

## **Break It Down (Secondary)**

Have you ever become so overwhelmed or anxious about the things you needed to do that you felt like giving up?

When you have something challenging you want to do or a project you need to complete, use the strategy **break it down** to help you get started! When you **break it down**, you identify small actions you can take to make progress toward your goal.

To **break it down**, I think about the tasks that are needed to complete a project. There are many types of tasks, such as creating a timeline, gathering materials, learning the content, writing, editing and revising, creating illustrations, and checking my work against a rubric. I write each task down in order of how they need to be completed so that I know exactly what I need to do.

I used the strategy **break it down** when I was working on a research paper which was due in three weeks. I wanted to avoid getting frustrated and procrastinating, so I **broke it down** by determining the actions I needed to complete.

I wrote down several small action steps, like “Work on the paper each day for 30 minutes,” “Read one research article per night,” and “Summarize key findings in my own words.” I tracked my progress by timing myself each night I worked on the paper and by marking off each action step as I completed it. I also asked for feedback from my teacher on my outline and rough draft to stay motivated. I didn’t get overwhelmed, because I knew that I just had to complete a few tasks each night. I completed my paper on time, and the quality of my work was improved because I didn’t wait until the last minute and rush through it.

Using the strategy **break it down** helped me get started, make progress, and keep my emotions in check while I was working on the research paper. The next time you’re having trouble getting started or feel like a task is overwhelming, **break it down** and get started with one small task.