

---

# **Best Behaviour**

**Starting Points  
for Effective Behaviour Management**

**Peter Relf  
Rod Hirst  
Jan Richardson  
Georgina Youdell**

Thanks  
to the many teachers  
who contributed ideas and good practice  
to our own teaching and  
to the compilation of this book

Peter Relf, Rod Hirst, Jan Richardson & Georgina Youdell  
assert the moral right to be identified as the authors of this work

Originally published by  
Network Educational Press Ltd

Republished in Australia by  
**HAWKER BROWNLOW**  
E D U C A T I O N

P.O. Box 8580, Heatherton,  
Victoria 3202, Australia  
Phone: (03) 8558 2444 Fax: (03) 8558 2400  
Toll Free Ph: 1800 33 4603 Fax: 1800 15 0445  
Website: <http://www.hbe.com.au>  
Email: [orders@hbe.com.au](mailto:orders@hbe.com.au)

© 1998, 2000 Network Educational Press Ltd  
© 2005 Hawker Brownlow Education

Printed in Australia

Code: NE3780  
ISBN: 1 74101 378 X  
1005

This work is copyright. Apart from any fair dealings for the purposes of private study, research, criticism or review, or as permitted under the Copyright Act, no part may be reproduced, transmitted, stored, communicated or recorded by any process without written permission. Enquiries should be made to the publisher.

---

## Foreword

A teacher's task is much more ambitious than it used to be and demands a focus on the subtleties of teaching and learning and on the emerging knowledge of school improvement.

This is what this series is about.

Teaching can be a very lonely activity. The time-honoured practice of a single teacher working alone in the classroom is still the norm; yet to operate alone is, in the end, to become isolated and impoverished. This series addresses two issues – the need to focus on practical and useful ideas connected with teaching and learning, and the wish thereby to provide some sort of an antidote to the loneliness of the long distance teacher who is daily berated by an anxious society.

Teachers flourish best when, in key stage teams or departments (or more rarely whole schools), their talk is predominantly about teaching and learning and where, unconnected with appraisal, they are privileged to observe each other teach; to plan and review their work together; and to practise the habit of learning new teaching techniques from each other. But how does this state of affairs arise? Is it to do with the way staffrooms are physically organised so that the walls bear testimony to interesting articles and in the corner there is a dedicated computer tuned to 'conferences' about special education needs, school improvement, the teaching of English etc. and whether, in consequence, the teacher leaning over the shoulder of the enthusiastic IT colleagues sees the promise of interesting practice elsewhere? Has the primary school cracked it when it organises successive staff meetings in different classrooms and invites the 'host' teacher to start the meeting with a 15 minute exposition of their classroom organisation and management? Or is it the same staff sharing, on a rota basis, a slot on successive staff meeting agendas when each in turn reviews a new book they have used with their class? And what of the whole school which now uses 'active' and 'passive' concerts of carefully chosen music as part of their accelerated learning techniques?

It is of course well understood that even excellent teachers feel threatened when they are first observed. The constant observation of the teacher in training seems like that of the learner driver. Once you have passed your test and can drive unaccompanied, you do. You often make lots of mistakes and sometimes get into bad habits. Woe betide, however, the back seat driver who tells you so. In the same way the new teacher quickly loses the habit of observing others and being observed. So how do we get a confident, mutual observation debate going? One school I know found a simple and therefore a brilliant solution. The head of the history department asked that a young colleague plan lessons for her, the head of department, to teach. She then taught this lesson and was observed by the young colleague. The subsequent discussion, in which the young teacher asked,

*'Why did you divert the question and answer session I had planned?'*

and was answered by,

*'Because I could see that I needed to arrest the attention of the group by the window with some hands-on role-play, etc.'*

---

lasted an hour and led to a once-a-term repeat discussion which, in the end, was adopted by the whole school. The whole school subsequently changed the pattern of its meetings to consolidate extended debate about teaching and learning. The two teachers claimed that because one planned and the other taught both were implicated but neither alone was responsible or felt 'got at'.

So there are practices which are both practical and more likely to make teaching a rewarding and successful activity. They can, as it were, increase the likelihood of a teacher surprising the pupils into understanding or doing something they did not think they could do rather than simply entertaining them or, worse still, occupying them. There are ways of helping teachers judge the best method of getting pupil expectation just ahead of self-esteem.

This series focuses on straightforward interventions which individual schools and teachers use to make life more rewarding for themselves and those they teach. Teachers deserve nothing less for they are the architects of tomorrow's society and society's ambition for what they achieve increases as each year passes.

Professor Tim Brighouse

---

# Contents

<b>Rationale</b>	6
Chapter 1 <b>A sense of security</b>	9
Chapter 2 <b>Respect</b>	17
Chapter 3 <b>Attention</b>	22
Chapter 4 <b>Friendship</b>	28
Chapter 5 <b>Routine</b>	33
Chapter 6 <b>Success</b>	38
Chapter 7 <b>Emotions</b>	43
Chapter 8 <b>Values</b>	48
Chapter 9 <b>Memory</b>	53
Chapter 10 <b>Motivation</b>	58
<b>Action points</b>	59
<b>Index</b>	62

# Rationale

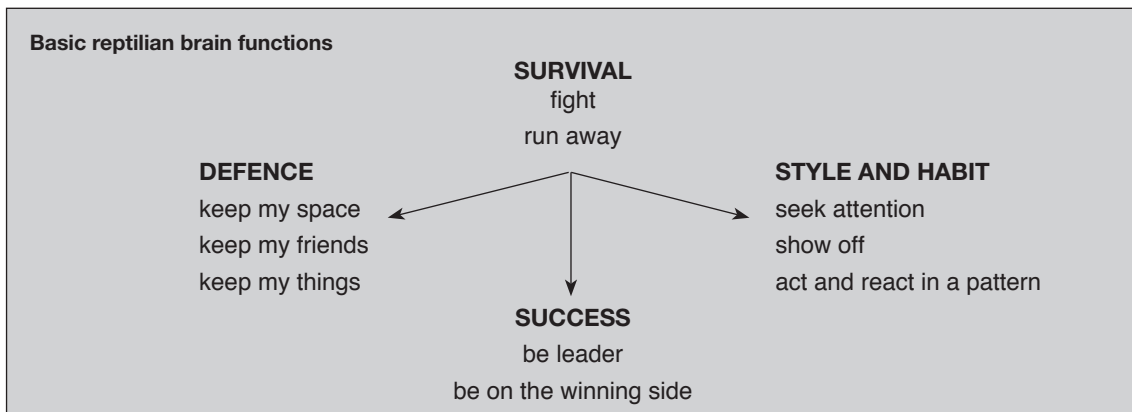
The behaviour management strategies in this resource are based on new information which has been learned about the brain in recent years. Some of this has direct implications for us as teachers, and explains some of those questions that have baffled us for years, like:

- I've explained that really carefully. Why haven't they understood?
- Why do they keep on talking when I've told them to stop?
- Why can't this pupil remember such a basic fact?
- Why do they get it right now and then fail later on?

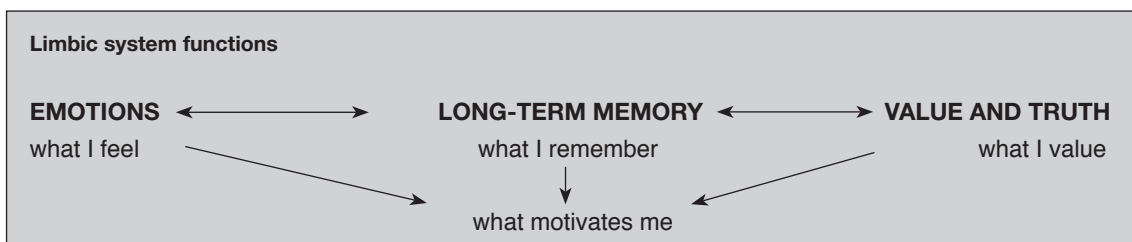
In the following paragraphs is a very basic guide to what we know about the brain. A fuller explanation appears in *Accelerated Learning in the Classroom* by Alistair Smith (Network Educational Press).

The brain is actually in three parts:

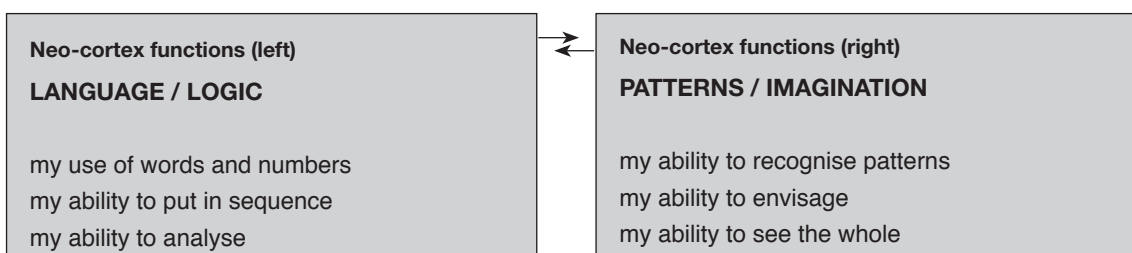
The base, the oldest part, is called the reptilian brain. This governs our basic responses and survival instincts like fight and flight and territory.



The mid brain is called the limbic system and governs emotion, values and memory. It also filters information to the top part of the brain if it sees it to be valuable.



The top part of the brain (the 'walnut' we are familiar with) is called the neo-cortex. This governs the higher order thinking skills like language, logic, pattern recognition and imagination.



And here is what we now know. If the brain perceives its owner to be under threat, whether this threat is physical, emotional or indeed real, the blood supply retreats from the neo-cortex and the limbic system to fuel the reptilian brain. This is to enable it to protect its owner. When this happens, the other parts of the brain do not work effectively.

Let's assume that the threat is perceived to have gone. The blood supply resumes. Now we have to keep the limbic system happy. If the information this part of the brain is receiving does not match its owner's value system, it will not filter that information into the neo-cortex, or the memory. If its owner is not emotionally involved with the material, it will reject it.

So, when learners feel safe and successful, they are not in a state of stress, which would hinder or even prevent learning. When learners feel there is a value in what they are learning, when they are emotionally engaged, then they allow learning up into the neo-cortex, the thinking part of their brain.

As teachers, we are charged with developing pupils' skills, knowledge and concepts, which to a large degree involve the left-brain and right-brain functions of the neo-cortex. When pupils are under stress (for reasons inside and outside the classroom and the school), the neo-cortex part of their brain is not functioning at its best. Only when the needs of the other parts of the brain – the reptilian brain and the limbic system – are met, is learning able to take place more easily.

Pupils whose difficult behaviour is inhibiting their own learning and the learning of others are often under stress. They are likely to be preoccupied with the concerns of the reptilian brain and/or the limbic system. These parts of the brain pose demands unlike those of the neo-cortex. For example:

