central theme. If your child were writing a history paper, for example, he would start with the main event or question in the center of the page, boxed or circled. Then, he would draw lines radiating from the main idea to create a second layer of related thoughts or ideas. These could each have shoots of their own — creating a multilayered map that provides a logical structure for his paper.

Mind maps can also help if your child is struggling to choose a topic in the first place. She can write down the general idea of the assignment in the center of the map, then brainstorm all the smaller ideas that come to her head until she settles on a topic.

To create a powerful mind map during class lectures, follow these steps:

- 1. IDENTIFY IMPORTANT THEMES:** Write the main topic in the middle of the page. As other themes start to become clear while listening to

*“To help my son take notes, we highlight, underline and make bullet points on 3x5 cards.”*

— KRIS

the lecture or going through the material, write them down around the outside of the page.

**2. ADD DETAILS:** Try to keep related facts and themes together — but if you can't, you can always connect them later with lines. Use key words instead of full sentences to save time. Print clearly, and leave lots of space.

**3. LOOK FOR RELATIONSHIPS:** Once the lecture is over, look at your mind map. Choose colors to represent certain categories — blue can be important battles, for example, while red can be notable people — and shade or outline your idea bubbles with the corresponding color.

**4. “MOVE” THINGS AROUND:** Using lines, arrows, or more colors, connect pieces of information to their appropriate topic.

**5. REDRAW THE MAP:** If your map gets cluttered, redraw it to bring related information closer together and separate the whole thing into different themes. If it helps, draw diagrams or funny cartoons to help you remember specific details.

## 2. Ask Questions

One of the most powerful ways to learn new material is to question it from all sides. Instead of writing a huge unbroken block of information, your child can divide up the content into questions and answers. To begin, practice answering the basic ones: Who? When? Where? What? Why? How?

## 3. Think Conceptually

Focus on big concepts, not small details. This works best for students who miss the forest for the trees — who get so wrapped up in minutiae that they miss the big picture. If your child has this problem, have her practice taking minimal notes on the details of the lecture, focusing instead on the larger topic. Be warned: This style of note-taking isn't great for students whose inattentive symptoms aren't being properly treated. Listening to the lecture carefully is a big part of it!

## 4. Pay Attention to Details

This style of note-taking is just the opposite! Instead of focusing on the general concept, your child writes down important dates, concrete examples, and other minute information. This allows children to see how small things fit together into a larger subject, and keeps wandering minds engaged.

## 5. Find an Application

Many students with ADHD learn best when they can relate schoolwork to the real world. If your child gets bored during science class but spends hours collecting worms or growing crystals, this may be how her brain works!

*“Students with ADHD think in concepts, images, and networks of connected ideas.”*

— MICHAEL SANDLER, ADHD COACH

While taking notes, she needs to ask herself, “How does this work? How does it apply to the real world? How can I use it in real life?”

## 6. Connect Emotionally

Kids with ADHD are often emotional, a trait that is often discouraged during class. But this shouldn't be the case — emotional connections help children retain information. Your child can harness this by keeping track of how he feels during a lecture. If a funny limerick makes him laugh, he should write down why. If hearing of a sad historical event makes him angry, he should note that, too. Anything that gets his emotions pumping and his brain moving will make learning stick.

## 7. Get Tech Savvy

If your child struggles with penmanship or fine motor skills, ask your child's teacher if he can take notes on a laptop or record lectures so he can go back later and match up what he wrote down to what was actually said. There are even apps he can use to organize or review his notes to help him retain the information or find something he needs for a homework assignment. *ADDitude* likes [inClass](#).

***“My son currently has a friend at school help him take notes or he records audio for notes on a deactivated iPhone.” — Allison***

## STOP LOSING YOUR NOTEBOOK!

If your child needs a new notebook every month, follow these tips to help him keep track of it:

- *Label it!* Make sure each new notebook prominently lists your child's name, phone number, and classroom number. In many cases, lost notebooks will find their way back by simple word of mouth.
- *Pick a place.* Tell your child to always keep her notebook in the same pocket of her backpack or same spot in her locker. At home, practice putting it in the correct pocket with her so it becomes a habit she keeps at school.
- *Make it more essential.* Storing other important items with his notebook will make your child less likely to lose it. Keep pencils, drawings, and other tools or keepsakes in the front pockets. Just don't have him store anything truly valuable in there, like a cellphone!

## Master The Planner

Using a planner is one of the smartest things your child can do to manage homework. Here are some simple tips to help her make the most of it.

### 1. Pick the Right Planner

The ideal paper planner will be thin, with a spiral binding to prevent pages from falling out, and a weekly page layout. A monthly planner may be overwhelming and unwieldy. Avoid bulky planners and leather covers. Make sure you choose one with enough space for writing down assignments: The younger the child, the larger the handwriting. Finally, look for a planner that has a pocket or sleeve attached at the back so that papers from and for the teacher can be kept together.

### 2. Keep the Planner at Your Child's Fingertips

Experts recommend that students keep their planner in the front pocket of the book bag or a binder that they carry to classes. It should take no more than two small actions — reach and open — for your child to retrieve his planner. Have him keep a pen in the spiral binding to avoid the “pen hunt” that often causes kids to stop using a planner. Use a binder clip to mark the current page, so he can access it with one flip.

### 3. Review What to Write Down

Explain to your child that she should write in her planner during daily transition points — at the end of each class when assignments and due dates are typically announced. She can use “texting” language so she doesn't fall behind. She should also consult her planner at her locker as she packs up at the end of the day, at home when starting her homework assignments, and before bed as she's making sure all of her assignments are in her backpack.

### 4. Have the Teacher Check the Planner

Many students swear they wrote down their assignments only to find that they left out critical details — like the reading comprehension questions that were to be answered. Encourage your child to write down assignments word for word and ask his teacher to look over the planner before he leaves class.

### 5. Schedule Fun Stuff and School Stuff

Using a planner can help your child develop critical skills: juggling responsibilities, allotting time, and planning ahead. Have your child schedule extracurricular events — concerts, martial arts lessons, etc. — and activities with friends in her planner, as well as academics. It will get her to take the long view and to learn to spot and avoid time conflicts.

### 6. Customize the Planner with Add-Ons

Place sticky notes of various sizes and colors in the planner to remind your

*“Our brand new middle schooler loves her Trapper Keeper! Everything has its place. Also, Post-It notes tuck nicely under the cover for reminders.”*

— TRISH



child about special school events or tasks — asking the math teacher for help with last night’s homework, say. A notation about Thursday’s piano lesson may include a prompt to practice every day for 15 minutes. Some parents also paper-clip a checklist to the planner including books and materials your student needs to bring home each day.

### **7. Use the Planner to Sharpen Long-Term Planning Skills**

All kids, especially those with ADHD, have difficulty with long-term planning. When your child has a big test, or is assigned a complicated project, use the homework planner to break it down into manageable mini-tasks. If he’s been assigned a report, mark the due date with a colored marker and work backward, allotting a day for selecting a topic and so on, and enough time to write a rough and final draft.

### **8. Schedule a Planner Meeting**

A meeting at the beginning of the week — Sunday evening usually works best — works miracles in improving the use of a planner. Everyone in the family grabs their planners or calendars to discuss the week ahead. Parents can start by telling family members about their weekly schedule — everything from deadlines at work to carpool plans. This sets the stage for children to respond with their plans. It drives home the importance of thinking ahead.

## Chapter Four

# Getting Homework Done — Without Hostility

Sink or swim does not work with our kids. We can't just lay down the law, enforce the rules, and expect homework behavior and performance to improve with time. Why? That's like asking an infant to learn to speak in a silent environment; in other words, we've got to model the behavior we expect.

“The biggest mistake that parents make regarding homework is assuming their kids have the skills to get it done,” Borba says. “Homework requires time-management, organization, and study skills. The first thing any parent should do is ask, ‘Have I taught my child all of these skills?’ You’ve got to model them one by one.”

How? Begin by working with your child to establish a reliable homework routine.

### STEP ONE: Build a Homework Routine

Research has consistently shown that reliable after-school routines decrease frustration, head off arguments before they start, and give children a sense of security. When it comes to homework, children should have a designated time, place, and system for positive reinforcement. Here's how to get started:

#### 1. Build Your Routine — Together

Begin by calling a formal family meeting. For the routine to run smoothly every day, parents and children need to be on the same page. This includes non-ADHD siblings, who can also learn responsibility (and earn rewards) by completing homework at the same time and place every day.

Before your family meeting, think about what you want to accomplish. For example, if video game use has leaked into homework time, start the dia-

*“I tell my daughter that the first step only LOOKS hard and I remind her of the times she did very well on previous assignments that she thought would end in disaster.”*

— NATALIE

logue by saying, “Last year, when you started playing video games right after school, it was tougher for you to get started on homework. How can we change that this year?” If late starts led to late bedtimes, say something like, “I noticed that you starting homework too late after dinner has begun to interfere with your sleep schedule. What is a good solution for this problem?” Let your child contribute input and truly hear him out.

## 2. Put it in Writing

Write down the homework schedule you’ve agreed upon and post it on the refrigerator or another conspicuous place. Kids with ADHD often do better with visual cues as opposed to verbal reminders, and posting the routine allows your child to take charge and follow it on his own.

## 3. Set a Limit on Reminders

Many ADHD children need a reminder or two about homework time, but it’s important that parents don’t overdo it. Decide on a set number of reminders (two normally works), and stick to it. Let your child know that if she has to be reminded more than twice, she will start losing privileges.

## 4. Designate a Homework Station

Agree on a reliable homework station that is quiet and free from distractions. In general, children’s bedrooms are NOT a good place for them to work — they’re full of toys, and not as easily supervised by busy parents trying to get dinner together.

If your child will be working near the TV, computer, or other potentially distracting electronic devices, make sure they stay off during homework time. Children should turn over the cell phones during homework time as well; they may be allowed to check them during designated breaks but not while the books are out. Many children, however, do well with soft music playing in the background while working.

## 5. Get Him Started

Often, the first homework step is the hardest because unpacking books, making sense of assignments, and trying to decide where to start are all very overwhelming tasks. A good start matters, so plan to sit down with your child for 10 minutes (or find a tutor who will) to help him put together a game plan and begin working.

“Give instructions calmly and quietly, make this as relaxed as possible because your child with pick up on your anxiety or impatience,” Borba says. “Take out the agenda with the homework assignments, take out the materials, and work with your child to figure out what he’s going to do first, second, third. Stress gets in the way of learning and retaining, so the idea is to reduce that from the beginning.”

***“We found a great station on Pandora called ‘Classical for Learning.’ Listening to it helps my son calm down and focus on the task at hand.”***

— BERNADETTE

## 6. Step Back

Borba recommends working with your child on the first few problems. Sit with her and make sure she's on the right track and gaining confidence, then step back. Stay close by and ready to provide help whenever necessary — but don't hover over your child's shoulder. Let her reach out to you for help when she needs it.

Once your child announces her work is complete, go over it with her to make sure. Pack up her folders and backpack, and give her some positive reinforcement.

## 7. Set a Timer

Schedule enough time to complete assignments without rushing. This will vary based on your child's age, maturity level, and history of completing assignments. Let your child know that this part of the routine isn't set in stone — if your child only has two more problems left once the clock strikes 5:00, he won't be allowed to immediately run away to play. But using a timer as a general guideline will help your child know what to expect, and teach him to pace himself through difficult assignments.

## 8. Plan Realistically Around After-School Activities

After-school sports and activities are important, especially for children who struggle with social skills or function better with a physical release after school. They also get in the way of homework time for many families booked solid with soccer, gymnastics, piano, karate, and more. One solution: Think about how your child can better utilize her time in the car traveling to and from practice.

“Don't let that time become wasted,” says Borba, who suggests keeping a cookie sheet under the front car seat to use as a magnetic desk where your child can review multiplication tables, work on vocabulary words, and review notes while en route or waiting on a sibling. “Obviously she can't be doing rigorous pencil and paper work, but she can be doing review. The challenge is to reframe that commuting time for learning so that you're not so jam-packed with homework when you get home. Plus, many children retain more information when they learn in little spurts like that.”

## 9. Reward Progress

For every day that your child successfully completes her homework (without a meltdown) have her put a star on the “homework chart.” After a certain number of stars, she can choose a reward — perhaps an extra hour on a video game, or a special ice cream outing with Mom and Dad. Children — especially those with ADHD — have a hard time seeing the long-term value

### TIME TOOLS

For a list of recommended timers for kids with ADHD, visit:

<http://additu.de/timers>

of homework assignments. Offering them concrete rewards along the way is a good way to keep them motivated.

### **10. Stick With It!**

Most children need one to three months before a new routine becomes a habit — and it may be longer for a child with ADHD. But the payoff is huge — your child will learn discipline, responsibility, and self-control if you can both stick it out.

## **STEP TWO: Learn to Fight Distraction**

Tiny distractions can throw off even the most determined ADHD student, leading to frustrated parents and incomplete assignments. Here are six of our favorite strategies for keeping your child focused and ready to power through the task at hand:

### **1. Take frequent breaks.**

Studying in “bursts” is a great way to keep attention strong and give your child a break when he starts to hit a wall. For every 30 minutes he works, have him get up and stretch or grab a snack for five minutes. He’ll be more motivated to dive in when he starts up again.

### **2. Move around.**

If your child is filled with hyperactive energy and popping out of his seat during homework time, don’t quash that impulse during homework time. Instead, allow your child to use it to his advantage. Walking around or marching in place while reading a textbook can help some children focus, while others may benefit from an exercise ball instead of a desk chair.

### **3. Fidget.**

Small hand movements — like playing with a squishy ball — can help students with ADHD maintain focus during homework. This is also useful for beating distractions during the school day, when children are not able to move around freely.

### **4. Talk out loud.**

If your child is an auditory learner, reading the textbook out loud can make the information easier to recall. Another tactic: Have your child read a paragraph or two in her head, then paraphrase it out loud to herself.

### **5. Change the subject.**

Change subjects when your child starts to get frustrated. She may have to shift back and forth several times between topics before all the work is completed, but taking a break from a frustrating problem will keep her spirits up.

*“In between each chunk of homework, my daughter does three short exercises that she chooses from picture cards. To her, it’s a motivating game.”*

— MEG

## 6. Sip something sweet.

While your child is working, have him slowly sip a drink with a little bit of sugar in it, like lemonade or a low-sugar sports drink. Glucose is the brain's fuel, and a little boost of it during homework time will allow your child to work more effectively and efficiently.

## STEP THREE: Keep it Positive

Even with a perfect routine and distraction-beating tactics, homework can still be a stressful time for children with ADHD or LD. It's important for parents to keep tempers under control, and keep the experience positive — even when homework is hard. Here are some expert suggestions:

### 1. Respect when he's had enough.

Every child has a "saturation point," when the stress of continuing homework outweighs the benefits of pushing through. If your child becomes too tired or frustrated — especially if he's on the younger side — let him stop. Write a note explaining the situation to the teacher. If it happens too often, call a meeting to reduce the homework load or work on another solution.

### 2. Skip tough problems.

Similarly, allowing your child to skip difficult problems occasionally will keep his anxiety levels down and make him more likely to work through the remainder of the assignment. Write a note to the teacher or tell your child to talk to his teacher before class about the problems he had trouble with.

### 3. Praise his efforts.

Give him positive reinforcement throughout the process, even if he's struggling. Compliment him for staying on task or thinking of a creative solution to a problem — the most important thing is that the compliment is true!

### 4. Give him closure.

When your child is done with his homework, pack up his bag together. This signals to him that his work is done and he can relax for the rest of the night.

## STEP FOUR: Work to Stem Tantrums and Hostility

It happens. We know. Maybe more than we'd like to admit. Homework time rolls around and, in the span of two seconds, our kids descend into angry, defiant, sometimes physical tantrums. They scream. They cry. They hit. Or they insist that they just don't care and won't do their homework, no matter what. And we are left practicing our deep-breathing exercises, counting the days until June, wondering if the fight is really worth it.

***“Stretch breaks. Chewing gum. Lots of positive feedback. These all help to keep him motivated and moving.”***

— MONTY MOM

Why does this happen, even with kids who have a reliable homework routine? Dr. Borba says the tantrum is often just the tip of a much larger iceberg lying beneath the surface, and the only way forward is to “get below and figure out what’s really causing that particular behavior.”

“Are the expectations too high?” Borba asks. “Did he not have enough success today at school? Is he not sure what the heck to do? Does he not have the skills? When you see defiant behavior, don’t wait — talk to the teacher ASAP. Those behaviors don’t get better; they only get worse unless you address and try to solve the underlying problem.”

Here are some ideas for getting ahead of the meltdowns:

### 1. Build a Partnership with the Teacher

At the start of the school year, bookmark the teacher’s web site, save her email address, and ask her to work collaboratively with you. Being proactive and connected can make a world of difference. Also important is getting answers to these questions at the start of the year:

- How long should homework take each night?
- Will the teacher post assignments on her Web page?
- How much is homework going to affect your child’s grade?
- Will you be informed of your child’s progress, problems, or missed assignments?

### 2. Create a Parent-Teacher Notebook

As the school year progresses, you will need a way to pass daily notes back and forth with your child’s teacher. Knowing about a tough day at school can save you frustration and tears at home. And sharing information about a sick relative, medication changes, or other personal happenings that may influence your child’s behavior and learning at school will help the teacher immeasurably. The more you and your child’s teacher share, the better you’ll both be able to anticipate his needs.

### 3. Consider Hiring a Tutor

Shocking as it may sound, some children are more likely to follow the advice and guidance of strangers than they are to listen to their own parents. Dr. Borba recommends calling the local high school’s counseling office and asking for the names of bright, calm, cool kids who would make good tutors.

“They won’t necessarily do a lot of teaching, but they will sit down with your child and help to keep them calm,” she says. “They also help to remove you from the situation, which is sometimes all it takes to end the hostility toward homework.”

*“My son’s teacher gives him ‘helper’ tasks that keep him moving while also helping out the teacher. He likes being helpful and it makes him feel good about himself.”*

— BEEBLY

#### **4. Start a Homework Group**

Again, your child is less likely to melt down in front of others, so consider assembling a homework group of your child's friends and classmates. It will allow her to interact with other children — building social skills — while also giving her a chance to work through problems with peers and see how other kids her age study. Supervision is recommended.

#### **5. Enforce Consequences**

You're staying positive, sticking to a routine and communicating with the teacher, but your child is still refusing to do her homework and fighting you on it every night. If hostility is becoming a habit, she's never going to do her homework unless you revisit your behavior plan.

“If she's capable of doing the work and has the skills, but still won't do it then the homework is not the issue; behavior is the issue,” Borba says. “Set up consequences for not doing homework, and make them immediate. No TV or video games tonight, or no car keys in the morning. Find out what would really cause your child pain, and don't back down. The consequence must be enforceable.”



## Chapter Five

# Working Through Academic Challenges: Reading and Math Help

### Resisting Reading

New readers, especially, tend to resist their 20-minute daily reading challenge. Why would they want to sound out all those tough words when they could snuggle tight as you read much more interesting books to them? It's a good question, and a tough challenge for parents who want their kids to love reading — and who love sharing books with them, too. Here are our recommendations for fostering more reading independence while keeping it age-appropriate, fun, and snuggly.

#### 1. Choose books at your child's reading level.

Have your child read aloud to you for the first few pages of a new book. If she makes more than five mistakes per page, it's too hard for her to read on her own. If you're unsure which books are appropriate, ask her teacher for suggestions. We like the following ADHD-friendly series:

***Junie B. Jones*** series, by Barbara Park

It's never said that Junie has ADD. But her difficulty with impulse control makes her a funny character all children can enjoy.

(Random House; ages 4-9)

***Eagle Eyes: A Child's Guide to Paying Attention***, by Jeanne Gehret

Focuses on the “gift” of ADHD rather than the disability.

(Verbal Images Press; ages 5-9)

***Hank Zipzer*** series, by Henry Winkler and Lin Oliver

This series is great for anyone who learns differently.

(Grosset & Dunlap; ages 8-12)

*“To make reading fun, we dress up as characters in the stories, make food related to the topic or country in the book, or have ‘family theater night.’”*

— LISA

## 2. Try the magazine rack.

An entire book may be daunting to the child who can't stay focused. A children's magazine may be a less intimidating alternative. If your child likes stories, try *Spider* (ages 6-9) or *Cricket* (ages 9-14); if she likes science, pick up *Ranger Rick* (ages 7 and up) or *Kids Discover* (ages 6 and up). For more information, visit [CricketMag.com](http://CricketMag.com), [NWF.org](http://NWF.org), and [KidsDiscover.com](http://KidsDiscover.com). Ask her teacher whether your child can read a few magazines to meet the monthly reading goal.

## 3. Pick the best time and place.

Many families schedule reading time when kids are getting ready for bed. But if her medication has worn off by then, she won't be able to give her best effort. Pick an earlier time — and a quiet spot — when she can concentrate.

## 4. Read together.

Help your child stay focused by sharing the reading with him. Take turns reading pages, or paragraphs, depending on his skill level and ability to focus. A bookmark can also keep your child on track and prevent him from losing his place. E.Z.C. Reader Strips have a tinted, transparent window to help kids focus on the text. They're available at [ReallyGoodStuff.com](http://ReallyGoodStuff.com).

## 5. Review every day.

Children with ADHD sometimes have trouble remembering the sequence of events in a story. After your child reads a chapter, have her explain to you what happened. You can jot down her words and review them with her the next day, before moving on to the next chapter.

## 6. Use a tape recorder.

Reinforce his reading with a book on tape (available at local libraries and most bookstores). By seeing and hearing the book's words, he should find it easier to stay focused. Hold his attention by having him record his voice as he reads. He'll feel as though he's "acting" rather than reading, and he can share the tape with a younger sibling.

## Moaning Over Math

Children who have ADHD or a learning disability like dyslexia tend to be "concrete" thinkers. Without something to see, touch, or otherwise experience, they struggle to learn new mathematical concepts. Which means you've got to get creative to make math less abstract — and more meaningful — without overwhelming a child for whom numbers do not come naturally.

Regarding math homework, we recommend the following guidelines for teachers and parents:

### RECOMMENDED READING

Find more book ideas for kids with ADHD or LD online:

<http://additu.de/kids-books>

### 1. Shorter is better.

Avoid overtaxing an ADHD child's focus; assign him every second, third, or fourth math problem, not all of them. Make sure that the problems you do assign address the math skills you want him to master. Use the same principle for homework assignments.

### 2. Ease word problem challenges.

Word problems are tough for everyone, but especially for kids with ADHD. Make word problems more concrete and visual to help them meet the challenge. Teach them to...

- Circle needed facts in the problem
- X out any unnecessary facts
- Underline the strategy or phrase ("How much did she spend?")

### 3. Check for errors right away.

It frustrates and demoralizes a child to complete a page of problems only to find out that they are wrong.

### 4. Use color to increase focus.

Students with ADHD often don't notice when the operations sign changes from plus to minus. Before beginning work on math problems, ask students to highlight key math operations. Color addition signs yellow, subtraction signs pink, and so forth.

### 5. Keep formulas and facts handy.

Shrink multiplication tables to a size that will fit in a student's wallet. Allow her to use it when a calculator is not permitted or is unavailable. Have the student keep a small card with formulas written on it. These cards will trigger her memory when she needs to recall important math facts.

### 6. Pair up.

Working with a classmate is an effective way to master math concepts. Each child makes up a problem and solves it, then hands a copy of the unsolved problem to his partner to solve. If they come up with different answers to the same problem, they work to figure out why.

### 7. Neaten up sloppy work.

Kids with ADHD have a tough time spacing out their work and calculations on assignments and tests, causing them to make careless errors. Turn notebook paper sideways (with lines running vertically rather than horizontally). This makes it easier for students to keep numbers aligned in columns and reduces careless errors.

***"Your child is essentially building these amazingly huge and intricate creations. And, for the most part, nobody sees them. When you show interest, your child is going to get really excited."***

— JAMES DALEY

## 8. Punch in the numbers.

Try using a calculator for class and homework. It allows students to focus on mastering concepts rather than struggling to remember math facts. Caution: Some students become “calculator dependent,” and may not remember how to do the basic problem. Review basic math skills periodically to make sure they know them.

## Math Made Fun

Parents can also help bring math to life in fun, concrete ways by trying some of these strategies at home:

### 1. Be manipulative.

Use blocks, tiles, even playing cards, to work out computations physically.

### 2. Draw a picture.

For example, if the problem is to divide 48 cookies among 12 students, draw a plate for each student and divide the cookies among the plates. [Seeing the problem visually](#) helps kids who struggle to learn math in traditional ways.

### 3. Use baseball cards.

“The biggest problem with math is that kids don’t see the relevance of it,” says Dr. Borba. “I’ve found that baseball cards are a hook for boys, especially, to learn adding and dividing. They became math wizards, and were able to tell me statistics and batting averages. That drew them in, and then they were able to transfer their knowledge to paper and pencil.”

### 4. Measure up.

Give your child a tape measure, and ask her to measure various distances in your home — the span of a windowpane, for instance, or the distance from the TV to the sofa. Then have her ask you to guess each distance. In return, you get to ask her a question or two about each measurement: “What’s half that distance? Double the distance?” or “What would that measurement be in inches? In centimeters?”

### 5. Create a mystery.

Say, “I’m a mystery number.” Then pose several math operations to help your child figure out the number, adjusting the difficulty to your child’s skill level. For a young child, you might say: “Add three to me, you’ll end up with five. What number am I?” A more advanced puzzle might be: “Find my square root, add five, and you’ll end up with nine. What number am I?”

### 6. Create a number chase.

Give your child a starting number, then have him keep track of the answer as you outline a series of math operations. A chase for a first-grader might be: “Start with the number 5. Add 2. Subtract 1. What number do you end up with?”

### TEACHING TIP

Use ebooks and other multimodal reading presentations to sustain the focus of children with ADHD.

As children advance in grade level, integrate new math operations into your chases. For an eighth-grader, you might try: “Start with the number 25. Find its square root. Quadruple that number. Multiply by 5. Find the square of that number. Subtract 25 percent. What number do you have?” (The answer is 7,500.)

### **7. Measure up.**

Give your child a cookbook, and let him pick a recipe that’s meant to feed four or six. Tell him that you want to make a special meal for just the two of you, and ask him to calculate the new amounts for each ingredient. Once you have your new recipe, let him measure the ingredients and help you prepare the dish. (Or invite friends over and adapt a recipe to feed more than the original yield.)

### **8. Shop at home.**

Use play money to “purchase” items your child gathers from around the house — shoes, stuffed animals, or ties, for example. As the “storekeeper,” your child gets to figure out how much you owe, and how much change to give you after each transaction. As your child’s skills advance, have her add sales tax. After you “buy” them, you can return the items for a full refund.

You can also use coins and bills to teach decimals and fractions. For example, “Give me one-tenth of a dollar...200 percent of a quarter...50 percent of a dime.”

### **9. Get tech support.**

Use computer games to drill and practice math skills. The games provide immediate feedback, and are fun, non-threatening, and motivating to students. These games also hold the interest of an ADHD student. Teachers can adjust the speed and level of difficulty to keep kids on their toes.

### **DOWNLOAD THIS!**

**Find our list of the 11 best homework and study apps here:**

<http://additu.de/o8>

## Chapter Six

# Handing In Homework Everyday

Your child does the hard work of completing her nightly homework assignment, and then forgets to turn it in. Or loses it. Or finds it crumpled under yesterday's lunch and throws it away. This is a common problem for children who lack the executive function skills to follow a process from start to completion. And a maddening occurrence for parents who sweat through the homework only to see a report card littered with incompletes and zeroes.

Here are five of our favorite strategies for making sure homework makes the full circle from school to home and back again:

- 1. Designate a single “Completed Work” folder** where your child places all finished assignments, and spend some time teaching your child to unpack the folder each day as soon as she arrives in her classroom. This may mean using Post-It note reminders and other visual cues for a few weeks until the habit is formed.
- 2. Conduct a nightly backpack check.** As your child packs for the next day, make sure that homework is in its folder and that necessary extras — musical instruments, gym clothes — are ready to go. Once a week, help your child clean out his backpack and work folders, and check on supplies that will be needed for the week ahead.
- 3. Work with your child’s teacher** on a daily routine for handing in **homework** assignments. Some teachers ask students to place their completed work on their desk as soon as they sit down for class. Another idea: Make handing in homework the “ticket to get out of class” at the end of the day. Stand by the door and collect it as the students leave. As you can imagine, kids will comply when the alternative is staying in school one minute longer.

*“We have a ‘mailbox’ next to the front door. All school papers go into this box so he doesn’t forget homework.”*

— LISA

4. **Ask your child's teacher to assign her a study buddy** — a neurotypical friend in the classroom — who will check to make sure she's handed in her daily assignments and written down that night's work to take home.
5. **Ask your child's teacher to accept homework assignments submitted via email** or web portal. If you can snap a photo of each completed worksheet and email that off to the teacher before your child goes to bed, that's one less hurdle for your child to jump each day.

## Chapter Seven

# Tackling Term Papers in Middle and High School

Long-term projects reflect heavily on a child's final grade in middle and high school. They also teach crucial skills that he'll need to develop to be a successful adult — like planning, research, and organization. On the down side, they are incredibly daunting to a student with ADHD. This plan can help:

### CAPTURE YOUR IDEAS

Check out this cool mind mapping app to help your student get started:

<http://additu.de/mindmap>

## Get Organized

### 1. Pick the right topic.

Your child will get the most of her paper if she's interested in the material, so help her pick something that will keep her engaged even when the going is tough. If it's a history paper and she's a WWII buff, try writing about the Invasion of Normandy. If it's a science paper and she loves whales, pick that.

### 2. Start putting down thoughts.

A good way to kick off the process is to have your child organize her thoughts into "What I Know," "What I Need to Learn," and "Visuals I Can Use." She can put down anything that comes to mind — let her know there are no wrong answers in the brainstorming session. It's best to get her thoughts down on paper before she loses them.

### 3. Put it on the calendar.

Get a calendar that displays a whole month at a glance. Using bright markers, work with your child to indicate when the paper was assigned and when it will be due. Cross off any days she won't be able to work because of prior commitments, like sports games or birthday parties. Finally, divide the number of workdays into three chunks, so you can follow the plan below.

## PART ONE: Research and Organization

Ask your child to go to the local library, search the Internet, and collect as



much information as he can about his topic. Have him start by skimming the books and articles he collects on that first day — without taking notes. He should be looking for stimulating ideas.

**HELPFUL HINT:** If he needs a visual aid to focus his efforts, have him draw a mind map. Begin with a circle in the middle of a paper and label it “Hump-back Whale.” Extend lines from it and label each spoke with a topic area he’d like to cover. For instance, one line might be labeled “Physical Features,” another, “Location and Migration.”

Group his many ideas into five, six, or seven topics that he wants to cover in the report. For a paper on a whale, he might include Physical Features, Food, Mating and Offspring, Location and Migration, Endangered or Not, and Interesting Facts.

The week should be spent making a list of materials he’ll need for the special project — poster board, glue, photos of whales, and so forth — and purchasing them. Put these away for now; he will use them in week three.

**HELPFUL HINT:** When your child comes home from school, ask him to spend 20-30 minutes a day on his research report. If he breaks down the project into smaller pieces, the work becomes more manageable.

## **PART TWO: Collect and Sort Information**

Using different-colored index cards for each topic — green for Physical Features and red for Food, say — your child should read through the collected material and write down one fact on a single card. (Kids in the seventh and eighth grades can get several facts on one card.) Have him capture the fact in a simple sentence, using his own words. For example, under the Food category, he might write: “An orca whale eats a thousand pounds of krill every day.”

**HELPFUL HINT:** If he needs a larger space to write on, use lined paper in a binder, with colored dividers to separate the topic areas. The colored tabs will make it easy to flip from one topic to the next as he writes down additional facts.

Place each category of cards in its own shoebox, so that all information relating to that topic is at his fingertips. All green cards will go in one box, and so on.

On a separate piece of paper, your child should write down a list of the

### **TERM PAPER TOOL**

For a sample outline of a research paper, see

<http://additu.de/outline>

books/authors and materials he used. A bibliography is usually a part of a research report — and if it isn't, making one will impress the teacher.

**HELPFUL HINT:** Include cards for introductory and concluding paragraphs for each topic area.

### **PART THREE: Compile and Work Through Drafts**

Working with one shoebox at a time, your child should lay all the cards on a table, paper-clip similar information together, and number each packet of cards. For instance, under “Food,” he might group together the information about krill and the small fish that orcas eat near the surface of the ocean. Another grouping might be larger fish that orcas consume, and how deep they have to dive to hunt them.

Have him type or write his rough draft from the numbered, paper-clipped cards. Each grouping becomes a paragraph in the research paper.

Read through his rough draft to make sure that information is organized clearly and makes sense. This is also a good time to check for misspellings and punctuation. While you are proofreading, he can make a colorful cover page that includes a title, his name, and the date.

Once he retypes a final draft of the written report, he can start working on the fun part — the visuals. These can eat up a lot of time if your child is a creative thinker, so be sure to save the illustrations, photos, and design elements for last.

## Chapter Eight

# Retaining and Recalling at Test Time

For many older children (and adults), studying for an upcoming test brings on stress and anxiety. Their instinct (and yours) may be to spend as much time studying as possible, but research shows that quality — not quantity — is what matters. Here are some tips to help your middle- or high-school student make the most of his study time — and get the best grade possible without pulling any all-nighters.

### 1. Cramming Doesn't Work

People with ADHD are natural procrastinators, and tend to study for tests by “cramming” — that is, trying to review all the information the night before. But this doesn't give the brain enough time to properly process the information, and is stressful to boot.

A better strategy is something educators call “distributed practice,” where study time is split into small chunks over consecutive days leading up to the test. The total amount of study time is the same — but instead of a 3-hour studying frenzy the night before the test, a child studies over four 45-minute sessions.

Why does this work better? Two reasons: to start, reviewing the material more than once increases familiarity and allows children to work out difficult questions without feeling time-pressured. The second — and most important — reason is simple: sleep. Sleep is when your brain rebuilds, recharges, and reviews what it's done during the day — surprisingly, it's actually the time when your brain is the most active! Sleeping between study sessions helps children rehash the material they've read, so they can go back the next day with more understanding.

### 2. Be Active, Not Passive

Surveys show that about 84 percent of students study for tests by re-reading

*“Recognizing that he really learns best visually and kinesthetically has led to us to approach his studying with more diagramming.”*

— LIZ

their notes or their textbooks exclusively. The problem? Reading something is the most ineffective way to study for an exam, especially for an ADHD brain. Reading is passive, not active — it's like trying to learn how to play basketball by watching the coach play.

A better, more active method is to make a practice test. Ask your child to predict what sorts of questions the teacher will ask on the test — look over study guides or check out old quizzes if you need some pointers. Tell your child to talk to friends and classmates to see what they think will be on the test. Then, help your child create a practice exam and time him while he takes it. If he misses questions, have him look over the material and figure out where he went wrong.

### **3. Review Before Bed**

Studies show that taking 10 to 15 minutes before bed to review what was learned that day helps children retain information. This shouldn't be an in-depth homework session — just a quick summary and a few discussion questions should do the trick.

### **4. Stay Active**

Exercise — about 30 minutes a day, four to five days a week — sends blood to the brain and improves focus, which can have the added bonus of helping children do nightly homework and long-term studying more effectively. If your child is an athlete, have her study right when she gets home from practice. If organized sports aren't her thing, that's okay — encourage her to take the dog on a walk or play in the backyard before she starts her homework. (ADHD students especially benefit from sports like yoga, ballet, and martial arts, which require intense focus on their body and their mind.)

### **5. Follow Your Nose**

Smell is the sense most strongly associated with memory. Use this to your child's advantage during homework time by putting a bowl of essential oil (peppermint works best) in her work area. Then, place another dish by her bed while she sleeps. Her brain will associate the smell with the material she learned that day, giving her brain an additional boost while she sleeps.

### **6. Nap Time**

For teenagers especially, a quick nap (no more than 30 minutes) right after school can help give them a quick reboot and more prepared to start their homework.

## **Recalling Information at Test Time**

Does your child's brain “lock up” during tests or quizzes? Whether it's a pop

### **YOUR GO-TO-BED GUIDE**

**Learn why kids with ADHD don't fall asleep or wake up easily — and what you can do about it.**

<http://additu.de/pq>

quiz or the SAT, tests aren't designed for children with ADHD. They require sitting still, focusing intently, and recalling information quickly: skills that often don't come easily for our kids.

So before every single test — regardless of type or length — have your child follow these general tips:

**1. Ask the teacher for extra time.**

If your child has an IEP or 504 plan, consider making this an official accommodation. If not, asking the teacher calmly and in private is worth a shot.

**2. Relax the mind.**

Tell her to take a few deep breaths and visualize herself sitting down, answering the questions, and acing the test. You can even teach her a simple breathing exercise called sama vritti, or “equal breathing.” During sama vritti, she breathes in through her nose for four counts, then breathes out for four counts (also through the nose). Doing this four or five times can help calm the body and mind before her test.

**3. Figure out the time given for each question.**

So, for example, if the test has 10 questions and is 40 minutes long, she'll have about four minutes for each question.

**4. Bring a timer.**

And practice using it to stay on task!

Once she's mastered those general test-taking tips, she can start to focus on different types of tests and the different challenges they present.

## Multiple-Choice Tests

**1. Take your time!**

This is a big one. Nervous students have a tendency to rush through multiple-choice tests, which can seem easy. But this can lead to careless mistakes. Teachers want students to complete tests, and in most cases try to give them reasonable time to do so. If your ADHDer has secured extra time on a test, this isn't an invitation to rush through it and goof off — it's up to him to use this time to the best of his ability.

**2. Read each question and each answer — twice!**

Tell your child to underline key phrases as she reads to keep herself focused and ensure that she fully understands the question.

**3. Go with your gut.**

Nine times out of ten, our first guess is right — but we may get nervous and try to talk ourselves out of it. Don't let your kid fall into this trap! Tell her

*“My daughter goes to a different room for tests. This way, the distractions are minimal — plus she doesn't feel awkward being one of the last students finished.”*

— NICOLE

to circle the first answer her mind goes to, then move on. She can revisit the question later if she's unsure.

#### **4. Answer what you can, and mark what you can't.**

Your child should go through the test once completely, answering the questions he knows and putting a star next to those he doesn't know at all. If there are some he's unsure about, tell him to put a dash next to them.

#### **5. Go back and recheck!**

After he's gone through the whole thing once, he should go back and look over the questions he was unsure about. He should reread the question slowly and carefully — and unless he's absolutely sure he was mistaken, stick with his gut response.

## **Math Tests**

### **1. Write down all formulas you remember.**

Write down the formulas prominently at the top of the page before even looking at the questions.

### **2. Copy down each problem on your scrap paper.**

Writing each problem out slowly — and double-checking — is a great way for your child to lay out the problems step by step. If she wants, she can ask the teacher for extra scrap paper at the beginning of the test so she can take up as much space for each problem as she'd like.

### **3. Work slowly!**

We've all heard the adage, "Slow and steady wins the race." Working quickly means he'll be more likely to make mistakes. Writing largely and as clearly as he can — and again, double-checking calculations at each step — means less errors.

### **4. Mark tough problems.**

Skip them at first, then go back to tackle them one by one. The important thing is to make sure your child finishes all the problems she does know first!

## **Essay Tests**

### **1. Answer the short and simple questions first.**

If she starts with the longest questions, she may run out of time for the easy questions and end up with a half-blank test!

### **2. Write your answer as a "sandwich."**

What does this mean? Simple — start with a brief topic sentence, then add

***"When taking tests at my son's school, the students can move to a comfortable place in the room. My son lays down under the table!"***

—COBCOLORADO

three detailed supporting sentences, then wrap up with a quick conclusion sentence.

### **3. Write a rough draft.**

For longer essay questions, tell your child to jot down a list of ideas he wants to tackle, then split them up between his introduction, his body paragraphs, and his conclusion.

### **4. Get accommodations.**

If your child is dyslexic or struggles with handwriting, don't be afraid to ask for him to take the exam orally. If that's not possible, see if he can type his answers on a computer or use text-to-speech software.

## **Standardized Tests**

High school students dread the SAT — and with good reason. It's long, complex, and strictly timed — not exactly ADHD-friendly!

Most teens with attention deficit disorder would agree that sitting in a seat for four hours answering questions bearing little relevance to a teen's life isn't a recipe for earning a blowout score. They'll lose interest. Their minds will wander. Worse, your child's ADHD mind will space out and lose focus on everything. What to do? Have her use these seven tips for helping ADHD teens maximize their efforts on the SAT test and earn the high scores that colleges want.

### **1. Talk It Out**

Instead of quickly deciding whether an answer is right or wrong, she should tell herself, in words, why one answer is better than another.

By talking through her reasoning, she can check her thought process and find mistakes. In fact, encourage her to verbalize all questions and answers to herself. It will ensure that her brain hasn't skipped over important information.

### **2. Don't Rush**

It's better to work slowly and carefully. Questions in the SAT get harder as you go, but they're all worth the same number of points. If he rushes through the test, he'll likely make careless mistakes on easy questions that can help him build up points.

### **3. Scribble**

Make sure your child knows to write all over the book — and we mean all over! Not only is it allowed, it's encouraged. He can take notes, draw dia-

## **DO YOUR HOMEWORK HOMEWORK**

**For more smart homework, study, and test-taking strategies, visit our online guide at**

<http://additu.de/study>

grams, or work out math problems. Writing down his thought process will make him more likely to come to the correct conclusion.

#### **4. Quiz Yourself**

Encourage her to ask herself comprehension questions as she goes to make sure she understands the material. Some good examples include: “What is the question asking me?” or “What am I being asked to agree or disagree with?” or “What is missing from this sentence — a noun, a verb, or a description?”

#### **5. Reread Math Questions**

SAT math questions are designed to be hard to understand — but once you know what they’re asking for, they’re usually straightforward to solve. Rereading the question a few times gives your child a stronger chance of getting it right.

#### **6. Cross Out Wrong Answers**

Never underestimate the power of visual cues. Crossing off an answer she knows is wrong will increase her chances of getting the question right by 20 percent. Plus, if she decides to skip the problem and come back later, she’ll remember which answers were wrong, saving her time later.

#### **7. Relax!**

Tell your child that if he feels himself start to get frustrated or tired, he shouldn’t force himself to push through. Taking a quick break will give his brain a rest. Tell him that halfway through each section, he can look away for two minutes and think about anything else — that girl he likes, or his upcoming sports game. When he comes back, he’ll be recharged and ready to focus.

### **A Little Extra Help:**

Some teachers allow students to create “cheat sheets” for big tests, but your child may not know where to start. Here are some tips:

#### **1. Prepare it a few days in advance.**

This gives your child a chance to review the material a few more times before the test, and stops him from feeling rushed and creating a sloppy cheat sheet.

#### **2. Be both general and specific.**

Tell your child to focus on the material that she’s the weakest on. If she struggles with big ideas, write those down; if she always forgets formulas, write those down. The study sheet should be tailored to your child’s specific needs — not what she thinks the teacher wants!



### **3. Type it up.**

If your child's teacher allows it, encourage your child to type up the study sheet. Have her make the font as small as he can read so he can get as much info on the page as possible, but don't overdo it — he doesn't want to need a magnifying glass during the test! The most important thing is that it's readable.

### **4. Make it pop!**

Tell her to use different font colors, fancy graphics, or other visual cues to help her brain sort the material and draw her eye to what's most important.

## Chapter Nine

# Apps, Gadgets, and Other Resources

### Smartphone Apps

Some children prefer using paper planners and analog timers. Others stay organized with digital apps and electronic reminders. Many benefit from both old- and new-fashioned solutions. Here are some of the mobile apps that we recommend for improving homework and study habits.

#### myHomework

(<https://myhomeworkapp.com/>)

For students who forget to write down assignments or turn them in on time, there's the free myHomework app. It tracks class schedules, homework assignments, and upcoming tests — and notifies your child when something is due. If your school chooses to participate, the app can also alert you to school announcements or let you download documents the school has shared — so no more lost permission slips!

#### inClass

(<http://www.inclassapp.com/>)

If your child is permitted to use a tablet in the classroom, inClass allows him to take multi-sensory notes — using audio, video, pictures, or plain old-fashioned text. He can also share his notes with classmates and discuss topics he struggles with, all right in this free app.

#### Flashcards Deluxe

(<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/flashcards-deluxe/id307840670?mt=8>)

Students who struggle with working memory will love this user-friendly flashcard app that's infinitely customizable — and easy to use. Your child can create her own flashcards, or download pre-made sets from a library of more than 4 million. Then, she can program the app to focus on the cards she's stumbling over or remove cards from the rotation once she's mastered them.

*“I love the app ColorNote. I can make check lists and calendar events, color code them according to importance, and the app alerts me to events. It's like having Post-It notes every where.”*

— LYNN

## SelfControl

(<http://selfcontrolapp.com/>)

This free Mac application is great for older students who are easily distracted by Facebook or Twitter during homework time. SelfControl allows you (or your child, if they're responsible enough!) to block tempting websites for a predetermined amount of time. It's great for parents trying to keep kids on track — even if they restart the device or delete the app, they still won't be able to access the sites until the time is up.

## SparkNotes

(<http://www.sparknotes.com/mobile-apps/>)

The classic study tool is now a handy app! ADHD students can access the full SparkNotes library — complete with summaries, study questions, and discussions of key themes — on the go on their Android or Apple device. If your child struggles to focus on long reading assignments, this app is a great way to reinforce the main ideas and get them thinking critically about the text.

## StudyBlue

(<https://www.studyblue.com/study-tools>)

The ultimate study tool! It has tons of different study modes, so your ADHDer can take quizzes, go over review sheets, or flip through flashcards. The app also boasts a built-in content library so your child can search related material and learn more about the topic at hand.

## Evernote

(<https://evernote.com/>)

If your child struggles to organize notes and papers, teach him to use Evernote to capture everything that matters in one convenient place. He can store online articles, handwritten notes, even photos — and search everything to find exactly what he needs immediately. A “tagging” function allows him to group items together by project. The app can even help your child turn his notes into easy-to-follow presentations.

## Popplet

(<http://popplet.com/>)

For visual learners, traditional outlining techniques for essays or large projects may not work. Enter Popplet, the brainstorming app built for visual learners. Your child can make mind maps, diagrams, “mood boards” — anything that helps her organize her thoughts in a more cohesive way. The simple interface keeps up with her racing brain, making outlining essays and projects much less stressful!

***“At my son’s school, the teachers use an app named ‘Remind.’ All of his homework is posted on there, and a text is sent to my phone and my son’s phone with not only homework reminders, but copies of blank homework sheets, maps to study from, and links to the online textbook pages needed. It is a LIFE-SAVER on busy school nights!”***

— KATE

## Documents To Go

([http://www.dataviz.com/dtg\\_home.html](http://www.dataviz.com/dtg_home.html))

Does your child struggle to sit still at the computer while typing up a long book report? Does he prefer to do his work sitting under the table or laying on the floor? Now you can bring the book report to him — wherever he works best — with Documents To Go! Any Word, Excel, PowerPoint, or PDF file can be transferred to your tablet, so your ADHD kid can work on his homework wherever he feels most productive.

## StayOnTask

(<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=valavg.stayontask&hl=en>)

StayOnTask is a simple app that can work wonders for ADHD children who drift off during homework time. The app will periodically “check in” with your child to make sure he’s doing his work and not messing around. It’s random, so users can’t predict when it will check up on them. If he’s off task when the app checks in, it provides a gentle reminder to put his mind back on his math homework.

## 30/30

(<http://3030.binaryhammer.com>)

For help breaking down homework into management chunks, try 30/30. The app’s simple interface allows you to set up a list of tasks and an amount of time needed for each one. Your child can use it to check in and easily figure out what she’s supposed to be doing and how much time she needs to do it.

***“I love the iOS app 30/30. You create your list of tasks and how long you want to allocate to each one, and it beeps when it’s time to move on to the next task.”***

— RACHEL T.

## Gadgets

### TimeTimer

([timetimer.com](http://timetimer.com))

The TimeTimer is a visual clock that lets your child know exactly how much time is left to complete a task, making it easier to stay focused and keep frustration at bay. The TimeTimer is divided into distinctive white and red sections; as time passes, the red section shrinks, showing even from a distance exactly how much time is left. It’s available as a physical clock, or as an app for smartphones or desktop computers.

### WatchMinder

([watchminder.com](http://watchminder.com))

Your child can wear this vibrating wristwatch throughout the day to gently remind himself to pay attention to the teacher, and it’s great for homework too — once you’ve stepped back to let your child work on his own, random vibrations can bring his attention back to his worksheets when he finds himself lost in a daydream.

## LiveScribe Smartpen

([livescribe.com](http://livescribe.com))

If your child still struggles with note-taking after implementing the strategies above, this clever smartpen may be the tool she needs to keep up. The LiveScribe records audio while your child writes and syncs it to the written notes — if your child misses something, she can simply tap on a specific spot in her notes and hear what the teacher was saying at the moment she was writing.

## ADDitude Expert Podcasts

### The IEP/504 Check Up

(<http://www.additudemag.com/RCLP/sub/10964.html>)

Interested in an IEP or 504 plan for your child? Susan Yellin, Esq., discusses everything from securing initial accommodations to tweaking them throughout the year to make sure they're working to help your child succeed.

### School Success: Practical Strategies for Getting Homework Done

(<http://www.additudemag.com/RCLP/sub/10655.html>)

Michele Borba, Ed.D., addresses reader questions about making homework less of a battle, helping children stay organized, and working with teachers for a fun, fulfilling school year.

### Stop School Stress

(<http://www.additudemag.com/RCLP/sub/10652.html>)

Is your ADHD or LD child terrified at the thought of school? Are mornings a hectic mess? Kirk Martin, founder of Celebrate Calm ([celebratecalm.com](http://celebratecalm.com)), offers strategies to stop meltdowns, reduce anxiety, and help your child learn to love school again.

## Books

### ***Nowhere to Hide: Why Kids with ADHD and LD Hate School and What We Can Do About It***

by Jerome J. Schultz

Despite parents' best efforts, many kids with ADHD or learning disabilities report hating school. Why? They're under constant stress — to sit still, to pay attention, or to not blurt out the answer. Jerome Schultz introduces a step-by-step DE-STRESS model to help these kids recognize their natural strengths, keep up in class, and learn to love school again.

***“I use the isoTimer app on my phone. It allows me to set multiple reminders color-coded by who they apply to, set how far in advance I want a reminder, and add items to my task list. It’s a huge help.”***

— J

### ***That Crumpled Paper Was Due Last Week: Helping Disorganized and Distracted Boys Succeed in School and Life***

by Ana Homayoun

Boys with ADHD are prone to hyperactivity, distractibility, and chronic disorganization. Academic counselor Ana Homayoun succinctly outlines the struggles these boys face, and offers practical, easily applicable solutions for families with boys of all ages.

### ***The Myth of the Perfect Girl: Helping Our Daughters Find Authentic Success and Happiness in School and Life***

by Ana Homayoun

For families with girls, Homayoun offers this companion book, focusing on girls and the unique challenges they face in today's high-pressure school environments. Offering both specific strategies and exploratory theory on the culture of perfectionism faced by many young girls today, *The Myth of the Perfect Girl* promises to empower girls of any age.

### ***Smart but Scattered***

by Peg Dawson and Richard Guare

You know your child is smart, right? So why can't she seem to keep track of her pencil, pay attention in class, or turn assignments in on time? Authors Dawson and Guare explore the critical executive function skills these "smart but scattered" children are missing, and how to bolster them — all in this easy-to-follow, step-by-step guide.

***“LifeRPG is by far the biggest lifesaver app. It allows you to set schedules and tasks to be completed throughout the day. As you complete the tasks, LifeRPG grants you experience points and coins that you can turn in to claim rewards that you set for yourself, like extra TV time.”***

— CHRISTINA

## **Designing a Daily Report Card**

What is a daily report card? Simply put, it's a tool to track daily behavioral goals, and to identify areas of struggle. They're commonly used in schools to help children learn rules and adapt to expectations — and they're particularly effective for children with ADHD. Parents and teachers should work together to craft a daily report card that best addresses a child's specific needs, but common areas to address include:

- **Attention skills**
- **Organization**
- **Completed work**
- **Playing well with others**
- **Proper behavior management**

Check out the following example of a daily report card, which can be easily modified for your child's unique strengths and challenges. For older stu-

dents, the days can be replaced with different subjects (math, language arts, physical education). Your child's teacher can choose to mark either "YES" or "NO" in each column, or assign a rating system (1 = Needs improvement; 2 = Doing better; 3 = Excellent work). Losing the card should result in zero points for the day. At the end of each day or week, go over the report card with your child and ask him why he thinks he got the scores he did, and what strategies he can implement to improve.

Frame the daily report card in positive terms — not as a punishment, or a way to set her apart from the other students — and explain that you and your child's teacher are using it to help her be the best student she can be. Working out a reward system for high marks can be helpful. If your teacher is using a YES or NO system, a certain percentage of YES marks (perhaps 75 percent) can result in a special privilege for the child. If points are used, a certain number of points can be the goal.

Similarly, if the child fails to achieve the correct percentage or points for several days in a row, or loses multiple cards, agreed-upon privileges can be taken away. It's best not to start taking away privileges for just one bad day or one bad mark, as this can be counterproductive for the child and damage his self-esteem. Solicit her opinion on fair expectations and rewards — children will be more inclined to work on their behavior when they feel listened to and respected.

Some sample rewards include:

- **Extra time on a video game or watching television**
- **One night of later bedtime**
- **A special ice cream outing with mom and dad**
- **A new toy or other desired item**
- **A special sleepover with friends**

## **Student/Teacher School Success Checklist**

Help your child's teacher better understand what your child needs to succeed in school with the free, **printable checklist on page 52**. Work together with your child to complete the checklist and then send it to your child's teacher. Not only will your child's teacher be better informed, but your child will also be involved in making the classroom and homework experience better.

***"I am a school psychologist working with ADHD students. Fidgets, teacher signals, and learning self-monitoring are my keys to success."***


— CHI


## Sample Daily Report Card: YOUNGER CHILD

See next page for printable version of this report card

Home report card for: John

Date: 10-1-2015

Played nicely with other children: 

Obedied class rules: 

Teacher signature: Mrs. Jones

Comments: John seemed to be making a good effort today!

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## Sample Daily Report Card: OLDER CHILD

See page 51 for printable version of this report card

Name: John Date: 10-1-2015

	MATH	READING	SPELLING	ENGLISH	SOC. STUDIES
On-task during class:	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Followed instructions:	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
Kept hands to himself/herself:	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>

SCALE: Good = 2 FAIR = 1 Poor = 0

	complete pgs. 44-45 in workbook	None	Practice words for week	None	Read pgs. 103-109
Homework grade:	<u>D</u>	-	-	-	<u>D</u>
Test grade:	-	-	-	<u>C</u>	-

Teacher signature: Mrs. Jones

Teacher comments: Richard still has trouble after lunch break.

Parent comments: \_\_\_\_\_



Home report card for: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Played nicely with  
other children:



Obedied class rules:



Teacher signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	MATH	READING	SPELLING	ENGLISH	SOC. STUDIES
<b>On-task during class:</b>					
<b>Followed instructions:</b>					
<b>Kept hands to himself/herself:</b>					

SCALE: Good = 2 FAIR = 1 Poor = 0

<b>Homework</b>					
<b>Homework grade:</b>					
<b>Test grade:</b>					

**Teacher signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Teacher comments:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent comments:** \_\_\_\_\_

# Student/Teacher School Success Checklist

## I learn best by:

- Using a daily written schedule
- Seeing rules posted
- Reading
- Listening
- Hands on learning, teacher demonstrations, experiments
- Other ways: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## To help me improve my listening:

- Use a bell or sound signal for important information
- Repeat the directions
- Ask me to repeat the directions back to you
- Provide written directions
- Other ways: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## To let out my energy, let me:

- Stretch
- Play classroom games
- Hold something
- Doodle
- Stand while doing my work
- Sit in the back of the room
- Walk around (e.g., choose me as a messenger)
- Other ways: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## To help me finish my class work, give me:

- More time
- Less work
- Extra help period
- Make-up time during class
- Extra work of my choice

- Free time as a reward for finishing class work

- Other ways: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## To help me be successful with homework:

- Write all my homework on the board
- Initial my assignment book for correct entries
- Contact my parents if I am missing work
- Let me keep an extra set of books at home
- Give me extra credit options to improve my grade:
  - Art project
  - Poster
  - News article
- Other ways: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Ways to improve my behavior:

- Homework pass
- Class parties
- Positive teacher comments
- Caring teachers
- Developing pride in myself
- Other ways: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## To help me get good test grades, give me:

- Special class review
- Study guide for tests
- Extra credit question
- Distraction free space to take tests
- Other ways: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## More **ADDitude** Special Reports Available Now

[www.adhdreports.com](http://www.adhdreports.com)

### The Complete IEP/504 Guide

**A step-by-step road map to securing school accommodations for your child**

How to request an assessment, prepare for school meetings, choose the most effective accommodations, draft a comprehensive IEP or 504 plan, and much more. Includes sample letters and worksheets.

>> Learn more about this special report: <http://additu.de/iep-504-ebook>

### A Parent's Guide to ADHD Diet and Nutrition

**The foods, vitamins, minerals, supplements, and herbs than can help your child**

What is the connection between the food your child eats and his or her hyperactivity, impulsivity, and distractibility? The editors of *ADDitude* have curated scientific information about foods and additives to avoid; how omega-3s, iron, and zinc boost the brain; why you should remove foods with artificial dyes and flavors; and much more.

>> Learn more about this special report: <http://additu.de/nutrition>

### Video Games and the ADHD Brain

**A parent's guide to setting limits, easing transitions, choosing brain-building games, and keeping kids safe online**

Is your child addicted to Minecraft? In this ebook, the editors of *ADDitude* present research on hyperfocus and video games, recommend games that build thinking, and offer advice on setting limits your child will honor. Includes frequently asked parent questions answered by gaming expert Randy Kulman, Ph.D.

>> Learn more about this special report: <http://additu.de/minecraft>

**To purchase additional copies of Your Homework Survival Guide or other *ADDitude* Special Reports, go to [www.adhdreports.com](http://www.adhdreports.com)**

## FREE **ADDitude** Downloadable Booklets

### 10 Solutions to Disorganization at School

Does your child forget her books? Are her desk, locker, and backpack in disarray? How to get organized

### 40 Winning Accommodations for ADHD/LD Children

How to pinpoint your child's problems in the classroom and select the best accommodations to help him succeed

### Letter to Your Child's Teacher

Sample letters to introduce your child to his new teacher

### Best Discipline Strategies for ADHD Children

50 best discipline techniques from ADHD parenting experts

### Time Assessment Chart

A way to track exactly where your time goes and how to spend it more wisely

### Never Be Late Again

Time management tips for adults with ADHD

### 25 Things to Love About ADHD

Why you should be proud of your attention deficit

**Find these and many more free ADHD resources online at:**

<http://additu.de/freedownloads>

## FREE ADHD Webinar Replays from ADDitude:

### Minecraft and ADHD Kids: Brain Boosting or Attention Busting?

>> <http://additu.de/minecraft-webinar>

Whether it's Minecraft or Candy Crush or Mario Kart, our kids are especially prone to extremes — playing as much as they can all the time and reacting terribly to limits. Here, Randy Kulman, Ph.D., and James Daley, explain why kids with ADHD get addicted to video games, how to set reasonable limits on play time, and how to ensure smoother transitions when time is up.

### The Toxic Impact of Stress on Learning and Behavior

>> <http://additu.de/stress>

School life involves planning and organizing, prolonged periods of focus, and high-pressure testing — all of them stressful for kids with ADHD and LD. Here, Jerome J. Schultz, Ph.D., explains how chronic stress can adversely affect brain functioning, behavior, social skills, and learning. He also recommends accommodations to alleviate stress, and parenting strategies to take the pressure off.

### How Executive Functions Affect ADHD Symptoms in Children and Adults

>> <http://additu.de/j->

Executive function. It's a set of skills working in concert to help us plan, organize, and execute projects — big and small. It's also often lacking in children with ADHD, which explains all the lost homework, missed deadlines, and unfinished projects. Here, Ann Dolin, M.Ed. offers homework, test-taking, and focus strategies that work particularly well for students with ADHD.

### Healing the ADHD Brain: Interventions and Strategies That Work

>> <http://additu.de/healing>

There's no one-size-fits-all approach for treating ADHD. Here, Daniel G. Amen, M.D., explains a multitude of treatment options that you can implement into every facet of your life — from medication and supplements to diet & exercise and neurofeedback.

### 10-Step Plan for Moms of ADHD Kids: How to Feel Supported, Understood and Not Alone

>> <http://additu.de/ww>

Raising a child with ADHD can be isolating. When the world doesn't understand the challenges you face and resentment builds up between you and your spouse. Here, Kirk Martin helps parents tackle the most challenging issues — defiance, disrespect, bullying, sibling fights, and more. All with a parent's health and sanity in mind.

## FREE ADHD Newsletters from ADDitude

Sign up to receive critical news and information about ADHD diagnosis and treatment, plus strategies for school, parenting, and living better with ADHD: <http://additu.de/email>

### Adult ADHD and LD

Expert advice on managing your household, time, money, career, and relationships

### Parenting Children with ADHD or LD

Behavior and discipline, time management, disorganization, making friends, and more critical strategies for parents

### ADHD and LD at School

How to get classroom accommodations, finish homework, work with teachers, find the right schools, and much more

### Treating ADHD

Treatment options including medications, food, supplements, brain training, mindfulness and other alternative therapies

## Appendix

### SOURCES:

**How to Use a Daily Report Card Program, by Harvey C. Parker, Ph.D.**

(<http://www.myadhd.com/gwtg/gwtg300dailyreportmanual.html>)

**Sample Daily Report Card, by HealthyChildren.org**

(<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/adhd/Pages/sample-daily-report-card.aspx>)

**Daily Behavior Form, by PBISWorld.com**

(<http://www.pbisworld.com/tier-2/daily-behavior-form/>)

**The ADHD Homework System That Works, by ADDitude**

(<http://www.additudemag.com/slideshow/1/slide-1.html>)

**Homework Without Tears, by ADDitude**

(<http://www.additudemag.com/adhd/article/2529.html>)

**6 Tips to Fight Distractions and Get Homework Done, by ADDitude**

(<http://www.additudemag.com/adhd/article/8394.html>)

**Fast Fixes to Get Homework Done, by ADDitude**

(<http://www.additudemag.com/adhd/article/9655.html>)

**9 Tips for Using a School Planner Successfully, by ADDitude**

(<http://www.additudemag.com/slideshow/7/slide-1.html>)

**Help Your Child Organize Homework, by ADDitude**

(<http://www.additudemag.com/adhd/article/2010.html>)

**ADHD Term Paper Help: Three Weeks to Success, by ADDitude**

(<http://www.additudemag.com/adhd/article/4036.html>)

**The New Way to Study with ADHD, by ADDitude**

(<http://www.additudemag.com/adhd/article/10602.html>)

**Ace Every Exam: ADHD Study Tips for Math, Essay, and Multiple-Choice Tests, by ADDitude**

(<http://www.additudemag.com/adhd/article/5821.html>)

**Ace It! How to Rock the SAT with ADHD, by ADDitude**

(<http://www.additudemag.com/adhd/article/9175.html>)

**How to Make Reading Fun, by ADDitude Readers**

(<http://www.additudemag.com/adhdblogs/35/11183.html>)

**School Accommodations That Help Students with ADHD or LD, by ADDitude Readers**

(<http://www.additudemag.com/adhdblogs/35/10922.html>)

**Tricks and Tools to Help Your Child Focus, by ADDitude Readers**

(<http://www.additudemag.com/adhdblogs/35/10938.html>)

**Note-Taking Tips for Students with ADHD, by ADDitude Readers**

(<http://www.additudemag.com/adhdblogs/35/10957.html>)

**Products and Apps Every ADHD Household Should Have, by ADDitude Readers**

(<http://www.additudemag.com/adhdblogs/35/10971.html>)

**Tool: Homework Success Checklist**

(<http://adhdmomma.com/2012/10/tool-give-kids-this-homework.html>)