

Teaching young learners with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (Part 2)

This is the continuation of a lecture module that looks at the special educational needs of children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and how these needs impact on their learning. The abbreviation SEBDs is used to refer to social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

To recall, **the first part of the module** included the following sections and some accompanying exercises:

- Introduction
- Defining SEBDs
- Possible SEBDs behaviours
- Effects of early years environment on children's ability to learn in class
- Effects of living in traumatic circumstances on a child's brain and learning and behaviour in class

In the second part, the focus is on the importance of play and learning to play for learners with SEBDs, as well as ways of applying play in the classroom. Also, some useful strategies for teachers of learners with SEBDs will be suggested. Finally, a Test-yourself section is included to allow students evaluate their understanding of the educational needs of learners with SEBDs.

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1. The importance of learning to play

In successful classroom learning, the learners can share the teacher, wait for attention, take turns and cope with getting things wrong. We learn these skills in play as a child. This section will consider the importance of play and how it impacts on learning in a classroom. There is a reading task and three exercises to be completed.

A. Read *The importance of learning to play* resource below to learn about D.W. Winnicott's work.

The importance of learning to play

D. W. Winnicott was a paediatrician and child psychoanalyst who looked at how children learn to play. He was interested in how the development of play allows the development of the child's identity and ability to have relationships.

His theories on play and observation of children give us another way of looking at some of our learners' behaviour. If we look at his theory of the stages of play a child goes through, we can understand why some learners find it difficult to take part in classroom lessons.

Winnicott believed that through interaction with the mother and play, the baby and young child learn to have a sense of 'me and not-me'. By developing this sense of separateness, the child can learn to play in a space which is between the two. This is the space in which learning can take place. If we consider for a moment how a young child learns to play, we can recognise the developmental stages cited by Winnicott (1971):

- playing with self, toes, fingers, etc.
- playing with the mother, not separate
- playing with an object, for example, a blanket or a soft toy
- playing alone, but in the mother's presence
- playing alongside another child (a stage often seen in nursery school, where two children will be playing, for example, in the 'home' area, but not with each other, alongside each other)
- inviting another child to join in your play
- being invited in to play another child's game and being able to follow their rules and inventions.

What stage of play have some children with SEBDs reached?

If we use this concept to look at the behaviour of some learners who have social, emotional and behavioural problems in our classes, we can see that there is an assumption that children, in order to learn in a classroom environment, have reached the final stage of play development. They can play by our rules, by society's rules, the school's rules and the teacher's rules.

Many of the learners with SEBDs have not reached this stage of play. Developmentally they are at a different stage to their chronological age, they cheat if they are not winning, they cannot wait for a turn, they cannot bear to lose and they argue about rules if they cannot follow them.

After reading about D.W. Winnicott's work complete the exercise below.

Exercise: The importance of learning to play

Question 1

D. W Winnicott studied children:

Select one:

- learning at school
- playing
- in hospital.

The correct answer is: playing

Question 2

Winnicott's idea of 'me and not-me' relates to:

Select one:

- the child separating from his mother
- the mother allowing the child to be independent
- the child making friends.

The correct answer is: the child separating from his mother

Question 3

Learning to play is important in learning to learn because:

Select one:

- learning should be fun
- if a child can share a space with another person in play, the child will learn to share the space in the classroom with other children and the teacher
- children need to know the classroom is not for playing but for learning.

The correct answer is: if a child can share a space with another person in play, the child will learn to share the space in the classroom with other children and the teacher.

Question 4

Some children with SEBDs:

Select one:

- want to play all the time
- played too much when they were young
- have not reached Winnicott's final stage of play.

The correct answer is: have not reached Winnicott's final stage of play.

Information: Winnicott's work shows that there is a very clear link between learning to play, to share a space with another person and being able to learn in a classroom, where the space needs to be shared with the teacher and other learners.

Read the information again and then do the exercise below.

Exercise: Stages of play

Below there is a list of different stages of child development in the area of play. Think about which stages develop first and try to put them into the correct order.

1. Playing with an object
2. Inviting others into your play
3. Playing with oneself; toes and fingers
4. Playing in the presence of the mother but alone
5. Playing alongside other children
6. Playing or mirroring with mother
7. Playing by others rules

The correct answer is:

1. Playing with oneself; toes and fingers
2. Playing or mirroring with mother
3. Playing with an object
4. Playing in the presence of the mother but alone
5. Playing alongside other children
6. Inviting others into your play
7. Playing by others rules

Feedback: An infant begins to play by playing with their own fingers, toes and body. The baby then starts to interact with the mother, mirroring their facial expressions, copying games such as 'peek a boo'. The baby then often starts to play with objects, moving away from self and mother. After that, a baby might be playing on the floor, but always with the mother or carer watching them and remaining close by. As the baby gets older, he learns that his mother or carer can be further away and still remember him. When a child goes to nursery, you often see the next stage, playing alongside another child but playing separate games. For example, two children in the nursery house can be playing in the kitchen and talking, but playing their own game. The next stage is for one child to invite the other child into their play. The final stage is

when a child can play a game with another person's rules, for example a card game or a board game or a group game.

In order to learn in a classroom learners need to be at the final stage of play, to be able to play by someone else's rules. They need to follow the school rules and the teacher's rules. Many learners have not developed these skills in their early years. You might have teenagers in your classes who cannot take turns in class, who cannot allow other's opinions and who want everyone to follow their agenda.

Now do the exercise below that addresses a learner's problems.

Exercise:

A learner's problems

- Read what Roberto says about his English class:

"I hate English, we always have to work in groups and no-one lets me have a go. I wait for ages and then I try and join in and it is never the right time. I like competitions but I hate losing. The teachers always make the rules and are always saying I argue too much but I just think it is not fair. Sometimes people won't even work with me. Anyway, I'm always moving schools anyway so I don't care."

- Select one or more:

Roberto:

1. does not like working in groups
2. is not able to wait his turn
3. cannot cope with losing
4. cannot accept the rules
5. finds the work too difficult
6. doesn't understand the teacher's instructions.

The correct answer is: 1, 2, 3, 4.

Overall feedback

It is okay to include games and play in our lessons. Some learners will need help with these skills and will need time to play properly. Playing is not a waste of time. Play is important in learning to lose and being able to bear frustration.

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2. Using play in the classroom

Games are a good way to practise English in the classroom. Learners with SEBDs can learn better social skills through play and games. You can choose a game which has a language aim and which also helps learners with their social skills and their classroom behaviour.

Here is a description of a game that serves both purposes.

Game: Backs to the board:

In a team of five, one child has their back to the board. The teacher sets a time limit of three minutes for the child to guess the word he/she has written on the board. The teacher writes the first word. The other children give prompts that might help their classmate guess the word. When the child in the chair has guessed, all the children move to the chair on their right and a new child sits in the chair at the front. The teacher writes another word. When the child at the front has guessed, the children all move again to the chair on their right. They continue rotating and guessing until the time is finished. Then another team comes to the front and plays the game. The winning team is the team who guessed the most words in the three minutes.

See a sample dialogue between the child sitting in the chair and his/her classmates:

Teacher writes *milk* on bb.

Child 1: It's a drink.

Child in the chair: Water?

Child 2: You can get it from a carton.

Child in the chair: Juice?

Child 3: It is white.

Child in the chair: Milk?

This simple game practises both language and social skills. It can be used with all levels of learners and all ages. The level is set by the items of vocabulary. Try it out with your learners. Learners will need to get used to the rules before they can play this well. When they understand the rules, you can play this as a team game. Bear in mind that games usually need to be played a few times in order for learners to really improve their skills.

For more of these kinds of games, see:

- Rinvoluceri, M. and Davis, P. (1990) *The Confidence Book* Longman
- Hadfield, J. (1992) *Classroom Dynamics* Oxford University Press
- Moseley, J. (1996) *Quality Circle Time in Secondary School* David Fulton Publishing

Exercise:

Read the gapped text and fill in the gaps by choosing the correct word from the box.

listen	empathy	criticize	one	language	together	engaged
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This game has a (1) ... aim and a social skills aim. The language aim practises vocabulary and describing unknown words. There are several other social skills aims. The game involves working (2) ... and helping each other. Learners have to show (3) ... with the student in the chair by thinking of helpful ways to describe the unseen vocabulary. They have to (4) ... carefully to each other and behave positively. If they start to (5) ... each other, they will waste time. If only (6) ... person shouts out ideas, the game usually does not work. All learners in the class are (7) ... in the game because as they watch each group at the front of the class, they are thinking about the best way to describe the word on the board.

The correct answer is:

1. language
2. together
3. empathy
4. listen
5. criticise
6. one
7. engaged

The English language classroom provides many opportunities to play games and practise the skills of listening, taking turns and working together. If you make use of these types of activities, you will be helping your learners to become better classroom learners and to build skills which are very important in life.

3. Useful strategies for teachers of learners with SEBDs

This section consists of five parts:

Manage yourself

The importance of teacher language
Behavior management
Non-verbal classroom management strategies
Setting targets

These are then followed by a *Test yourself* section.

Manage yourself

Teaching learners with SEBDs can be physically and emotionally tiring and frustrating. We often feel incompetent and not in control because we do not know what to do to help these learners.

Often these learners disrupt other learners and we feel unsure how to cope with these disturbances so that everyone can still learn. Some of these learners have problems outside school which we cannot solve. Learners come into school every day and more or less do the same thing. What makes the biggest difference, is the reaction of the adults around them.

It is important, therefore, that you have some strategies for looking after yourself and keeping calm, so that you can teach to the best of your ability.

Go through the four strategies listed below. Are they similar to your ways of keeping positive and in control?

Strategies

1. Train your brain to focus on remembering the positives in the day, not just the negatives. Take time at the end of each day to write down the positives and feed these back to students if appropriate.
2. Focus your thinking and action on things which you can control. You cannot control other people, only your reaction to them. Do not waste time worrying about things which are out of your control.
3. Create anchors which bring back good feelings. Anchors are things that trigger good memories and make us feel more positive. Anchors can be visual memories, such as a photo or picture in our head; auditory memories such as the sound of a voice or a song or kinaesthetic memories, such as the feeling of a nice sandy beach. We all have these kind of memories and we can deliberately choose to bring them to mind in stressful situations.
4. Use positive self-talk. Talk to yourself as you would to your best friend. Do not focus on the negatives, focus on your good points and what works.

Now do the exercise that follows.

Exercise:

Read the comments of the teachers below. Match the comment to the correct strategy above.

Lisa: *“When I am getting angry and upset about things at school, I make a list of all the things which are stressing me out and then divide them into two lists, things I can control and things I can’t control. I then focus on the things that in the moment I can control. Often I spend too much time worrying about things which are out of my control. If I can focus on the things which I can control, such as how I speak to someone or how I react to a student, I feel better.”*

The correct answer is: Strategy number 2

Francesco: *“I talk to myself. I imagine I am my own coach and give myself good advice and positive feedback. I tell myself that I can do this and everyone has bad days. I try to speak to myself in the same way that I would speak to a friend.”*

The correct answer is: Strategy number 4

Long: *“I make a list at the end of every day of six positive things which have happened, no matter how small. Otherwise, I go home focusing on the bad things and the students I could not deal with. Sometimes I notice that a student has behaved much better than I realized and then I can tell the student this as well.”*

The correct answer is: Strategy number 1

Mansi: *“I keep a photo of my wedding on a beach as a visual positive anchor but I sometimes turn it upside down to remind me to think creatively in a difficult situation.”*

The correct answer is: Strategy number 3

Here are four more strategies you can use to keep calm and positive and not get stressed:

5. Learn to say no. Accept only what you can handle. We often feel overwhelmed and stressed because we have taken on too much work and it is not being done properly.

6. Create solutions with colleagues to help and support each other. Spend your time with people who energise you, not with people who drain your energy and make you feel negative.
7. Look after yourself physically. Eat well, get enough sleep and exercise regularly.
8. Give yourself a breathing space at the beginning and the end of the day.

Exercise:

Match the following teachers' comment to the correct strategy above.

Katie and Anna: *"We sometimes go into the cupboard between our classrooms and shout and scream loudly. No-one can hear us but it helps us to be calm for the next lesson."*

The correct answer is: Strategy number 6

Abir: *"I hate being late to school. I always try to arrive a bit early to ease myself into the day and I like to take a bit of time at the end of school to sort out my papers, tidy up my room and think about the plans for the next day."*

The correct answer is: Strategy number 8

Christoph: *"I try to go for a walk every evening or to go to the gym if the weather is bad. Sometimes I am really tired, but I really need exercise for my sanity."*

The correct answer is: Strategy number 7

Malik: *"I have learned that I am not superhuman and I cannot do everything that I am asked to do I like to please people and want people to think I am a reliable, hard worker, but I have learned that I need to know my own limitations. Sometimes I have taken on too much extra work and then I have got completely stressed."*

The correct answer is: Strategy number 5

Overall feedback

All teachers need to have strategies for managing their emotional and physical states. Teaching can be a tiring, stressful job. Learners with SEBDs can be very challenging and difficult to teach. However, if you can manage your own emotions and reactions, you will have more success with those learners who find it difficult to behave and learn. Some **other tips for relieving stress** are:

- Practise standing back and breathing.
- Focus on the positives in the class and with the learner.
- Discuss the issues with supportive colleagues and make a plan.

The importance of teacher language

Many learners with SEBDs are very anxious and on high alert in the classroom. We saw in previous sections that their brains are often in the flight or flight mode, always expecting danger. This means that it can be difficult for them to understand instructions or classroom language. It is therefore vitally important for the teacher to use language effectively so that these learners can know what is expected and feel less anxious.

Think about the language which a teacher might use in a classroom. What examples can you think of that would be more effective and understandable for learners with SEBDs?

Go to *The importance of teacher language* exercise and look at the examples of language that a teacher might use in class.

Exercise:

The importance of teacher language

Choose the sentence which you think is more effective and understandable for learners with SEBDs.

Question 1

Select one:

- Look at the board.
- Don't turn around.

The correct answer is: Look at the board.

Feedback: 'Look at the board.' is more likely to be effective because it tells the learner exactly what you want them to do. When you say 'don't do something', it often makes our brain want to do it!

Question 2

Select one:

- Show me you are listening.
- You're not listening, listen!

The correct answer is: Show me you are listening.

Feedback: 'Show me you are listening.' is more likely to be effective as it tells the learner what you want them to do and is not likely to cause an argument. The other sentence is an example of the teacher interpreting a behaviour and this interpretation might be wrong. It is likely to cause some learners to argue that they ARE listening.

Question 3

Select one:

- Before you open your books, look at the board.
- Look at the board... now open your books.

The correct answer is: Look at the board... now open your books.

Feedback: 'Look at the board... now open your books.' is more effective as it gives the action words in the order the learner needs to do them. Learners with SEBDs often have problems with understanding the sequencing of instructions.

Question 4

Select one:

- You have done the first part well, but the second part needs improvement.
- You have done the first part well and the second part needs improvement.

The correct answer is: You have done the first part well **and** the second part needs improvement.

Feedback: Usually when our brain hears a 'but' it only remembers the words that follow the 'but'. Often the words in the preceding part of the sentence are forgotten. If we replace 'but' with 'and', it will help learners to hear the positive part of the sentence as well as the part which suggests improvement is needed.

Question 5

Select one:

- I know you think it is unfair, you still need to stay behind and finish this work.
- It's not unfair, the same rules apply to everyone.

The correct answer is: I know you think it is unfair, you still need to stay behind and finish this work.

Feedback: The first sentence is more effective as it shows the learner you have heard their objection and their opinion is not immediately dismissed. The second option dismisses the learner's point of view. It allows the learners to start arguing and giving you examples of times when you were not fair or treated someone differently.

Question 6

Select one:

- Calm down, there's no need to shout.
- I can see you are angry, I need you to calm down so we can discuss it.

The correct answer is: I can see you are angry, I need you to calm down so we can discuss it.

Feedback: It is more effective because it acknowledges the learner's feeling.

Exercise:

Think about the sentences from the previous exercise. Match a teaching tip (a-e) to each correct sentence from the previous exercise.

- a) Say what you want to happen.
- b) Give instructions step-by-step and in the correct order. Avoid use of sequencers such as before and put action words at the end of the sentence.
- c) If appropriate, name the feeling the learner might be having, many learners with SEBDs are not able to give names to their feelings
- d) Replace 'but' with 'and' when giving feedback and trying to resolve conflict.
- e) Pace their objections, you do not have to agree with the learner's arguments but you can show you have heard their point of view by reflecting it back.

1. *Look at the board ... now open your books.*

Correct: Give instructions step-by-step and in the correct order. Avoid use of sequencers such as before and put action words at the end of the sentence.

2. *Look at the board.*

Correct: Say what you want to happen.

3. *I know you think it is unfair, you still need to stay behind and finish this.*

Correct: Pace their objections, you do not have to agree with the learner's arguments but you can show you have heard their point of view by reflecting it back.

4. *You have done the first part well and the second part needs improvement.*

Correct: Replace 'but' with 'and' when giving feedback and trying to resolve conflict.

5. *I can see you are angry, I need you to calm down so we can discuss it.*

Correct: If appropriate, name the feeling the learner might be having, many learners with SEBDs are not able to give names to their feelings.

Exercise:

Look at these ways of talking to a learner in a positive and calming way (a-e). Match them with the respective 'negative' version of saying the same thing (1-5 further below).

- a) I'd like the children in this group to return to their tables and put everything away.
- b) Thank you to all those sitting quietly. I will wait for everyone else
- c) Hayley, get on with your work. Thank you. You only have five minutes to complete the task.
- d) I am concerned about your punctuality, Jill. I want you to arrive on time tomorrow and in future. If there is a problem, please talk to me after class.
- e) Please walk down the corridor. It can be dangerous to run.

1. Stop this awful noise. Everyone can hear you.

The correct answer is: Thank you to all those sitting quietly. I will wait for everyone else.

2. Don't run down the corridor, you silly girl.

The correct answer is: Please walk down the corridor. It can be dangerous to run.

3. Stop wandering around the class, I am sick of it, you never do what you are told.

The correct answer is: Hayley, get on with your work. Thank you. You only have five minutes to complete the task.

4. Late again. If this happens again, you will be in detention. If you waste my time, I will waste yours.

The correct answer is: I am concerned about your punctuality, Jill. I want you to arrive on time tomorrow and in future. If there is a problem, please talk to me after class.

5. Just look at the mess this group have left on the table.

The correct answer is: I'd like the children in this group to return to their tables and put everything away.

Overall feedback

Learners will respond to the language used by the teacher. If the teacher uses language positively and assertively, the learner is more likely to understand and follow instructions. Teachers need to think carefully about the classroom language they use and the effect it can have on a learner's brain. Using language effectively will help all learners, not just those with SEBDs. Some other useful general classroom management techniques are:

- Have a class contract.
- Have a clear reward system.

- Have a few clear sanctions.
- Take time to go over the rules if broken.

Behaviour management

We have seen how a teacher's classroom language is very important in managing learners with SEBDs. Creating positive expectations of learners will also help them learn in class.

Go to the *Teaching tips* exercise to consider some examples of teacher language and good behaviour management.

Exercise:

Teaching tips

Match each example of teacher language (1-5) with one of the good behaviour management tips below (A-E).

1. "Remember in the class we are kind to each other."
 2. "This table is ready, great."
 3. "I know it's Friday and you are all tired, so let's start with a fun thing."
 4. "John, I need you to move over here, thanks."
 5. "You don't need to be like that in here."
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- A. Use thanks at the end of an instruction.
 - B. Focus and comment on pupils who are doing what is required.
 - C. Use the language of need rather than obligation.
 - D. Put yourself in the learners' shoes and start from where they are.
 - E. Make rules few and positive. Keep to them.

The correct answer is: A-4, B-2, C-5, D-3, E-1

Non-verbal classroom management strategies

It is also important to have some non-verbal classroom management strategies. If the teacher regularly uses some non-verbal signals in class, the learners will feel safe in the class routine. This can be more effective than too much teacher talk.

Read about some strategies you can use in class.

1. Breathing - low, slow breathing is calming. Be aware if you are holding your breath in confrontations - breathe! Notice if a child is holding their breath.

2. Think about how you are standing. Freeze your body when giving instructions, keep your weight evenly distributed, your toes forward for getting attention.
3. Be consistent with your use of space. Have a fixed place at the front of the class where everyone can see you for giving instructions, move to another spot for disciplining - this creates spatial anchors.
4. Use visual anchors e.g. posters for routines, a picture of an ear for 'listen'.

Overall feedback

Non-verbal messages can be even more powerful than verbal messages. It is vital to think about the meaning of your non-verbal messages and to use non-verbal methods to reinforce learning, rules and instructions.

In order to set a target for a learner, you need to describe the problem behaviour and then think about what you WANT the learner to do instead. Set a target which is positive and achievable in a realistic timeframe. Include the learner in the target setting and use language which the learner can understand. Above all, remember the learner will not be able to behave perfectly in all situations, even learners who don't have SEBDs cannot do that!

Setting targets

It is also important to set achievable targets with learners so that they can learn to manage their own behaviour. Targets need to be phrased positively and to be measurable. It is important to let the learner know what their target behaviour should be. When setting a target, think about what you want the learner to do.

Go to the next exercise to consider setting targets for different types of behaviour problems.

Exercise:

Match a behaviour problem (a-i) with the respective target behavior (1-9).

A learner:

- a. is always calling out
- b. interrupts other learners.
- c. reacts badly when praised.
- d. rips up work rather than getting help.
- e. is always turning around, chatting to others.

- f. is rude to other learners.
- g. never accepts responsibility.
- h. argues with the teacher.
- i. is unkind to other learners.

A learner's target behavior:

1. is able to ignore peer distraction.
2. will apologise when appropriate.
3. speaks politely to others.
4. listens to others.
5. is able to turn take.
6. shows concern for others feelings.
7. is able to receive praise.
8. can ask for help when needed.
9. can accept 'no' when appropriate.

The correct answer is:

- | | | |
|------|------|------|
| a. 5 | d. 8 | g. 2 |
| b. 4 | e. 1 | h. 9 |
| c. 7 | f. 3 | i. 6 |

Feedback

You may also need to consider how to adapt your lessons as the focus for change is not just on the learner. Some points to consider when planning lessons are:

- ✓ Is differentiation needed with this learner?
- ✓ Is the way of teaching suiting the learner's learning style?
- ✓ Chunking of information – are there enough short activities and breaks?
- ✓ Is the lesson relevant and personalised enough for the learner?
- ✓ Should there be more kinaesthetic activities in the lesson?

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Test yourself

1. Select the correct answer for the following questions and statements.

Question 1

Learners with SEBDs do not really have a special educational need.

Select one:

- A. True
- B. False

The correct answer is B.

Feedback: Social, emotional and behavioural difficulties can impact greatly on a learner's ability to learn and remember things in class. SEBDs are considered to be a special educational need.

Question 2

Teachers need to manage their own emotional and physical state because:

Select one:

- A. this will help them to manage challenging learners
- B. learners like healthy teachers
- C. parents do not like tired teachers.

The correct answer is A.

Feedback: Learners with SEBDs and other challenging learners require the teacher to be calm, not stressed and able to react positively. It is not possible to do this if the teacher does not manage their own emotional state.

Question 3

If you say, "You don't need to be like this in here.":

Select one:

- A. it reminds the learner of the school rules
- B. it recognises that the learner might need to behave differently outside school in order to keep safe
- C. it shows the learner you are in control.

The correct answer is B.

Feedback: The phrase ‘in here’ shows the learner that you are not judging their behaviour outside school. Some learners will have learned behaviours which keep them safe outside school but which are not helpful for learning in school.

Question 4

Good learners:

Select one:

- A. never make mistakes
- B. are always happy
- C. can bear frustration and disappointment.

The correct answer is C.

Feedback: Good learners can cope with the frustration of not knowing something and getting things wrong. They can learn from their mistakes and work through their frustration.

Question 5

The effects of a learners early years environment impacts in class because:

Select one:

- A. parents will judge teachers
- B. children learn patterns of behaviours in response to the behaviour of the adults in their home environment
- C. children listen to their parents more than teachers.

The correct answer is B.

Feedback: Children learn behaviour in response to the behaviour of the adults in their early environment. This can mean that they learn behaviours which are not helpful for learning in school.

Question 6

Hypervigilance means:

Select one:

- A. the learner is constantly on high-alert and cannot focus
- B. the learner worries a lot about their friends
- C. the teacher must make sure all learners are feeling okay.

The correct answer is A.

Feedback: Hypervigilance is a term which means a learner is constantly scanning their environment for possible threats and danger. It means the learner cannot focus on their work and is often easily distracted.

Question 7

The reptilian brain is responsible for:

Select one:

- A. the fight or flight response
- B. feelings
- C. thinking.

The correct answer is A.

Feedback: The reptilian brain is the oldest part of the brain and responsible for the fight/flight/freeze response to perceived danger.

Select the correct answer for the following questions and statements:

Question 8

Which stage of play do learners need to pass through to learn in class?

Select one:

- A. playing on their own
- B. playing alongside others
- C. playing by other people's rules. Correct

The correct answer is C.

Feedback: In a classroom situation learners need to be able to follow class and school rules in order to take part in the lesson. Some learners will find this difficult.

Question 9

Which instruction is clearer for learners with SEBDs?

Select one:

- A. Don't turn around .
- B. Look at the board. Correct

The correct answer is B.

Feedback: It is better to tell the learners what you want them to do rather than tell them what you don't want them to do.

Question 10

Which feedback sentence is more positive for the learner?

Select one:

- A. I know you are trying hard but you need to concentrate more.
- B. I know you are trying hard and you need to concentrate more. Correct

The correct answer is B.

Feedback: By saying "but", we negate the positive meaning of the first part of the sentence. Some learners only hear the negative part and will not hear the positive feedback. If we use "and" it is more positive.

Question 11

Which teaching tip will help learners with SEBDs?

Select one:

- A. Use language which shows a positive expectation of the learner. Correct
- B. Tell the learner what they are doing wrong.
- C. Ignore the learner who is behaving badly.

The correct answer is A.

Feedback: Even if learners are behaving badly, we need to show that we have a positive expectation of them. They can live up to our expectation rather than live down to a lower expectation.

Question 12

Which sentence is a description of a behaviour?

Select one:

- A. You're lazy.
- B. You need to try harder.
- C. When you don't hand in your homework, it makes me think you are not trying. Correct

The correct answer is C.

Feedback: The homework statement is the only one which clearly describes the inappropriate behaviour and separates description from interpretation.

Question 13

A poster of the classroom rules is a/an:

Select one:

- A. visual anchor

- B. auditory anchor
- C. kinaesthetic anchor.

The correct answer is A.

Feedback: A poster is something which the learners can look at. This means it is a visual anchor.

Question 14

Which of these is a good target for a learner with SEBD?

Select one:

- A. Needs to show respect to others.
- B. Can turn take.
- C. Should improve behaviour.

The correct answer is B.

Feedback: Can turn take, is a clear description of the required behaviour. The other two targets are too vague and do not specify what the learner needs to do.

2. Key words (Matching task)

Match a definition (1-8) with a word (a-h).

- a. hypervigilant
- b. on-task behaviour
- c. domestic violence
- d. fight or flight
- e. anchor
- f. use-dependent brain
- g. SEBDs
- h. cortisol

1. Social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.
2. Focusing on the task set by the teacher and not being distracted.
3. Being constantly on the lookout for danger and not being able to settle to learn.
4. Aggression and violence in the home.
5. A hormone in the body which produces stress.
6. The survival response which happens when we are under extreme threat or facing danger: the brain responds by prompting us to fight or run away.

7. A trigger of a good memory, for example an imagined song or picture, which we can use to put ourselves in a good mood.

8. The brain evolves and develops according to how we use it.

The correct answer is: 1-g, 2-b, 3-a, 4-c, 5-h, 6-d, 7-e, 8-f

3. Case study

Read this case study of a learning situation.

Martin is nine years old. He is having problems in his English class.

Martin's teacher says:

"Martin's really hard to manage in class. He finds it hard to concentrate and often rips up his work rather than letting someone help him. He's always shouting and can't wait his turn in activities. He never follows the rules. I try to be patient with Martin but I feel useless when I try to help him because he refuses my help and so I get really frustrated and sometimes shout at him for not doing his work. He makes me feel powerless. Last year I gave him a certificate for his poems but he wouldn't come up to the front of the class and collect it. He threw it away and of course we all felt really annoyed."

Martin says:

"The teachers here hate me. They think I am aggressive, but I'm not. I'm just big and have a loud voice. They're not interested in listening to me. They're trying to get me out of this school. I'm no good at English, I don't understand it and no-one will help me. If I ask for help, they shout at me, so I don't bother. My mum's given up on me as well, she only ever hears bad news from school."

Can you help the teacher to identify the problem areas?

a. Download the SEBD case study document and complete it with your answers.

b. When you have completed your answers upload the completed SEBD case study document into the assignment area n Moodle.

Case study – Social, emotional and behavioural difficulties

INFORMATION	
Task	Your colleague is having problems trying to help a learner in his class. Read the case study telling you what your colleague and his learner think about the situation and help your colleague identify the problem areas.

What you need to do	<p>Save this document onto your computer and remember to save all the information that you add to it.</p> <p>Answer the questions below on this document using bullet points and short sentences. There is no need to write an essay, bullet points are sufficient.</p> <p>Upload the completed document into the SEBD area of your portfolio.</p>
How you will be assessed	<p>You will be assessed on the number of suitable suggestions that you make which will help your colleague. You only need to use ideas from this unit. Ensure that you write down all your ideas in bullet points and make sure to include a practical suggestion for the teacher where possible.</p>

CASE STUDY

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1. What tips can you give the teacher to help him to manage his feelings?

(4 or 5 bullet points)

- Learn to remember the positive experiences of the day
- Learn not to get back to the negative experiences
- Find someone (a colleague perhaps) to talk to about the problems and look for a solution together
- Not worry about things that cannot be changed
- Keep in good physical shape

2. How could the teacher change his lesson plans?

(2 or 3 bullet points)

- Include games
- Include pair/group activities so that Martin could get help from peers if he found a task difficult

3. Classroom management. How could the teacher improve his:

a) seating plan?

(1 or 2 bullet points)

- Sit him somewhere near in order to facilitate communication with him, e.g. by showing interest in what he is writing or providing help unobtrusively if needed
- Try to surround him by students with proper behaviour

b) instructions?

(2 or 3 bullet points)

- Use simple language and short sentences
- Give examples and demonstrate
- Stand where everyone can see him when giving instructions

c) class rules?

(3 or 4 bullet points)

- Create a set of simple class rules
- Involve students (and Martin specifically) in creating the list
- Make a poster with these rules and display (so that T can refer to them when needed)
- Model following the rules strictly

4. How could the teacher use assertive language to manage the learners better.

(3 or 4 bullet points)

- Avoid negative imperatives. Use positive instead, e.g. *Let her finish*, not *Don't interrupt her*.
- Talk about what needs to be done rather than what must be done.
- Say thank you at the end of an instruction, e.g. Please work quietly, thank you.
- Comment on those who do tasks properly and behave adequately, not on those misbehaving.

5. What could the reasons for this pattern of behaviour be? What might have had an influence from his early years?

(2 or 3 bullet points)

- Neglect by parents
- Mother suffering from depression
- Emotional abuse (maybe was humiliated and now wants to look strong and invulnerable)

*

Further reading:

Books

Cooper, P. (1999) *Understanding and Supporting Children with Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties* Jessica Kingsley

Delaney, M. (2008) *Teaching the Unteachable: Practical Ideas to Give Teachers Hope and Help When Behaviour Management Strategies Fail; What Teachers Can Do When All Else Fails* Worth Publishing

Delaney, M. (2010) *What can I do with the kid who...* Worth Publishing

Long, R. (2007) *The Rob Long Omnibus Edition of Better Behaviour* David Fulton

Olsen, J. and Cooper, P. (2001) *Dealing with Disruptive Students in the Classroom* TES Kogan Page

Rogers, B. (2009) *How to Manage Children's challenging Behaviour* Sage

Websites:

SEBDA <https://sebda.org/>

nasen <https://nasen.org.uk/>