



STARTER KIT 03

Homework Reset

功课重启

For the 7 pm standoff over a single worksheet.

SET-UP

10 minutes, then every evening

YOU'LL NEED

Reset sheet, a visible timer, a quiet clear surface

BEST FOR

Ages 6 to 14

What's really going on

Homework asks for sustained effort, working memory and emotional control all at once, at the end of a long school day when your child's tank is already empty. A meltdown over one worksheet is usually about overwhelm, not about whether they care. A reset is not about finishing everything. It is about making the next ten minutes doable.

Your five-step plan

1 Check the tank first

Snack, water, toilet, movement. Give a 20 to 30 minute breather after school before any books come out (see Kit 4).

2 Shrink the task

Write the homework list down. Start with the smallest or easiest item for a quick win. Split big tasks into chunks with a timer.

3 Set up one good spot

One clear surface, phone and TV out of sight, water within reach, same place every day. Sit nearby doing your own task if it helps them start.

4 Work in sprints with real breaks

Sprint, short movement break, sprint. Breaks are part of the plan, not a reward you take away when things go wrong.

5 Know when to stop

Agree a hard-stop time. If it is still a battle, write the teacher a short note: "Spent 45 minutes, stopped because of distress." Many teachers would rather know than receive a tear-stained half-page.

Start here this week

Tonight, agree one hard-stop time with your child and write it at the top of the reset sheet. Knowing there is an end makes starting much easier.

Homework Reset Sheet

Use this when homework has turned into a battle. Write the list down first, then pick the smallest task to start with.

HOMEWORK ENDS AT (HARD STOP)

_____ pm

ENERGY TODAY

☐ Low ☐ Okay ☐ Good

SNACK, WATER, TOILET DONE?

☐ Yes

#	Subject	Task	My first tiny step	Done
				☐
				☐
				☐
				☐
				☐

Sprint tracker

Younger children: 5 to 10 minutes. Older: 15 to 25. Use a timer they can see.

Sprint 1: _____ min ☐ done Break: _____ min

Sprint 2: _____ min ☐ done Break: _____ min

Sprint 3: _____ min ☐ done Break: _____ min

Sprint 4: _____ min ☐ done Break: _____ min

Break menu (3 to 5 minutes)

- Drink water, go to the toilet
- Jumping jacks or wall push-ups
- Stretch or walk around the flat
- Look out the window, breathe
- Short snack. No screens.

Stuck? Climb the ladder, one rung at a time

1

Read the question aloud

2

Try one example together

3

Ask a parent for one hint

4

Skip it and mark a star

5

Write a note to the teacher



Adapt it for your child

Every child is different. Read the cards that sound like yours, pick one or two ideas to try, and leave the rest.

How your child is wired

ADHD

Sit nearby doing your own task so they have company to start. Chunk the page, use a visible timer, and offer a movement break after each sprint. If medication has a short window, put the hardest homework inside it and ask the prescriber about timing. Never change the dose yourself.

Dyslexia

Read the questions aloud together first, then let them answer out loud before writing. Use audio for long reading and shorten copying tasks. Ask the school what accommodations exist. A child who reads slowly is working much harder than the page shows.

Dysgraphia or weak handwriting

Reduce the amount of writing: answer orally, then write one sentence. Use graph paper to line up working. Ask whether typing or voice-to-text can be used for drafts. Do not rewrite their work for neatness.

Dyscalculia or maths anxiety

Use real objects, a number line and coloured pencils. Say the steps aloud, and talk through any graph or diagram together before asking them to read it alone. Praise the method, not just the answer.

Autism

Define "finished" with a picture or checklist. Keep the same time, place and order every day. Be literal: "write two sentences", not "do some more". Use a favourite interest as the reward, and allow sensory breaks.

Perfectionist or anxious

Start with the easiest task for a quick win. Agree "first draft first" and allow one rub-out per line. Name the fear aloud ("you're worried it won't be perfect"). Praise effort and a finished page.

Your family's situation

Younger children (P1 to P2)

Ten minutes is a good session. Sit beside them, play a game with the spelling words, and let quick wins count. Stop while they still feel capable.

PSLE year and upper primary

The load is heavy, so triage: plan the week on Sunday, put big items first and protect sleep. Tell the teacher what is taking too long. A tired child learns less, and comparing with classmates usually makes it worse.

Chinese homework in an English-speaking home

You do not have to teach it. Use the teacher's audio or recordings, pinyin support and five-word 听写 chunks. Short, frequent practice beats one long battle. Ask the teacher for a shorter list if needed.

Homework at student care, tuition or with a helper

Share the reset sheet and the hard-stop time with whoever supervises, so your child meets one approach. Ask them to note how long tasks took and where your child got stuck.



Words that help

Try saying	Rather than
Let's do just the first ten minutes and see.	You always do this.
Which one do you want to start with?	Just sit down and do it!
This looks hard. Let's break it into pieces.	It's easy. You're just not trying.
We stop at 8. I'll write your teacher a note.	We're not leaving this table until it's done.

If it's still not working

It takes hours. Work out what is actually hard: reading the question, writing, remembering the steps, or just being tired. Tell the teacher about the volume, and consider whether there is an undiagnosed learning difference.

Perfectionism and constant erasing. Agree on "first draft first". Allow one rub-out per line, and praise the effort, not the neatness.

Spelling and 听写 practice drags on. Do five words at a time. Mix saying, tracing and writing, and finish while it still feels doable.

You are the one losing patience. Move from co-pilot to coach. Sit nearby, answer one question, then step back. If either of you is escalating, pause and come back.

When to get extra support

Speak to the form teacher or SENO if homework regularly takes far longer than expected, causes daily distress, or your child says things like "I'm stupid". If you suspect dyslexia, dysgraphia or dyscalculia, the Dyslexia Association of Singapore (DAS) offers SpLD assessments: <https://das.org.sg/services/spld-assessment/>

In Singapore, a good first step is your child's paediatrician or polyclinic doctor, who can refer you on to a Child Development Clinic, a Child Guidance Clinic or a psychologist. The form teacher, school counsellor and SEN officer (SENO) can share what they are seeing at school.

These kits offer general parenting and developmental guidance for educational purposes. They are not a diagnosis or a substitute for advice from your child's doctor, therapist, psychologist or teacher. Every child is different.

Before an ADHD assessment: what I've noticed

Appointments are short, and it's easy to forget the details. Fill this in over 1 to 2 weeks. Real examples help the doctor or psychologist far more than "he can't focus".

CHILD'S NAME & AGE / LEVEL _____	FIRST NOTICED AROUND _____	APPOINTMENT DATE _____
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Area	What happens (a real example)	Where	How often / since when
Mornings & getting ready e.g. needs 6 reminders to put on shoes		☐ Home ☐ School	
Homework & studying e.g. 20 minutes to start, done in 5		☐ Home ☐ School	
At school (teacher comments) e.g. "daydreams", "calls out answers"		☐ Home ☐ School	
Friends & play e.g. hard to wait for turns in games		☐ Home ☐ School	
Feelings & frustration e.g. big meltdowns over small changes		☐ Home ☐ School	
Sleep, eating & screens e.g. hard to fall asleep, picky eating		☐ Home ☐ School	

What we've already tried e.g. timers, sticker charts, tuition, changing seats. What helped, what didn't? _____ _____ _____	My questions for the doctor - What else could explain what we're seeing? - What happens after the assessment, and how long will it take? - What can the school do to help, and will we get a report? _____
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Bring along ☐ School report books and teacher comments ☐ Any earlier reports (speech, OT, psychologist) ☐ Your filled-in Strugglesmart ADHD Screener ☐ A few samples of homework or schoolwork	Good to know - In Singapore, you can start with your paediatrician or a polyclinic doctor, who can refer you on. - Ask the school's SEN officer or form teacher to share their observations too. - Only a qualified professional can diagnose ADHD. This page just helps you share what you see.
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Thinking ahead to PSLE or GCE? A recent report can support exam Access Arrangements like extra time or a separate room. Strugglesmart helps you plan it, in English or 华文.

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