# If Student has Difficulty....

## Then Try This!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Difficulty:</th>
<th>Suggestions:</th>
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| **Becoming Interested** | • Tell stories which relate to people’s lives  
• Establish relevancy or purpose  
• Provide concrete experiences  
• Read aloud story or article to stimulate  
• Seat student close to teacher |
| **Getting Started- Give Cue to Begin Work** | • Give work in smaller amounts  
• Provide immediate feedback/check on progress  
• Sequence work  
• Provide time suggestions  
• Peer or peer tutor |
| **Paying Attention to Spoken Word** | • Give explanations in small distinct steps  
• Provide written back-up to oral directions  
• Use prearranged signal to gain attention  
• Make sure student is facing you when speaking  
• Have student repeat directions  
• Use buddies, tape recorder  
• Shorten listening time  
• Alternate spoken with written manipulative tasks  
• Look directly at student, place hand on shoulder |
| **Following Directions** | • Use fewer words  
• Provide examples  
• Repeat  
• Have student repeat  
• Provide checklist  
• Use auditory and visual directions |
| **Keeping Track of Materials or Assignments** | • Use notebook  
• Use large envelope for each subject  
• Keep extra supplies on hand  
• Provide assignment sheets to resource/CM teacher and parents  
• Have students carry a mail bag  
• Write assignment on board  
• Give rewards for bringing assignments |
| **Turning in Work or Assignments** | • Place visual reminder of process on student’s desk in his/her locker, or in front of content/subject notebook  
• Use daily planner for dates and assignments  
• Set up parent reminder system with student  
• Be consistent with where work is to be placed  
• Use “check-off” system for student accountability |
| Paying Attention to Printed Word | • Select a text, highlight  
| | • Underline, number  
| | • Use highlighting tape  
| | • Keep desk clear of extras  
| | • Face desk to wall or use study carrel  
| | • Overhead transparency |
| Reading Textbooks | • Use lower level or adapted text (if available)  
| | • Tape text  
| | • Shorten amount of reading material by highlighting key points, concepts and information (reduce readability)  
| | • Have students read sections or segments of material aloud in small groups and report out to whole group  
| | • Allow extra time for reading  
| | • Omit reading assignments  
| | • Pair or peer share reading aloud  
| | • Place main idea, key concepts and information on index cards  
| | • Oral tests, quizzes  
| | • Cooperative group work  
| | • Pre-teach vocabulary with context of developing concept  
| | • Give take home tests  
| | • Use larger type |
| Completing Tasks on Time | • Reduce amount to be completed  
| | • Teach student to maintain a calendar of assignments  
| | • Use time to define work times  
| | • Have student keep a journal or log of timelines  
| | • Allow more time  
| | • Write schedules  
| | • Provide checklists-individual responsibility checklist for personal use in completing and turning in assignments, detailing when and where  
| | • Provide periodic closure of key information |
| Expressing him/herself Verbally | • Accept alternative forms of information (e.g. written work, art work, exhibit, chart/graph, bulletin board, photos, etc.)  
| | • Ask questions requiring short answers  
| | • Provide prompts  
| | • Give rules for class discussions  
| | • Teach student to ask questions in class  
| | • Question at the teaching level  
| | • Break him/her in gradually “by speaking” in smaller groups  
| | • Allowed taped reports |
| Staying on Task | • Reduce distractions, use timer to set short periods of work  
| | • Increase reinforcements  
| | • Provide checklist  
| | • Reduce amount of work  
| | • Give time-out and provide quiet alternatives for a short time |
| Taking Meaningful Notes | • Provide graphic organizers for pulling essential information together in a purposeful manner (study guide)  
• Verbally cue important information that student will be using in another setting (on test, in a project, with a group, etc.)  
• Allow student to leave space for interpreting the notes given by dividing the page into 2/3rds for note-taking and 1/3rd for identifying the main ideas and supporting details of information given  
• Have students share notes taken with another students (who takes really good notes) and then fill-in any missing bits of information that the student failed to get down in his/her notes |
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| Expressing Self in a Group or Participating in Class | • In class use a combination of group signaling (hand signals) and response cards (lap boards or 5x8 cards) to increase participation and a check for understanding  
• Set standards and processes for group participation including frequency and duration (may use a rubrics for group participation)  
• Provide a manipulative and/or alternate forms of communication to facilitate student input in group  
• Provide a group leader to encourage participation from all group members, defining questions that facilitate participation and productivity |
| Responding to Behavioral Redirections | • Establish eye contact  
• State what the student is doing, and the replacement behavior requested. (“You are talking right now, please be quiet.” “You are drawing, please return to your assignment.”)  
• Have student repeat requested behavioral change  
• Wait for behavioral compliance, then reinforce desired results  
• Establish a class signal for students as an indication that students need to self-correct group behavior (“1-2-3 lights, Mascot name, etc.”)  
• Set up behavioral contracts with students, who have chronic behavioral concerns who fail to respond to redirections, including identifiable antecedents, behaviors, and both negative and positive consequences |
| Self-Discipline, or Corrects Own Behavior | • Identify most common behavioral responses desired such as “How to Work in a Group”, ”How to Follow Directions”, etc.  
• List steps of specific observable behaviors that define the behavioral skill or response  
• Teach these responses and skills explicitly to all students, and have students practice the skills with each other  
• Reinforce the skills used in daily operation of the classroom in a variety of ways (individual and group responses)  
• Periodically discuss the skills and responses, and the positive effect on the class and individual productivity  
• Encourage students to create own skills or behaviors  
• Teach to replacement behaviors consistently |
| Learning by Listening | • Use file, flash, or vocabulary cards  
• Use visuals (graphic organizers, mind mapping, etc.)  
• Have student close his/her eyes and visualize the information  
• Spell by visualizing the whole word  
• Teach the use of acronyms  
• Give explanations in small distinct steps  
• Remove extra words (highlighting)  
• Provide study guides |
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| Working in Groups-Staying Focused | • Provide a partner  
• Provide a student with responsibility or position of leadership  
• Provide more structure by defining task and listening steps  
• Increase opportunities for participation |
| Working Independently | • Assign task at appropriate level (student readiness)  
• Be certain the student can see an end to the task  
• Give precise directions  
• Reinforce often  
• Provide a variety of type of work within the assignment |
| Understanding What is Read | • Reduce the language level (readability)  
• Become more concrete (more examples)  
• Reduce amount of new ideas  
• Provide examples and non-examples  
• Provide experience for a frame of reference  
• Provide study guide  
• Give organizational help  
• Provide alternate media  
• Remove extra words  
• Use “fill-in-the-blank” techniques |
| Write Legibly | • Use formats that are low on writing (e.g. multiple choice, fill in, programmed)  
• Use manipulatives  
• Have student type, use word processor  
• Allow use of tape recorder  
• Use graph paper  
• Save papers for two weeks and then have student read what he/she wrote  
• Teach writing directly |
| Spelling | • Dictate word, ask student to repeat it  
• Teach short easy words in context  
• Have students make flash/index cards  
• Teach words by spelling patterns  
• Avoid penalizing for spelling errors  
• Post words during study time for constant visual cues  
• Provide a tactile aid to spelling |
| Understanding Cause/Effect - Anticipating Consequences | • Use concrete examples  
• Use real life situations  
• Teach cause/effect directly (e.g. brainstorming, role playing, etc.)  
• Have students use their imaginations |
| Seeing Relationships | • Directly point out relationships  
• Draw arrows on worksheets or tests to show that ideas are related  
• Class discussion  
• Directly teach relations of function, category, opposition, sequence, etc.  
• Provide direct practice  
• Provide headings or a partially filled in chart-example  
• Use a banner with symbols for ideas/events |
| Expressing Him/Herself in Writing | • Accept alternate forms of reporting (e.g. oral report, tape recorded report, tape an interview, maps, photographic essay, panel discussion)  
• Have someone dictate work to someone else  
• Have student prepare only notes or outline in subject  
• Shorten amount required  
• Provide practice with story starters, or open-ended stories |
| Drawing Conclusions and Making Inferences | • Teach thinking skills directly  
• Draw a parallel to a situation that the student might have experienced in problem solving |
| Remembering | • Provide a checklist  
• Provide cues  
• Have student make note to self  
• Teach memory skills  
• Teach use of acronyms and other mnemonic devices |
| Prepared for class (supplies) | • Create visual reminder for needed supplies on 5x8 cards that can be placed at student’s desk in notebook, in locker, shared with parent, etc.  
• Use visual reminder as antecedent for behavioral change  
• Help organize student’s area for consistent use of supplies |
| Prepare for class (homework) | • Use day/date planner as antecedent, what’s due when?  
• Use highlighters or symbols in planner for work due  
• Set up parent/student reminder system, using planner  
• Frequently check student is actually using planner, give bonus points for successful use (reinforce)  
• Set up a buddy system as a reminder or fail safe system |


For more information, please contact:  
exceptional children’s assistance center  
1-800-962-6817  
www.ecac-parentcenter.org