

Elementary Edition 1.0

# optimistic outcomes



What every parent wants and every child needs



Maureen McKay

## DO NOT READ THIS BOOK!

Dear Parents, Caregivers, and Teachers,

This “book” does not need to be read cover-to-cover or stored on a book shelf. Keep it anyplace visible and find what you need—when you need it. Helpful features make this a resource that you will use over and over again. Scan the topics, pick one strategy, use it, try another one, repeat. It’s that simple. Don’t strain your brain reinventing the wheel. It is all right here for you to use. These tips really work!

### Book Features:

**Stand-Up and Pay Attention:** The stand-up easel allows you to refer to the strategies hands free as you multi task.

**Bonus:** A CD-ROM is attached to the easel providing you with supplemental reusable and reproducible materials.

**Run A Tab:** Our information is divided into 9 useful categories.

**Table of Contents:** Find one for each section on the nine tabbed pages. Subcategories help you to narrow your search.

**Up Front:** You may want to look for specific topics first, so our Book Index is found at the front.

**Readability:** Throughout this “book” we refer to alternating genders for readability. However, every tip is meant to be used with all children of both genders. Throughout this “book” we refer to the you, the reader, as “Parent”. Of course, by “Parent” we mean anyone who cares about a child—that’s you!

## MORE ABOUT NOT READING THIS BOOK!

### Page Features:

**Category and Subcategory** for each strategy are at the top of each page.

**Page numbers and memorable titles** for each strategy are near the top and repeated at the bottom of each page for quick access as you flip through the book.

**Page numbers** begin with the tab number followed by a decimal and then the strategy number.

**Strategies** are printed in blue directly below the title and number.

**Asterisks \*** indicate supplementary material is available on the attached CD-ROM or at [www.optimisticoutcomes.com](http://www.optimisticoutcomes.com).

**Parent to Parent** expand on or offer ideas from one parent to another. These tidbits are printed in orange and appear next to the speech-bubble icon.

**Learning Style Icons** help you to quickly identify strategies that appeal to three basic learning styles.



**Ear Icon** means this strategy is great for auditory learners who remember best by hearing and discussing.



**Eye Icon** means this tip beneficial for visual learners who learn by visualizing and seeing information.



**Hand Icon** means that this is a kinesthetic, hands-on strategy for those who learn best by doing and moving.

**Experiencing difficulties  
develops our problem  
solving skills which in  
turn builds our resilience.**



## SECTION 1 STUDY STRATEGIES

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## Getting Started

### 1.11 Best For Last

Allow your child to think of an enjoyable activity that he values. Have him work toward doing it as an incentive after he completes his homework. Keep the reward simple and the goal attainable. Appropriate activities or incentives can include things like:

- Ten minutes of one-on-one time talking with a parent.
- Walking around the block together.
- Playing a family game.
- Listening to his favorite music. (No parent complaints!)
- Telling a joke.
- Dancing or exercising together.
- Using special pens, paper, or materials.



### Parent To Parent

Remember, when the homework goal is met, allow your child to enjoy the agreed upon activity. This is not about *buying* things. Children are motivated by doing simple activities with you.



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## Writing

### 2.11 Dictatorship

Many children are full of ideas, but they struggle to put them onto paper. Communicating thoughts on paper takes many skills including the mechanics of handwriting. This is a very difficult skill for some children.

If writing takes extraordinary effort from your child and her frustration is mounting, act as a scribe or secretary to help get her ideas down on paper. Write only what she says. It is sometimes easier for children to copy their own words once you have written them down.



### Parent To Parent

Many children have a hard time keeping up with their ideas when it comes to writing. The result can be less descriptive work, so that the child has fewer words to physically write. If this is a constant problem for your child, partner with her teachers. Perhaps they will allow her to use a computer on some writing assignments. Technology is a wonderful tool.



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## Creative Intervention

### 3.18 In Your Estimation

Create an estimation jar for your home. Use a large transparent container. Take turns selecting things to put in it like ping pong balls, marbles, or marshmallows. Have everyone at home estimate how many items are in the container and then count to see who was the closest.

This teaches children to use estimation strategies and to evaluate if a common guess is reasonable or if it is way off the mark. It is also fun!



### Parent To Parent

Share with your child how you use estimation in real life. These examples help kids see why learning math is important and useful.

For example:

- Will there be enough pasta for dinner?
- Do I have enough gas in the car to get to work and back before I fill the tank?
- How long should I leave the jeans in the dryer?

## SECTION 4 MEMORIZATION

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**4.05 Column Notes**

## Helpful Tips

\* Note taking pages provided on the Optimistic Outcomes™ Resource CD-ROM

### 4.05 Column Notes

If your child needs to take \*notes in class, teach him to make three labeled columns on a piece of paper. By writing his notes in the appropriate columns, they are already organized into three categories for studying.

Main Points	Supporting Points	Questions and Thoughts



### Parent To Parent

There are many different ways to take notes. The “best” way is the method that works for your child.

It is fun to practice taking notes together as you watch a favorite television show. Try several different methods, and ask him which he thought worked best. This will help your child realize that it is his responsibility to determine what works for him.



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5.10 Track Checker

5.11 Capital Idea!

5.12 Deliberately Descriptive

5.13 Putting On The Breaks

5.14 Piece It Together

## Feedback and Editing

### 5.05 Non-Critical Questions

When giving feedback, avoid sounding critical or negative. Do not use accusatory statements or questions such as:

“You didn’t...”

“When will you ever learn to...?”

“Why do you always...?”

For mistakes or areas that need work, use positive “I” statements or questions such as:

“I’m not sure how this paragraph connects with this point. Can you explain it to me?”

“I’d like to hear more about...”

“I like how you explained that just now. Can you add that to this paragraph?”



### Parent To Parent

Often, a parent who is critical is really trying to spare his or her child from failure. However, this message does not come through and it can actually make the child feel like a disappointment.

If your child is afraid to make mistakes, she will be afraid to try new things. Mistakes are learning opportunities. “Mistakes are okay,” is a great family motto.



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**6.22 Food For Thoughts**

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**6.24 I'm Turning In**

## Understanding and Managing Time

### 6.04 Timing Is Everything

Playing “time games” with children in your family can really help teach the concept of time. Try timing how long it takes to do ordinary things.

For example:

- **“Predicttime”:** Predict how long it will take you and your child to fold the laundry or load the dishwasher. Then time yourselves doing the task. Was your prediction close?
- **A Little Shut Eye:** Ask your child to close her eyes for one minute. Tell her to let you know when she thinks one minute has elapsed. Time her to see how close the guess was to an actual minute. Share the actual elapsed time with her.



#### Parent To Parent

Keep in mind that many adults have trouble predicting how long a task will take. This is why weekend home improvement projects often take longer than a weekend! The more experience your child has with predicting and understanding time, the more able she will be to use her time wisely.



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## General

### 7.17 Exceptional Words

Tell your child to watch for overly-inclusive or exclusive words in either test answers or questions. These “absolute words” mean there can be no exception and include words such as:

<b>Only</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Always</b>
<b>Never</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>Ever</b>

For example:

In the question, “Which of these answers is **always** true?” there may be answers that are often true, but the correct answer is the one that is **always** true.



### Parent To Parent

Talk to your child about other tricky words in tests such as:

**Not**    **But**    **Except**

For example:

In the question, “Which of these animals is **not** a mammal?” they need to pay attention to the word “not” and select the answer that fits.



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## School—Teacher

### 8.07 Structural Supports

Students who easily get off task tend to work better in a classroom that is predictable and consistent. Classroom structure supports students who have difficulty being organized on their own. Children are reassured by knowing what the routine is and what is expected of them.

If you believe that a structured environment would be beneficial to your child next year, make an appointment to discuss it with your child’s teacher or principal. Keep in mind the most “popular” teachers among parents are not necessarily the best teachers for your child.

### 8.07 Structural Supports



### Parent To Parent

When trying to impact teacher selection, avoid talking about liking or disliking a particular teacher. Instead, talk about teaching styles and techniques that have worked well for your child in the past. Pinpoint styles to which your child responds.

Remember that while one child may need repetition, direction, and structure, other children need a less-structured learning environment. Schools hire teachers of varying styles because kids learn differently.

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**9.16 Team Approach**

**9.17 Out Of Gas**

**9.18 Sub-Structure**

**9.19 Optimistic Outcomes**

## Perspectives

### 9.11 Unseen Success

Our society values “celebrated” success. People want their successes to be visible and acknowledged by others. Parenting is often invisible and unacknowledged unless something goes wrong. Then all kinds of attention is put on one’s parenting skills.



### Parent To Parent

As a parent, remember to take the time to feel proud of the little successes that no one else ever sees. An accumulation of little accomplishments paves the way for larger success.

# Optimistic Outcomes: What Every Parent Wants And Every Child Needs Elementary Edition 1.0

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## What Can You Do Today— To Ensure An Optimistic Outcome Tomorrow?

For kids, an Optimistic Outcome means having the life skills for future success and independence. Adults need pearls of wisdom as they guide children. Little successes pave the way to a bright future.

This “book” is different. It contains condensed information for parents, caregivers, and teachers. Content is organized so you can scan the information and find what you need **without having to read** it like a book. Everything you’ll need is at your fingertips. Save time, have fun, and be more effective.

Discover how to:

- **Reduce struggles at home; at school; in life**
- **Improve communication**
- **Simplify school work**
- **Maximize learning style**
- **Teach life skills**
- **Make family time fun again**

Get ready to make your life easier and improve the outcome for a child you love.  
**\*Optimistic Outcomes: What Every Parent Wants And Every Child Needs** provides simple, tangible strategies that parents and caregivers can use—today.

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