

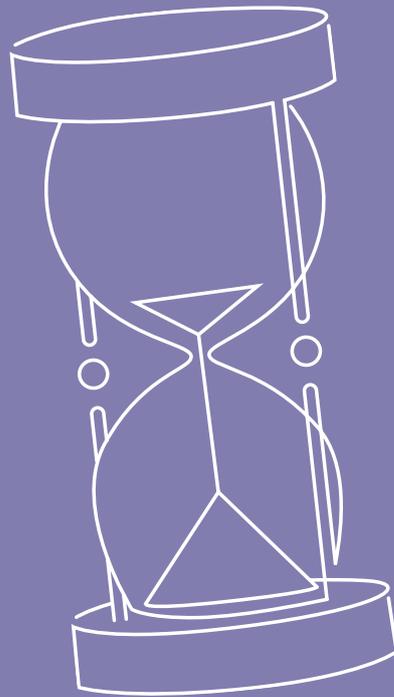
PRIMARY

Social, Environmental and Scientific Education: History

Guidelines for Teachers of Students with

SEVERE and PROFOUND

General Learning Disabilities



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SESE: Introduction

This aspect of education has always been regarded as an extremely important part of the curriculum in schools catering for students with general learning disabilities.

SESE offers opportunities for the introduction of a broad range of experiences that will greatly enrich and enhance the student's understanding of their familiar and wider surroundings.

This area of the curriculum involves understanding and relating to the environment in a way that is real and meaningful for each student. It encompasses history, geography and science and enables students to explore and investigate actively the natural, human, social, and cultural environment in which they live. It helps students to develop a sense of what part these aspects of life play in the wider scheme of things.

History

History is concerned with knowledge of the lives of people in the past and how this is interpreted. For students with severe and profound general learning disabilities, personal experiences and elements of family history will be to the forefront. The history curriculum also seeks to enable the student to make sense of the passing of time. It aims to familiarise him/her with the ability to gather evidence about things that happened in his/her own environment, to examine that evidence, and to draw simple conclusions from it. This can provide the student with an insight into the way in which historians go about their work.

Geography

Geography encompasses the study of the Earth, its inhabitants, and the relationships between them. It is particularly concerned with themes of place, space and the environment. For students with severe and profound general learning disabilities, this begins with gaining an awareness of one's own place and the place of familiar people in the immediate environment. Mobility around the school and the local environment is a critical need for many students. The Geography curriculum has much to offer in this respect. The curriculum also places an emphasis on observing and exploring the richness of the immediate environs of the school and home, and seeks to foster a sense of individual and community responsibility for environmental care.

Science

Science is concerned with enabling the student to gain knowledge and understanding of the physical and biological aspects of his/her environment. The curriculum emphasises the importance of starting with what is familiar to the student in the everyday environment. As his/her skills of observation and investigation are developed work can be broadened to include the wider environment.

I am a student learning to understand and relate to the environment, whose teacher is using these SESE guidelines

What can I learn through history?	What can I learn through geography?	What can I learn through science?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ I can engage activities to help me to understand the passing of time throughout the day/ week/year. ■ I can learn to associate special events with particular times of the day/week/year. ■ I can develop ways of remembering meaningful events and be helped to understand that they happened in the past. ■ I can work on strategies to help me to use the pattern of routine events in the past in order to anticipate future patterns of events. ■ I can learn to use skills of investigation to find out about past events. ■ I can work on projects to help me develop a sense of my own personal history. ■ I can participate in outings to enable me to experience the ambience of buildings and places associated with the past. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ I can gain an insight into my role as a member of different groups. ■ I can develop an awareness of the variety of homes in which people live. ■ I can work on projects that help me to understand the roles of people who are familiar to me in my environment. ■ I can improve my understanding of my own position in my immediate environment. ■ I can participate in activities to help me find my way around my familiar daily environment. ■ I can participate in activities to help me to take an interest in and make sense of unfamiliar environments. ■ I can work on projects to help me become aware of weather and seasonal changes. ■ I can learn how to take care of the immediate and the wider environment. ■ I can become aware of all the different ways in which I can use my environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ I can explore and experiment with a wide range of materials. ■ I can increase my awareness and understanding of plants in my environment. ■ I can find out about animals in my environment. ■ I can participate in activities to help me make sense of sources of energy around me. ■ I can participate in experiments to alert me to the changes that occur in materials and food when energy is applied to them. ■ I can increase my awareness and understanding of changes in my environment.

History: Introduction

In order to reconstruct and interpret the past the student must have an understanding of the passing of time. This can be a difficult concept for many students with severe and profound general learning disabilities.

History for students with severe and profound general learning disabilities aims to foster an understanding that things change over time and that these changes affect the life of the student and the life of others. The initial emphasis is on each student's own personal and family history, with visual representations of such history being used in class. This presents an ideal opportunity for collaboration with parents and other significant adults and children in the student's life.

The history curriculum offers valuable opportunities for students to develop a sense of time by drawing attention to routines and the times associated with them. The student begins to recognise sequences of daily and weekly events and learns to use time to make sense of the pattern of the day and the week. History also enables the student to develop an appreciation of the significance of special events in his/her life, his/her family, the school, and the local community. Historical events of national importance are also acknowledged and celebrated.

Skills of historical investigation are developed in a practical and meaningful way. Clues about events that happened in the recent past are used to build up information about what happened. Advantage may be taken of incidental opportunities, such as a visitor accidentally leaving something behind, or situations can be structured so that clues are available for investigation.

As the student progresses he/she is given an insight into the more distant and less familiar past. The investigation of school, community or local history may be meaningful for some students; local historical buildings can offer wonderful opportunities for investigating the past on a sensory level.

History: School planning

Planning sections in the *Primary School Curriculum: History, Teacher Guidelines* give advice on school planning for history, some of which will be applicable when planning for students with severe and profound general learning disabilities. The following section outlines some additional aspects that may need to be considered when planning for these students.

Curriculum and organisational planning

Additional issues that may need to be discussed as part of the school's planning for history include the following.

The purpose and nature of history in the school

Some parents/guardians, teachers and other staff members may be sceptical about teaching history to students with severe and profound general learning disabilities. A discussion about how history can be made meaningful and relevant to students at this level of learning may serve to promote awareness of the valuable part history can play in the student's education. It is generally recognised that these students often have particular needs in the areas of developing a sense of self and developing a sense of belonging. They also need to be enabled to develop a sense of daily routines and events and can often miss out on the excitement of looking forward to and remembering important social events because of a lack of awareness and comprehension. Using evidence and clues to make sense of things that have happened can contribute to the student's ability to solve problems. Awareness of what can be achieved through history will enable staff members and parents/guardians to make the best possible use of routine and special events.

Personal and local history

As the curriculum places a heavy emphasis on personal and local history, parents/guardians, other relatives, and local people with an interest in history will be valuable resources. Teachers will need to treat personal and family history with great sensitivity, always involving significant adults in the planning process in order to ensure trust and confidence. Elderly people in the locality may be delighted to spend some time showing items from the past or helping to identify local places of historical interest. The local library could be used as a resource, and the librarian might be interested in displaying students' work relating to local history. This would enhance two-way communication between the students and the community. Relatives and local people could also be invited to the school to view displays or help with projects.

A broad and balanced history curriculum

The amount of time spent on history will vary according to the strengths and needs of each student, but time spent outlining the value of history in the overall education of the student will enable teachers to see how history can help to meet the individual needs of each student. Learning will take place through active participation and exploration. Therefore, the broadest possible curriculum should be offered to each student, engaging him/her in any activity at his/her own level and with his/her particular needs in mind.

History: Classroom planning

Many excellent ideas are to be found in the planning sections of the *Primary School Curriculum: History, Teacher Guidelines*. Possible additional issues are referred to on the following pages.

Planning and organisational issues

Possible additional planning issues to be considered would include

- putting special emphasis on the start and finish of activities
- building some pattern and routine into the school day and school week and finding means of presenting this to each student in a way that he/she will understand
- changing established routines purposefully to stimulate a reaction
- finding ways of helping students to remember and communicate about events that have taken place
- establishing a system for daily/weekly communication between home and school so that information is available to share with the student about what happened earlier or what will happen later
- co-operating with parents and other significant adults to gather items that will help students to explore their past
- taking advantage of incidental opportunities or setting up situations that challenge the students to use available clues to solve problems about a past event
- checking places of potential interest for safety and wheelchair access
- organising extra help and transport to facilitate a visit to a local place of historical interest.

Listening and responding

Social, environmental and scientific education: History

Understanding and relating to the environment through history

Attending	Responding	Initiating
<p><i>The student should be enabled to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ attend to clues about the start and finish of familiar activities, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>visual, auditory or tactile clues given to signal routine events (See Communication and language)</i> ■ attend to routines and the passing of time throughout the school day <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>drawing attention to routine events and clues (as above) (if at all possible, most days should have a certain amount of routine to enable students to link certain events with times of the day)</i> ■ experience and attend to the ‘specialness’ of particular times during the week <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>swimming time, home time, Friday afternoon, the day of the holidays</i> ■ experience and attend to the celebration of special events to do with him/herself or his/her own family <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>birthdays, weddings, the arrival of a new baby (photos and videos taken at these events can be used for later activities)</i> ■ experience and attend to the celebration of special events in the class/school/locality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>seasonal celebrations/ birthdays/a visit by a celebrity (Photos and videos taken at these events can be used for later activities).</i> 	<p><i>The student should be enabled to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ respond with anticipation to clues given about the progression of routine events ■ begin to recognise the correct sequence of routine events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>clues given using objects of reference/pictorial representation/gestures/ words</i> ■ react to changes in routine events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>show by expression, gesture or vocalisation that he/she notices alterations in routine</i> ■ show an awareness of the beginning and end of the school day <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>show excitement on arrival and departure</i> ■ show pleasure during the celebrations of events related to self/family/class/ school/locality ■ show an awareness of terms relating to times of the day. 	<p><i>The student should be enabled to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ enquire by expression, gesture or vocalisation about the progression of daily/weekly events ■ sequence daily and weekly routine events using objects of reference, pictorial representation, gestures, or words <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>make out personal daily or weekly timetables, set out the sequence of a routine swimming trip</i> ■ sometimes initiate the start or finish of activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>anticipate the start or finish of an activity and prepare for it</i> ■ anticipate his/her favourite activities at home and their times in the day/week ■ communicate and become excited about special events related to himself/herself/family/ class/ school/locality.

Attending	Responding	Initiating
<p><i>The student should be enabled to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ attend to 'chats' about routine events that happened recently, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - objects of reference/ photographs, audio or visual recordings used to remind the student about events leaving home that morning, a trip to school in the car or bus ■ look at and feel items of his/her own belongings now, from the recent past, and from the more distant past <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - shoes, clothes, buggy, wheelchair ■ look at photographs of himself/herself, his/her family, and friends now, in the recent past, or more distant past. 	<p><i>The student should be enabled to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ show an understanding of the names of some days of the week ■ react by expression and gesture to discussion about routine events that happened recently <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>react to auditory and visual clues to jog the memory</i> ■ record, with help, special events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>a pictorial calendar, photographs of places visited</i> ■ react to photographs of particular events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>birthday, wedding, school outing</i> ■ show reaction to photographs of him/herself, family and friends from the recent or more distant past ■ laugh or become excited by videos of himself/herself in recent or distant family outings/ school tours ■ show reaction to items of his/her own belongings from the recent or more distant past. (See <i>Attending</i>.) 	<p><i>The student should be enabled to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ link activities with particular times of the day <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>indicate what activities take place in the morning/ afternoon</i> ■ use objects of reference, pictorial symbols or words relating to times of the day <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>morning, lunch-time, home-time</i> ■ communicate about and name some days of the week ■ initiate communication about recent events using objects of reference/pictorial representation/words <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>a journey from home that morning, trips with the class or the family, celebration events</i> ■ identify particular events from photographs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a birthday, a family holiday ■ identify, ask about, and seek to show items of his/her own belongings from the recent or more distant past.

Attending	Responding	Initiating
<p><i>The student should be enabled to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ look at photographs/videos of particular events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>birthdays, Christmas, school events</i> ■ listen to talks about trips undertaken recently or trips being planned for the near future ■ look at/feel/smell real items or pictorial representation of clothes, people, buildings, tools, toys, transport from the past ■ look at comparisons of old and modern items or pictures ■ listen to well-known stories about the distant past involving himself/herself <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - stories about when he/she was a baby - stories about significant family events that involved him/her (perhaps told by a parent/guardian/grandparent) ■ observe and participate in investigations of clues about past events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - who owns a handbag (deliberately left behind by a visitor perhaps), when was it left? 	<p><i>The student should be enabled to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ show interest in planning events or outings for the near future ■ show surprise or interest in real or pictorial representations of cloths, tools, toys, or transport from the past ■ sort, with help, old and modern items or pictures ■ respond to stories about the distant past involving himself/herself by changing expression, gesturing or vocalising (See <i>Attending</i>.) ■ respond when given clues about past events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>determine what students went swimming by looking at the swimming suits drying on the line/examining wet swimming suits in students' bags.</i> 	<p><i>The student should be enabled to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ identify by pointing, signing or vocalising, photographs of him/herself, family and friends from the recent or more distant past ■ ask for or operate independently videos of himself/herself on family outings/school tours ■ ask by expression, gesture or vocalisation about old items or pictures when shown them ■ with help from a parent/guardian, look for and bring into school old items from home ■ ask for stories about the distant past involving himself/herself (See <i>Attending</i>.) ■ use clues to re-create and speculate about events that happened <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>investigate a half-eaten birthday cake (deliberately kept until next day to give clues about what event took place and whose birthday it was)</i> - <i>examine photographs of events to gain information about them.</i>

Attending	Responding	Initiating
<p><i>The student should be enabled to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ listen to stories about people, myths and legends from his/her own locality ■ listen to stories about people, myths and legends from different cultures ■ use the senses to absorb the atmosphere of historical buildings on a trip with the family or the class <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>an old church, a big old house, a museum, an old university, an old town hall, an old courthouse.</i> 	<p><i>The student should be enabled to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ show interest in and answer questions about stories, myths and legends from his/her own locality and from different cultures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>point to pictures in book</i> - <i>gesture or ask for more</i> ■ show reaction to the atmosphere of historical buildings when brought by the family or with the class <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - look all around - make echoes - <i>wrinkle the nose to smell</i> (See <i>Attending</i>.) 	<p><i>The student should be enabled to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ tell stories about the past using objects of reference, pictorial representation, or words ■ seek out and ask for/turn on a recording of stories about people, myths and legends from his/her locality and from different cultures ■ explore historical buildings when brought by the family or the teacher <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>examine things by touching,</i> - <i>shout to make echoes,</i> - <i>ask about things in the buildings.</i> (See <i>Attending</i>.)

Exemplars

Introduction to history exemplars

The following pages outline some ideas for developing themes and topics in history for students with students with severe and profound general learning disabilities.

No.	Exemplar title	Page
1.	My birthday	15
2.	Creating a personal timeline	17
3.	Our class tour	19

Exemplar 1: SESE: History

Topic: My birthday

Objectives	Resources
<p>The student will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participate in a celebration of his/her birthday • develop awareness that he/she is the centre of attention for this special day • attend to the sensory experiences associated with the established traditions of a birthday celebration • develop awareness of the sequence of events leading up to a celebration. <p>Some students will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use clues to anticipate that something special involving himself/herself is about to happen. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suitable party decorations and food, a birthday cake, candles, a camera or video, a tape recorder.

Lesson

Leading up to the birthday

Ideas for increasing awareness leading up to the celebration include the following:

- Parents/guardians or other family members may enjoy being involved in plans for a birthday party. They can talk about it at home and help to build up excitement if this is suitable for the student.
- Family members may also wish to provide some party fare and may help to create a special feeling by making sure the student is looking his/her best on the day.
- Other history activities, such as looking at photographs and stories from the past, might be worked upon as the birthday draws near.
- In planning for a birthday cake, the individual preferences and needs of the birthday girl/boy should be taken into account. For example, some students may not be able to eat cake, so a mousse or block of ice cream might be an option. Some students might love chocolate while others may prefer a sharper flavour such as lemon.
- Decorations and birthday cards could be made during the visual arts class.
- Invitation cards for family members or a select number of students from other classes could be made. The delivery of these offers many learning opportunities.
- A countdown chart for the days leading up to the birthday could be created, with objects of reference and pictures to highlight what will happen each day. These could include sample decorations/birthday cards/invitation cards pinned to chart, followed by pictures of presents, followed by a picture of a cake with a big picture of the student beside it.

Exemplar 1: SESE: History

Lesson

The birthday itself

Ideas for alerting the student to the significance of the day and the sequence of events on the day might include

- attracting the attention of people on that day to assist in alerting the student that it is a special day for him/her, for example letting the bus driver know the day before, wearing a birthday boy/girl badge, singing a birthday song at assembly
- students going to other classes to bring friends to the party
- opening the door to people coming for the party and helping to welcome them
- accepting small presents and opening them
- being the centre of attention throughout the party, for example being first to be served, singing songs with his/her name in them, helping to blow out candles (in a darkened room if possible), being central to party games.

After the party

The following day(s) can be important in enabling all students to understand and remember the birthday party. ideas could include

- examining some birthday cake that was deliberately left over or investigating decorations that remain in place
- remembering what happened on the day
- remembering whose birthday it was, and how we know
- remembering what visitors were there (looking at the invitation list/presents/birthday cards/digital photographs/video footage)
- gathering all the invitation cards, birthday cards, etc. and putting them into the student's bag to take home
- putting details of the birthday into a booklet for the student.

Exemplar 2: **SESE: History**

Project: Creating a personal timeline

Objectives	Resources
<p>The student will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• participate in creating a personal timeline about his/her life• interact with his/her timeline by looking, feeling and listening• participate in showing his/her timeline to others• participate in sequencing the key events in his/her life• gain an understanding of key events in his/her life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Card to make a long, open-out timeline or a large scrapbook/folder, a box to hold key objects, pictures to represent key events.

Exemplar 2: SESE: History

Lesson

Development

- The timeline can start at any point in the student's life, depending on the needs of the student and the availability of relevant information and materials to represent events. For example, with the help of parents/guardians the timeline could start early in the student's life. Alternatively, it could trace his/her life since entering school or since entering his/her present class. It should involve some element of finding clues about the student's past such as helping to get information from key adults, looking for old photographs, looking for old objects/items of clothing belonging to the student in the past.
- The timeline should be tailored to suit the student's methods of accessing objects and ideas. For example, some timelines might be visually interesting while others might focus on tactile access or auditory access. Long strips of card that fold like a concertina might be suitable for some students while a folder or scrapbook approach might suit others.
- When large objects are being used, symbols for them could be placed on the timeline as they are being stored. The key objects could be placed in a box to be used when the student is working on or reviewing the timeline.

Visual ideas	Auditory ideas	Tactile ideas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Bright card for the timeline ■ Pictures or photographs with a thick black border ■ Bright or shiny representative objects from the past 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Crinkly material on the cover of the timeline ■ Crinkly material outlining key photographs ■ Representative objects with sound ■ Recordings of sounds to represent key events, for example, a baby crying, a song or hymn from a key event) ■ Recordings of an adult giving information about key events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Corrugated card for the timeline ■ Representative objects of tactile interest ■ Items of clothing ■ Pictures or photographs outlined with texture

Extending the idea

- The ideas outlined above can be adapted to create a daily timetable for the student. They can also be used to help the student to anticipate favourite or key events that happen on a weekly or monthly basis.

Exemplar 3: SESE: History

Project: Our class tour

Objectives	Resources
<p>The student will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • concentrate his/her attention on the class tour • anticipate the class tour • remember the class tour • sequence the events of the class tour • be able to show/tell others about the class tour. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A camera, art materials for presenting a record of the tour, objects of reference/photographs/pictures to represent stages of the tour.

Linkage

- Geography
- Communication and language
- Visual arts
- Drama

Exemplar 3: SESE: History

Lesson

Preparation

- Preparation for the class tour takes place by talking about the planned tour using objects of reference, photographs, pictures, taped sounds, or smells to raise student's awareness of where he/she is going. The proposed sequence of events is outlined every day for at least a week before the tour with the aid of as many visual, auditory, tactile, and olfactory clues as possible.

The day of the tour

- On the day of the tour photographs are taken of the significant stages of the tour. The students should play an active part in taking the photographs and each image should include some of the students if possible. A video recording could be taken, but still images will be needed for presenting a visual record of the tour. An auditory recording of the significant stages of the day would be very useful. This should concentrate on sounds that link with the photographs.
- The clues used in the preparatory sessions are used to stimulate anticipation of each stage of the tour and to facilitate understanding of what is happening. For example, the student's attention is drawn to the object of reference/taped sound/picture of the bus as it is about to arrive at the school. The taped sound of animals could be played as the class arrives at the zoo, then attention can be drawn to the sounds of the real animals as the students move around the zoo. On a trip to a lake students could dip their fingers in a cup of water as they are about to arrive at the lake, and then feel the real lake water.
- As the day progresses items can be gathered that relate to the significant stages of the tour. These should be fairly striking and have as strong a sensory element as possible.

Creating a record after the tour

- When the photographs are ready (if at all possible the day after the tour) the day's events are recounted, and objects of reference (originals and new ones gathered) and photographs taken on the day are examined. Students participate fully in this, given as much help as is necessary, either by looking, feeling, and perhaps showing a reaction to the items as they are displayed. Objects and photographs are sequenced. Video footage and taped sounds could be used to help with this process. Art work to represent the various stages could be created and linked with the objects of reference and photographs.
- The whole sequenced record is mounted on a background strip of contrasting card or fabric. A long, uncluttered wall or a corridor would be ideal for displaying the work. Each student is given a means of showing the record to parents/guardians, students from other classes, school staff, and any visitors to the school.
- Some students may be able to walk or wheel along beside the presentation, finger-pointing or eye-pointing to the various stages, and receiving whatever level of prompting is necessary. Another student might operate the taped sounds using a switch, possibly in co-operation with a student who is drawing attention to the visual and tactile display.