

我的文具盒分家记

开学两个月，我的文具盒已经装不下了。里面有两支黑笔、两支红笔、一支蓝笔、荧光笔、圆规、三角板、量角器、订书钉、一小卷胶带、半包纸巾，还有从各科作业本里掉出来的碎纸角。有一次数学考试要画辅助线，我在盒子里翻了四十秒，全班都在动笔，我还在摸那把三角板。监考老师走过来问我怎么了，我说在找尺子。那四十秒我到现在都记得。

更麻烦的是找东西这件事会传染。找尺子的那四十秒里，我顺手把盒子整个倒在桌上，考完试再装回去，装回去的东西就乱了顺序。第二天找红笔，第三天找订书钉，每一天都要翻一遍。晚上写作业，笔在左手边还是右手边都会影响我什么时候开始动笔。我发现我每天晚上坐在桌前的头五分钟，基本不是在写作业，是在收拾桌子。

十月底的一个周日，我做了一个决定：让文具盒分家。我找出三个透明的文件袋，一个装数学的东西，圆规、三角板、直尺、铅笔都归它；一个装语文英语的东西，黑笔、红笔、订书钉、胶带归它；还有一个只装第二天所有科目都要用的，黑笔两支、橡皮、笔袋里剩下的空间留给它。原来的大文具盒退役了，只装那个共用袋。三个袋子按顺序摆在笔盒旁边，谁用哪个袋子，用完放回原位。

分家第一周，我改作业的时候拿错袋子，把圆规带到了语文作业旁边。第二周顺手了，手伸出去就知道东西在哪。到十一月，我晚上坐到桌前的头五分钟没了，放下书包就摊开本子。

文具分家之后，我发现计划也可以分家。以前我的周末计划是一张纸从头写到尾，数学英语语文混在一起，写着写着就去做最容易的那件事，最难的那件永远排在最后，永远排不完。我照着三个袋子的样子，把计划纸折成三格，数学一格、英语一格、语文一格，每格只写三件事，做完一格划掉一格。哪一格空着，周末就先补哪一格。计划从一长串变成三小块，看着没那么吓人了，做完的反而多了。

现在我的文具盒还是那只旧文具盒，只是它不再什么都装。有人问我为什么上初中还要用这么旧的盒子，我说它现在只干一件事。盒子只干一件事，笔只待一个袋子，我每天晚上只先看空着的那一格。东西各归各位之后，我头一回觉得，脑子里的思路也是各归各位的。

How My Pencil Case Split Into Three

Two months into the new term, my pencil case could no longer close. It held two black pens, a red pen, a blue pen, a highlighter, a compass, set squares, a protractor, staples, half a roll of tape, a pack of tissues, and paper scraps fallen out of every workbook. Once in a math exam I needed an auxiliary line, and I spent forty seconds digging for a set square while the whole class was already writing. The invigilator asked what was wrong. I said I was looking for my ruler. I still remember those forty seconds.

Worse, the searching spread. After dumping the whole case out for that exam, I shoved everything back in no particular order. The next day I hunted for a red pen,

the day after for staples. At night, whether my pen lay on my left or my right decided when I started writing. I realized the first five minutes at my desk each evening were spent tidying, not studying.

One Sunday in late October I decided to split the case up. I found three clear file bags: one for math, holding the compass, set squares, ruler, and pencil; one for Chinese and English, holding black pens, the red pen, staples, and tape; and one for things every subject needs, two black pens, an eraser, and the leftover space. The old big case retired to carrying only that shared bag. The three bags stacked in order beside it, and each one went back to its place after use.

In the first week I grabbed the wrong bag and brought the compass to my Chinese homework. By the second week my hands knew where things were. By November, the first five minutes at my desk had disappeared. I dropped my bag and opened my notebook.

After the bags split, I found my plans could split too. My weekend plan used to be one long list, subjects mixed, and I always drifted to the easiest task while the hardest stayed last and never got done. Copying the three bags, I folded my plan sheet into three boxes, one for math, one for English, one for Chinese, three items per box, crossing out a box when it was done. Whichever box stayed empty got filled first. The plan went from one scary list to three small blocks, and I finished more.

My pencil case is still the same old one; it just no longer holds everything. People ask why I still use such an old case in middle school. I tell them it now does only one job. The case does one job, each pen stays in one bag, and each evening I look first at the empty box on my plan sheet. Once everything had its place, I felt, for the first time, that the thoughts in my head had their places too.