

30 Job Interview Questions for a Special Ed Teacher

1. Do you possess a calculating mind about to process in split seconds numbers ranging from one to 10,000 used to handle complex point systems for positive reinforcement and response-cost?
2. Do you have one eye of Medusa-like qualities, a look from which will stop a student dead in his tracks? The other eye should be capable of hind sight just before you make the inevitable error, and thereby prevent it.
3. Do you wear technologically-advanced clothing which, when worn while modeling a target behavior, reflects the student's own image performing the same behavior perfectly?
4. Are you a Siamese twin, making it possible to see all with four eyes, hear all with four ears, do all with four hands, and yet only be paid one inadequate salary?
5. Are you multi-lingual, capable of translating street talk, special education jargon, administrative double-talk and parent wishful thinking into ordinary speech?
6. Do you exist in a time warp which puts the endlessly long work day back into a fleeting moment and takes the occasional minute of free time and extends them into what might constitute a real life?
7. Are you definitely not affected by claustrophobia, as you will spend a lot of time in small spaces originally designed for storage areas and converted into time-out, intervention and tiny classrooms?
8. Can you select controlled periods of absolute forgetfulness, making it possible to start each day "fresh" in spite of teaching certain things over and over to students who pretend to have no recollection of them?
9. Can you speak in tones that vary from the soothing murmurs of a parent rocking a newborn to the earth-shaking rumbles of an enraged gorilla in the wild jungle?
10. Do you have degrees in all major areas, enabling you to teach any class with mastery in spite of limited materials and a shrinking budget?
11. Are you able to feign deafness to ignore comments better not heard in order to extinguish a behavior?
12. Do you have a shock-proof Teflon exterior so that everything really does roll off your back?
13. Are you capable of making moves worthy of Bruce Lee which are guaranteed to impress and/or intimidate even an Arnold Schwarzenegger look-alike?
14. Like a chameleon, can you change appearance so as to blend into any background and not be found when new students are about to be assigned to your program which is already over its limit?
15. Can you live like a puppet, being jerked around from time to time in opposite directions and having your life hang by a thread as you wait for your contract or pink slip?

16. Have you a built-in alarm clock that alerts you to faculty meetings, special committees, staffings, conferences, and the get-togethers of close family members who would like to see you from time to time?
17. Can you evoke enthusiasm for the least bit of progress, thereby motivating students, who rarely experience success, to keep trying?
18. Can you recognize, recite and refer correctly to BD, MD, LD, HAAD, BM, CBM, RET, RSDS, etc. without the use of a cheat sheet?
19. Do you have the benevolence of Mother Teresa, the self-esteem of Ross Perot, the energy of Hercules, and the perseverance of Sisyphus (the Greek rock pusher)?
20. Can you do more than set the correct time on a VCR?
21. Do you find mimeograph machines, copy machines, cassette recorders, filmstrip projectors, 16mm projectors, 35mm slide projectors, video cameras and obsolete computers user-friendly?
22. Do you know when to use conflict resolution, the Boys Town Model, proactive discipline, reactive discipline and prayer?
23. Are you always able to crawl out of a sick bed and teach because no substitute is available? (Translated: nobody wants to sub for you.)
24. Are you willing to regularly return to college to take video classes, weekend classes, night classes, and worst of all, summer classes because the requirement of job competency keeps gradually increasing?
25. Do you have some other source of money besides teaching, or do you have an excellent credit rating?
26. Can you converse intelligently about social skills, independent living skills, transportation, finance, post-secondary training, leisure activities, and the other facets of successful transition?
27. Can you handle 24 lesson plans a day, six different classes with four different levels of reading, writing, and mathematics ability per class?
28. To accommodate parents who work unreasonable hours, are you willing to meet them as early as 7 a.m., during your lunch half-hour, during your planning period after school, and if necessary, at the nearby Hardee's after 9p.m. to get signatures on the IEP forms?
29. When the money runs short, can you organize fund raising car washes, bake sales, candy sales and bingo nights?
30. Are you able to transform IEP goals and objectives into practical, achievable accomplishments by all students?

You Can?! You're hired. We'll discuss salary later.

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