Behavioral Characteristics of Students At Risk for Learning Disabilities

This checklist is designed to indicate the possible presence of a learning disability. For each characteristic described below, circle YES if the student exhibits the behaviour; circle NO if they do not. You will probably find that the student will have greater deficits in one area than in another. This will indicate areas of strength and weakness. Some students will have many deficit areas.

**Definition:**
1. Seems bright                      Yes No
2. Does some things well, others poorly Yes No
3. Is failing at school in one or more subjects Yes No

**Auditory Processing:**
1. Doesn’t listen in class            Yes No
2. Doesn’t remember what he is told, e.g., following directions Yes No
3. Has limited speaking and/or listening vocabulary Yes No
4. Has a poor sense of rhythm         Yes No
5. Can’t discriminate between similar sounds Yes No
6. Mispronounces words                Yes No
7. Has difficulty learning phonics, e.g., sounding out words Yes No
8. Reading errors are similar in meaning, e.g., puppy-dog Yes No
9. Spelling errors resemble correct word in appearance Yes No
10. Remembers what he sees            Yes No

**Visual Processing:**
1. Reverses letters when reading or writing Yes No
2. Is a slow reader                   Yes No
3. Sounds out words that should be sight words Yes No
4. Reading substitutions are visually similar but disrupt the meaning, e.g., horse-house Yes No
5. Loses his place or omits words when reading Yes No
7. Spelling errors are phonetic        Yes No
8. Can’t remember what he has seen, e.g., pictures, scenes Yes No
9. Has a superior ability to remember what he has heard Yes No

**Oral Language:**
1. Speaks in incomplete sentences     Yes No
2. Has an immature vocabulary         Yes No
3. Can’t seem to find the word(s) to express his thoughts Yes No
4. Dislikes participating in class discussions Yes No
5. Has poor reading comprehension     Yes No
6. Uses incorrect verb tenses         Yes No
7. Mispronounces words                Yes No
8. Sentences seem “mixed up”          Yes No
9. Uses gestures rather than words    Yes No
10. Can’t seem to express ideas

**Written Language:**
1. Poor writing posture                Yes No
2. Written work is untidy              Yes No
3. Sequence of movements in forming letters is incorrect Yes No
4. Beyond grade three, is still reversing letters Yes No
5. Letters vary in size and wander off the lines Yes No
6. Has difficulty copying from the board Yes No
7. Is slow completing written work Yes No
8. Can’t seem to express ideas

in writing in a logical or intelligible manner | Yes | No

**Motor Coordination:**
1. Is poor in sports | Yes | No
2. Seems clumsy | Yes | No
3. Drops things | Yes | No
4. Has poor balance | Yes | No
5. Has poor eye-hand coordination, e.g., cutting, writing | Yes | No

**Orientation:**
1. Can’t tell time | Yes | No
2. Lacks ability to judge time spans, e.g., bed time, birthdate | Yes | No
3. Performs poorly on timed tests or assignments | Yes | No
4. Can’t plan ahead | Yes | No
5. Gets lost | Yes | No
6. Confuses directions, e.g., north, south, left, right | Yes | No
7. Has difficulty making comparisons of size and/or distance | Yes | No

**ATTENTIONAL DIFFICULTIES**

**Hyperactivity:**
1. Acts impulsively, e.g., acts first, thinks later | Yes | No
2. Is moving constantly | Yes | No
3. Behavior is inconsistent from day to day | Yes | No
4. Is disruptive in class | Yes | No
5. Has a short attention span | Yes | No

**Disinhibition:**
1. Attention seems to wander | Yes | No
2. Daydreams | Yes | No
3. Comments are off topic | Yes | No
4. Starts assignments without having listened to directions | Yes | No

**Distractibility:**
1. Is easily distracted by sights and sounds around him/her | Yes | No
2. Can’t discriminate between what is important and what isn’t | Yes | No

**Perseveration:**
1. Persists in an activity or a train of thought to an obsessive level | Yes | No
2. Has difficulty switching topics in conversations | Yes | No

**Organization:**
1. Is rarely prepared for class | Yes | No
2. Loses assignments and personal belongings | Yes | No
3. Has a messy locker and/or desk | Yes | No
4. Notes are disorganized | Yes | No
5. Is often late or forgetful | Yes | No
6. Hands in assignments late or not at all. | Yes | No

**Social Perception:**
1. Dislikes school, complains frequently | Yes | No
2. Seldom takes responsibility for his own actions, e.g., blames others | Yes | No
3. Loses his temper easily | Yes | No
4. Insensitive to the feelings of others | Yes | No
5. Has few friends | Yes | No
6. Is withdrawn | Yes | No
7. Does not participate in group activities | Yes | No
8. Does not like change | Yes | No

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