

## Becoming a Behavior Detective

A student's challenging behavior can feel like a mystery.  
But, if we follow these three simple steps we can often solve the case!

### Behavior Detective Skills

**1. Look for Clues** - If you don't know why a student is having a hard time with challenging behavior, start by looking at what was happening right BEFORE the behavior happened.

**2. Ask Yourself Questions** - When thinking through what led up to the behavior, make sure to ask yourself some good questions. This will help you find the clues. Here's some questions to start with:

- What was the environment like when the behavior happened? Was it noisier, smellier, or more chaotic than usual?
- Was the student given a request that may have felt confusing, too challenging, or might have made them feel anxious?
- When does this behavior usually happen? First thing, during certain activities, or when switching from one activity to the next?
- Has this behavior happened before? Can you see a pattern for what may be triggering it?
- What is happening in the classroom when the student is behaving appropriately? How are things different?

**3. Look For The Motive** - What NEED is the child trying to meet through the behavior? Once you have an idea of WHY a student may be struggling, you can look for ways to help the student meet their needs in a more positive way in the future.

### CASE CLOSED!

**One More Thing** - Using your behavior detective skills can help you figure things out a lot of the time, but sometimes things will remain a mystery. So remember, what we do know about challenging behavior is that it is an outward sign that a student is having a hard time on the inside. So always approach with empathy.