Homework

Welcome and thank you for coming.

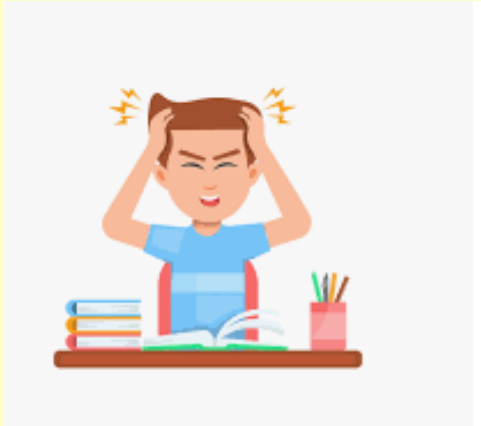
Susie Lord SENDCo

Ilse Blom- Early Years SENDCo

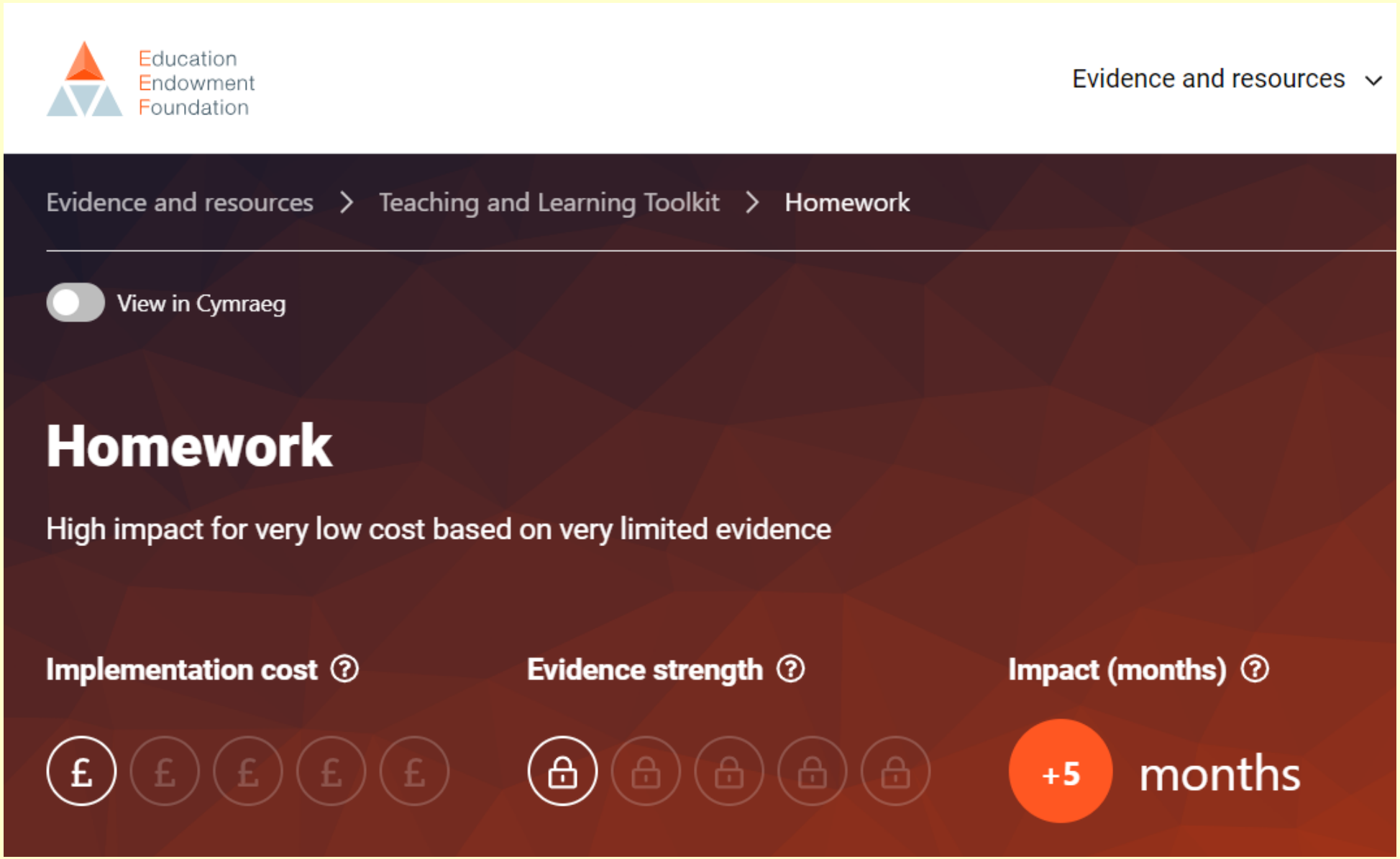
What a pain!

Children don't want to do homework. Can you blame them? They just sat in school for 6+ hours, now we want them to sit down and do more schoolwork during the little free time they have for themselves in the evenings.

Struggling learners have been pushing so hard all day to listen and do what they're asked. They’re tired, making them even more adamant that they not do any homework. And thus, the homework battles commence.



We’re going to look at why we ask children to complete homework and some strategies to help.


Education
Endowment
Foundation
Evidence and resources
Evidence and resources > Teaching and Learning Toolkit > Homework
View in Cymraeg
Homework
High impact for very low cost based on very limited evidence
Implementation cost
Evidence strength
Impact (months)
+5
months

Collis Inclusion charter

1 Explicit instruction

- Review of previous learning.
- Small steps learning using clear, succinct language.
- Effective questioning to frequently check understanding.
- Dual coding: Visual- image, diagram, table
- Provide models.

2 Cognitive and metacognitive strategies

- The process of learning
- Before the task: Have you solved problems like this before?
- During: What strategies do you have to help you?
- After: Did you accomplish what you set out to?

3 Scaffolding

- Allows independence
- Verbal: Child might need instructions re-explained or a part of the learning re-taught at their desk.
- Visual: Diagrams of what a child will need to complete a task (eg picture of workbook, headphones, pencil).
- Written: Sentence starters, writing frame eg paragraph 1 intro, paragraph 2 arguments for etc, instructions on board.

4 Flexible grouping

- No fixed groups.
- Adaptive teaching: Use of assessment for learning to see where current need is.
- Examples: Small group teaching, collaboration, re-teaching a particular skill, peer tutoring.
- We aim high for all children.

We use technology to aid children's learning.

Why might your child find homework hard?

Your child might be having difficulty because:

- the homework does not meet their level of ability and need so they find it too difficult, become frustrated and then don't want to work at home
- they don’t understand why they have to do work for school when they're at home
- it's not be clear to them what work needs to be done if they have difficulty with processing instructions or writing.
- they feel too tired after a long day at school or there may be too many distractions at home for them to concentrate
- they have difficulty with organising, sequencing and prioritising tasks and may misjudge how long to spend doing homework
- they feel that the work has to be perfect or don’t want to get it wrong, and struggle to begin a task because of anxiety.

Think about when and where to do homework

The best time to start homework will depend on your child. You may want to give them some time for a break after the school day, rather than going straight into starting homework, such as at 4pm or after dinner.

You may wish to start homework before a preferred or fun activity, using a visual timetable to show your child what will be happening. It can help to do homework at the same time each day, so it becomes part of a routine.

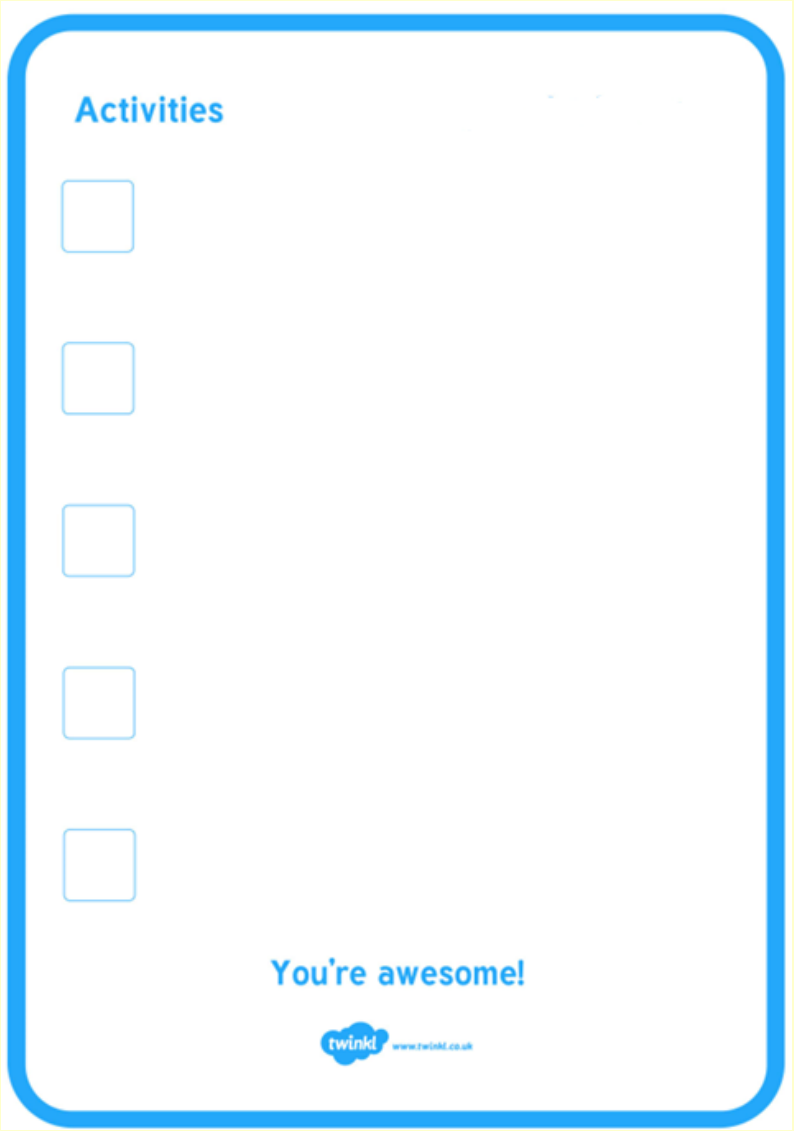
If possible, keep an area of your home free for your child to use to do their homework. It might help to set up a desk or table that they can work at. Work out where your child feels most comfortable and able to focus on their homework. Ideally, it should be away from any distractions like the television or gaming devices.

Sensory activities

Sensory processing issues might make it difficult for children to concentrate and remain calm while doing homework.

It might help to do some physical activities before settling down to homework or movement breaks during the time they complete their homework. Some children might like something to chew on while they work such as carrot sticks.

A visual schedule for completing tasks such as a tick list where your child can tick off as they complete each task (or question) can help to keep your child's attention, motivation and enthusiasm.



This also allows you to break tasks down into smaller, more manageable chunks.

Homework Box

Keep any supplies your child needs for homework in a special box. Some supplies our readers suggest having include scissors, several kinds of paper, sharpened pencils, and a calculator. Reserve it only for your child, and only for homework time, so you'll know it is always fully stocked.

Help them with organisation and timing

If your child finds it difficult to concentrate on work for a long time, you may need to sit with them first to help keep them focused. You could start by getting them to work for just a short time and then build up gradually.
Think about whether your child is able to complete a homework task in one day or whether you should break it down into smaller tasks over a few days.

Be sure you offer lots of breaks. Physical movement helps with mental alertness, but also gives your child the opportunity to de-stress and regroup.

Five Minute Fun Break

If your child is getting frustrated with an assignment, one reader suggests taking a break to do something fun together. Taking five minutes to go for a walk, listen to a favorite song, or have a snack can help break up the frustration he is feeling so he can return to his homework with a fresh perspective.

Communicate with school

If doing homework causes extreme problems, talk to your child's class teacher about this.

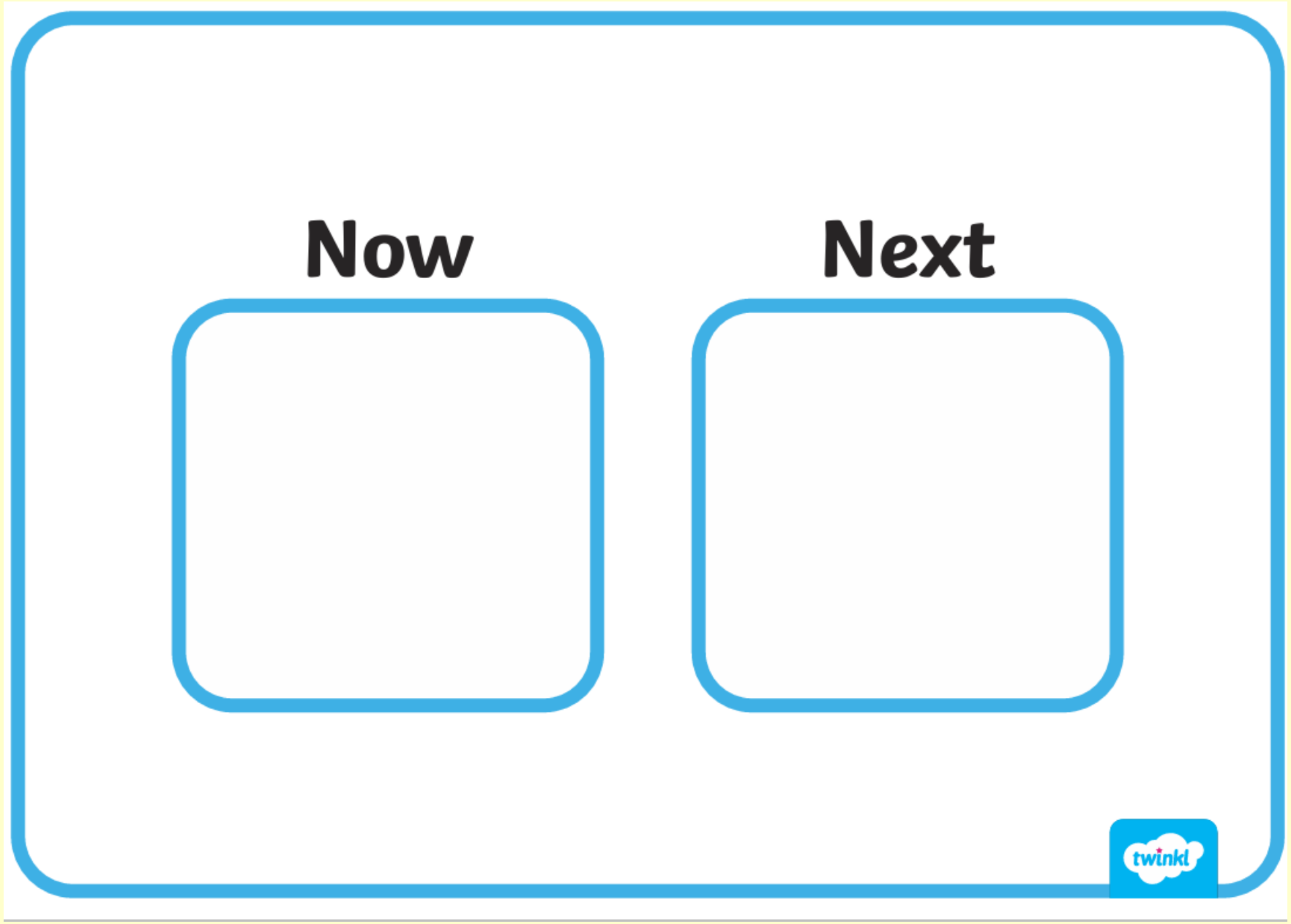
Remember, we have a homework club in school.

Ways to support your child

- Visual timetable with a motivator (an item or activity that your child really likes) on a Now and Next board. Alternate the motivators as needed.

- Social story

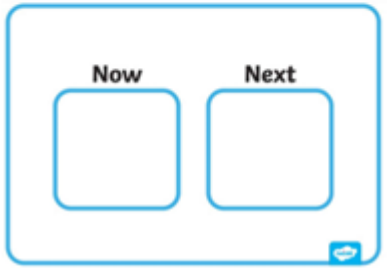
- Use positive words of encouragement when your child is working well, especially if your child is anxious about the homework. Reward and encourage small steps by using targeting and specific praise.

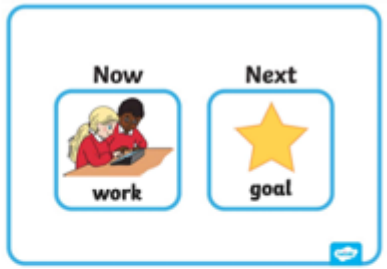

Now
Next
twinkl

We do our work first

I will do my homework first, then I can earn my chosen goal. My parents will help me if I need it.

We will use a now / next board so I know what to do.





Now is work. Next is my chosen goal.

This is OK.

This will make my teacher and my parents proud of me.

This will make me happy and feel proud of myself.

I can do my homework

My name is _____ and I am in Year __ at _____School.

Homework is given to help us remember what we learn and see if we can find things out. Sometimes we have to work on the computer, sometimes we have to write or draw and sometimes we have to make something.

computer

write

draw

make

It is part of being at school that all children get homework.

I need to decide on a good time to do my homework each day.

time

It is good that my mum and maybe other people in my family will help me.

help

It is ok when I don't like having to do homework. Many children feel like that too. I can try to do the best I can and do a good job because my teachers will expect it to be done no matter how I feel about it!

ok

When I have done my homework, it is a good idea to put it in my bag the night before so that I know I will have it to give to my teacher on the right day!

bag

I can plan a nice treat for when I have done my homework. I might play on the computer or relax or watch something on TV. Then I will enjoy it knowing that my homework is done!

great

Homework Agreement

Talk to your child about the main issues that arise when he sits down to do homework. What is his most difficult subject? What distracts him? How can he find ways to stop the distractions?
Once you have brainstormed ideas to make homework time more productive, write up a contract with your child that implements the agreed-upon strategies. Every time a strategy is used successfully, award points towards a reward.

Homework Agreement

Homework will be done at this time every day unless agreed otherwise:_____

Homework will be done at this location unless agreed otherwise:_____

- ✓ I understand that my parent will remind me when I need to start my homework.
- ✓ I will not make a fuss about needing to do my homework.
- ✓ I will not interrupt my homework with distractions such as having the television on.
- ✓ I know that I can ask an adult if I need help.
- ✓ I will take a _____ minute break if I need it.

For us to fill out together

Rewards and consequences

For following this contract and finishing my homework, I will get the following rewards:

At the end of the day: _____

At the end of the week: _____

Homework Reward Chart

Monday										
Tuesday										
Wednesday										
Thursday										
Friday										
Saturday										
Sunday										

Homework Completion Chart

Print off and hang a homework completion chart on your refrigerator or anywhere else your child can easily see it. Make your own, or use this printable homework chart. Mark an "X" whenever your child completes a homework assignment.

Some of our readers reward their child with a small prize when he completes the chart, while others simply allow bragging rights. Whichever way you choose, be sure to recognize his accomplishment.

A multisensory approach

Multisensory simply means using more than one of a child's senses at a time. Learning this way is far more effective for some children, especially those with dyslexia.

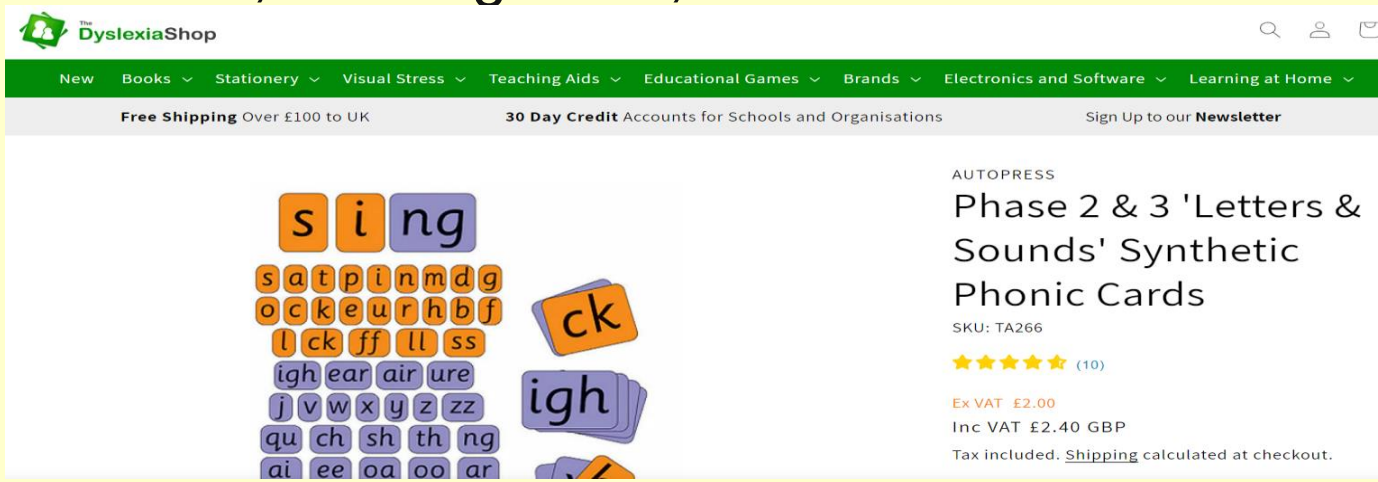
- For example, if your child just reads a book they are using one sense - *sight*. But if they read along with an audiobook, they are using two senses - *sight and hearing*. This would be multisensory learning and might help your child to absorb and retain the information in the book.

- If your child is struggling, try to include at least two senses –seeing something (visual), hearing something related to what is seen (auditory), some form of related movement of muscles, for example speaking or writing (kinaesthetic), and touching or feeling something (tactile).

Multisensory learning is useful for children of any age. For an older child, multisensory teaching can be as simple as, instead of getting them to read a book about Ancient Egypt, do a virtual tour of the British Museum and discuss the topic with them as you take a virtual walk through their Ancient Egypt galleries.

Here is an example of how you might apply multisensory learning if your child needs to do some phonics or spelling work…

1. Lay out an alphabet arc by putting the letters of the alphabet into an arc shape
2. Sing the alphabet song while touching each of the letters in turn
3. Discover the letter being introduced by taking items out of a bag that begin with the same letter
4. The learner feels the objects, names them and pulls them out to check if they are right
5. Identify the target sound and letter name
6. Demonstrate how to form the letters on a whiteboard
7. The learner explores forming the letter in sand, shaving foam, wiki sticks or similar



Share the Reading

A whole chapter in a book can be overwhelming for some children with LD. Have your child read the first paragraph, or sentence if she is a new reader, then you read the rest of the page.
Make the information or story as interesting as possible, pausing to reinforce the concepts presented. This will help keep your child engaged and interested in the assignment.

Test Me

Instead of quizzing your child on the material he is studying, have him quiz you. Reading the question and hearing the answer from you can help boost his memory skills.

This strategy also helps to take the focus off your child, and puts it on you, the parent, instead. Your child may feel a sense of authority in correcting you, and you'll be happy knowing he is learning the material.

Consider the way in which your child can show their learning

For some children, they might prefer to complete their learning on a computer.

Some children learn best through playing games, such as phonics games or TimesTable Rockstars.

Other sources of advice

- **Top tips to support your child's reading at home**

https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zbxby9q

- **Five ways to support your child with dyslexia at home**

https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z6mts4j

Summary

- **Create a routine.** Have a dedicated time and place for homework — routine and consistency are key.

- Establishing a regular homework routine makes the process less stressful. Set aside time and a quiet space for this.

- Turn off TV and other distractions (although music in the background can help some children drown out their surroundings and focus).

- Praise and reward often (typically more often than you are comfortable with). Recognise and reward the effort your child has made. If your child has low self-confidence in a subject, this is a key time where you can praise your child and help them to build their confidence.

Spelling strategies

There are some simple activities you can do with your child to help strengthen their spelling:

Blending and Segmenting (skills for reading and spelling)

Blending is a vital skill for reading. The separate sounds (phonemes) of the word are spoken aloud and in order, all through the word. They are then merged together into the whole word. This merging together is called **blending.** For example, the adult would say **c-a-t = cat.**
Segmenting is also a vital skill for spelling. The whole word is spoken aloud, then broken up into its separate sounds in order, all through the word. For example, the adult would say **cat = c-a-t.**

Blending activities you can do with your child

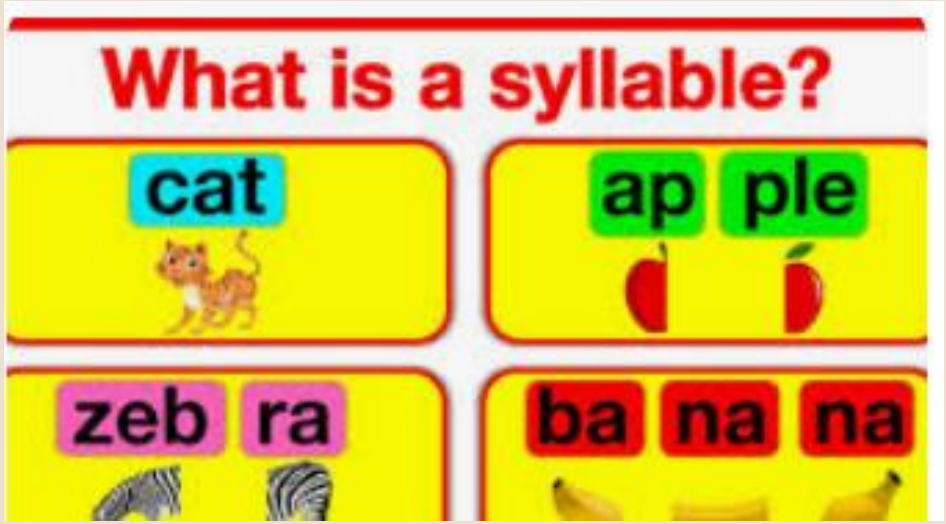
- Break down simple words when giving instructions or asking questions, such as:

  'Can you find your **h-a-t**, hat?' 'Where is the **c-a-t**, cat?' 'Sit on the **s-ea-t**, seat'

- Play '**What's in the box?**' Put some toys or objects in a bag and pull one out at a time. Say 'I can feel a **p-e-g**, **c-u-p**, **p-e-n**'. Children then guess what's in the box.

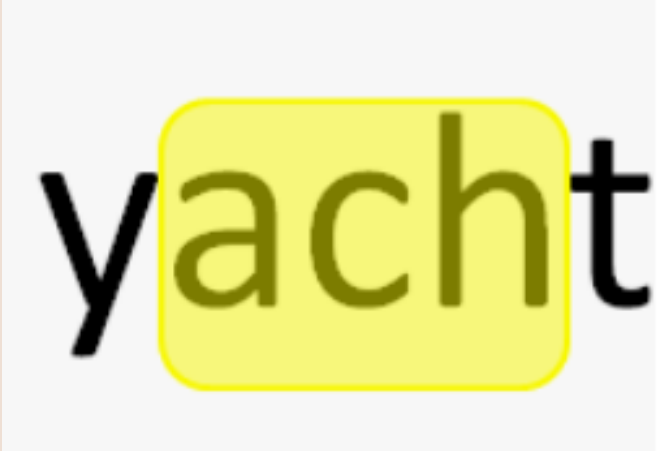
- Find objects around your home that have three or four phonemes (sounds) and practise 'sound talk'. First let them listen, then see if they will join in, for example, saying: 'I spy with my little eye something that has the sounds **c-l-o-ck**, **b-a-ll**.'

•Help your child to understand that words are made up of syllables and each syllable has a vowel sound. Say a word and ask how many syllables there are. Help your child to spell each syllable at a time.



•Write words in different coloured pens to make a rainbow or in shaving foam, flour or sand over and over again to help your child remember them.

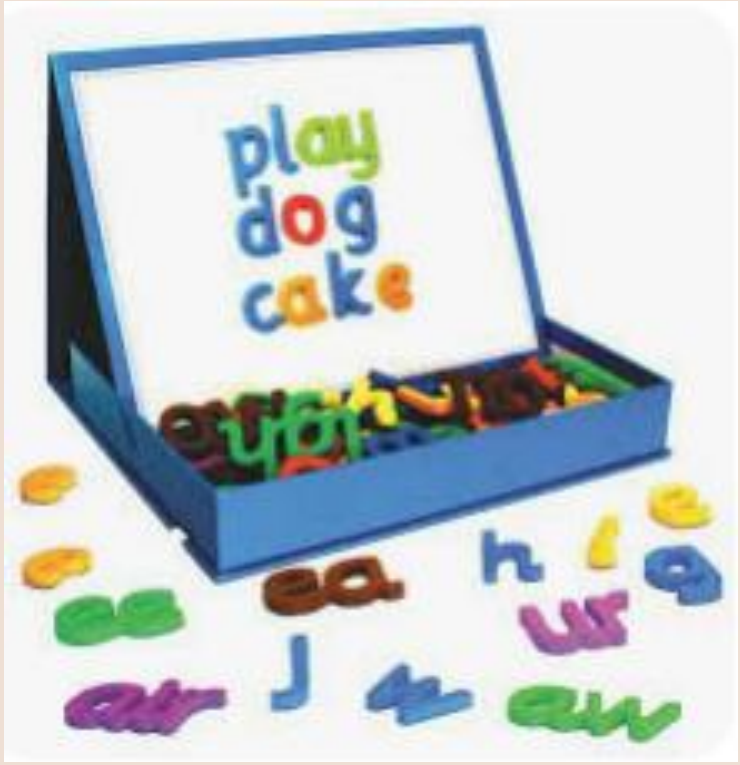
•Look with your child at the bits in the words which they find difficult - use colours to highlight just the tricky bit.



•Look for the prefixes and suffixes in words, e.g. -tion, -ness and learn these chunks. Explore with your child how many words have the same chunks at the beginning or the end of words.

•Use flashcards or play matching games to let your child see the words lots of times - the more times they see the word, the better they will be able to read and spell it.

•Use cut out or magnetic letters to build words together, then mix up the letters and rebuild the word together.



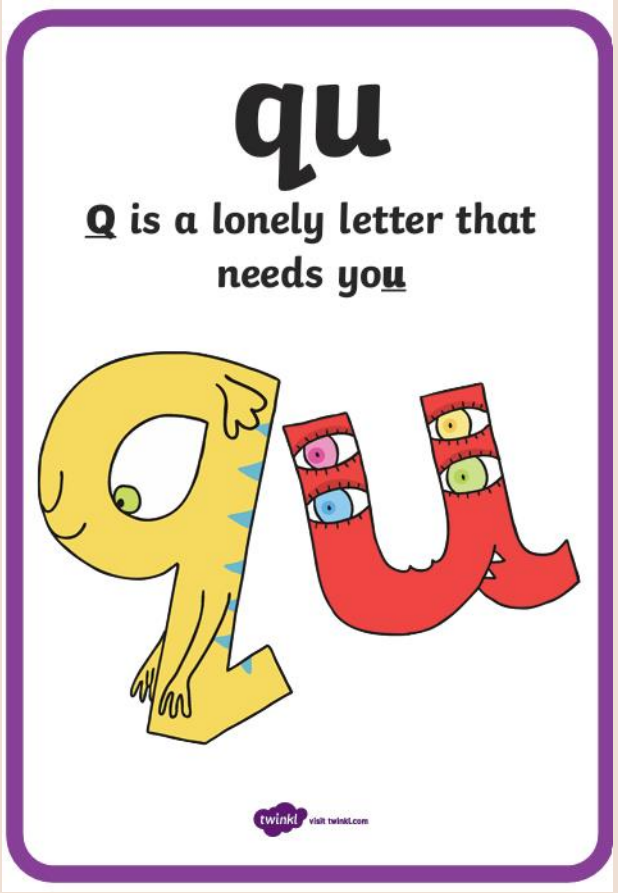
https://www.thedyslexiashop.co.uk/products/rainbow-phonics-magnetic-letters

•Use mnemonics - silly sentences where the first letter of each word makes up the word to be spelled.

said	**s**illy **a**nts **i**n **d**resses
because	**b**ig **e**lephants **c**an **a**lways **u**nderstand **s**mall **e**lephants

•Find smaller words in the bigger word, for example 'there is a hen in when’.

•Go over the rules of spelling together, e.g. a 'q' is always followed by a 'u'.



Thank you for coming.

I will put the powerpoint on this week's newsletter.

If you need help with any of the resources I've mentioned today, please feel free to ask.
Today we are sending out a parent survey. We would be really grateful if you would take the time to complete it.