







RTI & Behaviors: An Overview for Elementary Educators

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Key Behavioral Challenges

-  1. Understanding the Essential 'Big Ideas' in Student Behavior Management
-  2. Defining Student Problem Behaviors Clearly
-  3. Managing Groups of Students
-  4. Motivating the Reluctant Student
-  5. Managing the Difficult Behaviors of Individual Students
-  6. Finding Internet Resources to Help Support Strong Behavior Management in Your Classroom

Response to Intervention

Access PPTs and other materials from this workshop at:
<http://www.interventioncentral.org/sdasp>

Behavior Challenge:
Understanding the Essential
'Big Ideas' in Student
Behavior Management



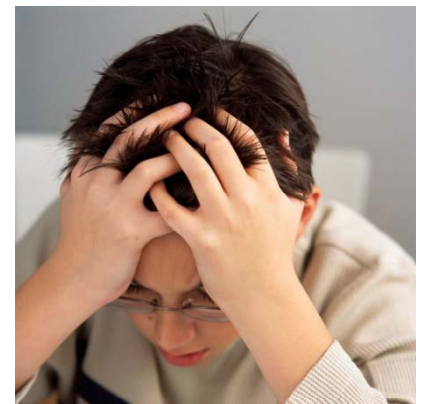
Big Ideas: Similar Behaviors May Stem from Very Different 'Root' Causes

(Kratochwill, Elliott, & Carrington Rotto, 1990)

- Behavior is not random but follows purposeful patterns.

Students who present with the same apparent 'surface' behaviors may have very different 'drivers' (underlying reasons) that explain why those behaviors occur.

A student's problem behaviors must be carefully *identified* and *analyzed* to determine the drivers that support them.



Source: Kratochwill, T. R., Elliott, S. N., & Carrington Rotto, P. (1990). Best practices in behavioral consultation. In A. Thomas and J. Grimes (Eds.). Best practices in school psychology-II (pp. 147=169). Silver Spring, MD: National Association of School Psychologists..

Common 'Root Causes' or 'Drivers' for Behaviors Include...

- Power/Control
- Protection/Escape/Avoidance
- Attention
- Acceptance/Affiliation
- Expression of Self
- Gratification
- Justice/Revenge

Source: Witt, J. C., Daly, E. M., & Noell, G. (2000). Functional assessments: A step-by-step guide to solving academic and behavior problems. Longmont, CO: Sopris West..pp. 3-4.

From the Trenches...
Office Disciplinary Referral

“

Disrespect toward teachers. Yelled at me while I was helping him with his assignment. Told him to cool down and sit in the center and he started up again. Finally, I asked him to leave. Have called home twice and spoke to grandmother about tardiness, attendance, and behavior.

”

From the Trenches...
Office Disciplinary Referral

“

L. was sleeping in class. I told him twice to wake up and read along with class. He did so, albeit reluctantly. The third time he fell asleep I buzzed the office to tell them he was coming down, with a referral to follow. He cursed and threw his book in the 'book box'.

”

From the Trenches...
Office Disciplinary Referral

“

For some reason, R. wants to keep challenging me. Today he was being persistent that he wanted to sit on a table not in his chair. This was after I asked him to stop talking 4-5 times, that's all. I sent him to the office again, second time.

”

Big Ideas: Low-Level Inferences Should Be Investigated First

(Christ, 2008)

“An inference is a tentative conclusion without direct or conclusive support from available data. All hypotheses are, by definition, inferences. It is critical that problem analysts make distinctions between what is known and what is inferred or hypothesized....Low-level inferences should be exhausted prior to the use of high-level inferences.”
p. 161

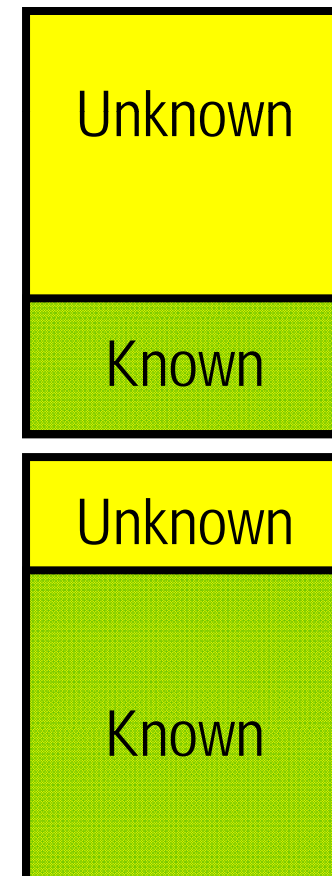
Source: Christ, T. (2008). Best practices in problem analysis. In A. Thomas & J. Grimes (Eds.), Best practices in school psychology V (pp. 159-176).

Examples of High vs. Low Inference Hypotheses

An 11th-grade student does poorly on tests and quizzes in math. Homework is often incomplete. He frequently shows up late for class and does not readily participate in group discussions.

High-Inference Hypothesis. The student is 'just lazy' and would do better if he would only apply himself.

Low-Inference Hypothesis. The student has gaps in academic skills that require (a) mapping out those skill gaps, and (b) providing the student with remedial instruction as needed.



Big Ideas: Academic Delays Can Be a Potent Cause of Behavior Problems

(Witt, Daly, & Noell, 2000)



Student academic problems cause many school behavior problems.

“Whether [a student’s] problem is a behavior problem or an academic one, we recommend starting with a functional academic assessment, since often behavior problems occur when students cannot or will not do required academic work.”

Source: Witt, J. C., Daly, E. M., & Noell, G. (2000). Functional assessments: A step-by-step guide to solving academic and behavior problems. Longmont, CO: Sopris West, p. 13

Big Ideas: Behavior is a Continuous 'Stream'

(Schoenfeld & Farmer, 1970)

- Individuals are always performing SOME type of behavior: watching the instructor, sleeping, talking to a neighbor, completing a worksheet (*'behavior stream'*).
- When students are fully engaged in academic behaviors, they are less likely to get off-task and display problem behaviors.
- Academic tasks that are clearly understood, elicit student interest, provide a high rate of student success, and include teacher encouragement and feedback are most likely to effectively 'capture' the student's 'behavior stream'.



Source: Schoenfeld, W. N., & Farmer, J. (1970). Reinforcement schedules and the "behavior stream." In W. N. Schoenfeld (Ed.), *The theory of reinforcement schedules* (pp. 215–245). New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts.

Response to Intervention

Unmotivated Students: What Works

Motivation can be thought of as having two dimensions:

1. the student's expectation
of success on the task

.....10

Multiplied by

2. the value that the student places
on achieving success on that
learning task

.....X.....10

100

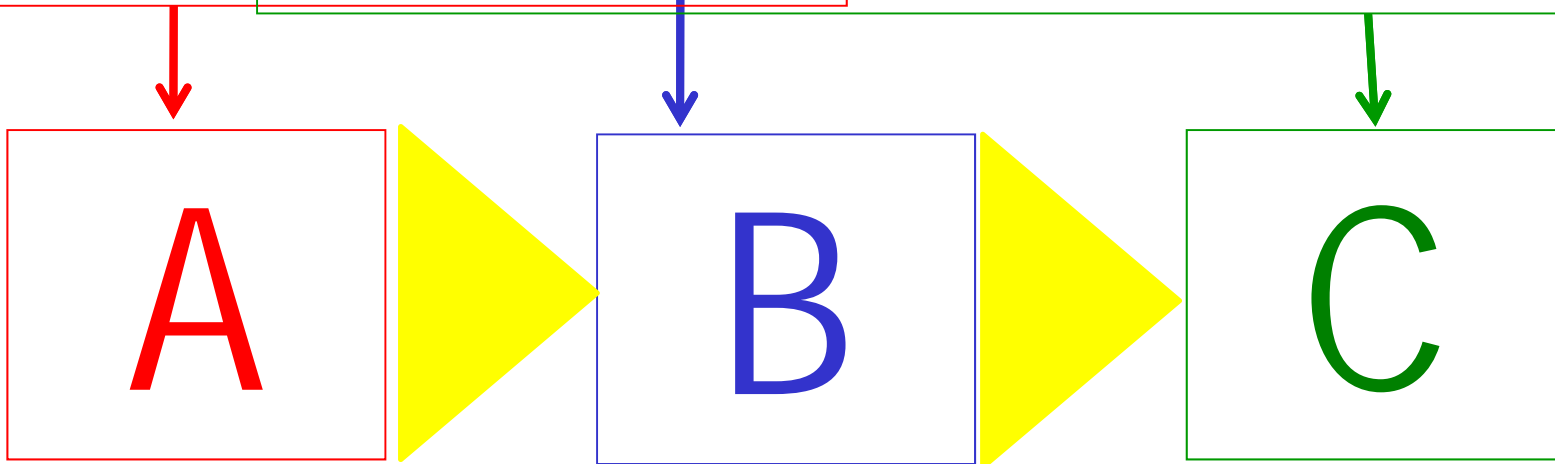
The relationship between the two factors is *multiplicative*. If EITHER of these factors (the student's expectation of success on the task OR the student's valuing of that success) is zero, then the 'motivation' product will also be zero.

Source: Sprick, R. S., Borgmeier, C., & Nolet, V. (2002). Prevention and management of behavior problems in secondary schools. In M. A. Shinn, H. M. Walker & G. Stoner (Eds.), *Interventions for academic and behavior problems II: Preventive and remedial approaches* (pp.373-401). Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

ABC: The Core of Behavior Management

"...at the core of behavioral interventions is the three-term contingency consisting of an antecedent, behavior, and consequence."

"... subsequent to the behavior is maintained if it is followed of environmental event (that is, pleasurable or reinforcing an antecedent) consequence."

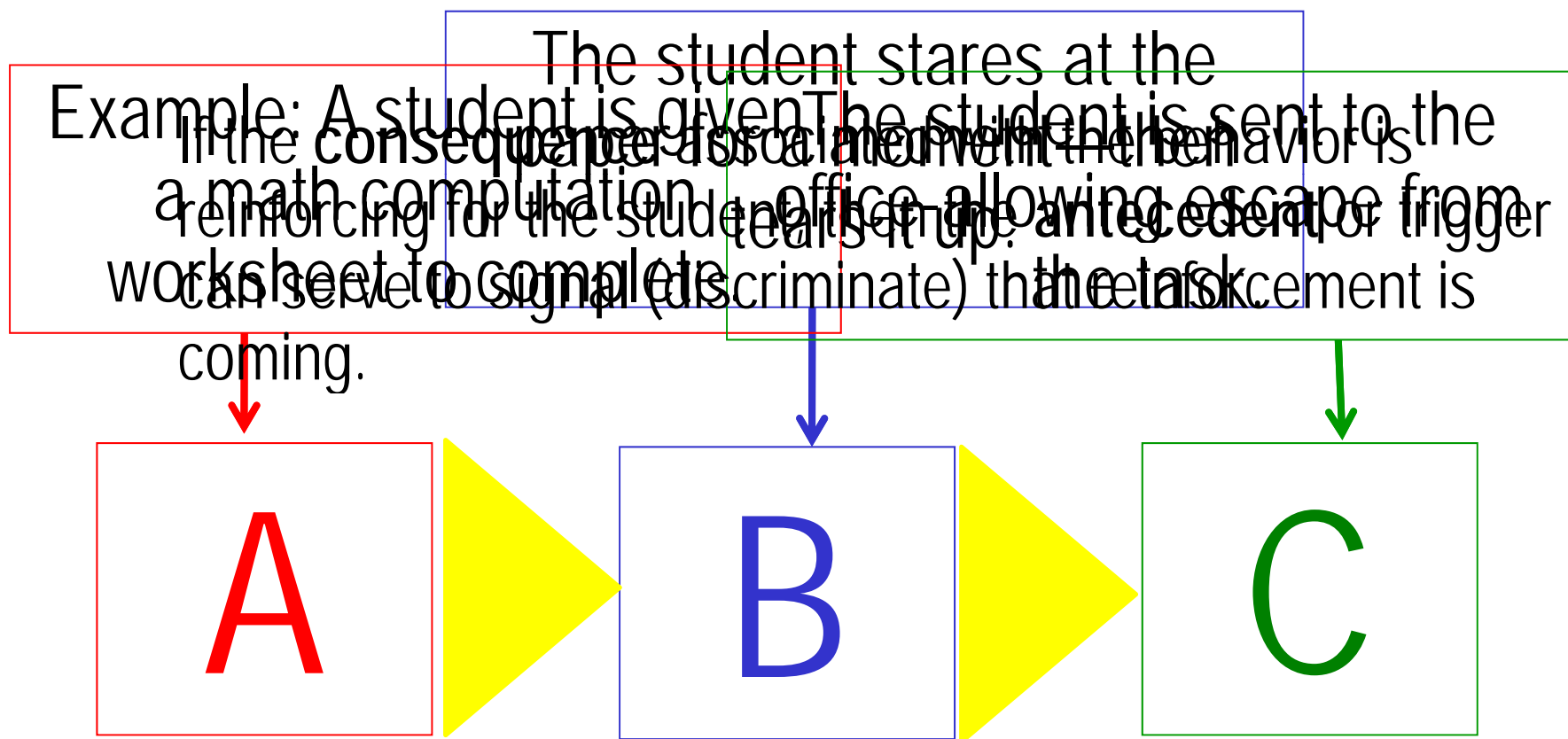


Source: Kern, L., Choutka, C. M., & Sokol, N. G. (2002). Assessment-based antecedent interventions used in natural settings to reduce challenging behaviors: An analysis of the literature. *Education & Treatment of Children*, 25, 113-130. p. 113.

Response to Intervention

ABC: Events as Antecedents

'Discriminative Stimulus': An antecedent can become associated with certain desired outcomes and thus 'trigger' problem behaviors.



Source: Kern, L., Choutka, C. M., & Sokol, N. G. (2002). Assessment-based antecedent interventions used in natural settings to reduce challenging behaviors: An analysis of the literature. *Education & Treatment of Children*, 25, 113-130. p. 113.

Antecedent Strategies to Manage Behavior: Proactive Changes to the Environment

“Antecedent interventions typically involve some type of environmental rearrangement. ”

Source: Kern, L., Choutka, C. M., & Sokol, N. G. (2002). Assessment-based antecedent interventions used in natural settings to reduce challenging behaviors: An analysis of the literature. *Education & Treatment of Children, 25*, 113-130. p. 113.

Advantages of Antecedent Strategies vs. 'Reactive Approaches'

1. Can prevent behavior problems from occurring
2. Are typically 'quick acting'
3. Can result in an instructional environment that better promotes student learning

Source: Kern, L. & Clemens, N. H. (2007). Antecedent strategies to promote appropriate classroom behavior. *Psychology in the Schools, 44*, 65-75.

05:00

Group Activity: *Big Ideas in Behavior Management*

At your tables:

- Review the big ideas in behavior management presented in this workshop.
- Select the top 1-2 big ideas that you feel are most important for your teachers to understand and keep in mind.

Big Ideas in Behavior Management

1. Student behaviors are not random; they have an underlying purpose
2. Schools should explore 'low inference' explanations for student behavior problems before 'high inference'
3. Academic problems often cause behavior problems
4. Motivation has two elements: (a) the student's perceived ability to complete a task multiplied by (b) the value that the student places on completing the task
5. It is better to **prevent** the triggers to problem behaviors than being reactive.

Good Behavior Game

(This resources available on conference page)

(Barrish, Saunders, & Wold, 1969)

Response to Intervention

Sample Classroom Management Strategy: Good Behavior Game (Barrish, Saunders, & Wold, 1969)

The Good Behavior Game is a whole-class intervention to improve student attending and academic engagement. It is best used during structured class time: for example, whole-group instruction or periods of independent seatwork

Description: The class is divided into two or more student teams. The teacher defines a small set of 2 to 3 negative behaviors. When a student shows a problem behavior, the teacher assigns a negative behavior 'point' to that student's team. At the end of the Game time period, any team whose number of points falls below a 'cut-off' set by the teacher earns a daily reward or privilege.

Guidelines for using this intervention: The Game is ideal to use with the entire class during academic study or lecture periods to keep students academically engaged. The Game is not suitable for less-structured activities such as cooperative learning groups, where students are expected to interact with each other as part of the work assignment.

Good Behavior Game: Steps

1. The instructor decides when to schedule the Game. (NOTE: Generally, the Good Behavior Game should be used for no more than 45 to 60 minutes per day to maintain its effectiveness.)
2. The instructor defines the 2-3 negative behaviors that will be scored during the Game. Most teachers use these 3 categories:
 - **Talking Out:** The student talks, calls out, or otherwise verbalizes without teacher permission.
 - **Out of Seat:** The student's posterior is not on the seat.
 - **Disruptive Behavior:** The student engages in any other behavior that the instructor finds distracting or problematic.

Good Behavior Game: Steps

3. The instructor selects a daily reward to be awarded to each member of successful student teams. (HINT: Try to select rewards that are inexpensive or free. For example, student winners might be given a coupon permitting them to skip one homework item that night.)
4. The instructor divides the class into 2 or more teams.
5. The instructor selects a daily cut-off level that represents the maximum number of points that a team is allowed (e.g., 5 points).

Good Behavior Game: Steps

6. When the Game is being played, the instructor teaches in the usual manner. Whenever the instructor observes student misbehavior during the lesson, the instructor silently assigns a point to that student's team (e.g., as a tally mark on the board) and continues to teach.
7. When the Game period is over, the teacher tallies each team's points. Here are the rules for deciding the winner(s) of the Game:
 - Any team whose point total is at or below the pre-determined cut-off earns the daily reward. (NOTE: This means that more than one team can win!)
 - If one team's point total is above the cut-off level, that team does not earn a reward.
 - If ALL teams have point totals that EXCEED the cut-off level for that day, only the team with the LOWEST number of points wins.

Good Behavior Game: Troubleshooting

Here are some tips for using the Good Behavior Game:

- Avoid the temptation to overuse the Game. Limit its use to no more than 45 minutes to an hour per day.
- If a student engages in repeated bad behavior to sabotage a team and cause it to lose, you can create an additional 'team of one' that has only one member--the misbehaving student. This student can still participate in the Game but is no longer able to spoil the Game for peers!
- If the Game appears to be losing effectiveness, check to be sure it is being implemented with care and that you are:
 - Assigning points consistently when you observe misbehavior.
 - Not allowing yourself to be pulled into arguments with students when you assign points for misbehavior.
 - Reliably giving rewards to Game winners.
 - Not overusing the Game.

GOOD BEHAVIOR GAME

Cut-Off=2

Team 1

Team 2

Game Over

| *[Out of Seat]*
| *[Disruptive]*

| *[Call Out]*



Answer: Both teams won the Game, as both teams' point totals fell BELOW the cut-off of 5 points.

Behavior Challenge:
Defining Student
Problem Behaviors
Clearly pp. 42-46





Team Activity: Select a Behaviorally Challenging Student...

:

- At your table:
 - Discuss students in your classrooms or school who present challenging behaviors.
 - Of the students discussed, select one student that your team will use in an exercise of defining student problem behaviors. (TIP: For this exercise, try to select a student with **emerging** difficulties rather than one with extreme and longstanding problem behaviors.)
 - Write a brief statement defining that student's problem behavior(s).

Defining Problem Student Behaviors...

1. **Define the problem behavior in clear, observable, measurable terms** (Batsche et al., 2008; Upah, 2008). Write a clear description of the problem behavior. Avoid vague problem identification statements such as "The student is disruptive."

A well-written problem definition should include three parts:

- **Conditions.** The condition(s) under which the problem is likely to occur
- **Problem Description.** A specific description of the problem behavior
- **Contextual information.** Information about the frequency, intensity, duration, or other dimension(s) of the behavior that provide a context for estimating the degree to which the behavior presents a problem in the setting(s) in which it occurs.

Sample Problem Behavior Definitions

<p><i>Conditions. The condition(s) under which the problem is likely to occur</i></p>	<p><i>Problem Description. A specific description of the problem behavior</i></p>	<p><i>Contextual Information. Information about the frequency, intensity, duration, or other dimension(s) of the behavior</i></p>
<p>During 20-minute independent seatwork literacy tasks,...</p>	<p>...John talks with peers about non-instructional topics...</p>	<p>...an average of three times.</p>
<p>In school settings such as the playground or gymnasium, when unsupervised by adults,...</p>	<p>...Angela is reported by peers to use physically threatening language...</p>	<p>...at least once per week.</p>
<p>When given a verbal teacher request...</p>	<p>...Jay fails to comply with that request within 3 minutes...</p>	<p>... an average of 50% of the time.</p>

Defining Student Problem Behaviors: Team Activity

Using the student selected by your team:

- Step 1: Define the problem behavior in clear, observable, measurable terms.

Five Steps in Understanding & Addressing Problem Behaviors:

1. Define the problem behavior in clear, observable, measurable terms.
2. Develop examples and non-examples of the problem behavior.
3. Write a behavior hypothesis statement.
4. Select a replacement behavior.
5. Write a prediction statement.

Defining Problem Student Behaviors...

2. **Develop examples and non-examples of the problem behavior** (Upah, 2008). Writing both examples and non-examples of the problem behavior helps to resolve uncertainty about when the student's conduct should be classified as a problem behavior. Examples should include the most frequent or typical instances of the student problem behavior. Non-examples should include any behaviors that are acceptable conduct but might possibly be confused with the problem behavior.

Response to Intervention

Examples and Non-Examples of Problem Behavior

Problem Behavior	Examples	Non-Examples
During 20-minute independent seatwork literacy tasks, John talks with peers about non-instructional topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• John chats with another student that he encounters at the pencil sharpener.• John whispers to a neighboring student about a comic book in his desk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• At the direction of the teacher, John pairs up with another student to complete an assignment..• John verbally interacts with students in an appropriate manner while handing out work materials as requested by the teacher.
When given a verbal teacher request, Jay fails to comply with that request within 3 minutes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jay does not comply when directed by the teacher to open his math book and begin work.• Jay is verbally defiant and uncooperative when requested by an adult to stop running in the hall.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jay does not comply with a teacher request because he does not hear that request.• Jay asks the teacher to explain directions that he does not understand.

Defining Student Problem Behaviors: Team Activity

Using the student selected
by your team:

- Step 2: Develop examples and non-examples of the problem behavior.

Five Steps in Understanding &
Addressing Problem Behaviors:

1. Define the problem behavior in clear, observable, measurable terms.
2. **Develop examples and non-examples of the problem behavior.**
3. Write a behavior hypothesis statement.
4. Select a replacement behavior.
5. Write a prediction statement.

Defining Problem Student Behaviors...

3. **Write a behavior hypothesis statement** (Batsche et al., 2008; Upah, 2008). The next step in problem-solving is to develop a hypothesis about why the student is engaging in an undesirable behavior or not engaging in a desired behavior. Teachers can gain information to develop a hypothesis through direct observation, student interview, review of student work products, and other sources. The behavior hypothesis statement is important because (a) it can be tested, and (b) it provides guidance on the type(s) of interventions that might benefit the student.

Response to Intervention

Behavior Hypothesis Statements

Problem Behavior	<Because>	Hypothesis
During 20-minute independent seatwork literacy tasks, John talks with peers about non-instructional topics...	...because...	...he is avoiding academic work.
When given a verbal teacher request, Jay fails to comply with that request...	...because...	...he is reinforced by the negative adult attention that results from his noncompliance.

05:00

Defining Student Problem Behaviors: Team Activity

Using the student selected
by your team:

- Step 3: Write a behavior hypothesis statement.

Five Steps in Understanding &
Addressing Problem Behaviors:

1. Define the problem behavior in clear, observable, measurable terms.
2. Develop examples and non-examples of the problem behavior.
3. Write a behavior hypothesis statement.
4. Select a replacement behavior.
5. Write a prediction statement.

Common 'Root Causes' or 'Drivers' for Behaviors Include...

- Power/Control
- Protection/Escape/Avoidance
- Attention
- Acceptance/Affiliation
- Expression of Self
- Gratification
- Justice/Revenge

Source: Witt, J. C., Daly, E. M., & Noell, G. (2000). Functional assessments: A step-by-step guide to solving academic and behavior problems. Longmont, CO: Sopris West..pp. 3-4.

Defining Problem Student Behaviors...

4. **Select a replacement behavior** (Batsche et al., 2008). Behavioral interventions should be focused on increasing student skills and capacities, not simply on suppressing problem behaviors. By selecting a positive behavioral goal that is an appropriate replacement for the student's original problem behavior, the teacher reframes the student concern in a manner that allows for more effective intervention planning.

Response to Intervention

Selection of Replacement Behavior

Problem Behavior	Replacement Behavior
During 20-minute independent seatwork literacy tasks, John talks with peers about non-instructional topics.	During 20-minute independent seatwork literacy tasks, John is engaged in active accurate academic responding.
When given a verbal teacher request, Jay fails to comply with that request.	When given a verbal teacher request, Jay carries out the request without argument or complaint within 3 minutes.

05:00

Defining Student Problem Behaviors: Team Activity

Using the student selected
by your team:

- Step 4: Select a replacement behavior.

Five Steps in Understanding &
Addressing Problem Behaviors:

1. Define the problem behavior in clear, observable, measurable terms.
2. Develop examples and non-examples of the problem behavior.
3. Write a behavior hypothesis statement.
4. **Select a replacement behavior.**
5. Write a prediction statement.

Defining Problem Student Behaviors...

5. **Write a prediction statement** (Batsche et al., 2008; Upah, 2008). The prediction statement proposes a strategy (intervention) that is predicted to improve the problem behavior. The importance of the prediction statement is that it spells out specifically the expected outcome if the strategy is successful. The formula for writing a prediction statement is to state that *if* the proposed strategy ('Specific Action') is adopted, then the *rate* of problem behavior is expected to *decrease* or *increase* in the desired direction.

Response to Intervention

Prediction Statement		
Specific Action	Problem Behavior	Rate of Behavior
If prior to independent seatwork, John meets with a tutor to review key vocabulary terms and rehearse the assigned reading,...	...the amount of time that John spends talking with peers about non-instructional topics during independent work...	...will decrease.
If adults avoid engaging Jay in long exchanges when he fails to comply with their requests and instead impose appropriate pre-selected consequences...	...the frequency of Jay's timely compliance with adult requests...	...will increase.

05:00

Defining Student Problem Behaviors: Team Activity

Using the student selected
by your team:

- Step 5: Write a prediction statement.

Five Steps in Understanding &
Addressing Problem Behaviors:

1. Define the problem behavior in clear, observable, measurable terms.
2. Develop examples and non-examples of the problem behavior.
3. Write a behavior hypothesis statement.
4. Select a replacement behavior.
5. Write a prediction statement.

Response to Intervention

Finding the Right Behavioral Intervention: Five Steps to Defining Student Problem Behaviors

Teachers can select effective interventions for student behavior problems only if they first clearly define the problem behavior(s) and the reason(s) that a behavior is occurring.

The process of defining student problem behaviors goes more smoothly if the teacher has first collected relevant information about the student's problem behavior (e.g., examples of seatwork, anecdotal notes of student behavior, frequency counts of behavior, student interview, etc.).

By following the five steps below, the teacher is more likely to describe a student's problem behavior(s) with clarity and to identify effective interventions to address them.

1. Define the problem behavior in clear, observable, measurable terms.

Sample Problem Behavior Definitions		
<i>Conditions. The condition(s) under which the problem is likely to occur</i>	<i>Problem Description. A specific description of the problem behavior</i>	<i>Contextual Information. Information about the frequency, intensity, duration, or other dimension(s) of the behavior</i>

2. Develop examples and non-examples of the problem behavior.

Examples and Non-Examples of Problem Behavior	
Examples	Non-Examples

3. Write a behavior hypothesis statement.

Behavior Hypothesis Statements		
Problem Behavior	<Because>	Hypothesis
	...because...	

4. Select a replacement behavior.

Selection of Replacement Behavior
Replacement Behavior

5. Create a prediction statement.

Prediction Statement		
Specific Action	Problem Behavior	Rate of Behavior

Defining Student Problem Behaviors: Team Activity

- Discuss how your school might promote the use **by all teachers** of this 5-step behavior-problem identification process.

Five Steps in Understanding & Addressing Problem Behaviors:

1. Define the problem behavior in clear, observable, measurable terms.
2. Develop examples and non-examples of the problem behavior.
3. Write a behavior hypothesis statement.
4. Select a replacement behavior.
5. Write a prediction statement.



Finding the Right Spark: Strategies for Motivating the Resistant Learner



Student Motivation: Reframing the Issue in Observable (and Fixable) Terms

Step 1: Redefine 'motivation' as academic engagement: e.g., The student chooses "to engage in active accurate academic responding" (Skinner, Pappas, & Davis, 2005).

Step 2: Build staff support for this mission statement: "When a student appears unmotivated, it is the school's job to figure out why the student is unmotivated and to find a way to get that student motivated."

Source: Skinner, C. H., Pappas, D. N., & Davis, K. A. (2005). Enhancing academic engagement: Providing opportunities for responding and influencing students to choose to respond. *Psychology in the Schools, 42*, 389-403.

Motivation Challenge:
Analyzing Why a Student
Lacks Motivation and
Selecting Appropriate
Strategies

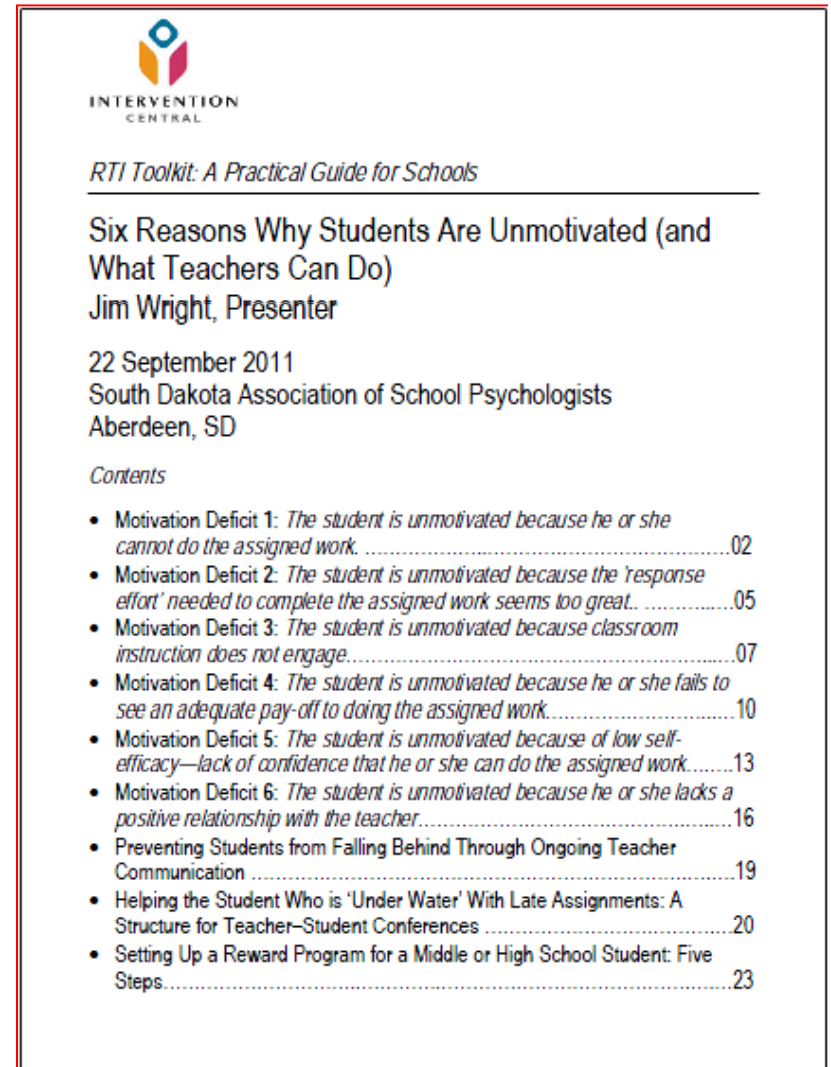


Six Reasons That Students Are Unmotivated (And What Teachers Can Do)

- The student is unmotivated because he or she cannot do the assigned work.
- The student is unmotivated because the 'response effort' needed to complete the assigned work seems too great.
- The student is unmotivated because classroom instruction does not engage.
- The student is unmotivated because he or she fails to see an adequate pay-off to doing the assigned work.
- The student is unmotivated because of low self-efficacy—lack of confidence that he or she can do the assigned work.
- The student is unmotivated because he or she lacks a positive relationship with the teacher.

Six Reasons Why Students Are Unmotivated (And What Teachers Can Do)

- This handout provides guidance to teachers in identifying why a student lacks motivation and what general strategies are recommended in the research.
- The teacher then has latitude to use the general guidelines and the research that supports them as a starting-point for their own intervention ideas to boost motivation.



Motivation Deficit 1: *The student is unmotivated because he or she cannot do the assigned work.*



- **Profile of a Student with This Motivation Problem:**
The student lacks essential skills required to do the task.

Motivation Deficit 1: Cannot Do the Work

- **Profile of a Student with This Motivation Problem (Cont.):**
Areas of deficit might include:
 - *Basic academic skills.* Basic skills have straightforward criteria for correct performance (e.g., the student defines vocabulary words or decodes text or computes 'math facts') and comprise the building-blocks of more complex academic tasks (Rupley, Blair, & Nichols, 2009).
 - *Cognitive strategies.* Students employ specific cognitive strategies as "guiding procedures" to complete more complex academic tasks such as reading comprehension or writing (Rosenshine, 1995)
 - *Academic-enabling skills.* Skills that are 'academic enablers' (DiPerna, 2006) are not tied to specific academic knowledge but rather aid student learning across a wide range of settings and tasks (e.g., organizing work materials, time management).

Motivation Deficit 1: Cannot Do the Work (Cont.)

- **What the Research Says:** When a student lacks the capability to complete an academic task because of limited or missing basic skills, cognitive strategies, or academic-enabling skills, that student is still in the acquisition stage of learning (Haring et al., 1978). That student cannot be expected to be motivated or to be successful as a learner unless he or she is first explicitly taught these weak or absent essential skills (Daly, Witt, Martens & Dool, 1997).

Motivation Deficit 1: Cannot Do the Work (Cont.)

- **How to Verify the Presence of This Motivation Problem:**
The teacher collects information (e.g., through observations of the student engaging in academic tasks; interviews with the student; examination of work products, quizzes, or tests) demonstrating that the student lacks basic skills, cognitive strategies, or academic-enabling skills essential to the academic task.

Motivation Deficit 1: Cannot Do the Work (Cont.)

- **How to Fix This Motivation Problem:** Students who are not motivated because they lack essential skills need to be taught those skills.

Direct-Instruction Format. Students learning new material, concepts, or skills benefit from a 'direct instruction' approach. (Burns, VanDerHeyden & Boice, 2008; Rosenshine, 1995; Rupley, Blair, & Nichols, 2009).

How to Fix This Motivation Problem: Students who are not motivated because they lack essential skills need to be taught those skills.

Direct-Instruction Format. Students learning new material, concepts, or skills benefit from a 'direct instruction' approach. (Burns, VanDerHeyden & Boice, 2008; Rosenshine, 1995; Rupley, Blair, & Nichols, 2009). When following a direct-instruction format, the teacher:

- ensures that the lesson content is appropriately matched to students' abilities.
- opens the lesson with a brief review of concepts or material that were previously presented.
- states the goals of the current day's lesson.
- breaks new material into small, manageable increments, or steps.
- throughout the lesson, provides adequate explanations and detailed instructions for all concepts and materials being taught. NOTE: Verbal explanations can include 'talk-alouds' (e.g., the teacher describes and explains each step of a cognitive strategy) and 'think-alouds' (e.g., the teacher applies a cognitive strategy to a particular problem or task and verbalizes the steps applying the strategy).
- regularly checks for student understanding by posing frequent questions and eliciting group responses.
- verifies that students are experiencing sufficient success in the lesson content to shape their learning in the desired direction and to maintain student motivation and engagement.
- provides timely and regular performance feedback and corrections throughout the lesson as needed to guide student learning.
- allows students the chance to engage in practice activities distributed throughout the lesson (e.g., through teacher demonstration; then group practice with teacher supervision and feedback; then independent, individual student practice).
- ensures that students have adequate support (e.g., clear and explicit instructions; teacher monitoring) to be successful during independent seatwork practice activities.

Motivation Deficit 1: Cannot Do the Work (Cont.)

- **How to Fix This Motivation Problem:** When following a direct-instruction format, the teacher:
 - ensures that the lesson content is appropriately matched to students' abilities.
 - opens the lesson with a brief review of concepts or material that were previously presented.
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Motivation Deficit 1: Cannot Do the Work (Cont.)

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 - ❑ regularly checks for student understanding by posing frequent questions and eliciting group responses.

Motivation Deficit 1: Cannot Do the Work (Cont.)

- **How to Fix This Motivation Problem:** When following a direct-instruction format, the teacher:
 - ❑ verifies that students are experiencing sufficient success in the lesson content to shape their learning in the desired direction and to maintain student motivation and engagement.
 - ❑ provides timely and regular performance feedback and corrections throughout the lesson as needed to guide student learning.

Motivation Deficit 1: Cannot Do the Work (Cont.)

- **How to Fix This Motivation Problem:** When following a direct-instruction format, the teacher:
 - ❑ allows students the chance to engage in practice activities distributed throughout the lesson (e.g., through teacher demonstration; then group practice with teacher supervision and feedback; then independent, individual student practice).
 - ❑ ensures that students have adequate support (e.g., clear and explicit instructions; teacher monitoring) to be successful during independent seatwork practice activities.

How to Fix This Motivation Problem: Students who are not motivated because they lack essential skills need to be taught those skills.

Direct-Instruction Format. Students learning new material, concepts, or skills benefit from a 'direct instruction' approach. (Burns, VanDerHeyden & Boice, 2008; Rosenshine, 1995; Rupley, Blair, & Nichols, 2009). When following a direct-instruction format, the teacher:

- ensures that the lesson content is appropriately matched to students' abilities.
- opens the lesson with a brief review of concepts or material that were previously presented.
- states the goals of the current day's lesson.
- breaks new material into small, manageable increments, or steps.
- throughout the lesson, provides adequate explanations and detailed instructions for all concepts and materials being taught. NOTE: Verbal explanations can include 'talk-alouds' (e.g., the teacher describes and explains each step of a cognitive strategy) and 'think-alouds' (e.g., the teacher applies a cognitive strategy to a particular problem or task and verbalizes the steps applying the strategy).
- regularly checks for student understanding by posing frequent questions and eliciting group responses.
- verifies that students are experiencing sufficient success in the lesson content to shape their learning in the desired direction and to maintain student motivation and engagement.
- provides timely and regular performance feedback and corrections throughout the lesson as needed to guide student learning.
- allows students the chance to engage in practice activities distributed throughout the lesson (e.g., through teacher demonstration; then group practice with teacher supervision and feedback; then independent, individual student practice).
- ensures that students have adequate support (e.g., clear and explicit instructions; teacher monitoring) to be successful during independent seatwork practice activities.

Motivation Deficit 2: *The student is unmotivated because the 'response effort' needed to complete the assigned work seems too great.*



- **Profile of a Student with This Motivation Problem:**
Although the student has the required skills to complete the assigned work, he or she perceives the 'effort' needed to do so to be so great that the student loses motivation.

Motivation Deficit 2: Response Effort (Cont.)

- **What the Research Says:** Research indicates that (1) as the perceived effort to complete an academic task or other behavior ('response effort') *increases*, people are *less* likely to engage in that behavior, while (2) as the effort to complete the same behavior *decreases*, people are *more* likely to engage in it (Friman & Poling, 1995).

Motivation Deficit 2: Response Effort (Cont.)

- **How to Verify the Presence of This Motivation Problem:**
The teacher first checks to see that the student has the requisite skills needed for academic success. The teacher then looks for evidence that, in specific situations, the student is reluctant to undertake academic tasks because they are perceived to require too much effort.

Tell-tale signs that a student may be unmotivated because of the required response effort include procrastination, verbal complaining, frequent seeking of teacher help, and other avoidant behaviors.

Motivation Deficit 2: Response Effort (Cont.)

- **How to Fix This Motivation Problem:** Teachers can increase student motivation through any method that reduces the apparent 'response effort' of an academic task (Friman & Poling, 1995). - so long as that method does not hold the student to a lesser academic standard than classmates (Skinner, Pappas, & Davis, 2005).

Motivation Deficit 2: Response Effort (Cont.)

Try These Ideas to Improve Motivation by Reducing Response Effort :

- *Start Assigned Readings in Class.* Whenever the teacher assigns a challenging text for students to read independently (e.g., as homework), the teacher (or perhaps a skilled student reader) reads the first few paragraphs of the assigned reading aloud while the class follows along silently in their own texts. Students are then expected to read the remainder of the text on their own.

Motivation Deficit 2: Response Effort (Cont.)

Try These Ideas to Improve Motivation by Reducing Response Effort :

- *Begin Challenging Homework Assignments in Class.* When assigned challenging homework, students are paired off or divided into groups and given a small amount of class time to begin the homework together, develop a plan for completing the homework, formulate questions about the homework, or engage in other activities that will create the necessary momentum to motivate students then to complete the work independently.

Motivation Deficit 2: Response Effort (Cont.)

Try These Ideas to Improve Motivation by Reducing Response Effort :

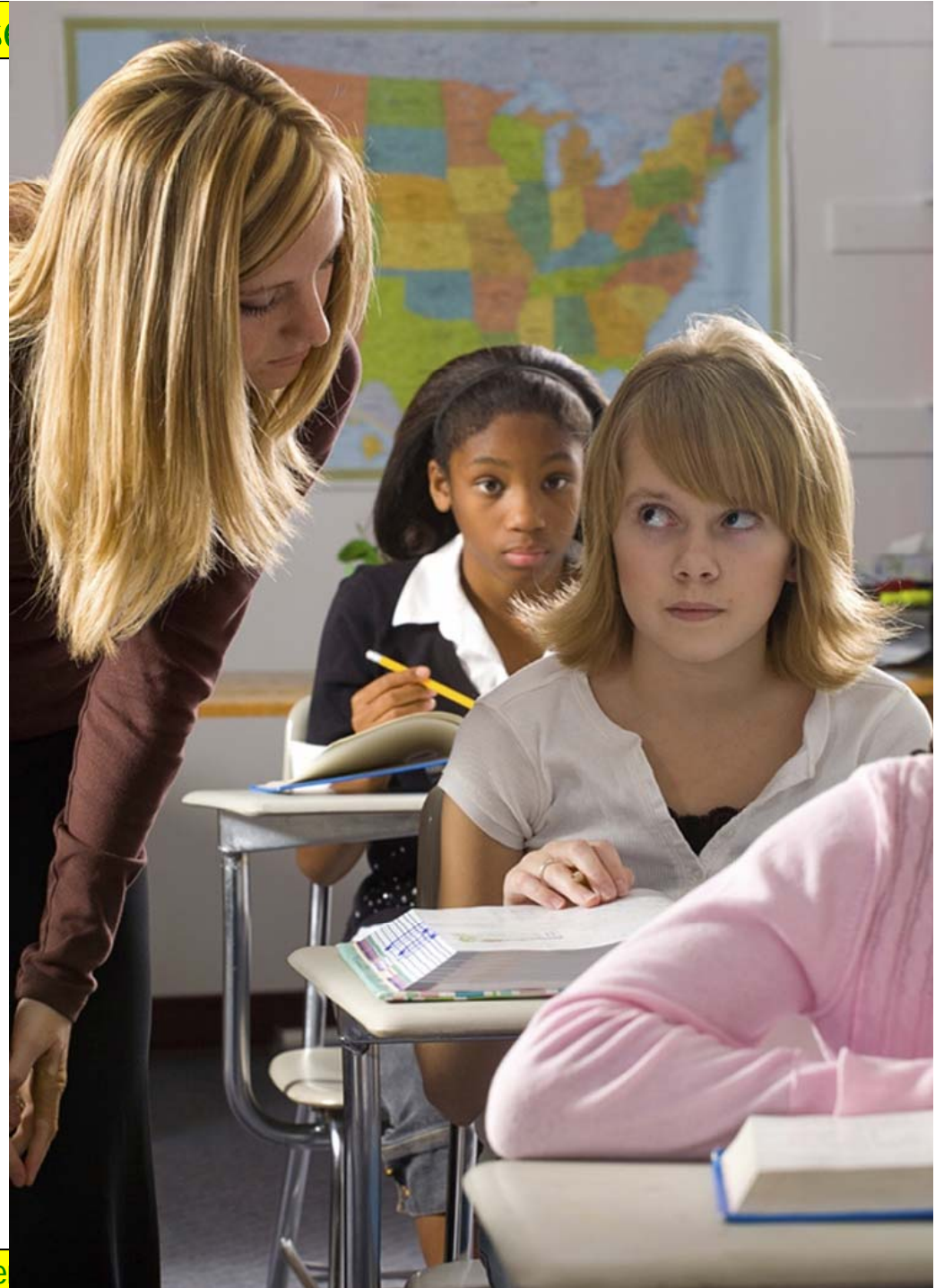
- *'Chunk' Assignments.* The teacher breaks a larger student assignment into smaller 'chunks'. The teacher provides the student with performance feedback and praise for each completed 'chunk' of assigned work (Skinner, Pappas, & Davis, 2005).
- *Select a Supportive Peer or Adult to Get a Student Started on Assignments.* If a student finds it difficult to get organized and begin independent seatwork activities, a supportive peer or adult in the classroom can get the student organized and started on the assignment.

Motivation Deficit 2: Response Effort (Cont.)

Try These Ideas to Improve Motivation by Reducing Response Effort :

- *Provide a Formal Work Plan.* For more complex assignments such as research papers, the teacher gives the student an outline of a work plan for completing those assignments. The plan breaks a larger assignment into appropriate sub-steps (e.g., 'find five research articles for the paper', 'summarize key information from research articles into notes', etc.). For each sub-step, the plan provides (1) an estimate of the minimum 'seat time' required to complete it and (2) sets a calendar-date deadline for completion. The teacher then touches base with the student at least weekly about his or her progress.

Helping the Student
Who is 'Under Water'
With Late
Assignments: A
Structure for
Teacher-Student
Conferences



Negotiating Missing Work: Student-Teacher Conference

When students fall behind in their classwork, they can quickly enter a downward spiral. Some students become overwhelmed and simply give up.

In such cases, the teacher may want to meet with the student –and if possible, a parent--to help that student to create a work plan to catch up with late work.

At the meeting, the teacher and student inventory what work is missing, negotiate a plan to complete that overdue work, and perhaps agree on a reasonable penalty when late work is turned in. All attending then sign off on the work plan. The teacher also ensures that the atmosphere at the meeting is supportive.

Negotiating Missing Work: Student-Teacher Conference (Cont.)

Here in greater detail are the steps that the teacher and student would follow at a meeting to renegotiate missing work:

1. *Inventory All Missing Work.* The teacher reviews with the student all late or missing work. The student is given the opportunity to explain why the work has not yet been submitted.

Negotiating Missing Work: Student-Teacher Conference (Cont.)

- 2. Negotiate a Plan to Complete Missing Work.* The teacher and student create a log with entries for all missing assignments. Each entry includes a description of the missing assignment and a due date by which the student pledges to submit that work. This log becomes the student's work plan. Submission dates for late assignments should be realistic--particularly for students who owe a considerable amount of late work and are also trying to keep caught up with current assignments.

Student Late-Work Planning Form: Middle & High School

Teacher: _____ Course: _____

Student: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Directions: At a teacher-student conference, use this form to create a plan for the student to complete and submit missing or late work.

Assignment	Target Date for Completion	NOTES

What penalty—if any—will be imposed for these late assignments? _____

Student Signature

Teacher Signature

Parent Signature

Negotiating Missing Work: Student-Teacher Conference (Cont.)

3. *[Optional] Impose a Penalty for Missing Work.* The teacher may decide to impose a penalty for the work being submitted late. Examples of possible penalties are a reduction of points (e.g., loss of 10 points per assignment) or the requirement that the student do additional work on the assignment than was required of his or her peers who turned it in on time. If imposed, such penalties would be spelled out at this teacher-student conference. Any penalties should be balanced and fair, permitting the teacher to impose appropriate consequences while allowing the student to still see a path to completing missing work and passing the course.

Negotiating Missing Work: Student-Teacher Conference (Cont.)

4. *Periodically Check on the Status of the Missing-Work Plan.* If the schedule agreed upon by teacher and student to complete and submit all late work exceeds two weeks, the teacher (or other designated school contact, such as a counselor) should meet with the student weekly while the plan is in effect. At these meetings, the teacher checks in with the student to verify that he or she is attaining the plan milestones on time and still expects to meet the submission deadlines agreed upon. If obstacles to emerge, the teacher and student engage in problem-solving to resolve them.

Motivation Deficit 3: *The student is unmotivated because classroom instruction does not engage.*



- **Profile of a Student with This Motivation Problem:** The student is distracted or off-task because classroom instruction and learning activities are not sufficiently reinforcing to hold his or her attention.

“

...researchers [shows] that when provided with a choice of two or more behaviors, with all else held constant, students are more likely to choose to engage in the behavior that results in more immediate reinforcement, higher rate reinforcement, or higher quality reinforcement... Thus, educators can increase the probability of students choosing to engage in assigned work by both enhancing reinforcement for assigned tasks and weakening reinforcement for competing behaviors... (Skinner et al., 2005; p. 396)

”

Source: Skinner, C. H., Pappas, D. N., & Davis, K. A. (2005). Enhancing academic engagement: Providing opportunities for responding and influencing students to choose to respond. *Psychology in the Schools*, 42, 389-403.

Motivation Deficit 3: Instruction Does Not Engage (Cont.)

- **What the Research Says:** In classroom settings, students can choose to respond to a variety of reinforcing events—for example, watching the teacher, interacting with peers, looking out the window at passing traffic. The fact is that classroom instruction must always compete for student attention with other sources of reinforcement (Billington & DiTommaso, 2003; Skinner, Pappas, & Davis, 2005). There are two ways that the instructor can increase the student's motivation to attend to classroom instruction: (1) by *decreasing* the reinforcing power of competing (distracting) stimuli, and/or (2) by *increasing* the reinforcing power of academic activities.

Motivation Deficit 3: Instruction Does Not Engage (Cont.)

- **How to Verify the Presence of This Motivation Problem:**
The teacher observes that the student is engaged in behaviors other than those related to instruction or is otherwise distracted by non-instructional events occurring in the classroom. Furthermore, the teacher has verified that the student's lack of attention to instruction is not due primarily to that student's attempting to escape or avoid difficult classwork.

Motivation Deficit 3: Instruction Does Not Engage (Cont.)

- **How to Fix This Motivation Problem:** The teacher can increase the inattentive student's focus on instruction and engagement in learning activities by:
 - *Reducing the Reinforcing Power of Non-Instructional Activities.* The teacher identifies any non-instructional activities in the classroom that are competing with instruction for the student's attention and takes steps to reduce or eliminate them.
 - *Increasing the Reinforcing Power of Classroom Instruction.* The teacher strives to boost the reinforcing quality of academic activities and instruction to better capture and hold the student's attention.

Motivation Deficit 3: Instruction Does Not Engage (Cont.)

Try These Ideas to Improve Motivation by *Reducing* the Reinforcing Power of Non-Instructional Activities:

- *Use Preferential Seating* (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). The teacher seats a student who is distracted by peers or other environmental factors in a location where the student is most likely to stay focused on instructional content. All teachers have an 'action zone', a part of the room where they tend to focus most of their instruction; the instructor seats the distractible student somewhere within that zone. The ideal seating location for any particular student will vary, depending on the unique qualities of that student and of the classroom.

Motivation Deficit 3: Instruction Does Not Engage (Cont.)

Try These Ideas to Improve Motivation by *Reducing* the Reinforcing Power of Non-Instructional Activities:

- *Create Low-Distraction Work Areas* (U.S. Department of Education, 2004. For students who are off-task during independent seatwork, the teacher can set up a study carrel in the corner of the room or other low-distraction work area. The teacher can then either direct the distractible student to use that area whenever independent seatwork is assigned or can permit the student to choose when to use the area.

Motivation Deficit 3: Instruction Does Not Engage (Cont.)

Try These Ideas to Improve Motivation by *Reducing* the Reinforcing Power of Non-Instructional Activities:

- *Restrict Student Access to Electronic Devices and Other Potential Distracting Objects.* The teacher creates a list of personal possessions that can pose the potential to distract from instruction (e.g., cell phones, personal game devices, etc.). The teacher either completely bans use of these items of student property at any point during a course session or restricts their use to clearly specified times or conditions.

Motivation Deficit 3: Instruction Does Not Engage (Cont.)

Try These Ideas to Improve Motivation by *Increasing* the Reinforcing Power of Classroom Instruction:

- *Use Bellringer Activities.* The teacher routinely gives students 'bellringer' activities to work on as soon as they enter the classroom. The point of this strategy is to capture students' attention at the outset with academically relevant activities. Ideally, bellringer tasks should be engaging but also should review and reinforce previously taught content or prepare students for the upcoming lesson.

Motivation Deficit 3: Instruction Does Not Engage (Cont.)

Try These Ideas to Improve Motivation by *Increasing* the Reinforcing Power of Classroom Instruction:

- *Provide Opportunities for Choice* (Kern, Bambara, & Fogt, 2002). One efficient way to promote choice in the classroom is for the teacher to create a master menu of options that students can select from in various learning situations. For example, during independent assignment, students might be allowed to (1) choose from at least 2 assignment options, (2) sit where they want in the classroom, and (3) select a peer-buddy to check their work. Student choice then becomes integrated seamlessly into the classroom routine.

Motivation Deficit 3: Instruction Does Not Engage (Cont.)

Try These Ideas to Improve Motivation by *Increasing* the Reinforcing Power of Classroom Instruction:

- *Structure Lessons around High-Interest or Functional-Learning Goals* (Kern, Bambara, & Fogt, 2002; Miller et al., 2003). A student is more likely to be engaged when academic lessons are based on 'high-interest' topics that interest the student (e.g., NASCAR racing; fashion) or that have a 'functional-learning' pay-off—e.g., job interview skills; money management skills --that the student values and can apply in his or her own life.

Motivation Deficit 3: Instruction Does Not Engage (Cont.)

Try These Ideas to Improve Motivation by *Increasing* the Reinforcing Power of Classroom Instruction:

- *Incorporate Cooperative Learning Activities into Instruction* (Beyda, Zentall, & Ferko, 2002; Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2002). Teacher-directed cooperative learning activities can be highly reinforcing for adolescent students, who typically find opportunities to interact with classmates to be a strong motivator. Cooperative learning tasks have the added advantages of promoting active student engagement and allowing the instructor to get real-time feedback through direct observation about the abilities and learning of individual students.

Motivation Deficit 3: Instruction Does Not Engage (Cont.)

Try These Ideas to Improve Motivation by *Increasing* the Reinforcing Power of Classroom Instruction:

- *Maintain a Brisk Pace of Instruction* (Gettinger & Seibert, 2002). Instruction that is well-matched to the abilities of the classroom and moves at a brisk pace is most likely to capture and hold student attention. Additionally, the teacher is careful to avoid 'dead time', interruptions of instruction (e.g., time-consuming transitions to other activities; etc.) when students may get off-task and be difficult to redirect back to academic tasks.

Motivation Deficit 4: *The student is unmotivated because he or she fails to see an adequate pay-off to doing the assigned work.*



- **Profile of a Student with This Motivation Problem:** The student requires praise, access to rewards, or other reinforcers in the short term as a temporary 'pay-off' to encourage her or him to apply greater effort.

Motivation Deficit 4: Insufficient Student Pay-Off (Cont.)

- **What the Research Says:** The use of external rewards ('reinforcers') can serve as a temporary strategy to encourage a reluctant student to become invested in completing school work and demonstrating appropriate behaviors (Akin-Little, Eckert, Lovett, & Little, 2004). As the student puts increased effort into academics and behavior to earn teacher-administered reinforcers, the student may in turn begin to experience such positive natural reinforcers as improved grades, increased peer acceptance, a greater sense of self-efficacy in course content, and higher rates of teacher and parent approval. The teacher can then fade and perhaps fully eliminate the use of rewards.

Motivation Deficit 4: Insufficient Student Pay-Off (Cont.)

- **How to Verify the Presence of This Motivation Problem:**
Through direct observation, student interview, and/or other means, the teacher has verified that instruction is effectively delivered and sufficiently engaging for most of the class, that the target student has the academic and related skills required for the academic work, and that the student has failed to be motivated by existing incentives such as grades that are typically available in classrooms. In the teacher's judgment, the target student needs additional incentives (e.g., praise, rewards) to promote motivation to complete academic tasks.

Motivation Deficit 4: Insufficient Student Pay-Off (Cont.)

- **How to Fix This Motivation Problem:**

Praise the Student. The teacher praises the student in clear and specific terms when the student engages in the desired behavior (Kern & Clemens, 2007). The teacher uses praise statements at a rate sufficient to motivate and guide the student toward the behavioral goal.

Praise: Effective...and Underused

Praise can be an efficient way to raise the compliance level of whole groups or individual students. However, studies show that praise is seldom used with general education students and is used even less often with special-needs students (Kern & Clemens, 2007).

Source: Kern, L. & Clemens, N. H. (2007). Antecedent strategies to promote appropriate classroom behavior. *Psychology in the Schools, 44*, 65-75.

Motivation Deficit 4: Insufficient Student Pay-Off (Cont.)

- **How to Fix This Motivation Problem:**

Use Rewards. The teacher establishes a reward system to motivate an individual student by implementing these steps (e.g., Kazdin, 1989):

1. *Define the Target Behavior.*
2. *Establish Criteria for Success.*
3. *Choose Student Incentives.*
4. *Decide Whether a Point System Will Be Used.*
5. *Decide How the Reward is to Be Delivered.*

Setting Up a Reward Program for a Middle or High School Student: Five Steps

Students who lack motivation to apply effort or behave appropriately in their middle or high school classrooms may benefit from the temporary opportunity to earn incentives for important behavioral goals such as paying attention in class, doing assigned work, or complying with teacher requests. Reward programs can work well for students who chronically struggle in the classroom and do not see a meaningful payoff to doing their assigned work. The purpose of a reward program is to give the student external incentives to encourage increased effort. Presumably, as the student tries harder to attend to instruction and complete academic tasks in order to earn rewards, there is the possibility that the student will also begin to experience collateral benefits from the increased effort, such as improved grades, greater peer acceptance, and an improved sense of self-efficacy with course work. As these benefits accrue, the teacher can gradually fade, then discontinue, the reward program.

General guidelines appear below for setting up an individual reward program in a middle or high school classroom:

1. **Define the Target Behavior.** The teacher writes a definition of the undesired student behavior to be decreased or the desired behavior to be increased as a result of the reward program. The behavioral definition should be written in clear, specific terms—sufficiently clear to allow different observers who might review the behavioral definition to all be in general agreement about when the student is displaying that behavior in the classroom.

Here are sample behavioral definitions:

- *John turns in homework, with clear evidence that he has attempted each problem or item assigned.*
- *Jane remains in her seat during large-group instruction.*
- *Frank complies with teacher requests within 1 minute.*

2. **Establish Criteria for Success.** The teacher defines the minimum acceptable criteria for student success in the target behavior, which may include information about time intervals, cumulative frequency, and/or percentage of compliance.

Time-intervals. Most reward systems are based on time intervals. If the student meets the behavioral goal within a specified time interval, the student is judged to have earned an incentive (e.g., reward, token point, praise, etc.). Here are examples of success criteria tied to time intervals:



Motivating the Reluctant Student: Activity

- Review the two reasons for poor student motivation presented.
 - Discuss how your school might identify and support students who lack motivation for these reasons.
- Motivation Deficit 3: The student is unmotivated because classroom instruction does not engage.
 - Motivation Deficit 4: The student is unmotivated because he or she fails to see an adequate pay-off to doing the assigned work.

Motivation Deficit 5: *The student is unmotivated because of low self-efficacy—lack of confidence that he or she can do the assigned work.*



- **Profile of a Student with This Motivation Problem:** The student has a low sense of self-efficacy in a subject area, activity, or academic task and that lack of confidence reduces the student's motivation to apply his or her best effort. NOTE: Self-efficacy is the student's view of his or her own abilities specific to a particular academic area (e.g., mathematics) and should not be confused with self-esteem, which represents the student's global view of his or her self-worth.

Motivation Deficit 5: Low Self-Efficacy (Cont.)

- **What the Research Says:** Students often sabotage their academic performance by engaging in negative self-talk about their abilities and by making faulty attributions to explain poor academic performance (Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2002).

Motivation Deficit 5: Low Self-Efficacy (Cont.)

- **How to Verify the Presence of This Motivation Problem:**
Teachers can tap students' impressions of self-efficacy by asking them to 'think aloud' about their abilities in the academic area of interest, encouraging the student to:
 - talk about their perceived strengths and weaknesses as learners in particular subject areas
 - give examples (with details) about specific successes and failures that they have experienced on academic assignments present strategies (if any) that they typically use to
 - Discuss how they complete a range of common academic tasks (e.g., undertaking a term paper, completing a chemistry lab exercise, doing homework)
 - disclose their routine for preparing for quizzes and tests.

Motivation Deficit 5: Low Self-Efficacy (Cont.)

- **How to Fix This Motivation Problem:**
Challenge Faulty Student Attributions about Ability. As a student articulates attitudes toward learning and describes techniques that he or she uses as an independent learner, the teacher can use this information to identify whether a low sense of academic self-efficacy may be holding the student back.

A useful framework for analyzing student views about their academic abilities is presented by Linnenbrink & Pintrich (2002). The authors analyze student attributions along three dimensions: internal/external; stable/unstable; and controllable/uncontrollable.

How Attributions About Learning Contribute to Academic Outcomes

Attribution Theory: Dimensions Affecting Student Interpretation of Academic Successes & Failures

(Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2002)

The situation or event is...

- Unstable (changes often)

- Stable (can be counted on to remain relatively unchanged)

- Internal (within the student)

- External (occurring in the surrounding environment)

- Uncontrollable (beyond the ability of the student to influence)

- Controllable (within the student's ability to influence)

How Attributions About Learning Contribute to Academic Outcomes

*Some people are born mathematicians.
and picks questions that are impossible to study for!
I was born to watch TV.*

The situation or event is...

- Unstable (changes often)

- Stable (can be counted on to remain relatively unchanged)

- Internal (within the student)

- External (occurring in the surrounding environment)

- Uncontrollable (beyond the ability of the student to influence)

- Controllable (within the student's ability to influence)

Motivation Deficit 5: Low Self-Efficacy (Cont.)

- Examples of Faulty Student Attributions and 'Teacher Corrections': External vs. Internal

A student blames the teacher for giving unannounced quizzes that catch the student unprepared (**external** explanation of the problem).

In response, the instructor points out that the student has the option to review course content regularly and thus always be prepared for quizzes (shifting the focus by tying the **internal** explanation of student preparation to the goal of improving academic performance).

Motivation Deficit 5: Low Self-Efficacy (Cont.)

- Examples of Faulty Student Attributions and 'Teacher Corrections': Stable vs. Unstable

A student laments to her math teacher that her difficulty in grasping concepts relating to negative numbers shows that she 'will never get a good grade in math' (a view that the problem is long-term and therefore **stable**).

The teacher helps the student to reframe the problem as **unstable** and likely to improve soon by noting that many students struggle with negative-number concepts but that the student should find upcoming math instructional modules to be much easier to comprehend.

Motivation Deficit 5: Low Self-Efficacy (Cont.)

- Examples of Faulty Student Attributions and 'Teacher Corrections': Controllable vs. Uncontrollable

A teacher points out to a student who complains about the requirements of a particular course as arbitrary and unfair (**uncontrollable**) that the student was given a syllabus at the start of the semester spelling out all academic requirements to be used as a roadmap for the course, that the syllabus will allow the student to complete assignments ahead of time if he wishes, and that furthermore the student is welcome to seek help from the teacher whenever he chooses (**controllable** factors).

Challenging 'Faulty' Student Attributions: Example

A student says 'I am just not wired to be a writer' (faulty attribution: stable, internal, uncontrollable). The teacher shows the student evidence to disconfirm her attribution: examples of the student's own writing from a portfolio that are of high quality because the topics had interested the student.

The instructor demonstrates that when the student puts effort into her writing, the product is reliably and predictably improved--reframe: unstable/changeable (quality of the writing product depends on student effort), internal (the student has the necessary skill set to produce good writing), controllable (student effort is the key factor in producing a quality writing product).

Source: Linnenbrink, E. A., & Pintrich, P. R. (2002). Motivation as an enabler for academic success. *School Psychology Review*, 31, 313-327.

Motivation Deficit **6**: *The student is unmotivated because he or she lacks a positive relationship with the teacher.*



- **Profile of a Student with This Motivation Problem:** The student appears indifferent or even hostile toward the instructor and thus may lack motivation to follow teacher requests or to produce work.

Motivation Deficit 6: Lack of Positive Relationship (Cont.)

- **What the Research Says:** Because humans are highly social beings, positive teacher attention can be a very powerful motivator for students (e.g., Kazdin, 1989).

Motivation Deficit 6: Lack of Positive Relationship (Cont.)

- **What the Research Says (Cont.):** At times, however, instructors and students can fall into a 'negative reinforcement trap' (Maag, 2001; p. 176) that actively undercuts positive relationships: A student who has difficulty with the classwork misbehaves and is then sent by the teacher to the principal's office. Both teacher and student are reinforced by the student's exclusion from the classroom: The teacher is negatively reinforced by having a difficult student removed from the room and the student is *also* negatively reinforced by being allowed to escape the challenging classwork. Because this scenario is reinforcing to both parties, it is very likely to be repeated with increasing frequency unless the teacher intervenes to break the negative cycle.

Motivation Deficit 6: Lack of Positive Relationship (Cont.)

- **How to Verify the Presence of This Motivation Problem:**

The teacher looks for evidence that the student lacks a positive relationship with the teacher, such as:

- the student's apparent avoidance of opportunities to talk to the teacher
- a lack of eye contact, sarcastic or defiant student comments
- a general pattern of defiant or non-compliant behavior.

NOTE: Because teachers as well as students are social beings, an instructor's impression of whether a student 'likes' them or not can often be a good predictor of the actual state of the teacher-student relationship.

Motivation Deficit 6: Lack of Positive Relationship (Cont.)

- **How to Fix This Motivation Problem:** The teacher provides the student with increased doses of positive attention at times when the student is engaging in appropriate behavior. (At the same time, the teacher keeps interactions with the student brief and neutral when that student misbehaves—although the student otherwise is held to the same behavioral expectations as his or her peers.)

Motivation Deficit 6: Lack of Positive Relationship (Cont.)

Try These Ideas to Improve the Student-Teacher Relationship:

- *Strive for a High Ratio of Positive Interactions with Students* (Sprick, Borgmeier, & Nolet, 2002). A general, proactive rule of thumb to promote positive teacher-student relationships is for instructors to maintain a ratio of at least three positive interactions with any student for every negative (disciplinary) interaction that they have that student.

Motivation Deficit 6: Lack of Positive Relationship (Cont.)

Try These Ideas to Improve the Student-Teacher Relationship:

- *Commit to a Short Series of Positive 'Micro-Conversations'* (Mendler, 2000). The teacher selects a student with whom that instructor wants to build a more positive relationship. The instructor makes a commitment to spend 2 minutes per day for ten consecutive days engaging the student in a positive conversation about topics of interest to that student. NOTE: During those two-minute daily conversations, the teacher maintains a positive tone and avoids talking about the student's problem behaviors or poor academic performance.

Motivation Deficit 6: Lack of Positive Relationship (Cont.)

Try These Ideas to Improve the Student-Teacher Relationship:

- *Emphasize the Positive in Teacher Requests* (Braithwaite, 2001). The teacher avoids using negative phrasing (e.g., "If you don't return to your seat, I can't help you with your assignment") when making a request of a student. Instead, the teacher request is stated in positive terms (e.g., "I will be over to help you on the assignment just as soon as you return to your seat"). When a request has a positive 'spin', that teacher is less likely to trigger a power struggle and more likely to gain student compliance.



Motivating the Reluctant Student: Activity

- Review the two reasons for poor student motivation presented.
 - Discuss how your school might identify and support students who lack motivation for these reasons.
- Motivation Deficit 5: The student is unmotivated because of low self-efficacy—lack of confidence that he or she can do the assigned work.
 - Motivation Deficit 6: The student is unmotivated because he or she lacks a positive relationship with the teacher.

Anticipating the Unmotivated Student

Teachers can proactively use the checklist of reasons for poor motivation (and related strategies to address them).

The teacher reviews each motivation blocker and verifies that he or she has procedures in place at the group level to address them.

- The student is unmotivated because he or she cannot do the assigned work.
- The student is unmotivated because the 'response effort' needed to complete the assigned work seems too great.
- The student is unmotivated because classroom instruction does not engage.
- The student is unmotivated because he or she fails to see an adequate pay-off to doing the assigned work.
- The student is unmotivated because of low self-efficacy—lack of confidence that he or she can do the assigned work.
- The student is unmotivated because he or she lacks a positive relationship with the teacher.

05:00

Response to Intervention

The Unmotivated Student: Possible Reasons: Activity

At your table:

- Review the possible reasons for lack of student motivation reviewed in this presentation.
- Discuss which of these reasons your school would probably be MOST open to addressing and which might cause some resistance among staff.

- The student is unmotivated because he or she cannot do the assigned work.
- The student is unmotivated because the 'response effort' needed to complete the assigned work seems too great.
- The student is unmotivated because classroom instruction does not engage.
- The student is unmotivated because he or she fails to see an adequate pay-off to doing the assigned work.
- The student is unmotivated because of low self-efficacy—lack of confidence that he or she can do the assigned work.
- The student is unmotivated because he or she lacks a positive relationship with the teacher.

Secondary-Level Tier 1 Intervention: Behavioral Case Example

Jim Wright

www.interventioncentral.org



Tier 1 Case Example: Justin:
Non-Compliance



Case Example: Non-Compliance

The Problem

- Justin showed a pattern from the start of the school year of not complying with teacher requests in his English class. His teacher, Mr. Steubin, noted that – when given a teacher directive—Justin would sometimes fail to comply. Justin would show no obvious signs of opposition but would sit passively or remain engaged in his current activity, as if ignoring the instructor.

When no task demands were made on him, Justin was typically a quiet and somewhat distant student but otherwise appeared to fit into the class and show appropriate behavior.

Case Example: Non-Compliance

The Evidence

- *Student Interview.* Mr. Steubin felt that he did not have a strong relationship with the student, so he asked the counselor to talk with Justin about why he might be non-compliant in English class. Justin told the counselor that he was bored in the class and just didn't like to write. When pressed by the counselor, Justin admitted that he could do the work in the class but chose not to.
- *Direct Observation.* Mr. Steubin noted that Justin was less likely to comply with writing assignments than other in-class tasks. The likelihood that Justin would be non-compliant tended to go up if Mr. Steubin pushed him to comply in the presence of Justin's peers. The odds that Justin would comply also appeared to increase when Mr. Steubin stated his request and walked away, rather than continuing to 'nag' Justin to comply.

Case Example: Non-Compliance

The Evidence (Cont.)

- *Work Products.* Mr. Steubin knew from the assignments that he did receive from Justin that the student had adequate writing skills. However, Justin's compositions tended to be short, and ideas were not always as fully developed as they could be—as Justin was doing the minimum to get by.
- *Input from Other Teachers.* Mr. Steubin checked with other teachers who had Justin in their classes. The Spanish teacher had similar problems in getting Justin to comply but the science teacher generally found Justin to be a compliant and pleasant student. She noted that Justin seemed to really like hands-on activities and that, when potentially non-compliant, he responded well to gentle humor.

Case Example: Non-Compliance

The Intervention

- Mr. Steubin realized that he tended to focus most of his attention on Justin's non-compliance. So the student's non compliance might be supported by teacher attention. OR the student's compliant behaviors might be extinguished because Mr. Steubin did not pay attention to them.
- The teacher decided instead that Justin needed to have appropriate consequences for non-compliance, balanced with incentives to engage in learning tasks. Additionally, Mr. Steubin elected to give the student attention at times that were NOT linked to non-compliance.

Case Example: Non-Compliance

The Intervention (Cont.)

- *Appropriate Consequences for Non-Compliance.* Mr. Steubin adopted a new strategy to deal with Justin's episodes of non-compliance. Mr. Steubin got agreement from Justin's parents that the student could get access to privileges at home each day only if he had a good report from the teacher about complying with classroom requests.

Whenever the student failed to comply within a reasonable time (1 minute) to a teacher request, Mr. Steubin would approach Justin's desk and quietly restate the request as a two-part 'choice' statement. He kept his verbal interactions brief and neutral in tone. As part of the 'choice' statement, the teacher told Justin that if he did not comply, his parents would be emailed a negative report. If Justin still did not comply, Mr. Steubin would follow through later that day in sending the report of non-compliance to the parents.

Teacher Command Sequence: Two-Part Choice Statement

1. *Make the request.* Use simple, clear language that the student understands.

If possible, phrase the request as a positive (*do*) statement, rather than a negative (*don't*) statement. (E.g., "*Justin, please start your writing assignment now.*") Wait a reasonable time for the student to comply (e.g., 1 minute)

Teacher Command Sequence: Two-Part Choice Statement

- 2. [If the student fails to comply] Repeat the request as a 2-part choice.* Give the student two clear choices with clear consequences. Order the choices so that the student hears negative consequence as the first choice and the *teacher request* as the second choice. (E.g., “Justin, I can email your parents to say that you won’t do the class assignment or you can start the assignment now and not have a negative report go home. It’s your choice.”) Give the student a reasonable time to comply (e.g., 1 minute).

Teacher Command Sequence: Two-Part Choice Statement

3. *[If the student fails to comply] Impose the pre-selected negative consequence.* As you impose the consequence, ignore student questions or complaints that appear intended to entangle you in a power struggle.

Case Example: Non-Compliance

The Intervention (Cont.)

- *Active Student Engagement.* Mr. Steubin reasoned that he could probably better motivate the entire class by making sure that lessons were engaging.

He made an extra effort to build lessons around topics of high interest to students, built in cooperative learning opportunities to engage students, and moved the lesson along at a brisk pace. The teacher also made 'real-world' connections whenever he could between what was being taught in a lesson and ways that students could apply that knowledge or skill outside of school or in future situations.

Case Example: Non-Compliance

The Intervention (Cont.)

- *Teacher Attention (Non-Contingent)*. Mr. Steubin adopted the two-by-ten intervention (A. Mendler, 2000) as a way to jumpstart a connection with Justin. The total time required for this strategy was 20 minutes across ten school days.

Sample Ideas to Improve Relationships With Students: **The Two-By-Ten Intervention** (Mendler, 2000)

- Make a commitment to spend *2 minutes per day* for *10 consecutive days* in building a relationship with the student...by talking about topics of interest to the student.

Avoid discussing problems with the student's behaviors or schoolwork during these times.

Source: Mendler, A. N. (2000). *Motivating students who don't care*. Bloomington, IN: National Educational Service.

Case Example: Non-Compliance

The Outcome

- The strategies adopted by Mr. Steubin did not improve Justin's level of compliance right away. Once the teacher had gone through the full ten days of the 'two by ten' intervention, however, Mr. Steubin noticed that Justin made more eye contact with him and even joked occasionally. And the student's rate of compliance then noticeably improved—but still had a way to go.
- Mr. Steubin kept in regular contact with Justin's parents, who admitted about 8 days into the intervention that they were not as rigorous as they should be in preventing him from accessing privileges at home when he was non-compliant at school. When the teacher urged them to hold the line at home, they said that they would –and did. Justin's behavior improved as a result, to the point where his level of compliance was typical for the range of students in Mr. Steubin's class.