for you to know

Keeping your environment in order can help you to find things that you need more easily and quickly. That can help to keep your anxiety level lower.

Peter was often anxious because he couldn't find the things he needed. He carried his backpack from class to class, but it was such a mess inside that he couldn't always find his homework, assignment book, or pencils when he needed them. Then he became anxious. He wouldn't be able to participate in class, and his teacher would be upset with him because he wasn't prepared.

Peter kept all his school belongings in his locker, but it was such a mess that he couldn't always find his gym shorts, library books, or class notebooks when he needed them. Then he became anxious. Searching for his belongings would make him late for class, he wouldn't be able to participate, and his teacher would take points off because he wasn't prepared.

Peter had all his personal belongings in his bedroom at home: clothes, video games, sports equipment, computer supplies, and materials he needed for his music lessons. But his room was such a mess that he couldn't always find his basketball jersey, his extra guitar strings, the disks with his English reports, or his good shoes when he needed them. Then he became anxious. He would be late for his appointments, he wouldn't be able to participate, and people would be upset with him because he wasn't prepared.

Peter's older sister, Michelle, was almost always organized, and she was rarely anxious about finding things. She told Peter that it would help him to learn about categories.

If he could learn to put things into categories on a regular basis, he would be far more organized and far less anxious. Michelle said that categories are just groups of things that have something in common with each other. She helped Peter organize the things in his room by category, and then Peter did the same thing with his backpack and locker. He was able to find things more easily and quickly, and that eliminated a lot of his anxiety.

directions

Go to any store near you. Each store has many products. If they weren't organized by category, things would be a mess and it would be hard to find what you were looking for. Draw a picture or write about how you see things categorized in the store.

Go to your local library or your school library. Each library has many books and many different kinds of books. If they weren't organized by category, things would be a mess and it would be hard to find what you were looking for. On the next page, draw a picture or write about how you see things categorized in the library.
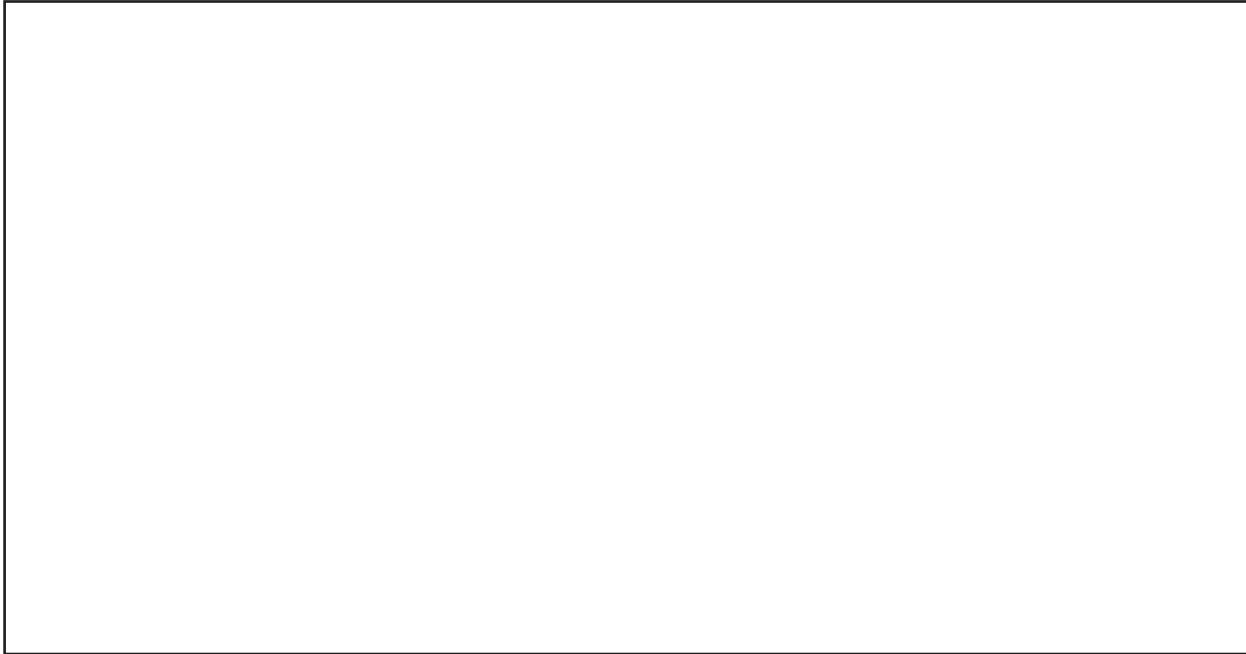
Sit in the doorway of your bedroom and look around you. You have a lot of belongings in your bedroom. When things aren't organized by category, it can be a mess and hard to find what you are looking for. Draw a picture or write about how you can categorize the things in your room.
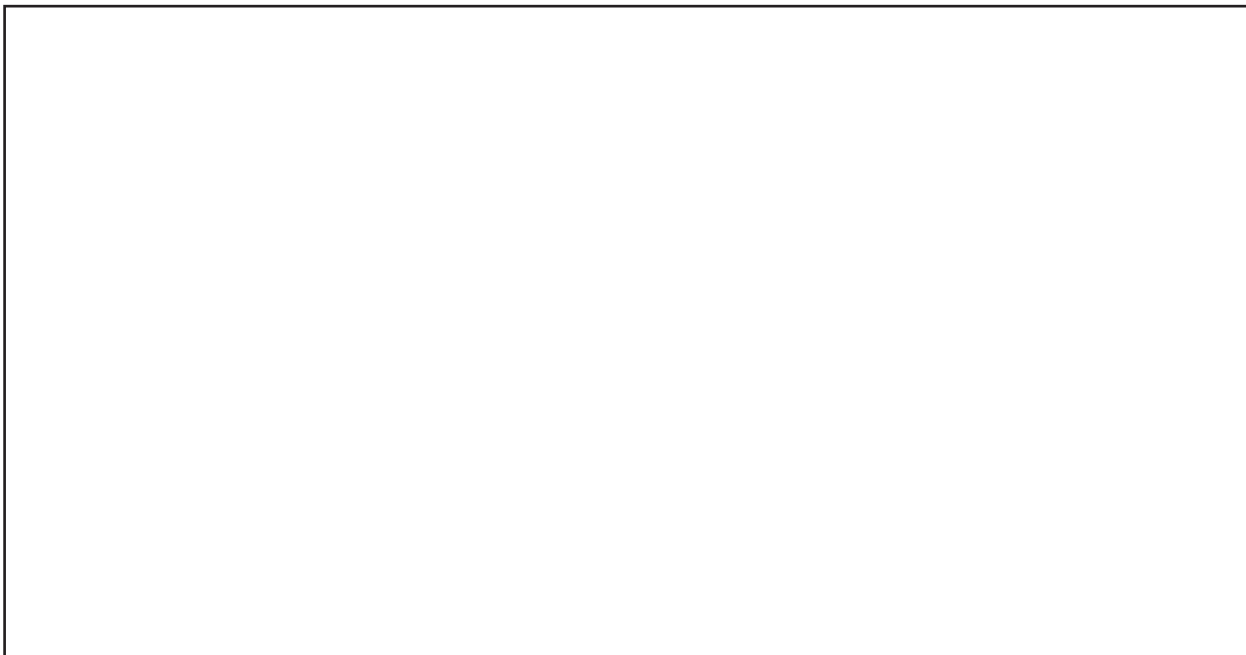
more to do

Describe a time when being unorganized caused you to feel anxious.

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What changes could you make so that wouldn't happen again?

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In your room, which categories are the most important for you to keep organized, and why?

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Describe other places that you need to be organized, and tell why.

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One of the tricks to being organized is _staying_ organized. Organizing your belongings once is just the beginning. Then you have to learn to keep them organized. Imagine you just finished organizing your room on Sunday night. On Monday afternoon, your mom gave you your clean laundry to put away, you brought two finished art projects and three homework assignments home from school, and you had to dump your backpack out on your floor to find your lab partner's phone number. Describe what you would have to do and when you would have to do it to keep your room organized.

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