RTI Toolkit: A Practical Guide for Schools

Behavioral Intervention Strategies for Groups and Individual Students

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Defining Student Problem Behaviors: A Key to Identifying Effective Interventions

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. 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 (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 good method to judge whether the problem has been adequately defined is to apply the "stranger test": Can a stranger read the problem definition statement, then observe the student, and be able to judge reliably when the behavior occurs and when it does not? A useful self-prompt to come up with a more detailed description of the problem is to ask, "What does <problem behavior> look like in the classroom?"

   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		
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*
During 20-minute independent seatwork literacy tasks,…	…John talks with peers about non-instructional topics…	…an average of three times.
In school settings such as the playground or gymnasium, when unsupervised by adults,…	…Angela is reported by peers to use physically threatening language…	…at least once per week.
When given a verbal teacher request…	…Jay fails to comply with that request within 3 minutes…	… an average of 50% of the time.

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.

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	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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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		
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*

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

Establishing a Positive Classroom Climate: Teacher Tips for Managing Group Behaviors

Here are six management tips to create a more smoothly running classroom:

1. Set firm but fair behavioral standards at the start of the school year. Teachers who set firm, reasonable expectations for student behaviors send the message from day one that they expect the classroom to be a place of respect, civility, and learning. As one instructor noted, "First impressions are everything. Students need to know the behavioral boundaries in the classroom—and they can only know them if you show them!"

2. If you teach with others, make sure that all members of the instructional team use consistent discipline practices. Nothing confuses students more than having various members of a teaching team impose different behavioral expectations and consequences. When teachers on a team are inconsistent in how they respond to student misbehavior, the result can be angry and frustrated students. Be proactive. Hold team planning meetings early in the school year to reach agreement on what kinds of negative student misbehavior warrant consequences and what those consequences should be. Write up the results of that discussion as behavior management guidelines. Then monitor to sure that team members follow the plan consistently! (You may want to go a step further and share your behavioral guidelines with your students.)

3. Classroom rules: Keep 'em short and sweet. Classroom rules tend to be most effective when they are few in number (e.g., 3-5) and stated in positive terms whenever possible (e.g., "Work quietly at your desk" rather than "Don't disturb other students!"). Teachers also find that students are more respectful of rules when they have had a voice in coming up with them. Finally, remember to post rules prominently and review them occasionally to 'remind' students that you really do value appropriate behaviors!

4. Get to know your students from the beginning. Students are less likely to misbehave or act disrespectfully toward the teacher if they have a positive relationship with him or her. Teachers can get a jumpstart on getting to know their class as individuals by making up a simple survey for students to complete at the start of the school year. By asking students to answer items such as "What privileges or rewards do you prefer?", "List some learning activities that you enjoy", and "What instructional topics really interest you?", teachers can get interesting insights into their students as well as discover what topics, activities, or rewards are likely to motivate them.

5. Be a role model. Teachers should never forget that they are powerful behavioral role models for their students. Because they shape student behaviors by their own example, teachers should hold themselves to the same standards for civility and respect that they expect of their students. If a classroom rule states, for example, that "In this classroom, we use a respectful tone of voice", the rule applies equally to students and teachers. To quote one teacher with whom we talked, "In the classroom, teachers should aim to treat others consistently, fairly, and respectfully. We are mirrors for our students!"

6. Put together a classroom crisis plan. No teacher likes to imagine that a crisis will occur in his or her classroom, for example, a student suddenly becoming physically threatening. However, instructors who plan their responses to possible crisis situations are much more able to respond quickly and appropriately if and when such events occur. You can take charge of crisis planning by becoming familiar with your school's crisis plan, talking with staff whose rooms are near yours about how you can mutually help one another out in the event of a crisis, and teaching your students how they should respond (e.g., by evacuating the classroom in an orderly fashion) if a crisis situation occurs.

Effective Teacher Commands: Establishing Classroom Control

As classroom managers, teachers regularly use commands to direct students to start and stop activities. Instructors find commands to be a crucial tool for classroom management, serving as instructional signals that help students to conform to the teacher's expectations for appropriate behaviors. Teachers frequently dilute the power of their classroom commands, however, by:

Effective Teacher Commands...

- Are brief
- Are delivered one at a time Use specific language so that the student clearly understands the request
- Avoid an authoritarian, "Do it my way or else!" tone of voice
- Avoid strong negative emotion or sarcasm
- Are stated as directives rather than as questions
- Avoid long explanations or justifications (and present any explanation before the command rather than after it).
- Allow the student a short but reasonable amount of time to comply without additional teacher comments or directives

- presenting commands as questions or polite requests. Commands have less impact when stated as questions or requests, because the student may believe that he or she has the option to decline. The teacher who attempts, for example, to quiet a talkative student by saying, "Tanya, could you mind keeping your voice down so that other students can study?" should not be surprised if the student replies, "No, thank you. I would prefer to talk!"

- stating commands in vague terms. A student may ignore a command such as "Get your work done!" because it does not state specifically what behaviors the teacher expects of the student.

- following up commands with excessive justifications or explanations. Because teachers want to be viewed as fair, they may offer long, drawn-out explanations for why they are requiring the class or an individual student to undertake or to stop a behavior. Unfortunately, students can quickly lose the thread the explanation and even forget the command that preceded it! Using Effective Commands Teachers can reduce problems with student compliance and make their commands more forceful by following research-based guidelines (Walker & Walker, 1992):

Using Effective Commands Teachers can reduce problems with student compliance and make their commands more forceful by following research-based guidelines (Walker & Walker, 1992):

Effective teacher commands:

- are brief. Students can process only so much information. Students tend to comply best with brief commands because they are easy to understand and hard to misinterpret.

- are delivered one task or objective at a time. When a command contains multi-step directions, students can mishear, misinterpret, or forget key steps. A student who appears to be noncompliant may simply be confused about which step in a multi-step directive to do first!

- are delivered in a matter-of-fact, businesslike tone. Students may feel coerced when given a command in an authoritarian, sarcastic, or angry tone of voice. For that reason alone, they may resist the teacher's directive. Teachers will often see greater student compliance simply by giving commands in a neutral or positive manner.

- are stated as directives rather than questions. Perhaps to be polite, teachers may phrase commands as questions (e.g., "Could we all take out our math books now?"). A danger in using 'question-commands' is that the student may believe that he or she has the option to decline! Teachers should state commands as directives, saving questions for those situations in which the student exercises true choice.

- avoid long explanations or justifications. When teachers deliver commands and then tack lengthy explanations onto them, they diminish the force of the directive. If the instructor believes that students should know why they are being told to do something, the teacher should deliver a brief explanation prior to the command.

- give the student a reasonable amount of time to comply. Once the teacher has given a command, he or she should give the student a reasonable timespan (e.g., 5-15 seconds) to comply. During that waiting period, the instructor should resist the temptation to nag the student, elaborate on the request, or other wise distract the student.

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Reducing Problem Behaviors Through Good Academic Management: 10 Strategies

Students who are confrontational or non-compliant frequently have poor academic skills, a low sense of self-efficacy as learners, and a very negative attitude toward school (Sprick, et al., 2002). Misbehavior often stems from academic deficits. Educators who work with these behaviorally challenging learners, however, often make the mistake of overlooking simple academic strategies that have been shown to shape student behavior in powerful and positive ways (Penno et al., 2000). Here are ten research-based ideas on academic management that no teacher of difficult-to-manage students should be without!

1. Be sure that assigned work is not too easy and not too difficult. It is surprising how often classroom behavior problems occur simply because students find the assigned work too difficult or too easy (Gettinger & Seibert, 2002). When assignments are too simple, the student may become bored and distracted. When work is too hard, the student is likely to feel frustrated and upset because he or she cannot complete the assignment. As a significant mismatch between the assignment and the student's abilities can trigger misbehavior, teachers should inventory each student's academic skills and adjust assignments as needed to ensure that the student is appropriately challenged but not overwhelmed by the work.

2. Offer frequent opportunities for choice. Teachers who allow students a degree of choice in structuring their learning activities typically have fewer behavior problems in their classrooms than teachers who do not. (Kern et al., 2002). Providing choices gives students a sense of autonomy and voice in their learning. It should also be remembered that no teacher could possibly anticipate each student's idiosyncratic learning needs in every situation. If students are offered choice in structuring their academic activities, however, they will frequently select those options that make their learning easier and more manageable. In sum, students who exercise academic choice are more likely to be active, motivated managers of their own learning and less likely to simply act out due to frustration or boredom. As an example of choice at the group level, an instructor may let the entire class vote on which of two lessons they would prefer to have presented that day. Choice can be incorporated into individual assignments too. In independent seatwork, for example, a student might be allowed to choose which of several short assignments to do first, the books or other research materials to be used, the response format (e.g., writing a short essay, preparing an oral report), etc. 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. An instructor, for example, may teach the class that during any independent assignment, students will always have a chance 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.

3. Select high-interest or functional learning activities. Kids are more motivated to learn when their instructional activities are linked to a topic of high interest (Kern et al., 2002). A teacher who discovers that her math group of 7th-graders loves NASCAR racing, for

example, may be able to create engaging math problems based on car-racing statistics. Students may also be energized to participate in academic activities if they believe that these activities will give them functional skills that they value (Miller et al., 2003). One instructor assigned to work with a special-education classroom of high school boys with serious behavior problems related that she had great difficulty managing the class—until she realized that each of them wanted to learn to drive. So the teacher brought in copies of the state driver's education manual and that became the instructional text. The students were much better behaved because they were now motivated learners working toward the pragmatic real-world goal of learning to drive (R. Sarsfield, personal communication).

4. Instruct students at a brisk pace. A myth of remedial education is that special-needs students must be taught at a slower, less demanding pace than their general-education peers (Heward, 2003). In fact, a slow pace of instruction can actually cause significant behavior problems, because students become bored and distracted. Teacher-led instruction should be delivered at a sufficiently brisk pace to hold student attention. An important additional benefit of a brisk instructional pace is that students cover more academic material more quickly, accelerating their learning (Heward, 2003).

5. Structure lessons to require active student involvement. Here is a powerful concept in behavior management: it is very difficult for students to be actively engaged in academics and to misbehave at the same time! When teachers require that students participate in lessons rather than sit as passive listeners, they increase the odds that these students will become caught up in the flow of the activity and not drift off into misbehavior (Heward, 2003). Students can be encouraged to be active learning participants in many ways. A teacher, for example, may call out questions and have the class give the answer in unison ('choral responding'); pose a question, give the class 'think time', and then draw a name from a hat to select a student to give the answer; or direct students working independently on a practice problem to 'think aloud' as they work through the steps of the problem. Students who have lots of opportunities to actively respond and receive teacher feedback also demonstrate substantial learning gains (Heward, 1994).

6. Incorporate cooperative-learning opportunities into instruction. Traditional teacher lecture is frequently associated with high rates of student misbehavior. When misbehavior occurs in a large-group format, it also can have a large negative impact: one acting-out student who gets into a power-struggle with the lecturing instructor will interrupt learning for the entire class. There is evidence, though, that when students are given well-structured assignments and placed into work-pairs or cooperative learning groups, behavior problems typically diminish (Beyda et al., 2002). Furthermore, if a behavior problem should occur while cooperative groups are working together, the teacher is often able to approach and privately redirect the misbehaving student without disrupting learning in the other groups (Beyda et al., 2002). Even positive teacher practices can be more effective when used in cooperative-learning settings. When instructors teaching in lecture format take the time to give extended feedback and provide coaching to individuals, other students can become disengaged and off-task. If students are working in pairs or small groups, though, teacher feedback given to one group or individual does not interrupt learning for the other groups.

7. Give frequent teacher feedback and encouragement. Praise and other positive interactions between teacher and student serve an important instructional function, because these exchanges regularly remind the student of the classroom behavioral and academic expectations and give the student clear evidence that he or she is capable of achieving those expectations (Mayer, 2000). Unfortunately, in most classrooms, educators tend to deliver many more reprimands than they do praise statements. This imbalance is understandable: after all, teachers are under pressure to devote most of their class time to deliver high-quality instruction and tend to interrupt that instruction only when forced to deal with disruptive behavior. A high rate of reprimands and low rate of praise, however, can have several negative effects. First, if teachers do not regularly praise and encourage students who act appropriately, those positive student behaviors may whither away through lack of recognition. Second, students will probably find a steady diet of reprimands to be punishing and might eventually respond by withdrawing from participation or even avoiding the class altogether. A goal for teachers should be to engage in at least 3 to 4 positive interactions with the student for each reprimand given (Sprick, et al., 2002). Positive interactions might include focused, specific praise, non-verbal exchanges (e.g., smile or 'thumbs-up' from across the room), or even an encouraging note written on the student's homework assignment. These positive interactions are brief and can often be delivered in the midst of instruction.

8. Provide correct models during independent work. In virtually every classroom, students are expected to work independently on assignments. Independent seatwork can be a prime trigger, though, for serious student misbehavior (DuPaul & Stoner, 2002). One modest instructional adjustment that can significantly reduce problem behaviors is to supply students with several correctly completed models (work examples) to use as a reference (Miller et al., 2003). A math instructor teaching quadratic equations, for example, might provide 4 models in which all steps in solving the equation are solved. Students could refer to these models as needed when completing their own worksheets of similar algebra problems. Or an English/Language Arts teacher who assigns his class to compose a letter to their U.S. Senator might allow them to refer to three 'model' letters while they write.

9. Be consistent in managing the academic setting. Picture this (not-uncommon) scenario: A teacher complains that her students routinely yell out answers without following the classroom rule of first raising their hand to be recognized. She invites an observer into the classroom to offer her some ideas for reducing the number of call-outs. The observer quickly discovers that the teacher often ignores students who have raised their hand and instead accepts answers that are blurted out. Because she is inconsistent in enforcing her classroom rules, the teacher is actually contributing to student misbehavior! As a group, students with challenging behaviors are more likely than their peers to become confused by inconsistent classroom routines. Teachers can hold down the level of problem behaviors by teaching clear expectations for academic behaviors and then consistently following through in enforcing those expectations (Sprick et al., 2002). Classrooms run more smoothly when students are first taught routines for common learning activities--such as participating in class discussion, turning in homework, breaking into cooperative learning groups, and handing out work materials—and then the teacher

consistently enforces those same routines by praising students who follow them, reviewing those routines periodically, and reteaching them as needed.

10. Target interventions to coincide closely with 'point of performance'. Skilled teachers employ many strategies to shape or manage challenging student behaviors. For instance, a teacher may give a 'pre-correction' (reminder about appropriate behaviors) to a student who is about to leave the room to attend a school assembly, award a 'good behavior' raffle-ticket to a student who displayed exemplary behavior in the hallway, or allow a student to collect a reward that she had earned for being on time to class for the whole week. It is generally a good idea for teachers who work with a challenging students to target their behavioral and academic intervention strategies to coincide as closely as possible with that student's 'point of performance' (the time that the student engages in the behavior that the teacher is attempting to influence) (DuPaul & Stoner, 2002). So a teacher is likely to be more successful in getting a student to take his crayons to afternoon art class if that teacher reminds the student just as the class is lining up for art than if she were to remind him at the start of the day. A student reward will have a greater impact if it is given near the time in which it was earned than if it is awarded after a two-week delay. Teacher interventions tend to gain in effectiveness as they are linked more closely in time to the students' points of performance that they are meant to influence.

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Creating Reward Menus That Motivate: Tips for Teachers

Rewards are often central to effective school interventions. As possible incentives that students can earn for appropriate school performance or conduct, these reinforcers (or 'rewards') often serve as the motivational 'engine' that drives successful interventions.

Choosing rewards to use as incentives for a student intervention may seem simple and straightforward. A reinforcer, however, probably will not be successful unless it passes three important tests:

- Acceptability Test. Does the teacher approve of using the reinforcer with this child? Are parent(s) likely to approve the use of the reinforcer with their child?

- Availability Test. Is the reinforcer typically available in a school setting? If not, can it be obtained with little inconvenience and at a cost affordable to staff or parents?

- Motivation Test. Does the child find the reinforcer to be motivating?

Reward systems are usually most powerful when a student can select from a range of reward choices ('reward menu'). Offering students a menu of possible rewards is effective because it both gives students a meaningful choice of reinforcers and reduces the likelihood that the child will eventually tire of any specific reward.

However, some children (e.g., those with Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) may lose interest in specific reward choices more quickly than do their typical peers. Teachers will want to regularly update and refresh reward menus for such children to ensure these reinforcers retain their power to positively shape those students' behaviors.

Creating a 'Reward Deck.' A Reward Deck is an idea that can help teachers to quickly select and regularly update student reward menus. This strategy involves 5 steps:

1. The teacher reviews a list of reward choices typically available in school settings. (Instructors can use the comprehensive sampling of possible school rewards that appears in the next section: Jackpot! Ideas for Classroom Rewards.). From this larger list, the teacher selects only those rewards that she or he approves of using, believes would be acceptable to other members of the school community (e.g., administration, parents), and finds feasible and affordable.

2. The teacher writes out acceptable reward choices on index cards-- to create a master 'Reward Deck'

3. Whenever the teacher wants to create a reward menu for a particular student, he or she first 'screens' reward choices that appear in the master Reward Deck and temporarily removes any that seem inappropriate for that specific case. (For example, the teacher may

screen out the reward 'pizza party' because it is too expensive to offer to a student who has only minor difficulties with homework completion.)

4. The teacher then sits with the child and presents each of the reward choices remaining in the Reward Deck. For each reward option, the child indicates whether he or she (a) likes the reward a lot, (b) likes the reward a little, or (c) doesn't care for the reward. The teacher sorts the reward options into three piles that match these rating categories. The teacher can then assemble that child's Reward Menu using the student's top choices ("like a lot"). If the instructor needs additional choices to fill out the rest of the menu, he or she can pull items from the student's "like a little" category as well.

5. (Optional but recommended) Periodically, the instructor can meet with the student and repeat the above procedure to 'refresh' the Reward Menu quickly and easily.

School-Wide Strategies for Managing...
OFF-TASK / INATTENTION

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Students who have chronic difficulties paying attention in class face the risk of poor grades and even school failure. Inattention may be a symptom of an underlying condition such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. However, teachers should not overlook other possible explanations for student off-task behavior. It may be, for example, that a student who does not seem to be paying attention is actually mismatched to instruction (the work is too hard or too easy) or preoccupied by anxious thoughts. Or the student may be off-task because the teacher's lesson was poorly planned or presented in a disorganized manner. It is also important to remember that even children with ADHD are influenced by factors in their classroom setting and that these students' level of attention is at least partly determined by the learning environment. Teachers who focus on making their instruction orderly, predictable, and highly motivating find that they can generally hold the attention of most of their students most of the time. Here are some ideas to consider to boost rates of student attending and on-task behavior:

Capture Students' Attention Before Giving Directions *(Ford, Olmi, Edwards, & Tingstrom, 2001; Martens & Kelly, 1993)*. Gain the student's attention before giving directions and use other strategies to ensure the student's full understanding of them. When giving directions to an individual student, call the student by name and establish eye contact before providing the directions. When giving directions to the whole class, use group alerting cues such as 'Eyes and ears on me!' to gain the class's attention. Wait until all students are looking at you and ready to listen before giving directions. When you have finished giving directions to the entire class, privately approach any students who appear to need assistance. Quietly restate the directions to them and have them repeat the directions back to you as a check for understanding.

Class Participation: Keep Students Guessing *(Heward, 1994)*. Students attend better during large-group presentations if they cannot predict when they will be required to actively participate. Randomly call on students, occasionally selecting the same student twice in a row or within a short time span. Or pose a question to the class, give students 'wait time' to formulate an answer, and then randomly call on a student.

Employ Proximity Control *(Ford, Olmi, Edwards, & Tingstrom, 2001; Gettinger & Seibert, 2002; U.S. Department of Education, 2004)*. Students typically increase their attention to task and show improved compliance when the teacher is in close physical proximity. During whole-group activities, circulate around the room to keep students focused. To hold an individual student's attention, stand or sit near the student before giving directions or engaging in discussion.

Give Clear Directions *(Gettinger & Seibert, 2002; Gettinger, 1988)*. Students will better understand directions when those directions are delivered in a clear manner, expressed in language the student understands, given at a pace that does not overwhelm the student, and posted for later review. When giving multi-step directions orally, write those directions on the board or give to students as a handout to consult as needed. State multi-step directions one direction at a time and confirm that the student is able to comply with each step before giving the next direction.

Give Opportunities for Choice *(Martens & Kelly, 1993; Powell & Nelson, 1997)*. Allowing students to exercise some degree of choice in their instructional activities can boost attention span and increase academic engagement. Make a list of 'choice' options that you are comfortable offering students during typical learning activities. During independent seatwork, for example, you might routinely let students choose where they sit, allow them to work alone or in small groups, or give them 2 or 3 different choices of assignment selected to be roughly equivalent in difficulty and learning objectives.

Instruct at a Brisk Pace *(Carnine, 1976; Gettinger & Seibert, 2002)*. When students are appropriately matched to instruction, they are likely to show improved on-task behavior when they are taught at a brisk pace rather than a slow one. To achieve a brisk pace of instruction, make sure that you are fully prepared prior to the lesson and that you minimize the time spent on housekeeping items such as collecting homework or on transitions from one learning activity to another.

Make the Activity Stimulating *(U.S. Department of Education, 2004)*. Students require less conscious effort to remain on-task when they are engaged in high-interest activities. Make instruction more interesting by choosing a specific lesson topic that you know will appeal to students (e.g., sports, fashion). Or help students to see a valuable 'real-word' pay-off for learning the material being taught. Another tactic is to make your method of instruction more stimulating. Students who don't learn well in traditional lecture format may show higher rates of engagement when interacting with peers (cooperative learning) or when allowed the autonomy and self-pacing of computer-delivered instruction.

Pay Attention to the On-Task Student *(DuPaul & Ervin, 1996; Martens & Meller, 1990)*. Teachers who selectively give students praise and attention only when those students are on-task are likely to find that these students show improved attention in class as a result. When you have a student who is often off-task, make an effort to identify those infrequent times when the student is appropriately focused on the lesson and immediately give the student positive attention. Examples of teacher attention that students will probably find positive include verbal praise and encouragement, approaching the student to check on how he or she is doing on the assignment, and friendly eye contact.

Provide a Quiet Work Area *(U.S. Department of Education, 2004)*. Distractible students benefit from a quiet place in the classroom where they can go when they have more difficult assignments to complete. A desk or study carrel in the corner of the room can serve as an appropriate workspace. When introducing these workspaces to students, stress that the quiet locations are intended to help students to concentrate. Never use areas designated for quiet work as punitive 'time-out' spaces, as students will then tend to avoid them.

Provide Attention Breaks *(DuPaul & Ervin, 1996; Martens & Meller, 1990)*. If students find it challenging to stay focused on independent work for long periods, allow them brief 'attention breaks'. Contract with students to give them short breaks to engage in a preferred activity each time that they have finished a certain amount of work. For example, a student may be allowed to look at a favorite comic book for 2 minutes each time that he has completed five problems on a math worksheet and checked his answers. Attention breaks can refresh the student –and also make the learning task more reinforcing.

Reduce Length of Assignments *(DuPaul & Ervin, 1996; U.S. Department of Education, 2004)*. Students' attention may drift when completing overly long assignments. For new material, trim assignments to the minimum length that you judge will ensure student understanding. When having students practice skills or review previously taught material, break that review into a series of short assignments rather than one long assignment to help to sustain interest and engagement.

Schedule Challenging Tasks for Peak Attention Times *(Brock, 1998)*. Many students with limited attention can focus better in the morning, when they are fresh. Schedule those subjects or tasks that the student finds most difficult early in the day. Save easier subjects or tasks for later in the day, when the student's attention may start to wane.

Select Activities That Require Active Student Responding *(Gettinger & Seibert, 2002; Heward, 1994)*. When students are actively engaged in an activity, they are more likely to be on-task. Avoid long stretches of instructional time in which students sit passively listening to a speaker. Instead, program your instructional activities so that students must frequently 'show what they know'

through some kind of active [visible] response. For example, you might first demonstrate a learning strategy to students and then divide the class into pairs and have students demonstrate the strategy to each other while you observe and evaluate.

Transition Quickly *(Gettinger & Seibert, 2002; Gettinger, 1988)*. When students transition quickly between educational activities and avoid instructional 'dead time', their attention is less likely to wander. Train students to transition appropriately by demonstrating how they should prepare for common academic activities, such as group lecture and independent seatwork. Have them practice these transitions, praising the group for timely and correct performance. Provide additional 'coaching' to individual students as needed. During daily instruction, verbally alert students several minutes before a transition to another activity is to occur.

Use Advance Organizers *(U.S. Department of Education, 2004)*. One strategy to improve on-task behavior is to give students a quick overview of the activities planned for the instructional period or day. This 'advance organizer' provides students with a mental schedule of the learning activities, how those activities interrelate, important materials needed for specific activities, and the amount of time set aside for each activity. All students benefit when the teacher uses advance organizers. However inattentive students especially benefit from this overview of learning activities, as the advance organizer can prompt, mentally prepare, and focus these students on learning right when they most need it.

Use Preferential Seating *(U.S. Department of Education, 2004)*. Seating the student near the teacher is one tried-and-true method to increase on-task behavior. Preferential seating simply means that you seat the student in a location where he or she is most likely to stay focused on what you are teaching. Remember that all teachers have an 'action zone', a part of the room where they tend to focus most of their instruction. Once you have analyzed your 'action zone' as a teacher, place the student's seat somewhere within that zone. Of course, the ideal seating location for any particular student will vary, depending on the unique qualities of the target student and of your classroom. When selecting preferential seating, consider whether the student might be self-conscious about sitting right next to the teacher. Also, try to select a seat location that avoids other distractions. For example, you may want to avoid seating the student by a window or next to a talkative classmate.

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School-Wide Strategies for Managing... HYPERACTIVITY

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Hyperactive students tend to have a very high energy level, act impulsively and can be behaviorally distracting. They may fidget, play with objects, tap pencils so loudly against their desk that kids from across the room look over at them, or blurt out answers to teacher questions before the instructor is even finished asking them. When working with students who are hyperactive or impulsive, teachers should keep in mind that these students are very often completely unaware that others view their behavior as distracting or annoying. Teachers working with such children can greatly increase their own effectiveness by clearly communicating behavioral expectations to students, by encouraging and rewarding students who behave appropriately, and by being consistent and fair when responding to problem student behaviors. Here are teacher ideas for managing impulsive or hyperactive students who display problem motor or verbal behaviors:

Adopt a 'Silent Signal' *(U.S. Department of Education, 2004)*. You can redirect overactive students in a low-key manner by using a silent signal. Meet privately with the student and identify for the student those motor or verbal behaviors that appear to be most distracting. With the student's help, select a silent signal that you can use to alert the student that his or her behavior has crossed the threshold and now is distracting others. Role-play several scenarios with the student in which you use the silent signal and the student then controls the problem behavior. When you are able to successfully use the 'silent signal' during instruction, be sure to praise the student privately for responding appropriately and promptly to your signal.

Allow Discretionary Motor Breaks *(U.S. Department of Education, 2004)*. When given brief 'movement' breaks, highly active students often show improvements in their behaviors. Permit the student to leave his or her seat and quietly walk around the classroom whenever the student feels particularly fidgety. Or, if you judge that motor breaks within the classroom would be too distracting, consider giving the student a discretionary pass that allows him or her to leave the classroom briefly to get a drink of water or walk up and down the hall.

Encourage Acceptable Outlets for Motor Behavior *(U.S. Department of Education, 2004)*. If the student distracts other students by playing with objects, substitute an alternative motor behavior that will not distract others. Give the student a soft 'stress ball' and encourage the student to squeeze it whenever he or she feels the need for motor movement. Or if the setting is appropriate, allow the student to chew gum as a replacement motor behavior.

Have the Student Monitor Motor Behaviors and Call-Outs *(DuPaul & Stoner, 2002)*. Students can often change problem behaviors when they pay attention to those behaviors. Have the student monitor his or her motor behaviors or call-outs. First, choose a class period or part of the day when you want the student to monitor distracting behaviors. Next, meet privately with the student to discuss which of that student's behaviors are distracting. Then, together with the student, design a simple distractible behavior-rating form with no more than 3 items (For a student who calls out frequently, for example, a useful rating item might be "How well did I observe the rule

today of raising my hand and being called on before giving an answer? Poor – Fair – Good".) Have the student rate his or her behaviors at the end of each class period. Make an effort to praise the student (a) for being accurate in rating behaviors, and (b) for any improvements that you see in the student's behaviors over time.

Ignore Low-Level Motor Behaviors *(Sprick, Borgmeier & Nolet, 2002; U.S. Department of Education, 2004)*. Selective ignoring can be an effective teacher response to minor fidgeting or other motor behaviors. If the student's 'fidgety' behaviors are relatively minor and do not seriously derail classroom instruction, the teacher should simply not pay attention to them.

Remove Unnecessary Items From the Student's Work Area *(U.S. Department of Education, 2004)*. Students who tend to distract themselves and others by playing with objects behave better when their work area is uncluttered. Take away (or direct the student to put away) any items that the student does not need for the work assignment but might be tempted to play with (e.g., extra pens, paper clips).

Schedule Group 'Stretch Breaks' *(Brock, 1998)*. You can increase the focus of your entire class and appropriately channel the motor behaviors of fidgety students by scheduling brief 'stretch breaks.' At their simplest, stretch breaks consist of having students stand next to their desks, stretch their arms, take a deep breath, and exhale slowly before resuming their seats. Or you can be creative, having students take part in different movements during each break (e.g., "OK class. It's time for a stretch break. Stand by your desk, arms over your head. Then take 3 steps back and 3 steps forward…"). NOTE: When using stretch breaks, be sure that you select movements that all of your students are physically able to accomplish without difficulty.

Seat the Student Next to Distraction-Resistant Peers *(Kerr & Nelson, 1998)*. One useful strategy for managing low-level motor behaviors is to seat the student next to peers who can generally ignore those behaviors. Rearrange seating in the classroom so that the student is sitting near peers who are good behavior models and are not readily distracted by that student's minor fidgety movements or playing with objects.

Select a 'Supportive Peer' *(DuPaul & Stoner, 2002)*. Handpick a classmate who has a good relationship with the student but is not easily drawn off-task and appoint that student as a 'helper peer'. Meet privately with the student and the helper peer. Tell the peer that whenever he or she notices that the student's verbal or motor behavior has risen to the level of distracting others, the peer should give the student a brief, quiet, non-judgmental signal (e.g., a light tap on the shoulder) to control the behavior. Role-play several scenarios so that the peer knows when he or she can ignore the student's low-level motor behaviors and when the peer should use a signal to alert the student to more distracting behaviors.

Structure Instructional Activities to Allow Interaction and Movement *(DuPaul & Stoner, 2002; Sprick, Borgmeier & Nolet, 2002; U.S. Department of Education, 2004)*. Students with high energy levels may be more likely to engage in distracting behavior when they are forced to sit through long periods of lecture or independent seatwork. Instead, offer students frequent opportunities for more movement by designing instruction to actively engage them as learners (e.g., cooperative learning). An additional advantage of less formal, more spontaneous learning activities is that when the overactive child does happen to display motor behaviors in this relaxed setting, those behaviors are less likely to distract peers.

Use 'Response Cost' *(DuPaul & Stoner, 2002; Martens & Meller, 1990)*. A strategy to reduce distracting verbal or motor behaviors is to use 'response cost': first awarding points or tokens and then deducting those points or tokens whenever the behavior distracts other students. Here is a simple version that you can use in your classroom: Award the student a certain number of 'behavior points' (e.g., 5) at the start of each class period and write a series of tally marks on the

blackboard that corresponds to this number. Privately inform the student that each time that he or she engages in verbal or motor behaviors that obviously distract other students (e.g., cause them to comment on the behavior), you will silently go to the board and erase one point from the student's total. At the end of each class period, the student is allowed to keep any 'behavior points' that remain. Let the student know that he or she can collect points across multiple days and eventually redeem a certain number of collected 'behavior points' for prizes or privileges (e.g., extra free time).

Use Brief Reminders About Appropriate Behavior and Conduct *(DuPaul & Stoner, 2002; Sprick, Borgmeier & Nolet, 2002)*. Provide students with brief reminders of expected behaviors at the 'point of performance', when they will most benefit from it. Consider using structured prompts such as the following for students who tend to blurt out answers: "When I ask this question, I will give the class 10 seconds to think of your best answer. Then I will call on one student." Or you can remind students who have difficulty moving through hallways as part of a group, "Remember to keep hands to self and to walk quietly on the right as we walk to art class."

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School-Wide Strategies for Managing...
DEFIANCE / NON-COMPLIANCE

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Students who are defiant or non-compliant can be among the most challenging to teach. They can frequently interrupt instruction, often do poorly academically, and may show little motivation to learn. There are no magic strategies for managing the behaviors of defiant students. However, research shows that certain techniques tend to work best with these children and youth: (1) Give the student positive teacher recognition. Even actions as simple as greeting the student daily at the classroom door or stopping by the student's desk to ask 'How are you doing?' can over time turn strained relationships into positive ones. (2) Monitor the classroom frequently and intervene proactively to redirect off-task students before their mild misbehaviors escalate into more serious problems. (3) Avoid saying or doing things that are likely to anger or set off a student. Speak calmly and respectfully, for example, rather than raising your voice or using sarcasm. (4) When

you must intervene with a misbehaving student, convey the message to the student that you will not tolerate the problem behavior—but that you continue to value and accept the student. (5) Remember that the ultimate goal of any disciplinary measure is to teach the student more positive ways of behaving. Punishment generally does not improve student behaviors over the long term and can have significant and lasting negative effects on school performance and motivation. (6) Develop a classroom 'crisis response plan' to be implemented in the event that one or more students display aggressive behaviors that threaten their own safety or the safety of others. Be sure that your administrator approves this classroom crisis plan and that everyone who has a part in the plan knows his or her role. One final thought: While you can never predict what behaviors your students might bring into your classroom, you will usually achieve the best outcomes by remaining calm, following pre-planned intervention strategies for misbehavior, and acting with consistency and fairness when intervening with or disciplining students. Here are other ideas for managing defiant or non-compliant students:

Allow the Student a 'Cool-Down' Break *(Long, Morse, & Newman, 1980)*. Select a corner of the room (or area outside the classroom with adult supervision) where the target student can take a brief 'respite break' whenever he or she feels angry or upset. Be sure to make cool-down breaks available to all students in the classroom, to avoid singling out only those children with anger-control issues. Whenever a student becomes upset and defiant, offer to talk the situation over with that student once he or she has calmed down and then direct the student to the cool-down corner. (E.g., "Thomas, I want to talk with you about what is upsetting you, but first you need to calm down. Take five minutes in the cool-down corner and then come over to my desk so we can talk.")

Ask Open-Ended Questions *(Lanceley, 2001)*. If a teacher who is faced with a confrontational student does not know what triggered that student's defiant response, the instructor can ask neutral, open-ended questions to collect more information before responding. You can pose 'who', 'what', 'where', 'when', and 'how' questions to more fully understand the problem situation and identify possible solutions. Some sample questions are "What do you think made you angry when you were talking with Billy?" and "Where were you when you realized that you had misplaced your science book?" One caution: Avoid asking 'why"'questions (e.g., "Why did you get into that fight with Jerry?") because they can imply that you are blaming the student.

Assign a Reflective 'Processing' Essay After Misbehavior *(Boynton & Boynton, 2005; Mayer & Ybarra, 2004; Walker, Colvin, & Ramsey, 1995)*. The student who gets into a conflict must write and submit to the teacher a brief 'process' plan outlining how they will improve their behavior. At minimum, the plan would state: (1) the role the student played in the conflict, (2) the part that other participants may have taken in the incident, (3) the student's suggestions for finding the best resolution to the problem, and (4) how the student can act in the future to prevent the conflict from recurring. NOTE: Some teachers use a pre-printed structured questionnaire containing these 4 items for the student to complete.

Do Not Get Entangled in Arguments *(Walker & Walker, 1991)*. The careful teacher avoids being dragged into arguments or unnecessary discussion when disciplining students. When you must deliver a command to, confront, or discipline a student who is defiant or confrontational, be careful not to get 'hooked' into a discussion or argument with that student. If you find yourself being drawn into an exchange with the student (e.g., raising your voice, reprimanding the student), immediately use strategies to disengage yourself (e.g., by moving away from the student, repeating your request in a business-like tone of voice, imposing a pre-determined consequence for noncompliance).

Emphasize the Positive in Teacher Requests *(Braithwaite, 2001)*. When an instructor's request has a positive 'spin', that teacher is less likely to trigger a power struggle and more likely to gain student compliance. Whenever possible, avoid using negative phrasing (e.g., "If you don't return

to your seat, I can't help you with your assignment"). Instead, restate requests in positive terms (e.g., "I will be over to help you on the assignment just as soon as you return to your seat").

Expand the Range of Classroom Behavior Interventions *(Sprick, Borgmeier, & Nolet, 2002)*. The teacher who has developed an array of in-class consequences for minor misbehaviors can prevent students from being sent to the principal's office or to in-school detention. First, list those common misbehaviors that you believe should typically be handled in the classroom (e.g. being late to class, talking out). When finished, categorize your list of misbehaviors into 3 groups: 'Level 1' (mild) misbehaviors, 'Level 2' (medium) misbehaviors, and 'Level 3' (more serious) misbehaviors. Then, list next to each level of problem behaviors a range of in-class consequences that you feel appropriately match those types of misbehavior. For example, you may decide that a 'soft' reprimand would be a choice to address Level 1 misbehaviors, while a phone call to the parent would be a choice for Level 3 misbehaviors. NOTE: In-class consequences are intended for minor misbehaviors. You should notify an administrator whenever students display behaviors that seriously disrupt learning or pose a risk to the safety of that student or to others.

Give Praise That is Specific and Does Not Embarrass the Student *(Sprick, Borgmeier, & Nolet, 2002)*. Defiant students can respond well to adult praise but only when it is sincere and specific, and is not embarrassing. Ideally, the teacher should deliver praise as soon as possible after the positive behavior. Praise should be specific and descriptive—because vague, general praise can sound fake and does not give the student any useful information about how their behavior meets or exceeds the teacher's expectations. For older students who tend to dislike being praised in a highly public manner, the teacher can use a more indirect or low-key approach (e.g., writing a note of praise on the student's graded assignment, praising the student in a private conversation, calling the student's parent to praise the student).

Give Problem Students Frequent Positive Attention *(Sprick, Borgmeier, & Nolet, 2002)*. Teachers should make an effort to give positive attention or praise to problem students at least three times more frequently than they reprimand them. The teacher gives the student the attention or praise during moments when that student is acting appropriately--and keeps track of how frequently they give positive attention and reprimands to the student. This heavy dosing of positive attention and praise can greatly improve the teacher's relationship with problem students.

Have the Student Participate in Creating a Behavior Plan *(Walker, Colvin, & Ramsey, 1995)*. Students can feel a greater sense of ownership when they are invited to contribute to their behavior management plan. Students also tend to know better than anyone else what triggers will set off their problem behaviors and what strategies they find most effective in calming themselves and avoiding conflicts or other behavioral problems.

Increase 'Reinforcement' Quality of the Classroom *(Dunlap & Kern, 1996; Mayer & Ybarra, 2004)*. If a student appears to be defiant or non-compliant in an effort to escape the classroom, the logical solution is to make the classroom environment and activities more attractive and reinforcing for that student. Unfortunately, the student who fails repeatedly at academics can quickly come to view school as punishment. Some ideas to increase motivation to remain in the classroom are to structure lessons or assignments around topics of high interest to the target student, to increase opportunities for cooperative learning (which many students find reinforcing), and to adjust the target student's instruction so that he or she experiences a high rate of success on classwork and homework.

Keep Responses Calm, Brief, and Businesslike *(Mayer, 2000; Sprick, Borgmeier, & Nolet, 2002)*. Because teacher sarcasm or lengthy negative reprimands can trigger defiant student behavior, instructors should respond to the student in a 'neutral', business-like, calm voice. Also, keep responses brief when addressing the non-compliant student. Short teacher responses give the defiant student

less control over the interaction and can also prevent instructors from inadvertently 'rewarding' misbehaving students with lots of negative adult attention.

Listen Actively *(Lanceley, 1999; Long, Morse, & Newman, 1980)*. The teacher demonstrates a sincere desire to understand a student's concerns when he or she actively listens to and then summarizes those concerns. Many students lack effective negotiation skills in dealing with adults. As a result, these students may become angry and defensive when they try to express a complaint to the teacher-even when that complaint is well founded. The instructor can show that he or she wants to understand the student's concern by summing up the crucial points of that concern (paraphrasing) in his or her own words. Examples of paraphrase comments include 'Let me be sure that I understand you correctly…', 'Are you telling me that…?', 'It sounds to me like these are your concerns:…' When teachers engage in 'active listening' by using paraphrasing, they demonstrate a respect for the student's point of view and can also improve their own understanding of the student's problem.

Offer the Student a Face-Saving Out *(Thompson & Jenkins, 1993)*. Students sometimes blunder into potential confrontations with their teachers; when this happens, the teacher helps the student to avoid a full-blown conflict in a manner that allows the student to save face. Try this face-saving de-escalation tactic: Ask the defiant student, "Is there anything that we can work out together so that you can stay in the classroom and be successful?" Such a statement treats the student with dignity, models negotiation as a positive means for resolving conflict, and demonstrates that the instructor wants to keep the student in the classroom. It also provides the student with a final chance to resolve the conflict with the teacher and avoid other, more serious disciplinary consequences. Be prepared for the possibility that the student will initially give a sarcastic or unrealistic response (e.g., "Yeah, you can leave me alone and stop trying to get me to do classwork!"). Ignore such attempts to hook you into a power struggle and simply ask again whether there is any reasonable way to engage the student's cooperation. When asked a second time, students will often come up with workable ideas for resolving the problem. If the student continues to be non-compliant, however, simply impose the appropriate consequences for that misbehavior.

Proactively Interrupt the Student's Anger Early in the Escalation Cycle *(Long, Morse, & Newman, 1980; Walker, Colvin, & Ramsey, 1995)*. The teacher may be able to 'interrupt' a student's escalating behaviors by redirecting that student's attention or temporarily removing the student from the setting. If the student is showing only low-level defiant or non-compliant behavior, you might try engaging the student in a high-interest activity such as playing play an educational computer game or acting as a classroom helper. Or you may want to briefly remove the student from the room ('antiseptic bounce') to prevent the student's behavior from escalating into a full-fledged confrontation. For example, you might send the student to the main office on an errand, with the expectation that-by the time the child returns to the classroom-he or she will have calmed down.

Project Calmness When Approaching an Escalating Student *(Long, Morse, & Newman, 1980; Mayer, 2000; Walker, Colvin, & Ramsey, 1995)*. A teacher's chances of defusing a potential confrontation with an angry or defiant student increase greatly if the instructor carefully controls his or her behavior when first approaching the student. Here are important tips: Move toward the student at a slow, deliberate pace, and respect the student's private space by maintaining a reasonable distance. If possible, speak privately to the student, using a calm and respectful voice. Avoid body language that might provoke the student, such as staring, hands on hips, or finger pointing. Keep your comments brief. If the student's negative behaviors escalate despite your best efforts, move away from the student and seek additional adult assistance or initiate a crisis-response plan.

Relax Before Responding *(Braithwaite, 2001)*. Educators can maintain self-control during a tense classroom situation by using a brief, simple stress-reduction technique before responding to a student's provocative remark or behavior. When provoked, for example, take a deeper-than-normal breath and release it slowly, or mentally count to 10. As an added benefit, this strategy of

conscious relaxation allows the educator an additional moment to think through an appropriate response--rather than simply reacting to the student's behavior.

Reward Alternative (Positive) Behaviors *(Mayer & Ybarra, 2004; Walker, Colvin, & Ramsey, 1995)*. The instructor can shape positive behaviors by selectively calling on the student or providing other positive attention or incentives only when the student is showing appropriate social and academic behaviors. The teacher withholds positive attention or incentives when the student misbehaves or does not engage in academics.

State Teacher Directives as Two-Part Choice Statements *(Walker, 1997)*. When a student's confrontational behavior seems driven by a need for control, the teacher can structure verbal requests to both acknowledge the student's freedom to choose whether to comply and present the logical consequences for non-compliance (e.g., poor grades, office disciplinary referral, etc.). Frame requests to uncooperative students as a two-part statement. First, present the negative, or non-compliant, choice and its consequences (e.g., if a seatwork assignment is not completed in class, the student must stay after school). Then state the positive behavioral choice that you would like the student to select (e.g., the student can complete the seatwork assignment within the allotted work time and not stay after school). Here is a sample 2-part choice statement, 'John, you can stay after school to finish the class assignment or you can finish the assignment now and not have to stay after class. It is your choice.'

Use a 'Buddy Teacher' for Brief Student Breaks *(Boynton & Boynton, 2005)*. Sending a mildly non-compliant student on a short visit to a neighboring classroom can give both the teacher and student a needed break. Arrange with an instructor in a nearby room for either of you to send a student to the other's room whenever you need a short respite from the student. Set aside a seating area in each classroom for student visitors. NOTE: These timeouts should be used only sparingly and should NOT be used if the student appears to find the breaks rewarding or to seek them as a way to avoid work.

Use Non-Verbal and Para-Verbal Behaviors to Defuse Potential Confrontations *(Braithwaite, 2001; Long, Morse, & Newman, 1980; Walker, Colvin, & Ramsey, 1995)*. When interacting with defiant or confrontational students, teachers can use non-verbal and para-verbal techniques such as non-threatening body language, soft tone of voice, or strategic pauses during speech, to reduce tensions. For example, if a student is visibly agitated, you may decide to sit down next to the student at eye level (a less threatening posture) rather than standing over that student. Or you might insert a very brief 'wait time' before each response to the student, as these micro-pauses tend to signal calmness, slow a conversation down and help to prevent it from escalating into an argument.

Use 'Soft' Reprimands *(Sprick, Borgmeier, & Nolet, 2002)*. The teacher gives a brief, gentle signal to direct back to task any students who is just beginning to show signs of misbehavior or non-compliance. These 'soft' reprimands can be verbal (a quiet word to the student) or non-verbal (a significant look). If a soft reprimand is not sufficient to curb the student's behaviors, the teacher may pull the student aside for a private problem-solving conversation or implement appropriate disciplinary consequences.

Validate the Student's Emotion by Acknowledging It *(Lanceley, 1999)*. When the teacher observes that a student seems angry or upset, the instructor labels the emotion that seems to be driving that student's behavior. 'Emotion labeling' can be a helpful tactic in deescalating classroom confrontations because it prompts the student to acknowledge his or her current feeling-state directly rather than continuing to communicate it indirectly through acting-out behavior. A teacher, for example, who observes a student slamming her books down on her desk and muttering to herself after returning from gym class might say to the student, "You seem angry. Could you tell me what is wrong?" Once a powerful emotion such as anger is labeled, the teacher and student can then talk about it, figure out what may have triggered it, and jointly find

solutions that will mitigate it. Emotion labeling should generally be done in a tentative manner ("John, you sound nervous…", "Alice, you appear frustrated…"), since one can never know with complete certainty what feelings another person is experiencing.

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Behavior Intervention Checklist: Foundation Tier 1 Behavior Management Strategies

Directions: The checklist below contains evidence-based strategies for managing classrooms and for increasing compliance with individual students. When observing a class, use the checklist to verify that effective strategies were in use.

- If specific strategies were observed, check 'Y' in the 'Observed?' column.
- Write any important observation comments in the 'Notes' column.
- If a particular management strategy is missing and appears to be critical to student success, check the 'Critical Item?' column for that strategy.

Whole-Group Management Strategies			
The strategies that teacher use proactively to manage the classroom can head off many behavior problems before they occur.			
Observed?	Behavior Management Strategy	Notes	Critical Item?
__Y __N	Post Positive Class Rules. The classroom has a set of 3-8 rules or behavioral expectations posted. When possible, those rules are stated in positive terms as 'goal' behaviors (e.g. 'Students participate in learning activities without distracting others from learning') (Sprick, Borgmeier, & Nolet, 2002)..		☐
__Y __N	Train Students in Basic Class Routines. The teacher has clearly established routines to deal with common classroom activities (Fairbanks, Sugai, Guardino, & Lathrop, 2007; Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003; Sprick, Borgmeier, & Nolet, 2002). These routines include but are not limited to: ☐ Engaging students in meaningful academic activities at the start of class (e.g., using bell-ringer activities) ☐ Assigning and collecting homework and classwork ☐ Transitioning students efficiently between activities ☐ Independent seatwork and cooperative learning groups ☐ Students leaving and reentering the classroom ☐ Dismissing students at the end of the period		☐
__Y __N	Scan the Class Frequently and Proactively Intervene When Needed. The teacher 'scans' the classroom frequently—during whole-group instruction, cooperative learning activities, and independent seatwork. The teacher strategically and proactively recognizes positive behaviors while redirecting students who are off-task (Sprick, Borgmeier, & Nolet, 2002). .		☐
__Y __N	Use Brief Group Prompts. The teacher gives brief reminders of expected behaviors at the 'point of performance'—the time when students will most benefit from them (DuPaul & Stoner, 2002). To prevent student call-outs, for example, a teacher may use a structured prompt such as: "When I ask this question, I will give the class 10 seconds to think of your best answer. Then I will call on one student."		☐

Instructional Delivery			
Teachers who accommodate, engage all learners in meaningful academic activities can prevent behavior problems.			
Observed?	Behavior Management Strategy	Notes	Critical Item?
__Y __N	Avoid Instructional 'Dead Time'. The teacher presents an organized lesson, with instruction moving briskly. There are no significant periods of 'dead time' (e.g., during roll-taking or transitioning between activities) when student misbehavior can start (Carnine, 1976; Gettinger & Ball, 2008).		☐
__Y __N	Incorporate Effective Instructional Elements into All Lessons. The teacher's lesson and instructional activities include these elements (Burns, VanDerHeyden, & Boice, 2008): ☐ *Instructional match.* Students are placed in work that provides them with an appropriate level of challenge (not too easy and not too difficult). ☐ *Explicit instruction.* The teacher delivers instruction using modeling, demonstration, supervised student practice, etc. ☐ *Active student engagement.* There are sufficient opportunities during the lesson for students to be actively engaged and 'show what they know'. ☐ *Timely performance feedback.* Students receive feedback about their performance on independent seatwork, as well as whole-group and small-group activities.		☐
__Y __N	Give Clear Directions. When delivering directions to the class, the teacher uses strategies that increase the likelihood that all students hear and clearly understand them (Ford, Olmi, Edwards, & Tingstrom, 2001). For large groups, such strategies might include using a general alerting cue (e.g., 'Eyes and ears on me') and ensuring general group focus before giving directions. Multi-step directions are posted for later student review. For individual students, the teacher may make eye contact with the student before giving directions and ask the student to repeat those directions before starting the assignment.		☐

Strategies for Working With Individual Students			
While teachers can never predict what behaviors students might bring into their classrooms, these instructors will usually achieve the best outcomes by remaining calm, following pre-planned intervention strategies for misbehavior, and acting with consistency and fairness when intervening with or disciplining students.			
Observed?	Behavior Management Strategy	Notes	Critical Item?
__Y __N	Prepare a Range of Appropriate Classroom Consequences for Misbehavior. The teacher has a continuum of classroom-based consequences for misbehavior (e.g., redirect the student; have a brief private conference with the student; remove classroom privileges; send the student to another classroom for a brief timeout) that are used before the teacher considers administrative removal of the student from the classroom (Sprick, Borgmeier, & Nolet, 2002)..		☐

__Y __N	Select Behavior Management Strategies Based on Student Need. The teacher is able flexibly to select different behavior management strategies for use with different students, demonstrating their understanding that one type of intervention strategy cannot be expected to work with all students. (Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003)		☐
__Y __N	Employ Proximity Control. The teacher circulates through the classroom periodically, using physical proximity to increase student attention to task and general compliance (Gettinger & Seibert, 2002; U.S. Department of Education, 2004).		☐
__Y __N	Ask Open-Ended Questions. The teacher asks neutral, open-ended questions to collect more information before responding to a student who is upset or appears confrontational (Lanceley, 1999). The teacher can pose 'who', 'what', 'where', 'when', and 'how' questions to more fully understand the problem situation and identify possible solutions (e.g., "What do you think made you angry when you were talking with Billy?"). Teachers should avoid asking 'why" questions because they can imply that the teacher is blaming the student.		☐
__Y __N	Use Proactive 'Soft Reprimands'. The teacher gives a brief, gentle signal to direct back to task any students who is just beginning to show signs of misbehavior or non-compliance (Sprick, Borgmeier, & Nolet, 2002). These 'soft' reprimands can be verbal (a quiet word to the student) or non-verbal (a significant look). If a soft reprimand is not sufficient to curb the student's behaviors, the teacher may pull the student aside for a private problem-solving conversation or implement appropriate disciplinary consequences.		☐
__Y __N	Keep Responses Calm and Brief. The teacher responds to provocative or confrontational students in a 'neutral', business-like, calm voice and keeps responses brief (Sprick, Borgmeier, & Nolet, 2002; Walker & Walker, 1991). The teacher avoids getting 'hooked' into a discussion or argument with that student. Instead the teacher repeats the request calmly and—if necessary-- imposes a pre-determined consequence for noncompliance.		☐
__Y __N	Emphasize the Positive in Teacher Requests. Whenever possible, the teacher states requests to individual students in positive terms (e.g., "I will be over to help you on the assignment just as soon as you return to your seat") rather than with a negative spin (e.g., "I won't help you with your assignment until you return to your seat."). When an instructor's request has a positive 'spin', that teacher is less likely to trigger a power struggle and more likely to gain student compliance (Braithwaite, 2001).		☐

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Finding the Spark: More Ideas for Building Student Motivation

Teachers can feel overwhelmed when faced with students who are unmotivated to learn. The task becomes less daunting, though, when teachers realize that they can boost student motivation in five important ways: by (1) making positive changes to the learning environment, (2) fostering a sense of community in the classroom, (3) enhancing the interest of classroom activities, (4) responding to individual learning challenges, and (5) building in additional outcomes/pay-offs for learning. Here are some ideas:

Learning Environment

The setting in which we work can encourage us to give our best effort or discourage us from even trying to perform.

Ideas to motivate by influencing factors in the student's environment:

- Reduce distractions in the classroom.
- Create a consistent room arrangement, with predictable materials and routines.
- Let students choose their seat location and study partners.
- Enlist students to come up with rules and guidelines for effective classroom learning.
- Create a memory-friendly classroom. Post assignments and due dates, written steps for multi-step tasks, etc.
- Use a mix of verbal and environmental cues to keep students focused and on-task.
- Hold class in different locations occasionally ("within-building field trip"). For example, think about 'swapping' classrooms with another teacher on a given day.
- Ask for student advice on how to make the classroom a more inviting and useful learning environment.

Classroom Community

We define ourselves in relation to others through social relationships. These connections are a central motivator for most people.

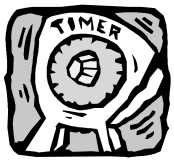
Ideas to motivate by fostering a sense of a learning community:

- Be as inviting a person as possible by actively listening to students and acknowledging their contributions.
- Greet students at the classroom door. 'Check in' briefly with students at the start and end of a work period.
- Ask students to complete a learning-preferences questionnaire.
- Assign 'study buddies' who help each other to get organized, start work projects, encourage one another, and provide peer feedback.
- Train students to be peer editors or evaluators of others' assignments.
- Hold weekly 5-minute 'micro-meetings' with the group or class. Check in with the group about topics or issues important to them. Record important points brought up and get back to students if necessary.

- Keep 'dialog journals'. Have students write daily or weekly comments in a journal to be kept in class. Respond to student comments with short comments of your own.
- Circulate through the classroom. Be interactive and visible to kids. Use words of praise and encouragement.

Academic Activities

Motivated students are engaged in interesting activities that guarantee a high success rate and relate to real-world issues.



Ideas to motivate through selection and development of learning activities:

- Use humor.
- Keep miscellaneous work supplies on hand (e.g., paper, pencils, etc.) for students to borrow.
- Set a timer (e.g., for 60 seconds) and challenge students to finish routine tasks or transition between activities before timer runs out.
- Set up academic 'culminating event' fieldtrips. On these fieldtrips, have students use skills learned in class (e.g., drafting questions in social studies to be used in an interview with a member of city government).
- Invite interesting guest speakers into the classroom to speak on academic topics. Prepare index cards with review questions and answers based on material covered in class. Have guest speaker 'quiz' teams; award points to teams based on their mastery of material.
- Offer students meaningful choice in setting up their assignments (e.g., selection of work materials, type of activity).
- Select fun, imaginative activities for reviewing academic material. In order to get students to assemble material for a research paper, for example, you might send them to the library on a fact-finding 'scavenger hunt.'
- Encourage active student participation.
- Use motivating 'real-world' examples for review, quiz, or test items.
- Keep instructions and assignments short. Have students repeat instructions back.
- Celebrate student achievement.
- Celebrate mistakes as opportunities for learning.
- Prior to assignments, have students set their own short-term work or learning goals. Periodically, have students rate their own progress toward their self-selected goals.
- Structure work period so that more difficult activities are in the middle, with easier tasks at the start and end.
- Liven potentially dull student review activities by conducting them as class-wide or small-group drills. Use a game format to maintain interest.
- Use novel, interesting materials for instruction.
- Allow students to set their own pace for completing work.
- Select activities that make a community contribution. Students may, for instance, work on writing skills by publishing a monthly newsletter for the 7th grade.

Learning Challenges

Every learner presents a unique profile of strengths and weaknesses. We unlock motivation when we acknowledge and address unique learning profiles.

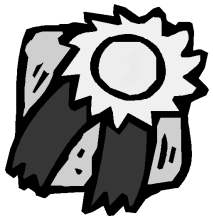
Ideas to motivate by accommodating challenges to learning:

- Avoid 'stigmatizing' as low performers those students who require remedial academic support.
- Lead students through the first part of an assignment as a group before having them complete it independently.
- If an assignment requires use of new or difficult terms or concepts, first pre-teach or preview this material.
- Make the classroom a 'safe' setting in which in which students can identify and work on their own skill deficits.
- Give students credit and recognition for effort on assignments as well as for mastery of content.
- Be honest in telling students how challenging a topic or activity is likely to be to master. Never downplay the difficulty of an assignment!
- Use a 'think-aloud' approach when introducing a skill or strategy.
- Select academic activities that guarantee a high degree of student success.
- Allow students to take a brief break when tired or frustrated.
- Help students to get organized and started on an activity.
- Have students keep a schedule of work assignments and due dates.
- Encourage students to use memory aids such as notes and lists.
- Assist students in breaking large, multi-step tasks into smaller subtasks. Have students write those subtasks down as a personal 'to-do' list.
- Teach students to use a notebook organizer.
- Give reminders of upcoming transitions between activities.
- Help students to highlight key information to be remembered.
- Provide frequent review of key concepts.
- Periodically remind students of timeline of upcoming assignments.

Outcomes/Payoffs for Learning

Learning is a motivating activity when the learner can count on short- or long-term payoffs for mastering the material being taught.

Ideas to motivate by arranging or emphasizing payoffs to the student for successful learning:



- Reward student *effort* along with *quality* of completed work. (One way to do this is to use frequent *encouragement* for good effort along with *praise* for finished work.)
- Build in short-term rewards (e.g., increased free time, pencils, positive note home) for student effort, work completion.
- Create high-visibility location for displaying student work (e.g., bulletin board, web site). Encourage students to select their own best work to be posted.
- Have students monitor their own progress in accuracy/work completion. For example, have students create graphs charting homework assignments turned in. Tie student-monitored performance to reward programs.

Acknowledgements

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Engaging the Student as an Active RTI Partner in the Intervention Planning Process

Schools should strongly consider having middle and high school students attend and take part in their own RTI Problem-Solving Team meetings for two reasons. First, as students mature, their teachers expect that they will take responsibility in advocating for their own learning needs. Second, students are more likely to fully commit to RTI intervention plans if they attend the RTI Team meeting and have a voice in the creation of those plans.

Before the RTI Team Meeting. The student should be adequately prepared to attend the RTI Team meeting by first engaging in a 'pre-meeting' with a school staff member whom the student knows and trusts (e.g., school counselor, teacher, administrator). By connecting the student with a trusted mentor figure who can help that student to navigate the RTI process, the school improves the odds that the disengaged or unmotivated student will feel an increased sense of connection and commitment to their own school performance (Bridgeland, DiIulio, & Morison, 2006).

A student RTI 'pre-meeting' can be quite brief, lasting perhaps 15-20 minutes. Here is a simple agenda for the meeting:

- *Share information about the student problem(s).* Share with the student information about the problems with academic performance or behavior that led to an RTI Team referral. For example, the student may be shown RTI referral forms from teachers documenting their concerns or review recent grade reports.
- *Describe the purpose and steps of the RTI Problem-Solving Team meeting.* Be sure that the student understands that the goal of the upcoming RTI Team meeting is to develop an intervention plan designed to help the student to be successful.
- *Stress the student's importance in the intervention plan*. Emphasize the key role that the student can and should play in designing the intervention plan. Here the school is only acknowledging the obvious: a middle or high school student holds most of the power in deciding whether or not to commit to an intervention.
- *Have the student describe his or her learning needs.* Consider using the attached structured interview *Pre-RTI Team Meeting Student Interview: Sample Questions* to collect information about the student's learning needs.
- *Invite the student to attend the RTI Team meeting*. Reassure the student that he or she will not be singled out or 'attacked' at the problem-solving meeting. Assure the student that the meeting's purpose is simply to develop a plan to help that student to do better in school.

During the RTI Team Meeting. If the student agrees to attend the RTI Team meeting, he or she participates fully in the meeting. Teachers and other staff attending the meeting make an effort to keep the atmosphere positive and focused on finding solutions to the student's presenting concern(s). As each intervention idea is discussed, the team checks in with the student to determine that the student (a) fully understands how to access or participate in the intervention element being proposed and (b) is willing to take part in that intervention element. If the student appears hesitant or resistant, the team should work with the student either to win the student over to the proposed intervention idea or to find an alternative intervention that will accomplish the same goal.

At the end of the RTI Team meeting, each of the intervention ideas that is dependent on student participation for success is copied into the *School Success Intervention Plan* (see below), which is then signed by the student, parent, and an adult school contact with whom the student has a positive connection. The student is directed to inform the assigned school contact if the student discovers that he or she is unable to carry out any element on the *School Success Intervention Plan*. The school contact person can then follow up to determine how to fix any problems encountered in the plan.

After the RTI Team Meeting. If the school discovers that the student is not carrying out his or her responsibilities as spelled out by the intervention plan, it is recommended that the staff member assigned as the RTI contact meet with the student and parent. At that meeting, the adult contact checks with the student to make sure that:

- the intervention plan continues to be relevant and appropriate for addressing the student's academic or behavioral needs
- the student understands and call access all intervention elements outlined on the *School Success Intervention Plan*.
- adults participating in the intervention plan (e.g., classroom teachers) are carrying out their parts of the plan.

If all evidence suggests that the student clearly has the capability to implement the intervention plan and that the student simply chooses not to do so, the adult contact should remind the student and parent that the intervention plan cannot work without the student's active cooperation. The student and parent are informed that the intervention plan will be discontinued if the student continues to refuse to comply but that the intervention plan can be reinstated immediately if the student decides once again to participate in the plan.

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Pre-RTI Team Meeting Student Interview: Sample Questions

Directions. Set aside time before the RTI Problem-Solving Team meeting to meet individually with the referred student. Ask the following questions to better determine the student's learning needs. Record student responses and bring the completed questionnaire to the RTI Team meeting.

1. Which of your courses are the most challenging? Why?	
2. Describe how you study for quizzes and tests in your most challenging course(s).	
3. What strategies do you use to get help in your most challenging course(s)?	
4. Homework:	
a. Describe the physical setting in which you usually do your homework.	
b. How long do you typically work on homework each night?	
c. Do you have access to cell phones, TV, video games, or other entertainment while you do homework? If so, how frequently are you using them during homework time?	
d. How do you decide which homework assignment to do first?	
e. Do you spend time each night reviewing course notes or sections from your course textbooks? If so, about how much time do you usually spend doing this?	
f. What kinds of homework assignments do you like least or find most challenging?	

5. What would you want your teachers to know about your strengths and challenges as a student?	Strengths: _____ _____ _____ Challenges: _____ _____ _____
6. What are steps that you can take on your own to be more successful in school?	
7. What would you like to see as outcomes after the RTI Team meets to discuss your learning needs?	

School Success Intervention Plan for: _____ Date: _____

The student agrees to carry out the strategies listed below to promote school success:	[Optional] If adults in school or at home will assist the student with a strategy, the ADULT responsibilities are listed below :	[Optional] Name of adult(s) assisting student with strategy
1. _____ _____	1. _____ _____	_____ _____
2. _____ _____	2. _____ _____	_____ _____
3. _____ _____	3. _____ _____	_____ _____
4. _____ _____	4. _____ _____	_____ _____

_____ Signature of Student

_____ Signature of Adult School Contact

_____ Signature of Parent

The RIOT/ICEL Matrix: Organizing Data to Answer Questions About Student Academic Performance & Behavior

The RIOT/ICEL matrix is an assessment guide to help schools efficiently to decide what relevant information to collect on student academic performance and behavior—and also how to organize that information to identify probable reasons why the student is not experiencing academic or behavioral success.

The RIOT/ICEL matrix is not itself a data collection instrument. Instead, it is an organizing framework, or heuristic, that increases schools' confidence both in the quality of the data that they collect and the findings that emerge from the data.

Select Multiple Sources of Information: RIOT (Review, Interview, Observation, Test). The top horizontal row of the RIOT/ICEL table includes four potential sources of student information: Review, Interview, Observation, and Test (RIOT). Schools should attempt to collect information from a range of sources to control for potential bias from any one source.

- Review. This category consists of past or present records collected on the student. Obvious examples include report cards, office disciplinary referral data, state test results, and attendance records. Less obvious examples include student work samples, physical products of teacher interventions (e.g., a sticker chart used to reward positive student behaviors), and emails sent by a teacher to a parent detailing concerns about a student's study and organizational skills.

- Interview. Interviews can be conducted face-to-face, via telephone, or even through email correspondence. Interviews can also be structured (that is, using a pre-determined series of questions) or follow an open-ended format, with questions guided by information supplied by the respondent. Interview targets can include those teachers, paraprofessionals, administrators, and support staff in the school setting who have worked with or had interactions with the student in the present or past. Prospective interview candidates can also consist of parents and other relatives of the student as well as the student himself or herself.

- Observation. Direct observation of the student's academic skills, study and organizational strategies, degree of attentional focus, and general conduct can be a useful channel of information. Observations can be more structured (e.g., tallying the frequency of call-outs or calculating the percentage of on-task intervals during a class period) or less structured (e.g., observing a student and writing a running narrative of the observed events). Obvious examples of observation include a teacher keeping a frequency count of the times that she redirects an inattentive student to task during a class period and a school psychologist observing the number of intervals that a student talks with peers during independent seatwork Less obvious examples of observation include having a student periodically rate her own academic engagement on a 3-point scale (self-evaluation) and encouraging a parent to send to school narrative observations of her son's typical routine for completing homework.

- Test. Testing can be thought of as a structured and standardized observation of the student that is intended to test certain hypotheses about why the student might be struggling and what school supports would logically benefit the student (Christ, 2008). Obvious examples of testing include a curriculum-based measurement Oral Reading Fluency probe administered to determine a student's accuracy and fluency when reading grade-level texts and a state English Language Arts test that evaluates students' mastery of state literacy standards. A less obvious example of testing might be a teacher who teases out information about the student's skills and motivation on an academic task by having that student complete two equivalent timed worksheets under identical conditions—except that the student is offered an incentive for improved performance on the second worksheet but not on the first ('Can't Do/Won't Do Assessment'). Another less obvious example of testing might be a student who has developed the capacity to take chapter pre-tests in her math book, to self-grade the test, and to write down questions and areas of confusion revealed by that test for later review with the math instructor.

Investigate Multiple Factors Affecting Student Learning: ICEL (Instruction, Curriculum, Environment, Learner). The leftmost vertical column of the RIO/ICEL table includes four key domains of learning to be assessed: Instruction, Curriculum, Environment, and Learner (ICEL). A common mistake that schools often make is to assume that student learning problems exist primarily in the learner and to underestimate the degree to which teacher instructional strategies, curriculum demands, and environmental influences impact the learner's academic performance. The ICEL elements ensure that a full range of relevant explanations for student problems are examined.

- Instruction. The purpose of investigating the 'instruction' domain is to uncover any instructional practices that either help the student to learn more effectively or interfere with that student's learning. More obvious instructional questions to investigate would be whether specific teaching strategies for activating prior knowledge better prepare the student to master new information or whether a student benefits optimally from the large-group lecture format that is often used in a classroom. A less obvious example of an instructional question would be whether a particular student learns better through teacher-delivered or self-directed, computer-administered instruction.

- Curriculum. 'Curriculum' represents the full set of academic skills that a student is expected to have mastered in a specific academic area at a given point in time. To adequately evaluate a student's acquisition of academic skills, of course, the educator must (1) know the school's curriculum (and related state academic performance standards), (2) be able to inventory the specific academic skills that the student currently possesses, and then (3) identify gaps between curriculum expectations and actual student skills. (This process of uncovering student academic skill gaps is sometimes referred to as 'instructional' or 'analytic' assessment.) More obvious examples of curriculum questions include checking whether a student knows how to computer a multiplication problem with double-digit terms and regrouping or whether that student knows key facts about the Civil War. A less obvious curriculum-related question might be whether a student possesses the full range of essential academic vocabulary (e.g., terms such as 'hypothesis') required for success in the grade 10 curriculum.

- Environment. The 'environment' includes any factors in the student's school, community, or home surroundings that can directly enable their academic success or hinder that success. Obvious questions about environmental factors that impact learning include whether a student's educational performance is better or worse in the presence of certain peers and whether having additional adult supervision during a study hall results in higher student work productivity. Less obvious questions about the learning environment include whether a student has a setting at home that is conducive to completing homework or whether chaotic hallway conditions are delaying that student's transitioning between classes and therefore reducing available learning time.

- Learner. While the student is at the center of any questions of instruction, curriculum, and [learning] environment, the 'learner' domain includes those qualities of the student that represent their unique capacities and traits. More obvious examples of questions that relate to the learner include investigating whether a student has stable and high rates of inattention across different classrooms or evaluating the efficiency of a student's study habits and test-taking skills. A less obvious example of a question that relates to the learner is whether a student harbors a low sense of self-efficacy in mathematics that is interfering with that learner's willingness to put appropriate effort into math courses.

References

Christ, T. (2008). Best practices in problem analysis. In A. Thomas & J. Grimes (Eds.), *Best practices in school psychology V* (pp. 159-176). Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

RIOT/ICEL Assessment Worksheet

Student: _____ Person Completing Worksheet: _____

Date: _____ Statement of Student Problem: _____

_____

Directions: Fill out the grid below to develop an assessment plan for the targeted student.

	Review	Interview	Observe	Test
Instruction				
Curriculum				
Environment				
Learner				

Daily Behavior Report Cards: A Convenient Behavior Monitoring Tool

Daily Behavior Report Cards (DBRCs) are behavior rating forms that teachers use to evaluate the student's global behaviors on a daily basis or even more frequently. An advantage of DBRCs is that these rating forms are quick and convenient for the teacher to complete. This section contains daily and weekly versions of a generic DBRC, as well as a progress-monitoring chart to record cumulative DBRC ratings.

Increasing the Reliability of DBRCs. DBRCs rely heavily on teacher judgment and therefore can present a somewhat subjective view of the student's behavior. When a teacher's ratings on DBRCs are based on subjective opinions, there is a danger that the teacher will apply inconsistent standards each day when rating student behaviors. This inconsistency in assessment can limit the usefulness of report card data. One suggestion that teachers can follow to make it more likely that their report card ratings are consistent and objective over time is to come up with specific guidelines for rating each behavioral goal. For example, one item in the sample DBRC included in this section states that *"The student spoke respectfully and complied with adult requests without argument or complaint."* It is up to the teacher to decide how to translate so general a goal into a rubric of specific, observable criteria that permits the teacher to rate the student on this item according to a 9-point scale. In developing such criteria, the instructor will want to consider:

- *taking into account student developmental considerations.* For example, "Without argument or complaint" may mean "without throwing a tantrum" for a kindergarten student but mean "without loud, defiant talking-back" for a student in middle school.

- *tying Report Card ratings to classroom behavioral norms.* For each behavioral goal, the teacher may want to think of what the typical classroom norm is for this behavior and assign to the classroom norm a specific number rating. The teacher may decide, for instance, that the target student will earn a rating of 7 ('Usually/Always') each day that the student's compliance with adult requests closely matches that of the 'average' child in the classroom.

- *developing numerical criteria when appropriate.* For some items, the teacher may be able to translate certain more general Report Card goals into specific numeric ratings. If a DBRC item rates a student's compliance with adult requests, for example, the teacher may decide that the student is eligible to earn a rating of 7 or higher on this item on days during which instructional staff had to approach the student no more than once about noncompliance.

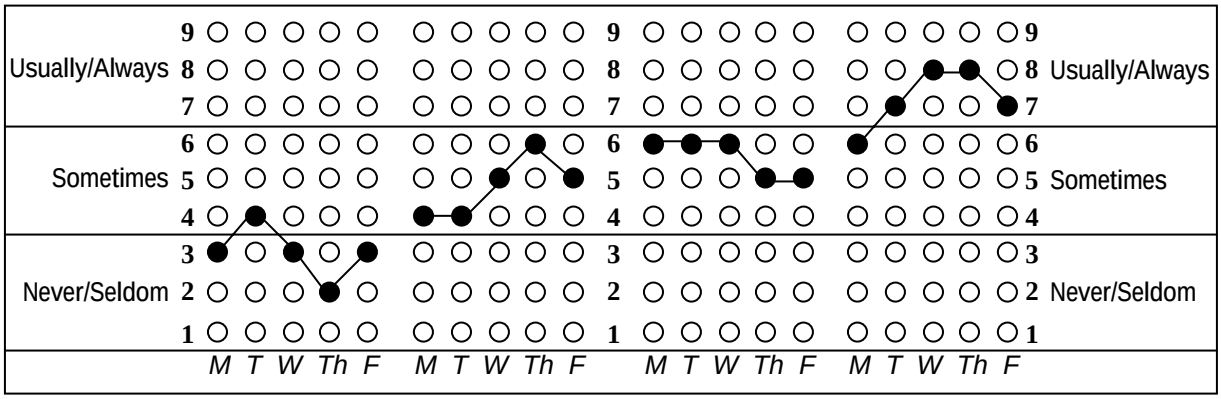
Charting Report Card Ratings. Daily Behavior Report Card ratings can be charted over time to provide a visual display of the student's progress toward behavioral goals. The sample DBRC (daily and weekly versions) included in this section has its own progress-monitoring chart, which permits the teacher to graph student behavior for up to 4 school weeks. The instructor simply fills in the bubble each day that matches the numerical rating that he or she assigned to the student for the specific behavioral goal. As multiple points are filled in on the graph, the instructor connects those points to create a time-series progress graph. (Figure 1 contains an example of a completed progress-monitoring chart.) When enough data points have been charted, the behavior graph can be used to judge the relative effectiveness of any strategies put in place to improve the student's behavior.

Using DBRCs as a Self-Monitoring Intervention. DBRCs are primarily used as a behavior-monitoring tool. However, teachers may also choose to use DBRCs as part of a student self-monitoring program, in which the student rates their own behaviors each day. If teachers decide to use student behavior report cards for self-monitoring, they should first identify and demonstrate for the student the behaviors that the

student is to monitor and show the student how to complete the behavior report card. Since it is important that the student learn the teacher's behavioral expectations, the instructor should meet with the student daily, ask the student to rate their own behaviors, and then share with the student the *teacher's* ratings of those same behaviors. The teacher and student can use this time to discuss any discrepancies in rating between their two forms. (If report card ratings points are to be applied toward a student reward program, the teacher might consider allowing points earned on a particular card item to count toward a reward *only* if the student's ratings fall within a point of the teacher's, to encourage the student to be accurate in their ratings.)

Figure 1: Example of completed DBRC progress-monitoring form

During instructional periods, the student focused his or her attention on teacher instructions, classroom lessons and assigned work.



Daily Classroom Behavior Report Card

Student: _____	Date: _____
Teacher: _____	Classroom: _____

Directions: Review each of the Behavior Report Card items below. For each item, rate the degree to which the student showed the behavior or met the behavior goal.

During instructional periods, the student focused his or her attention on teacher instructions, classroom lessons and assigned work.

Circle the degree to which the student met the behaviora goal:

1 2 3 | 4 5 6 | 7 8 9

Never/Seldom Sometimes Usually/Always

The student interacted with classmates appropriately and respectfully.

Circle the degree to which the student met the behaviora goal:

1 2 3 | 4 5 6 | 7 8 9

Never/Seldom Sometimes Usually/Always

The student completed and turned in his or her assigned class work on time.

Circle the degree to which the student met the behaviora goal:

1 2 3 | 4 5 6 | 7 8 9

Never/Seldom Sometimes Usually/Always

The student spoke respectfully and complied with adult requests without argument or complaint.

Circle the degree to which the student met the behaviora goal:

1 2 3 | 4 5 6 | 7 8 9

Never/Seldom Sometimes Usually/Always

Weekly Classroom Behavior Report Card

Student: _____

Teacher: _____ Classroom: _____

Directions: Review each of the Behavior Report Card items below. For each item, rate the degree to which the student showed the behavior or met the behavior goal.

Date	__/__/__	__/__/__	__/__/__	__/__/__	__/__/__
Behavioral Target	**M**	**T**	**W**	**Th**	**F**
During instructional periods, the student focused his or her attention on teacher instructions, classroom lessons and assigned work. Select the degree to which the goal was met: 1...2...3...|4...5...6...|7...8...9 Never/Seldom Sometimes Usually/Always	____ Pts	____ Pts	____ Pts	____ Pts	____ Pts
The student interacted with classmates appropriately and respectfully. Select the degree to which the goal was met: 1...2...3...|4...5...6...|7...8...9 Never/Seldom Sometimes Usually/Always	____ Pts	____ Pts	____ Pts	____ Pts	____ Pts
The student completed and turned in his or her assigned class work on time. Select the degree to which the goal was met: 1...2...3...|4...5...6...|7...8...9 Never/Seldom Sometimes Usually/Always	____ Pts	____ Pts	____ Pts	____ Pts	____ Pts
The student spoke respectfully and complied with adult requests without argument or complaint. Select the degree to which the goal was met: 1...2...3...|4...5...6...|7...8...9 Never/Seldom Sometimes Usually/Always	____ Pts	____ Pts	____ Pts	____ Pts	____ Pts

Classroom Behavior Report Card