

Scaffolding Plan: Starting a Task or Assignment

Objective

To independently begin assigned tasks with confidence and persistence, using available supports and strategies when needed. This skill promotes self-initiation, builds task engagement, and reduces avoidance behaviors in the classroom.

Visual Supports

- Display a simple “Start My Work” checklist on the student’s desk. (see last page for reminder cards)
 1. I know what to do.
 2. I have what I need.
 3. I can start one part at a time.
- Provide a “First–Then” card, such as “First start my work, then take a break.”
- Show a visual example of what “starting” looks like i.e. pencil in hand, eyes on paper, and materials ready.

Verbal Cues

- Use short, positive prompts: “Let’s start with number one,” or “Try the first step and I’ll help after that.”
- Reinforce initiation: “You began right away. Nice job getting started.”

Guided Practice

- Use the “I do, we do, you do” method to model steps together.
- Begin with shorter assignments and lengthen them as the student’s confidence grows.

- Practice initiation during short, success-based activities before moving to longer ones.

Breaking the Task Into Steps

1. Read or listen to directions.
2. Gather materials.
3. Ask for help if something is unclear.
4. Start with the easiest or first part.
5. Continue one section at a time.

Provide color-coded checklists or sticky notes to highlight which step to begin on.

Positive Reinforcement

- Use a “Start Strong” chart or simple token system to encourage starting behaviors.
- Praise effort rather than perfection. Say, “You got started right away. That’s progress.”

Internal Motivators

Help students recognize their own success.

- “You took charge and started on your own.”
- “You proved you can start even when it’s tough.”
- “Once you began, you made great progress.”

Environmental Changes

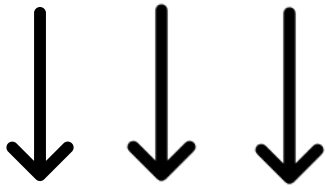
- Seat the student near a positive role model or supportive adult.
- Keep the workspace organized and clutter-free.
- Have materials pre-set to reduce transition stress.

- Use a consistent cue such as a timer or phrase like “Let's begin” to signal work time.

Progression Goals

- **Goal 1:** Begin a task after verbal or visual prompting with adult support.
- **Goal 2:** Start tasks independently within two minutes using cues.
- **Goal 3:** Consistently initiate tasks independently without prompts.

SEE THE NEXT PAGE FOR SIMPLE VISUAL SUPPORTS






Reminder Cards (Without or With Visual Supports)

Start My Work

- ☐ I know what to do.
- ☐ I have what I need.
- ☐ I can start one part at a time.

Start My Work

	 I know what to do.
	 I have what I need.
	 I can start one part at a time.

First



Then



I am ready to start my work.

