

I Feel like I Co-Teach with Ted every Fall

Every fall I introduce a group of 25 to 35 students in Virginia to PBS and of course to Ted Carr. They read his never-revised-but-still-relevant 1994 book, along with his classic article (Volume 1, number 1, pp. 5-25 of JPBI) that gives the research background on Val, Gary, and Juan. They learn to use “Carr cards” (as I call them) to record the ABCs of each instance of serious problem behavior and then to review, shuffle, and sort them in order to discover solutions for individual students. They learn (also from Ted) about the importance of establishing rapport with individuals who have problem behavior as a key step in the long road to making improvements. And they get heavy doses of “Carr quotes,” so they grow to understand how different PBS is from behavior modification. Here are my two favorites:

“One of the central messages of PBS is that, in providing support, we should focus our efforts on fixing problem contexts and not problem behavior” (Carr et al., 2002, p. 8)

“...[P]roducing change is not simply a matter of implementing specific techniques, but, rather involves reallocation of resources involving time, money, and political power” (Carr et al., 2002, p. 12).

When December comes and the final exams is uploaded, everyone in that class knows who Ted Carr is and can put his messages into place. This year will be no different, except that we will all miss him greatly.

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