

# Staying Sane for English PSLE

I'm afraid there is no magic shortcut to English exam success, but success can be achieved through steady work and knowing what's expected in each paper. Raising your child's English proficiency to a level that meets PSLE requirements demands that he hone his writing and reading skills every day.

In my first article I advised breaking down each of the four papers into manageable sections so as not to overwhelm your kid. By practising each component systematically, she'll have a better sense of where her strengths and weaknesses lie. This step-by-step approach will also give her a sense of moving forward and build her confidence in tackling the exam as a whole. The following tips are addressed to your child.

## Reading for Success

- **Read daily.** This is a valuable habit to cultivate, and it's such a fun way to prepare for the PSLE! Reading builds your vocabulary, broadens your view of the world and ensures that you write better too, because you're learning new and different ways of saying things—from sentence construction to approaching a story or essay.
- **Read one or two news articles a day.** The Straits Times and Newsweek all carry good writing. Read stories for fun and relaxation, like the Harry Potter and Lemony Snicket books.

## Managing Time

- **Early preparation.** Start preparing for your exam at least 3 months in advance. Of course, throughout the year you need to make time for regular English practice. If you devote just one hour a day to English, at the end of a week you'll have seven hours worth of improvement! Last-minute cramming won't do the job and will only make you nervous.
- **Draw up a realistic timetable to keep you on track.** Don't forget to include time for rest and recreation as well.

## Managing Stress

- **Recognizing stress.** Is your anxiety paralyzing you and making it hard for you to focus? If you feel overwhelmed, don't be afraid to ask for help from your family, teachers or friends.
- **Take study breaks.** The mind gets tired when you're sitting down and studying for long periods of time. When you feel your concentration flagging get up and take a short walk, do some stretching exercises or have a healthy snack. Taking some "time out" every 45 minutes or so is a good strategy that will help you get back on track.

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Coming next month: **Vocabulary building and speaking skills.**



Elly Sim is a Child Development Specialist (B.Sc) who was trained and qualified in the US in Child Development and Psychology. She co-founded the school Jan & Elly in 1995 and continues to design and develop its highly-acclaimed English programmes.

Ask Elly anything regarding your child's English language challenges. Email her at [elly@jan-elly.com](mailto:elly@jan-elly.com)