

When Work Is Hard Cards and a Story

SECTION 1 · THE THREE STORIES IN COLOR

WHEN WORK IS HARD

STORY When a Worksheet Is Hard (Color)

THIS STORY BELONGS TO _____

DATE _____

1



WORKSHEET

I start a worksheet, and partway through, it feels too hard to finish.

2



THINKING

When a worksheet is hard, I can feel frustrated and want to give up.

3



CALM

I take a breath and stay calm about the worksheet.

4



IDEA

I think of a strategy to try, like asking for help or taking a short break.

5



AGAIN

I try my strategy, and if it does not work the first time, I try again.

6



CHECK

Trying a strategy when a worksheet is hard is something I can do, even if the work is still hard.

STORIES IN COLOR

WHEN WORK IS HARD

Story Strips (Color)

Story in order, as cut-apart cards. Print, cut on the dashed lines, and the story travels in a numbers keep the order. This is the color set; the same three strips in the ink-saver set are

IT IS HARD



HARDER



DO DO



VE IN COMMON

story
the same four
ain) and the
story, in the
cking-with-it
on the story
story apart.

FOUR QUICK WAYS TO USE A STRIP

- ☐ Clip it to a lanyard or keyring so it travels between rooms with the student.
- ☐ Tape it inside a folder or desk lid for a quiet, private reminder.
- ☐ Hand one card at a time as the story is retold, in order, one to six.
- ☐ Send the set home in an envelope the week that story is new (page 25).

at each row as one strip before cutting the six cards apart — that
ands are still learning scissors. A laminated strip holds up to a

What Is Inside, and Where

Before you begin

PAGE 4



Start Here —
Three Steps
START HERE

4

01 The Three Stories in Color

PAGES 6–10



When a
Worksheet Is Hard
(Color)
STORY

6



When the Task
Gets Harder
(Color)
STORY

7



When a Game Is
Hard to Do (Color)
STORY

8



Pocket Story
Strips (Color)
CARDS

9



Write Your Own
Story (Type or
Draw)
STORY

10

02 The Ink-Saver Stories

PAGES 12–15



When a
Worksheet Is Hard
(Ink-Saver)
STORY

12



When the Task
Gets Harder (Ink-
Saver)
STORY

13



When a Game Is
Hard to Do (Ink-
Saver)
STORY

14



Pocket Story
Strips (Ink-Saver)
CARDS

15

03 Practice, Data and Home

PAGES 17–28



Practice: When a
Worksheet Is Hard
PRACTICE

17



Practice: When
the Task Gets
Harder
PRACTICE

18



Practice: When a
Game Is Hard to
Do
PRACTICE

19



How to Use the
Stories
REFERENCE

21



Story and
Moments Log
LOG

22



Weekly Roll-Up
and Graph
TRACKER

23



Filled Example
EXAMPLE

24



Family Page
NOTES

25



Hand-Off to
Another Adult or
Room
NOTES

26



Phrase Bank for
Writing a New
Story
REFERENCE

27



Storage and
Binder Labels
REFERENCE

28

Start Here — Three Steps



1

Print one story

Pick the story that fits what this student needs most right now and print it from the color set (pages 6–8) or the ink-saver set (pages 12–14). Type the student's name on it first if you like.

The pocket strips (page 9) put the same six pictures on cut-apart cards; the blank page (page 10) is for a story of your own.



2

Read it, then practice

Read the story in a calm moment, pointing to each picture, the same way every time. After a read, do that story's practice page (pages 17–19): three "what can I do?" moments, a Monday-to-Friday strip, and three things to try with an adult.

The how-to page (page 21) has the rest: which story first, what counts as a moment, and reading it the same way in every room.



3

Log it, roll it up, send it home

One row on the log (page 22) each school day: was the story read, by whom, how many moments came up, and in how many the student tried a strategy.

Total the week on the roll-up (page 23) and dot the graph. Send the family page (page 25) home the week a story is new; the hand-off page (page 26) goes with the story to any other adult.

WHAT THIS FILE IS

A fillable PDF: 3 short picture stories (18 sentences, 8 pictures) about noticing that work is hard and trying a strategy instead of giving up, in a color set and an ink-saver set, a practice page for each, pocket strips, a write-your-own page and the data pages behind them, with type-in fields throughout. It works offline, no account needed.

WHAT THIS FILE IS NOT

Not an editable online slideshow or word-processor document, and not a behavior plan or a legal or clinical procedure of any kind. It follows no named method, supplies no prompt hierarchy, fading schedule or mastery rule and promises no outcome; it tells a student, in pictures, what a hard task can look like and one way to keep trying, and counts what happened — never that the strategy made the work easy.

WHICH PAGE, WHEN

YOUR SITUATION	GO TO
A worksheet or written assignment feels too hard to finish	When a Worksheet Is Hard, page 6; practice, page 17
A book or a multi-step task gets harder partway through	When the Task Gets Harder, page 7; practice, page 18
A game or a physical skill still is not right after a few tries	When a Game Is Hard to Do, page 8; practice, page 19
A situation none of the three stories covers	Blank story, page 10; phrase bank, page 27
The IEP meeting or a family conference	Roll-up and graph, page 23; example, page 24

IF SOMETHING DOES NOT WORK, AND WHERE THIS FILE LIVES

A field will not hold my typing. Open the file in Acrobat Reader or Preview, not a browser tab. **A picture reads as a different word.** Cover it and use the blank page instead; the **Ask a Question** tab reaches me for a free update.

Confidentiality: initials only on anything that leaves your hands, first name only on the family page.

STORY

When a Worksheet Is Hard (Color)

THIS STORY BELONGS TO

DATE

1



WORKSHEET

I start a worksheet, and partway through, it feels too hard to finish.

2



THINKING

When a worksheet is hard, I can feel frustrated and want to give up.

3



CALM

I take a breath and stay calm about the worksheet.

4



IDEA

I think of a strategy to try, like asking for help or taking a short break.

5



AGAIN

I try my strategy, and if it does not work the first time, I try again.

6



CHECK

Trying a strategy when a worksheet is hard is something I can do, even if the work is still hard.

STORY

When the Task Gets Harder (Color)

THIS STORY BELONGS TO

DATE

1



BOOK

I am reading a book or working on a task with many steps, and partway through, it starts to feel hard.

2



THINKING

When a task gets harder partway through, I can feel frustrated and want to give up.

3



CALM

I take a breath and stay calm about the task.

4



IDEA

I think of a strategy to try, like taking a short break or reading the directions again.

5



AGAIN

I try my strategy, and if it does not work the first time, I try again.

6



CHECK

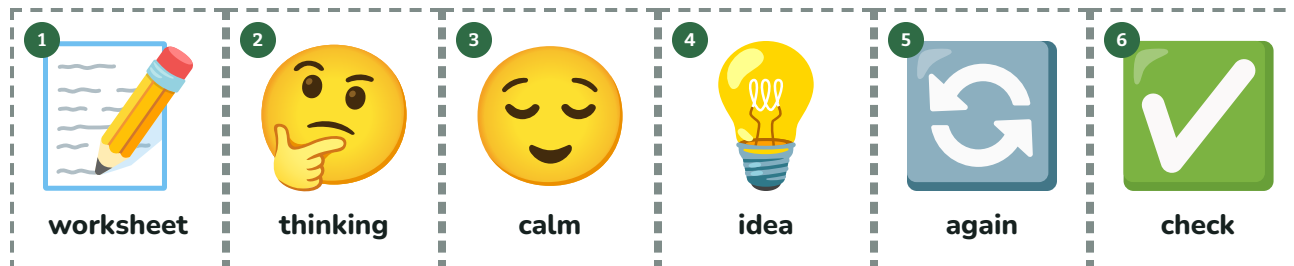
Trying a strategy when a task gets harder is something I can do, even if the work is still hard.

CARDS

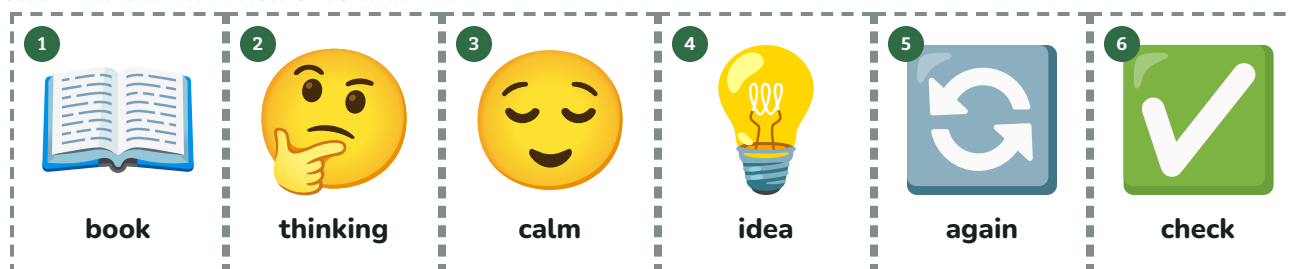
Pocket Story Strips (Color)

The six pictures of each story in order, as cut-apart cards. Print, cut on the dashed lines, and the story travels in a pocket or on a keyring; the numbers keep the order. This is the color set; the same three strips in the ink-saver set are on page 15.

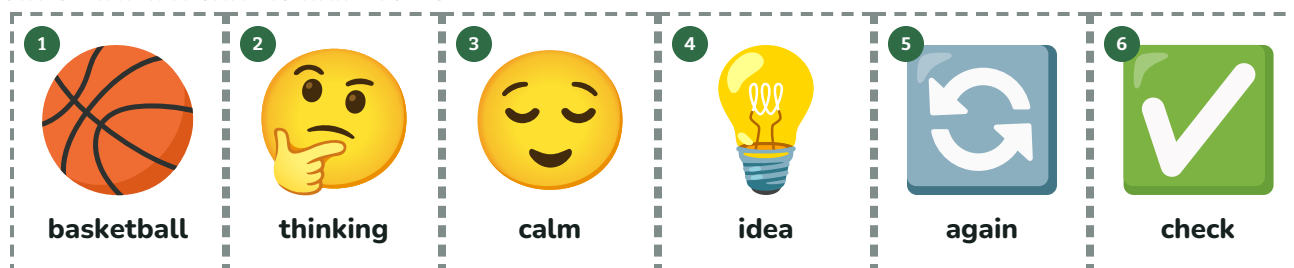
STORY 1 • WHEN A WORKSHEET IS HARD



STORY 2 • WHEN THE TASK GETS HARDER



STORY 3 • WHEN A GAME IS HARD TO DO



WHAT EVERY STORY'S PICTURES HAVE IN COMMON

Only the first card is different in each story (worksheet, book, or basketball) — the same four cards after it (thinking, calm, idea, again) and the closing check mark show up in every story, in the same order, because it is the same sticking-with-it routine each time. The full sentences on the story pages (pages 6–8) are what tells each story apart.

FOUR QUICK WAYS TO USE A STRIP

- ☐ Clip it to a lanyard or keyring so it travels between rooms with the student.
- ☐ Tape it inside a folder or desk lid for a quiet, private reminder.
- ☐ Hand one card at a time as the story is retold, in order, one to six.
- ☐ Send the set home in an envelope the week that story is new (page 25).

PRINTING AND CUTTING TIP

Print on cardstock if it is available, and cut each row as one strip before cutting the six cards apart — that keeps the numbers in order while little hands are still learning scissors. A laminated strip holds up to a backpack or a keyring for the whole year.

STORY

When a Game Is Hard to Do (Ink-Saver)

THIS STORY BELONGS TO

DATE

1



BASKETBALL

I try a game or a physical skill a few times, and I cannot get it right yet.

2



THINKING

When a game or skill is hard to get right, I can feel frustrated and want to give up.

3



CALM

I take a breath and stay calm about the game.

4



IDEA

I think of a strategy to try, like watching someone else first or asking for a tip.

5



AGAIN

I try my strategy, and if it does not work the first time, I try again.

6



CHECK

Trying a strategy when a game is hard is something I can do, even if the skill is still hard.

PRACTICE

Practice: When the Task Gets Harder

Goes with When the Task Gets Harder (page 7). Read the story together, then do this page.

NAME

DATE

READ THE STORY WITH

WHAT CAN I DO? (READ THE STORY FIRST)

#	WHEN THIS HAPPENS...	WHAT CAN I DO?	I DID IT (Y / N)
1	A book or a multi-step task gets harder partway through.		
2	I feel frustrated in the middle of my work, not just at the start.		
3	I want to stop before the work is finished.		

I DID THIS TODAY (MARK THE DAY)

THIS WEEK	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
I read the story					
I did what the story says					

PUT THE STORY IN ORDER

1

2

3

4

5

6

Cut the strip cards for this story (page 9) and put them in order, one to six. Then tell the story.

TRY IT WITH AN ADULT

☐ Show me how you would take a slow breath partway through the work.

☐ Practice naming one strategy you could try, like taking a short break.

☐ Tell me one part of the work you already finished.

MY OWN WORDS ABOUT THIS STORY

 LOG

Story and Moments Log

One row per school day. It counts two things: whether the story was read, and how many of the day’s moments the student tried a strategy for.

STUDENT		STORY IN FOCUS		WEEK OF		
#	DATE	STORY READ	READ BY (ADULT / TOGETHER / STUDENT)	MOMENTS SEEN	USED IT	INITIALS
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						
16						

WHAT “READ BY” MEANS ON THIS SHEET

Your own short word for how the read went: an adult read it, you read it together, or the student read it alone. Leave the row’s story column blank on a day it was not read; the moment columns still count.

WHAT THE TWO MOMENT COLUMNS MEAN

Moments seen: how many times a hard-task moment came up that day — a worksheet, a task getting harder partway through, or a game or skill not yet right. Used it: how many of those the student tried a strategy for. Total both on the roll-up (page 23) at the end of the week.

TRACKER

Weekly Roll-Up and Graph

One row and one dot per week, from the log. Eight weeks across, 0 to 100 percent.

STUDENT

GOAL (YOUR DISTRICT'S OWN WORDING)

CRITERION (YOUR TEAM SETS IT)

#	WEEK OF	STORY	DAYS READ	MOMENTS SEEN	USED IT	PERCENT	NOTES
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							

PERCENT OF MOMENTS THE STUDENT USED IT · ONE DOT PER WEEK, THEN DRAW THE LINE



FIGURING THE PERCENT

Add the log’s two moment columns (page 22) for the week. Used it divided by moments seen, times 100, rounded to the nearest whole number. Days read is how many rows that week name a story.

BRINGING THIS PAGE TO A MEETING

A rising line says the student is trying a strategy in more of the moments it is about. The criterion field above is where your team’s own number goes, so every dot is read against the same line. This page counts what is plotted; it does not decide what a flat line means.



EXAMPLE

Filled Example

SAMPLE · INVENTED STUDENT

Every number in the read-out is re-counted straight from the two tables above.

Noah is invented, and so is every mark on this page. One week on the log, then three weeks on the roll-up, to show how the two pages read once real marks are on them.

The log, one week (page 22)

#	DATE	STORY READ	READ BY	MOMENTS SEEN	USED IT
1	10/5	Worksheet Is Hard	adult	3	1
2	10/6	Worksheet Is Hard	together	2	1
3	10/7	Worksheet Is Hard	together	3	2
4	10/8	Worksheet Is Hard	student	2	2
5	10/9	Worksheet Is Hard	together	3	3

The roll-up, three weeks (page 23)

#	WEEK OF	STORY	DAYS READ	MOMENTS SEEN	USED IT	PERCENT
1	10/5	Worksheet Is Hard	5	13	9	69%
2	10/12	Worksheet Is Hard	4	11	8	73%
3	10/19	Worksheet Is Hard	5	12	10	83%

READING THE NUMBERS

The week above: 13 moments seen across 5 days, used it in 9, 69 percent. The story was read by an adult 1 time, together 3 times and by Noah alone 1 time. The weeks: 9 of 13 (69 percent), then 8 of 11 (73 percent), then 10 of 12 (83 percent) — a line rising week on week. Every percent is that row's own used-it count divided by its moments seen.

A LINE THIS SHEET COULD WRITE

"With When a Worksheet Is Hard read 5 days that week, Noah tried a strategy when a worksheet felt hard in 10 of 12 moments seen the week of 10/19 (83 percent), up from 9 of 13 the week of 10/5."

HOW THE GRAPH WOULD LOOK

Three dots on the roll-up graph (page 23) at 69, 73 and 83, joined by a line that rises. The "read by" column on the week above shows the read shifting from an adult to the student, which the log records but does not score.

WHAT THIS EXAMPLE IS NOT

One invented child's week and three weeks of totals. It sets no typical rate, predicts nothing about a real student, and the criterion field would hold whatever Noah's team wrote — not a number this file supplies.

THE PRACTICE STRIP THAT WEEK (PAGE 17)

On the Monday-to-Friday strip, Noah marked "I read the story" on 5 days — every row above names the story — and "I did what the story says" on 5 days, the days whose used-it count is at least 1 (every day on the log above). The strip is the student's own mark; the log is the adult's count. They agree here because the example was built that way, not because they must.