

My DISTRACTION TROLL

Won't Let Me Focus!

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I'll just do
my homework
later!



Contents



Meet Hannah

A Girl and Her Distraction Troll -----	5
A Typical Day -----	6

Life with a Distraction Troll

Hopping Topics -----	8
Tuning Out -----	10
Making Careless Mistakes -----	12
Losing Track of Time -----	14
Switching Interests -----	16
Calling On Your Focus Fairy -----	18



Working on Your Focus

Get Your Thoughts Together -----	20
Find the Right Environment -----	22
Take Care of Business -----	24
Live Healthy -----	26
Hannah, Her Distraction Troll, and All the Rest of Us -----	28





MEET
HANNAH

A Girl and Her Distraction Troll

This is Hannah. She's a good kid, but lately she's been having a hard time staying focused. She often loses track of time, leaves projects unfinished, makes careless errors, and can't keep her thoughts on track!

Lately, Hannah has become so distracted that she has started to wonder if something strange could be behind it—or *someone* strange. It feels like her mind is playing tricks on her, but what if it's actually a distraction troll? What if a chaotic little creature is following her around, crowding her head with thoughts, breaking her concentration, and keeping her distracted?

As Hannah tried to fall asleep, her busy mind raced out of control. She could almost feel the distraction troll beside her, jumping on the bed and poking her in the head.



Hopping Topics

In the morning, Hannah decided that if she wanted to get rid of her distraction troll, she would have to take note of all the ways it was messing with her mind. The first way she noticed was one that happened all the time. Often,

when talking to someone, her mind got so crowded with thoughts that she couldn't stop hopping from one topic to another. It even happened that very morning, on the car ride to school.



Hannah was sitting in the backseat, talking to her brother, Philip. At first, the conversation seemed to be going well. Philip was listening attentively and trying to respond—until he threw up his arms and said, "Hannah! What are you talking about?"

Hannah hadn't even noticed how many thoughts were spilling out of



The flood of new topics eventually gave Hannah a headache, and it left her brother feeling irritated. Philip would have liked to respond to Hannah's thoughts, but she didn't leave him any time to have a real conversation.

her. *Was it pizza for lunch today? Were her sneakers tied too tight? Had she forgotten her assignment book? Look at that huge bird outside the car!* By the time she brought up one topic, she was already moving on to the next. Her mind felt out of control—almost like someone was messing with it.

When your head is overflowing with thoughts you want to share, how can you slow down and control what you say?

Tuning Out

"Earth to Hannah! It's time to hand in your quiz."

Hannah jumped in her seat. What was going on? Oh—she was in class! And there was a quiz on her desk. It was still blank, though, and the teacher was standing over her, looking concerned.

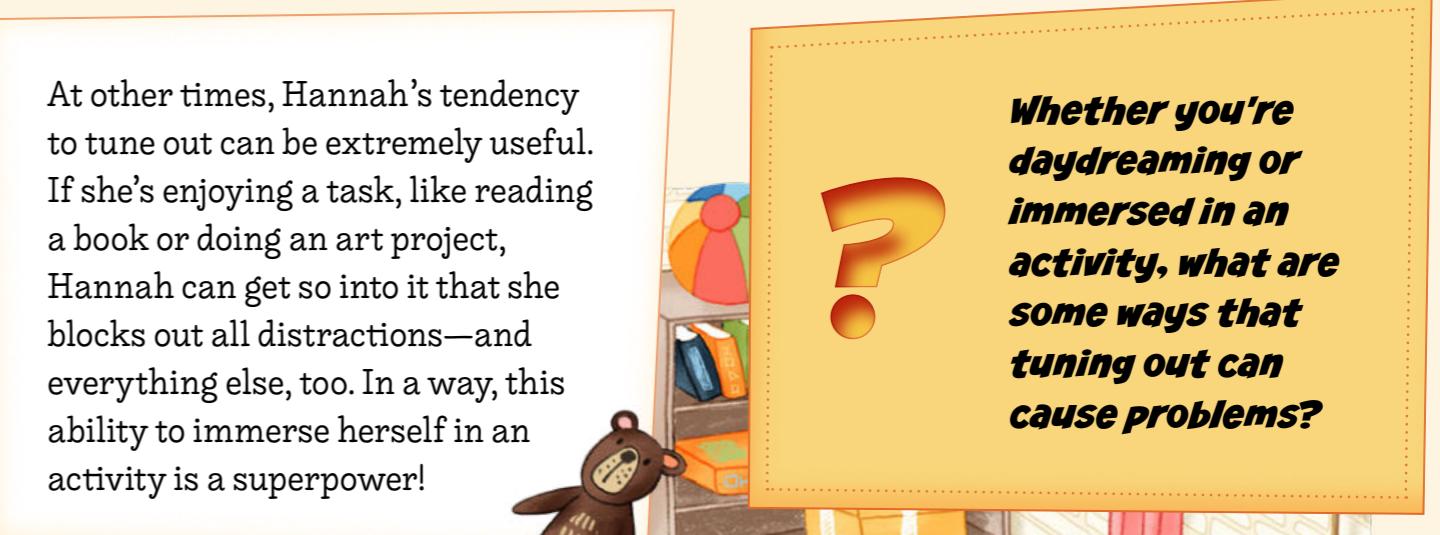
Oh, Hannah.
Where did
your mind go?



That whole day in class, Hannah's mind wouldn't stay on task. As her classmates worked, she drifted off into thoughts of the coming weekend. Until her teacher called on her, Hannah hadn't realized that she had tuned everything else out. She was just sitting at her desk, staring off into space. Daydreaming like this often led to her falling behind on schoolwork.



At other times, Hannah's tendency to tune out can be extremely useful. If she's enjoying a task, like reading a book or doing an art project, Hannah can get so into it that she blocks out all distractions—and everything else, too. In a way, this ability to immerse herself in an activity is a superpower!



Whether you're daydreaming or immersed in an activity, what are some ways that tuning out can cause problems?



Making Careless Mistakes



"Done!" Hannah called, racing across the field to the afterschool teacher. Everyone had been asked to find seven pinecones, and Hannah had found hers right away! It didn't occur to her that there might be a good reason everyone else was taking longer.

When listening to the instructions, Hannah had been so eager to get started that she didn't hear about the second step of the task. If she had, she would have known that everyone was also supposed to use their pinecones to craft a work of art. Because her mind was moving too fast, Hannah missed this step entirely.



It's okay to make mistakes! Everyone does, here and there. Sometimes, though, if you rush through a task, you could miss the instructions or overlook a question, leading to a careless mistake. That's why it's important to ignore any nearby distraction trolls and do your best to stay focused.



Losing Track of Time

It's three o'clock, and I only have one homework assignment. That leaves plenty of time to play outside!



It was still light out when Hannah got home from school that day. She ran to her backyard, excited to finally have some time to play in

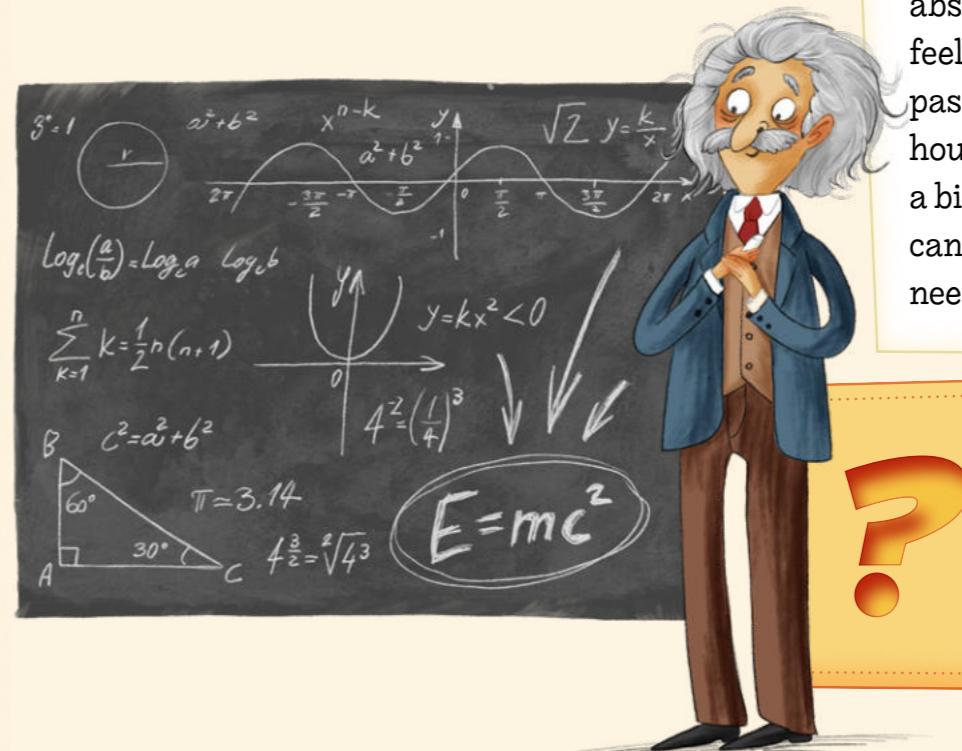
her new treehouse. There was one big homework assignment she still had to do, but there was also plenty of time to get to it later....

Oh no! Seven o'clock already? And I still have to finish my homework!

Hannah was still hard at play when suddenly she realized that the backyard had gotten darker—much darker. It was past sunset! Where had the time gone? She had been so excited to enjoy her free afternoon that she got swept up in her games and completely lost track of time. Not only had she stayed outside too long, but she still had all that homework to do!



When someone struggles to tell how much time is passing, it's called time blindness. This is common among people with distraction trolls. Especially when you're absorbed in a fun activity, it can feel like only a few minutes have passed when really it's been a few hours. But time blindness can have a big upside, too! For example, it can be really helpful when you need to avoid distractions and focus.



What are some common situations where you lose track of time?

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Hannah just wants to be a good kid, take care of her responsibilities, and have fun, but one thing keeps getting in her way: She can't focus! It's gotten bad enough that she wonders if she's being followed by a chaotic little troll who's crowding her head with thoughts, breaking her concentration, and keeping her distracted. Ready to make a change, she calls on a focus fairy to help her out. Join Hannah as she learns how to control her mind, improve her focus, and send her distraction troll packing. With all the tips and tricks in this book, you can, too!

**Support
and tips for
distracted
kids**

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