



Teacher Interview Questions

Working with Students with Significant Cognitive Delays

[Key Questions Highlighted]

Interview Question	Desired Response	Applicant Response
I. Effective Teams		
a) How would you describe the roles and responsibilities of the paraeducators?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Support instructional goals ✓ Support positive climate ✓ Collect data 	
b) How would you communicate clear expectations to the paraeducators?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provide written guidelines ✓ Meet on a regular basis ✓ Share lesson plans 	
c) How often would you plan to meet with the paraeducators to review student progress and plans?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ At least once a week ✓ Short daily briefings at the beginning and end of school 	
d) How would you maximize the effectiveness of the paraeducators as part of the team?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provide a detailed schedule ✓ Review & discuss data together ✓ Include their ideas 	
e) How would you collaborate with general education staff?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Attend grade level meetings ✓ Meet during conference periods ✓ Share lesson plans 	
f) How would you communicate with families?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Daily parent log ✓ E-mail/phone calls/website ✓ Progress reports/newsletters 	

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II. Classroom Climate		
a) How would you describe the needs of students with significant cognitive delays?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Instructional ✓ Behavioral/Sensory ✓ Communication ✓ Physical/Medical ✓ Post-secondary options 	
b) Given those needs, what are possible key areas to consider when building your classroom environment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Large group area[s] ✓ Small group area[s] ✓ Centers/Stations ✓ Independent work area[s] ✓ Calming areas 	
c) How would you determine what your daily schedule would include?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Consider grade level curriculum ✓ Balance difficulty of tasks ✓ Capitalize on student energy levels 	
d) How will you communicate this schedule to the students?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Class schedule posted in a format that most, if not all, students understand 	
e) What will you provide for those students that do not understand the format of your class schedule?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Individual schedules for students that benefit from additional structure in a format that each student understands [e.g. object, photo, picture, combination, etc.] 	
f) How would you teach appropriate behaviors?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Modeling ✓ Visual cues & supports ✓ Narratives such as Social Stories and/or Power Cards 	

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<p>g) How would you prevent problematic behaviors from occurring?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Identify and modify antecedents to the behaviors. If we understand what is causing the behavior, then we can adjust the environment or other contributing factor[s] to prevent. ✓ Some preventive strategies include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Schedule ○ Transition marker ○ Checklists/mini-schedule ○ First/Then board ○ Choice board ○ Extra break cards ○ Narrative ○ T-chart ○ Keychain rules ○ Video modeling ○ Peer supports 	
<p>h) What are some examples of instructive consequences that help to teach more appropriate behaviors?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ An instructive consequence teaches a student how to react differently to certain stimuli. Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Visual cue of a replacement behavior ○ Narratives ○ Keychain rules ○ Video modeling ○ Social autopsy ○ T-chart 	

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III. Alignment with State Standards		
a) What curriculum would you follow for your students, including those with significant cognitive delays?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Curriculum that is aligned with general education at grade level 	
b) Describe the process for developing individual educational plans [IEPs]?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Identify student strengths, needs and interests ✓ Prioritize and align with state standards ✓ Develop a PLAAFP in each key area ✓ Develop a measurable annual goal in objective terms 	
c) Describe the process for developing behavioral individual plans [BIPs]?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Identify a target behavior in measurable terms including frequency, intensity & duration ✓ Clarify antecedents ✓ Determine effectiveness of previous strategies ✓ Identify preventive strategies ✓ Identify instructive consequences 	
d) How would you align the curriculum with instruction, assessment and the IEPs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Review the state assessment documents including the essence statements and vertical alignment tools ✓ Review the district curriculum ✓ Review student IEPs ✓ Develop lesson plans that align all documents 	

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IV. Differentiated Instructional Planning		
a) What are some examples of differentiated instruction for students with special needs, including those with significant cognitive delays?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Small group instruction ✓ Hands-on instruction ✓ Multiple intelligences incorporated ✓ Pictorial cues ✓ Graphic organizers ✓ Tiered assignments ✓ Centers/Stations 	
b) How would you develop lesson plans that reflect the diversity in your classroom?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Incorporate student interests ✓ Incorporate family cultures ✓ Incorporate communication goals throughout instruction ✓ Focus on independence 	
c) How can your staffing resources be maximized to support the effective implementation of DI?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Teaching assistants assigned to facilitate interaction at centers/stations ✓ Teaching assistants assigned to reinforce taught skills/concepts through small group and/or direct instruction 	
d) How do you integrate technology throughout instruction?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Instructional software ✓ SmartBoards ✓ Assistive technology ✓ Communication systems 	
e) How would you and your staff document student progress?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ IEP data collection forms ✓ Behavior data collection forms ✓ Anecdotal records ✓ Collection of student work 	

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f) How would you use the data to make instructional decisions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Adjust instructional strategies ✓ Adjust behavioral strategies ✓ Revise IEP goals 	
g) How would you promote interaction with typical peers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Peer buddies ✓ Peer supports ✓ Inclusive opportunities 	
V. Social Communication		
a) How would you ensure that each student has an effective means of communication?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Collaborate with the speech therapist to determine the most appropriate communication system 	
b) What types of assistive technology in the area of communication have you had experience in previous situations?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Picture Exchange Communication System [PECS] ✓ Dynavox ✓ GoTalk ✓ Vanguard ✓ iPad 	
c) What are some strategies to develop social communication?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Communication systems ✓ Scripts ✓ Topic cards 	

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VI. General		
a) What are your personal goals for this year?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ To achieve success on individual student goals ✓ To provide an effective means of communication system for every students ✓ To create meaningful instruction for each and every student 	
b) What are your staff development needs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Based on student needs 	
c) What are the strengths that you would bring to this position?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Dedication and commitment to the students ✓ Knowledge of student needs ✓ Instructional leadership ✓ Positive attitude ✓ Effective communication skills ✓ Ability to focus on data and prevention ✓ Flexibility 	