

SUCCESSFULLY
Working with Your Child with Learning Differences at Home



Presented By

Jill Stowell, M.S.

Author and Founder
Stowell Learning Centers
Chino • Irvine • Pasadena • Thousand Oaks

Take the pressure off and...

Increase Careful Reading and Attention to Meaning

Neurological Impress Reading with Visualizing at Punctuation

Students point to each word and read **slowly** orally or silently, using appropriate phrasing and intonation. Students will tap twice at each punctuation mark. This calls attention to the punctuation and gives students a chance to think about what they are reading.

The instructor will question the students to see if they have created a mental image from the phrase or sentence just read. Do as much or as little questioning as needed to be sure that the students are imaging as they are reading. This will interrupt the flow of the reading at first, but gradually, the students will be able to mentally check their own images at each punctuation mark, without having to stop and discuss them.

This technique improves orientation and synchrony between what the student is seeing and saying when reading. In addition, it helps students consciously focus on creating images as they are reading. This is a critical factor in reading comprehension.

When students get comfortable with this technique, they can use it for studying and test taking by pointing to each word as they orally or mentally say it and tapping twice at punctuation and visualizing. This increases accuracy and attention to words and meanings.

Tune-Up/ Support Listening

Thinking Caps (www.braingym.org)



Massage the curled part of the ear lobes, taking deep breaths as you “uncurl” and rub the earlobe. This activates the ears for listening.

Simplify instructions

- Give instructions in short phrases with visual back-up.
- Give only pertinent content.

Comprehension and Memory

Visualize on the Walls

When teaching new information, discussing events in a story, learning a sequence of steps or new vocabulary, guide students in developing mental images and locating them in order or in various places on the walls. Then go back and drill or have them retell the information by looking at that spot on the wall. Anchoring an image somewhere specific in space will make it easier to retrieve the information.

Associations

Guide students in creating sequences of mental images to remember lists and facts (such as states and capitals, presidents, steps in science or math formulas). Be sure to link each new image to the one before it.

Strong images are easier to remember. Students can make their images strong by adding color or movement, changing the size, making them silly or absurd, or making them illustrate a strong emotion.

Associations can be used to remember vocabulary or facts. For example:

Vagus Nerve: Sometimes called the Vagabond Nerve because it connects so extensively in the body.

The student could visualize a vagabond walking along the “nerve highways” holding a stick on his shoulder with a knapsack on the end of it.

Rafter Words

Write vocabulary words that students need to know in large, bold printed letters on cards and put them around your room up high on the wall. (Tip: Blue painter’s tape will stick but not damage your walls). When students need to spell one of those words, have them look up and find it. Looking up and finding it in a specific location each time will help them imprint the word in their visual memory. This also works with other important information that need to be memorized such as the periodic Table of Elements.

5-Minute Power Writing Strategy

Principles:

- It is easier to write from a question than a statement
- The faster you write, the better you write
- This gives you a way to break writing into small manageable chunks so it doesn't drag or feel overwhelming.

Rules:

- Start with 3 power words (nouns or verbs) about the topic
- Your first word in your first paragraph must be one of the 3 power words.
- The other 2 words must appear in the first paragraph.
- Write for 5 minutes without stopping. No editing, erasing, or going back. No stopping to think.

Steps:

- Take your main idea sentence or topic and turn it into a question.
- Visualize the answer to the question.
- Write 3 power words (nouns or verbs) that will help answer the question
- Write for 5 minutes following the rules.
- At the end of 5 minutes, edit, extend, and clarify the sentences.
- Proofread with COPS.

Proofreading Strategy

COPS

Here's a simple technique to help writers of any age become more independent in proofreading their written work.

Have the student write COPS on a 3x5 card or at the top of her paper. Explain what each letter in the acronym stands for and walk through the process together with everything the student writes – even single sentences. Very quickly, most students will begin to apply COPS all on their own.

COPS stands for:

Capitalization

Overall Appearance (Spacing; clean, clear, well-formed letters; mistakes erased completely)

Punctuation

Spelling (Have the student check spelling by starting with the last word in the sentence or paragraph. This takes the words out of context. The student should check to see if the word “sounds right” and “looks right.”

Have students go through each sentence checking for **C**apitalization. When done, they get to check off the **C**. Then check for **O**verall appearance, checking it off when done. Go on to **P**unctuation, followed by **S**pelling.

Comprehension / Test Study Strategy

Concept Diagramming

Most students have no idea how to study for a test. They often resort to reading the chapter over and over, hoping it will sink in; depending on parents to read the material and quiz them; or just hoping they somehow got the information through osmosis.

Some students work hard to memorize their study guides or practice questions word for word. They think they know the material, but when it appears on the test, stated in a different way, they don't recognize it as being what they studied and end up being disappointed in their grade.

Here is a strategy that takes a bit of time up front, but helps students really understand the material and makes studying much more interesting. Test grades improve because students are really *thinking* about the information instead of just trying to ingest it by rote.

This strategy, called **Concept Diagramming**, is great for use with content areas such as history or science. It is a good tool to use when studying in groups or with a partner (or parent).

Steps

The student should:

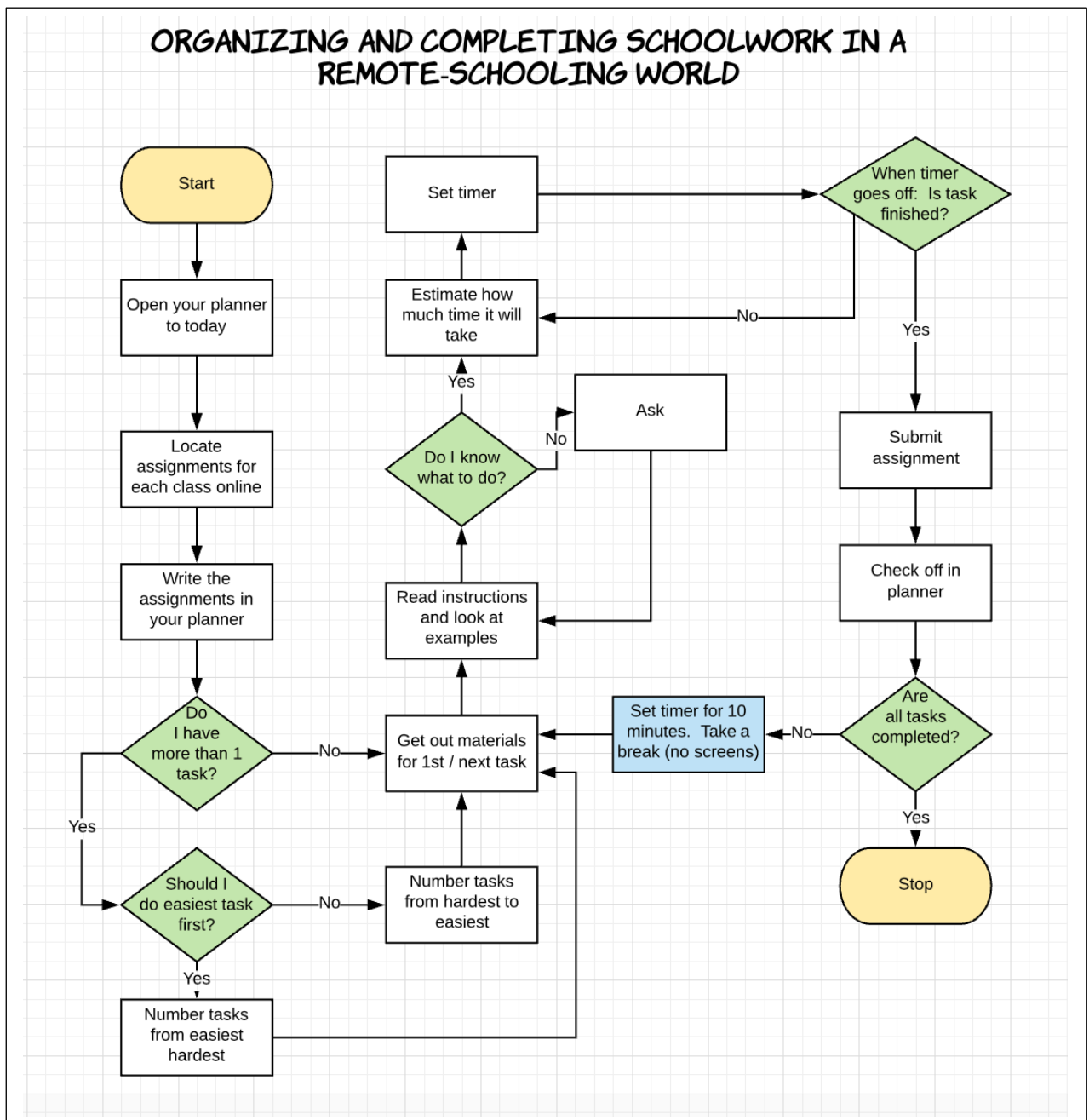
1. Put important events, dates, vocabulary, and names on 3X5 cards.
2. Organize the cards in some way and orally explain why it makes sense to group the cards in that way.
3. Then mix the cards up and group them in another way, orally explaining the new connections.
4. After each test, save all of the cards, labeling them by chapter or section so that they can be used again to study for unit tests and finals.

Flow Charts for Organization and Follow Through

A flow chart is a visual representation of exactly what needs to be done step by step. Planning out each and every step of a project or task and putting the steps on a flow chart with your student helps build problem solving and planning skills

Following a flow chart step by step takes the pressure off of students and allows them to feel successful as they follow each step.

Use free flow chart apps to build your flow chart, using ovals for start/stop, rectangles for steps, and diamonds for decisions or questions.



Focus Strategies

Timer

Use a **timer** for kids with trouble focusing on task. Start with 5 minutes and gradually increase. When the timer goes off, celebrate; then re-set for the next 5 minutes.

Movement Minute

Recognize the limits of your students' ability to concentrate before becoming unproductive. Take a **"Movement Minute"** to re-energize thinking and focus.

Five-Count Breath

Student inhales slowly through the nose and counts five counts on fingers. Without holding breath, student begins to exhale slowly through the mouth in five counts as he puts his fingers back down.

- Repeat 3 times.

Deep breathing immediately forces oxygen into the brain, which improves thinking and encourages muscles to relax as they are flooded with oxygen rich blood. This supports clearer thinking and learning

Brain Break - Cross Crawls

Touch hand to opposite knee; alternate moving one arm and opposite leg.



Take a 1 - 5 minutes brain break when you see that your child is becoming frustrated or making a lot of mistakes.

Cross Crawls activate the brain for reading, writing, and spelling and are very helpful when student is getting disoriented or flustered and making many errors. Cross crawls help with fluency as they activate the 2 hemispheres of the brain to work together,

Getting Started Questions

Together with the student, make a list of the first three things that he needs to do to get started. Before starting each assignment, the student should read and use his questions to help him get started immediately and independently.

1. *What materials do I need?*
2. *Did I put my name on the paper?*
3. *Where is the first set of instructions?*

Do You Know a...

- Bright Underachiever
- High achiever who struggles
- Child or teen with Dyslexia
- Smart student with learning or attention challenges

There is a reason a bright child might struggle in school...

- It's not because he's lazy
- Or because of bad parenting
- Or because teachers don't know how to teach

The most common reason for a child to struggle in school?

Weak or inefficient underlying skills learning or information processing skills.

These weak underlying skills cause interference to learning. Unfortunately, they do not typically improve with time or traditional tutoring.



We can help. We do what traditional tutoring doesn't do. We get to the ROOT of the problem.



For 35 years, we have served children and adults with diagnosed or undiagnosed learning and attention challenges including:

- Dyslexia
- Learning disabilities
- Attention deficit
- Auditory processing disorders
- Executive function
- Processing skills
- Bright underachievers

Stowell Learning Centers: Call 877-774-0444

VIRTUAL SCREENINGS and SESSIONS!