

How to
HOMESCHOOL
your
CHILD WITH AUTISM

BY **QUENNIE LIM**

Hi Parents!

My name is Quennie Lim, and I'm truly honored that our paths have crossed. I strongly believe that the best teachers for children are their parents.



I'm about to share teaching strategies that have worked well for me in teaching children with autism. These strategies will help you create a more successful and meaningful teaching experience with your child.

These approaches have been effective in autism classrooms because they are well-tested and research-based.

By the way, I just want to share my teaching experience with you so you can have an idea of what it may feel like when you first start.

When I was new to teaching children with autism, I felt mentally prepared. I thought I understood the techniques and strategies I had learned in theory.

But to be honest, I was wrong. I experienced many emotional ups and downs, and I struggled in the beginning.

There were times when I would cry after sessions, and I had to remind myself that there would always be another day to try again and do better.

Teachers are like parents. We also face challenges in handling our students. We learn from them. We become stronger, we care deeply for them, and we give our best because we believe in what they can achieve.

When you homeschool your child, you give your full dedication and commitment. It is not easy. I homeschooled my daughter, and I can honestly say it was hard—but I never regretted it.

Through this journey, you will come to know your child deeply—their strengths, weaknesses, interests, frustrations, and difficulties. You will also see them struggle.

And truly, without those struggles, I would not have learned. I would not have gained the knowledge and understanding I have now without going through those experiences.

But these struggles have reasons on its own.

I'm going to share with you what can make your teaching more effective, based on the strategies and experience I've gained from over 10 years of working with children with autism.

But remember—these struggles happen for a reason.

In the beginning, you may feel frustrated. You may want to give up. You might cry or feel confused.

Those feelings are normal because we are human—we feel.

So when you feel like giving up, remind yourself: you are doing this to make your child's life better. Tell yourself that with every struggle comes growth and success.

I hope you learn a lot from what I will share with you here.

HERE WE GO...

In teaching children with autism (I will use CWA in the following pages), there are several concepts we need to consider.

Sometimes, a strategy may not work. But do not feel discouraged. Instead, take time to think and reflect. Review other strategies from different situations, because many of them can be connected, intertwined, or overlapping.

These concepts include strategies that can help children cope better during table-top activities with you.

They also provide general guidance that can support you in homeschooling your child. Follow each one, and continue learning and studying so you can grow your understanding of autism and better support your child.

1

Assess Your Child

Before you begin teaching your child, take time to understand where they are right now.

Observe and write down notes about their interests, level of understanding, motivation, sensory needs, attention span, and other traits that make them unique.

You can use simple child profile templates online (Google or Pinterest) to help guide you. Remember to look beyond academics—notice their daily living skills, communication, and social interactions.

When you take a holistic approach, you are helping your child grow not just in learning, but in life.

2

Establish Work Habits

Children with autism (CWA) often have difficulty with planning, organization, following instructions, and handling unpredictable routines, along with many other challenges. Because of this, establishing strong work habits can help them complete tasks—something many parents find difficult.

CWA benefit from a clear start–do–finish concept. This means they need to know when and what activity to start, how to use or handle the materials, and when the task is finished. Parents need to be clear and specific, as children with autism may have difficulty knowing when to stop on their own.

Below are some simple guidelines to help you establish effective work habits with your child.



Know your child's level

Understand whether your child is at the object, photograph, or word level. This will help you choose the right tools and materials that match their ability.

When activities are appropriate to their level, it can reduce frustration and prevent meltdowns. If expectations are too high, both you and your child may feel frustrated. If tasks are too easy, your child may lose motivation. Finding the right balance is key.



Be Specific in Giving Instruction

As mentioned earlier, children with autism (CWA) need clear and specific instructions. They are often literal thinkers, so using simple and direct language helps them understand what to do.

Avoid abstract or unclear phrases. The clearer you are, the more successful your child will be in following directions.

3 Be Consistent

Consistency is very important. Children with autism thrive on predictability and routine.

Establish a regular schedule so your child knows when it is time to learn, play, or have a snack.

Frequent changes or unpredictable routines can be confusing and may lead to meltdowns.

4 Develop Independence

When you have a consistent routine, your child will begin to develop independence. Over time, you will not need to give as many physical or verbal prompts. This also gives you small moments to breathe—you can do household chores or simply sit and rest for a few minutes, knowing that your child understands their routine during teaching time at home.

5 Incorporate Schedules in his Daily Routine

I will be sharing more about schedules shortly. When your schedule is clear and consistent, your child can follow their routine more smoothly because they understand what comes next.

Your child may not have developed work habits yet when you begin teaching. They may not automatically know that when given a workbook, they need to sit down, turn the page, pick up a pencil, complete the task, close the book, and move on to the next activity.

As you teach routines, keep in mind how children learn best. They need to be guided step by step. Ideally, they should sit on a chair and face the table during learning time. However, if your child is not ready for this yet, you can still give simple tasks while they are standing.

Start by teaching the concept of sitting first before introducing more complex tasks.

Practice these routines every day, and over time, your child will begin to develop strong and consistent work habits.

3 Choose Appropriate Tasks or Activities

When teaching your child, choose materials that match their ability. Your child needs to experience success to stay motivated and continue learning.

If a task is too difficult, your child may avoid it, lose interest, or engage in stimming.

Match the material to their level:

- Object level – use real objects
- Photograph level – use pictures with few words
- Word level – use simple worksheets

When tasks are appropriate, your child will stay engaged and build confidence.

Tasks are not only paper-based, such as worksheets or books. They can also include puzzles and hands-on materials like connectors, counters, or blocks.

Try to provide a variety of tasks for your child. Using different materials and presenting activities in different ways can help them become more flexible and less rigid with changes.

You can also include activities that are done out of the chair, such as water play, sand play, painting, stamping, or bubble play. These types of activities support learning while keeping your child engaged and motivated.

4 Make a Schedule

Giving your child a schedule is very important. When children with autism (CWA) have a schedule, they are able to predict their daily activities, which helps them feel more secure and organized.

Many CWA have difficulty with planning and organization. A clear schedule supports both, and it also helps improve flexibility over time.

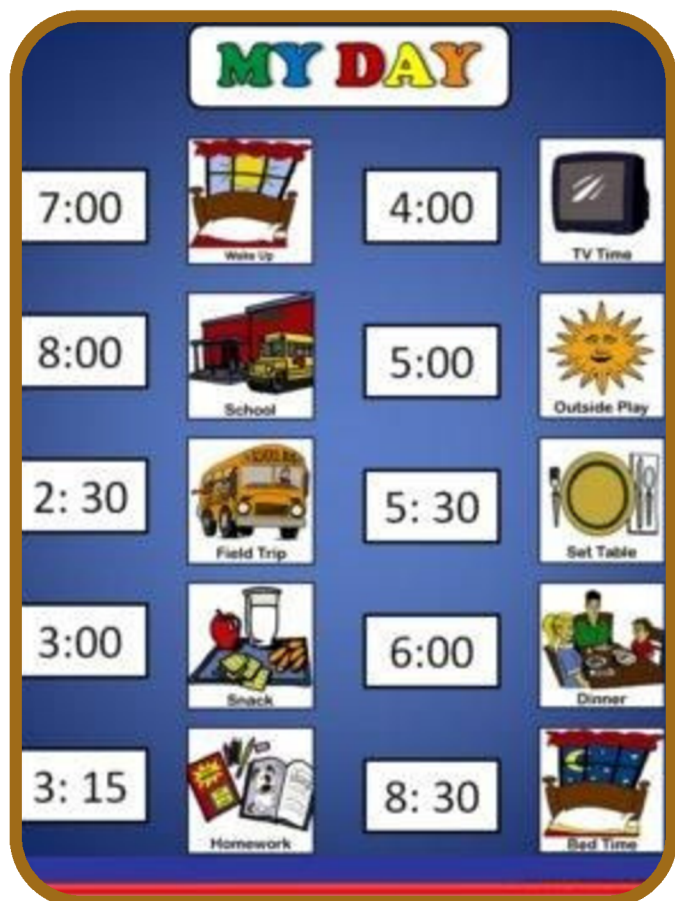
Without a schedule, your child may feel confused or unsure about what to do next. Even adults rely on schedules—how much more do children with autism need them?

There are many sample schedules available online. Just make sure to choose one that matches your child's level so it will be meaningful and effective for them.

Schedules can be presented using photographs (real pictures) or clipart (simple cartoon images).

Always make sure that the type of schedule you provide matches your child's level, so they can understand it easily and interact with it successfully.

Here are some examples of schedules you can use.

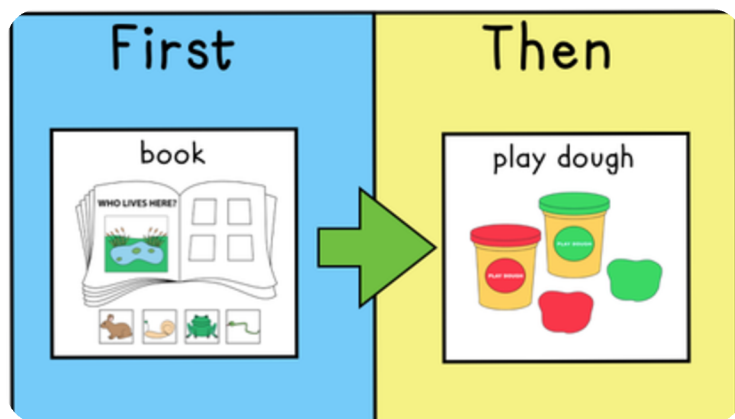


Schedule Sample #1

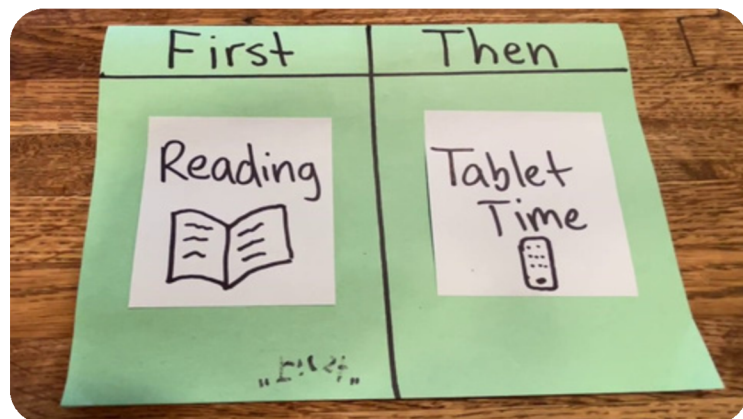


Schedule Sample #2

Schedule boards can include many pictures or just a few, such as a First–Then board.



Schedule Sample #3



Schedule Sample #4

When choosing a schedule board, it is important to consider your child's level. Using a schedule that is not appropriate may lead to confusion, ineffective learning, or even meltdowns.

If your child can already follow activities from top to bottom, you can use a schedule with multiple steps. If your child is just beginning, a First–Then board is a great starting point to help them understand simple sequencing.

You will also notice that schedule boards can be presented in different ways. Choose the one that best matches your child's needs and level of understanding.

The first two schedules show several activities using pictures. In Sample #1, the pictures are bigger and spaced out, making them easier to see. In Sample #2, everything is placed on one page, and there are check marks on the side to show when an activity is completed.

In Sample #3, the images are simpler, using line drawings with less color. In Sample #4, there is no color at all—it uses hand-drawn pictures and simple lines.

You can also include time in the schedule if your child is able to read a clock and understand time. If you have limited materials, you can create your own drawings instead of printing pictures. Just make sure to teach your child what each drawing means so they can understand and follow the schedule effectively.

5 Sensory Break

Know your child's sensory needs. Some children need to regulate themselves during table-top activities—for example, they may need to stand up or move around from time to time. When this happens, your child is showing that they need short breaks in order to complete a task. By understanding your child's sensory profile, you can better support and accommodate their needs.

Below are some examples of situations where a child may need accommodations.

- 01** The child may have difficulty completing tasks and may cover their ears due to sensitivity to noise, such as hearing footsteps from upstairs. This means they work better in a quiet environment. To support them, choose a quiet corner with minimal noise, consider using noise-canceling headphones, and schedule learning time during quieter parts of the day (e.g., around 2:00 PM).

02

The child appears fidgety and tends to flap his hands while working. He also enjoys watching his hands as he flaps. What can you do? You can provide a visually stimulating toy to meet his need for visual input. You may also give him short breaks after each task to help with body regulation, and allow him to go to a sensory corner after completing each activity.

03

The child tends to push the table with his hands to rock the chair. You can give him a break after every three tasks (depending on his attention span) and bring him to a sensory corner for regulation. You may also give him a squishy ball to hold while working, as long as he can still focus and complete the task.

These are just some examples of what may happen during study time with your child. The best person to consult regarding sensory processing issues is your child's Occupational Therapist (OT), as they can provide proper guidance based on your child's specific needs. Sometimes, sensory behaviors are a form of communication. Your child may be telling you they need a break, need movement, or need a specific tool (e.g., a gym ball) to help them regulate.

6 Teaching Environment at Home

When teaching your child, be aware of their environment. Is your child affected by noise inside or outside the house? Can they focus while facing their toys? Are they seated near a doorway where people frequently pass by? Are bright lights distracting them? Is there a large open space that makes them want to run around instead of focus?

Take time to assess whether your child's environment is suitable for learning. Remove or reduce distractions, adjust their seating position away from interruptions, and help them focus on you during teaching time.

Structure your child's learning space so they feel safe and can stay attentive to tasks. Being attentive does not mean your child will stop all fidgeting—sometimes they can fidget and still complete their work.

As mentioned earlier, allow short breaks after each task or at the end of table-top activities to help your child regulate and stay ready to learn.



Consider your position in relation to your child. Would it help if your child faces a wall to reduce distractions?



Is your child able to sit facing you? Or does your child focus better when you sit beside them instead of directly in front?

7

Manner of Delivery

When teaching your child, remember that you are not only teaching academics—you are also developing skills such as listening, communication, interaction, work habits, flexibility, and eye contact.

It is important for your child to understand you and gradually build their language and vocabulary.

Some parents tend to use too many words or long sentences. Try to keep your language simple and clear. Children with autism often learn best through visuals—they understand better when they can see, not just hear.



When teaching your child, gently encourage eye contact. Use a calm, soft voice so your child feels safe and comfortable during learning time.

Sometimes, you may need to repeat instructions two or three times before your child understands. Be patient and give them time to process.

Always prepare before starting your table-top activities. Preparation is key to successful teaching. When you are well prepared, you can guide your child more smoothly and confidently. Children with autism need time to process language. Give your child at least 5–7 seconds to respond before repeating your instruction.

Avoid repeating instructions too quickly or using a frustrated or high-pitched tone. Your child can sense these emotions, even if they cannot express it.

8 Language and Communication

Language is one of the areas where children with autism (CWA) may have difficulty. The best person to guide you in this area is your child's Speech Therapist (ST).

Language development can include many skills—from oral movements (such as tongue and lip control) to higher-level skills like problem-solving, storytelling, reasoning, and understanding meaning. Your ST can assess your child's strengths and areas of need. Since this is a broad area, teaching approaches may vary depending on your child's level.

Once your child has been assessed, focus on the goals recommended by the ST. For example, if your child is working on using pronouns (e.g., "I" and "you"), you can begin to explore simple and practical ways to teach and practice this skill at home.

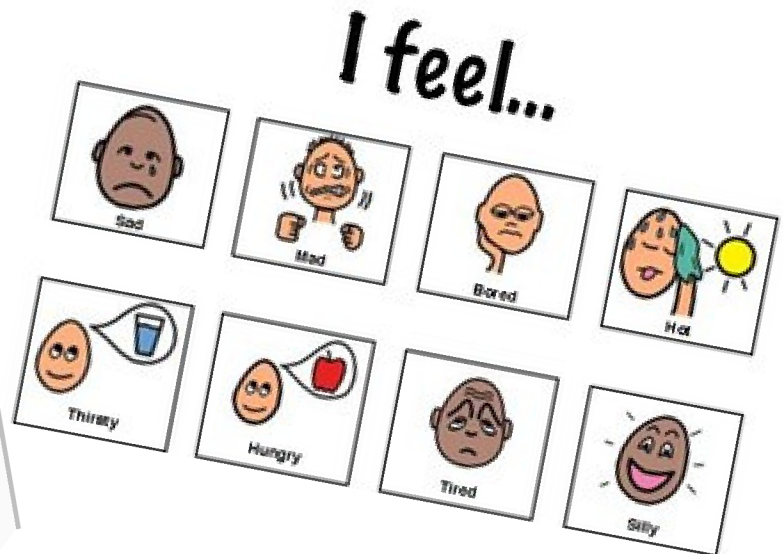
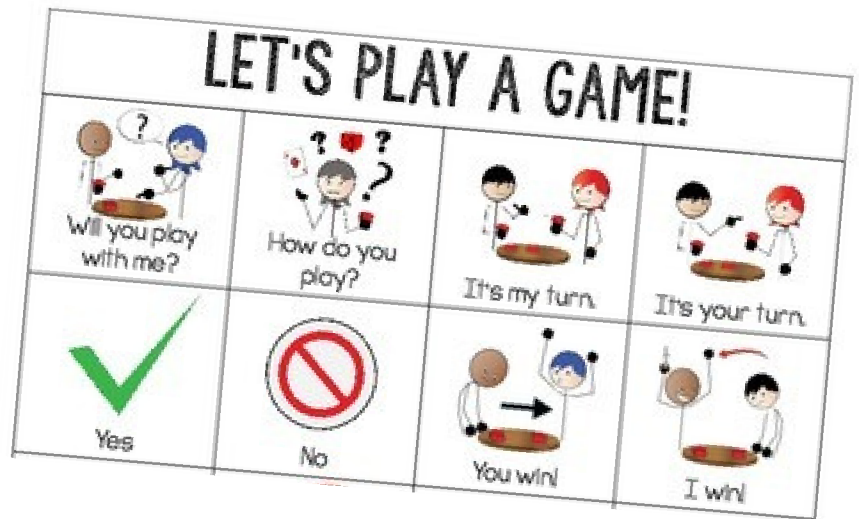
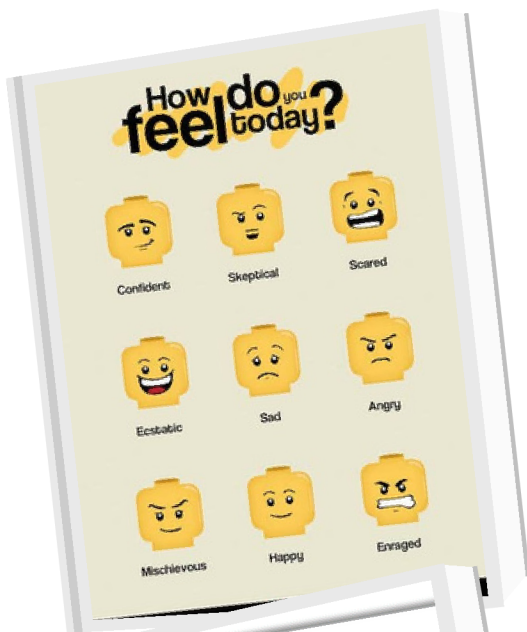
Communication is a two-way process. It includes both receptive communication (understanding) and expressive communication (expressing). Talking is just one part of expressive communication.

There are many tools you can use to support your child's communication. You may use PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System) or other assistive technologies, such as apps on tablets or phones.

When teaching communication, your child first needs to understand what you are saying. They process your words in their brain—this is receptive communication. Pairing your words with visuals can greatly improve their understanding, as many children with autism think in pictures.

9 Use of Visual Supports

Visual supports are important tools when teaching children with autism. Below are some examples of visual supports that parents and teachers can create and use during teaching.



When you are preparing for visual support, consider the following:

- 1** Be clear and specific
- 2** Do not use long texts
- 3** Use pictures or texts that is of your child's level.
- 4** Incorporate your child's interest (e.g. picture of train, paw patrol or barbie)
- 5** You can make different kinds of visuals for different subjects or topics (e.g. Nouns, Verbs, Following Instructions, Toileting routine, etc.)

There are many examples of visual supports available online that you can use as a guide. However, always make sure that the visuals you choose match your child's level and that they understand the concept. You can also find ready-to-use visual supports in my freebies, eBooks, and inside the members' lounge.

10 Presentation of the Task/Activity

There are many ways you can present tasks to your child, depending on what works best for their needs and learning style.

1 Give by hand

Some children need to receive activities or tasks directly from a parent. These children may have difficulty independently getting materials from the table and may need support in starting the task.

2 Presented on the table

Parents can place tasks on the table—this may include one, two, three, or four activities. This method works best if your child can independently choose and start tasks without needing prompts.

3 Tasks are in the shelf or tier basket

Use this structure if your child can turn their body toward the shelf and independently take a tray or basket using both hands.

4 Tasks on shelf but requires walking

This structure can be used for children who are able to walk short distances (e.g., 3–5 steps from the table). It is helpful for those who are still developing the ability to move around the room and may have difficulty getting tasks from shelves that are farther away.

5 Referring on board

This type of task presentation is designed for children who can read and refer to the overall classroom schedule. They do not need to move around the room, but instead follow the group schedule or assigned tasks independently.

At the beginning, you may find these strategies challenging to implement. That's okay. Building mastery takes time and consistency, so keep going. With practice, both you and your child will become more comfortable with the routine.

If you have questions or need clarification, feel free to reach out to me at teachingparentsautism@yahoo.com.

If you would like to learn more about autism, you can explore the other eBooks I have created (and more coming soon). You can also visit my website at www.OQpublishing.com for additional resources and programs.

That's it! I hope you learned a lot from this eBook and that you are able to apply these strategies in your homeschool journey.

Thank you, and God bless you!

Another Awesome Guide That Will Help You Even More



If you want to understand autism beyond what is commonly taught, this will help you gain the deeper, more specific knowledge you need. Visit my website (oqpublishing.com) to learn more.

BY

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TALK TO ME.



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