Behavioral Function

*It’s not just for Tier 3*

Association for Positive Behavior Support Conference
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Objectives

• Following our session, attendees will...
  • Define and describe behavioral function
  • Describe the utility of, and rationale for, considering function across all tiers of support
  • Identify functional skills that all students need to be successful
  • Provide examples of contextually appropriate function-based behavior support at Tier 3, Tier 2, and Tier 1
Behavioral Function

• We will be referring to behavioral function in three ways:
  • Function of behavior
  • Function-based thinking
  • Functional skills
## Function of Behavior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“Why” the student is engaging in the behavior</th>
<th>The reinforcement that follows behavior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive reinforcement</td>
<td>E.g., access preferred items, activities, people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative reinforcement</td>
<td>E.g., escape or avoid tasks, activities, social interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need the student is communicating</td>
<td>Valid for the student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All behavior is lawful</td>
<td>Both “appropriate” and “inappropriate” (or interfering) behavior</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Function-based Thinking

Considering function when designing behavior support
- Regardless of tier

Could include functional behavior assessment (FBA)
- But not always
Functional Skills

Skills that relate to primary functions

Big Four (Ala’i-Rosales et al., 2019)
• From years of research on FBA

Rather than wait for interfering behavior to develop, teach skills to prevent!

Skills we need to successfully navigate life!

Goals of PBS (Carr et al., 2002; Risley, 1996)
• Increase quality of life (QOL) by teaching skills
• Decrease in behavior that interferes with learning/ QOL
We should consider function across all tiers of support.

Because...

• Behavior that interferes with learning occurs across all tiers
  • Although not as severe and chronic at T1 and T2

• Function-matched support can increase effectiveness of T1 and T2
  • Enable students receiving T3 support to be more successful in those environments

• All students need to learn functional skills
  • Learning these skills can prevent interfering behavior from developing
Behavioral Function at Tier 3
Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)

• For students with persistent challenging behavior that has not been (or cannot be) sufficiently addressed by Tier 2 support we use FBA to create individualized behavior support plans.

• We gather A-B-C information from:
  • The student and those who know them best (e.g., teachers, family members)
  • Direct observations of behavior in context

• We use FBA data to identify:
  • The function the challenging behavior serves for the student
  • The conditions under which challenging behavior does not occur
  • Functional reinforcers for desired behavior
Behavior Support Planning

• The result of FBA should be an Individualized behavior support plan with strategies designed to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PREVENT</th>
<th>TEACH</th>
<th>REINFORCE</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Eliminate or neutralize setting events</td>
<td>• Functional replacement behavior</td>
<td>• Dense schedule of reinforcement for use of replacement behavior and new skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Eliminate or modify antecedent triggers</td>
<td>• New skills needed to access natural reinforcers</td>
<td>• Minimize reinforcement for challenging behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Prompts for desired behavior</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>
FBA in Schools: What the Research Tells Us

• For students who require Tier 3 support, function-based intervention is key to effectively decreasing intense and persistent challenging behavior (Cho & Blair, 2017)

• Function-based behavioral interventions have been shown to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of behavior support for students with and without disabilities who exhibit a wide range of challenging behaviors (Blair, 1999; Carr et al., 1999; Borgmeier et al., 2019; Cho & Blair, 2017; Epstein et al., 2008; Ingram et al., 2005; Newcomer & Lewis, 2004; Strickland-Cohen et al., 2016)

• Growing body of research showing that Tier 3 can be effectively designed and implemented by school-based personnel to address non-dangerous behaviors (Crone, Hawken, & Bergstrom, 2007; Dukes, Rosenberg, & Brady, 2007; Loman & Horner, 2014; Maag & Larson, 2004; Renshaw et al., 2008; Scott, Nelson, & Zabala, 2003; Strickland-Cohen & Horner, 2015)
Research-to-Practice Gap

• In typical practice we often employ our most effective tools only when behavior has become severe/dangerous
  • FBA/BSP used as a “last resort” and only for students with IEPs (Borgmeier et al., 2019)

• Students who engage in persistent, lower-intensity behavior are more likely to receive less effective punitive/exclusionary practices (e.g., reprimands, ODRs, suspensions; Mitchell & Bradshaw, 2013)
The Logic Behind Multi-Tiered Behavior Support

• SWPBIS creates a school climate that supports the appropriate academic and social behavior of ALL students with a focus on:
  • PREVENTION
  • EARLY INTERVENTION
Proactive Function-Based Support at Tier 3

• Many of problem behaviors that Tier 3 teams encounter do not require comprehensive FBA-BSP

• Using streamlined FBA-BSP procedures that “match” the level and intensity of problem behavior
Find Out More

• www.pbis.org

Lead Authors:
Kathleen Strickland-Cohen
Chris Borgmeier
Building Seamless Continuums of Support

• All staff trained in FB thinking

• Advanced tiers explicitly linked to universal expectations, practices, and systems to support
  • Inclusion
  • Generalization
  • Fading
Function in Tier 2

Dylan Zimmerman
Purpose of Tier 2

- Targeted interventions
- Continuously and quickly available
- Support students before Tier 3
  - Prevent intensive Tier 3 when not necessary
- **Function-based**

Why use functional thinking at Tier 2

- Can improve effectiveness
  - Improve CICO when not effective (Campbell & Anderson, 2008; McIntosh et al., 2009)
- Student-centered
  - Behavior communicates a need
  - Not just behavior reduction (Carr et al., 2002; Risley, 1996)
- No reason not to! Efficient options available
  - Interview/survey tools
  - Brief observations
  - Hypothesis confirmed through data-based decision making
Function at Tier 2 – Typical Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Targeted Intervention</th>
<th>Check in, Check out</th>
<th>Social Skills Club</th>
<th>Reading Buddies</th>
<th>Homework Club</th>
<th>Lunch Buddies</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access to Adult Attention</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Access to Peer Attention</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Access to Choice of Alternatives/Activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Access to Items or Activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option for Avoiding Aversive Activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Avoid Activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option for Avoiding Aversive Social Peer/ Adult Attention</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural Prompts for ‘What To Do’ Throughout the Day</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Least 5 Times During the Day When Positive Feedback is Set Up</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>A School-Home Communication System</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Opportunity for Adaptation into a Self-Management System</td>
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TFI version 2019 (Algozzine et al., 2015)
A Systematic Review of Function-Modified Check-In/Check-Out

David A. Klingbeil, PhD, Evan H. Dart, PhD, and Amber L. Schramm, MA

Abstract
Check-in/check-out (CICO) is widely used as a Tier 2 intervention within school-wide positive behavior interventions and supports. Evidence suggests that traditional CICO is primarily effective for students demonstrating problem behavior maintained by adult attention. A growing body of research has investigated function-modified CICO to address behaviors maintained by other consequences. The purpose of this review was to examine the evidence-base for function-modified versions of CICO to identify (a) the procedures used to assess students’ behavior function and (b) the types of modifications and additions to CICO that have been empirically evaluated. We systematically reviewed 11 studies that examined the effects of function-based CICO. Researchers determined behavior function using a combination of direct observations and indirect assessments. These methods were more involved than a brief behavior screening. The modifications and additions to traditional CICO included changes that were functionally relevant and functionally independent. Based on the results of this review, more research is needed before function-based CICO can be considered an evidence-based practice. Moreover, the extent to which educators can implement function-based CICO without researcher support is also unknown. The implications of this review are discussed in terms of future research and practice.
Assessing and Designing T2 Interventions

**Assess Function**
- Survey/Interview
- Brief observations

**Select Interventions**
- Function-Matched intervention
- Function-Matched modifications

Klinbeil et al., 2019
Selecting Intervention Modifications

- Context
- Function

Appropriate modifications
## Selecting Intervention Modifications

### Context - Timing and Format

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Time-based adult attention or praise</th>
<th>Contingent teacher attention when completing work/on task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Precorrection: Remind student about expectations such as when to talk</td>
<td>Contingent teacher attention when raising hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rewards include activities with teacher and other adults in the school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Escape from Demands</td>
<td>Antecedent Modifications</td>
<td>Teaching Modifications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Embed prompts for break requests into CICO or similar tracker*&lt;br&gt;• Embed prompts for break requests into the classroom&lt;br&gt;• Provide verbal prompts for break requests*&lt;br&gt;• Modify amount or difficulty of work*&lt;br&gt;• Provide opportunity to bring work home*&lt;br&gt;• Allow student to sit next to helpful peer*&lt;br&gt;• Pre-correction: Remind student of expectations prior to challenging periods, or of homework prior to going home*&lt;br&gt;• Provide time in school to complete homework</td>
<td>• Teach routines around requesting a break*&lt;br&gt;• Teach responses to teacher giving or denying a break*&lt;br&gt;• Teach study skills*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Attention</td>
<td>• Scheduled peer interactions (e.g., social activities) prior to challenging periods&lt;br&gt;• Change seating to minimize access to distracting peers*&lt;br&gt;• Interrupt and redirect peer responses to student problem behavior*</td>
<td>• Teach peers to ignore each other’s distracting behavior (e.g., how to respond to peer talking off-topic)&lt;br&gt;• Teach request for peer-tutor or partner work*</td>
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Step 1: Assess for Function

Assess Function
- Survey/Interview
- Brief observations

Select Interventions
- Function-Matched intervention
- Function-Matched modifications

Monitor Progress
- Confirm function
- Check integrity
- Re-evaluate function

Hypothesized Function: Peer Attention
Step 2: Select Function-Matched Strategies

### Assess Function
- Survey/Interview
- Brief observations

### Select Interventions
- Function-Matched intervention
- Function-Matched modifications

### Monitor Progress
- Confirm function
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<th>Consequence Modifications</th>
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<tr>
<td>Embed prompts for break requests into OICD or similar tracker*</td>
<td>Teach routines around requesting a break*</td>
<td>Earn free time after completing work*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embed prompts for break requests into the classroom</td>
<td>Teach responses to teacher giving or denying a break*</td>
<td>Link daily goal and points earned to work completion*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide verbal prompts for break requests*</td>
<td>Teach study skills*</td>
<td>Reward choices include options to reduce work (e.g., homework pass, leave class early pass, break opportunities)</td>
</tr>
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<td>Modify amount or difficulty of work*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Provide opportunity to bring work home*</td>
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<td>Teach peers to ignore each other’s distracting behavior (e.g., how to respond to peer talking off-topic)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teach request for peer-tutor or partner work*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invite a peer to daily check-out/end of day reward if goal is met*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase frequency of reward delivery (mid-day and afternoon)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seat next to preferred peer during lunch*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seat next to preferred peer during class*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of the Good Behavior Game or similar interdependent group contingency during class*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Indicates a specific modification or strategy to address the identified function.
Step 2: Progress Monitoring

- **Assess Function**
  - Survey/Interview
  - Brief observations

- **Select Interventions**
  - Function-Matched intervention
  - Function-Matched modifications

- **Monitor Progress**
  - Confirm function
  - Check integrity
  - Re-evaluate function

*Identify next steps*
We cannot make students learn or behave. We can create environments to increase the likelihood students learn and behave. – Dr. Tim Lewis
**KEY CONCEPT**

Behavior is functionally related to the teaching environment.

- Behavior = what the student ‘does’ (appropriate/inappropriate)
- Teaching environment = all that happens before, during, and after the student’s behavior
ABC-F

Routine: “During ______________”

Antecedent/Trigger:
When ______

Behavior:
The student does ______

Consequence/Outcome:
... and as a result ______

Therefore, the Function of the behavior is to:
Learning and Teaching Environment

- **Environments** that increase this likelihood are guided by a core set of effective practices that are implemented with consistency and fidelity.
Empirically Documented Best Practices

Maximize Structure
- Schedule
- Routines

Expectations for Behavior
- 3-5 & Positive
- Teach & Prompt

Tier 1 Classroom PBIS

Active, Engaging Instruction
- Opportunities to Respond
- Task Difficulty
- Choice
- Activity Sequencing

Acknowledge / Encourage Expected Behavior
- Respond to Behavior Errors

Monitor Behavior
- Move
- Scan
- Interact

Simonsen et al. (2008)
1. Routines & Procedures
2. Expectations & Rules
3. Encourage Expected Behavior
4. Respond to Behavior Errors
5. Active Supervision
6. Opportunities to Respond
7. Activity Sequencing + Offering Choice
8. Task Difficulty
Adult Behaviors = Student Change

Student Characteristics
- skills, abilities, social
- learning history,
- function/motivation,
- academic history

Teacher/School Control
- curriculum (modeling, explicit, etc.),
- engagement, expectations,
- environment (routines, consistency,
- physical arrangement, etc.), time,
- feedback

What could I do to maximize the probability of the student demonstrating expected behavior?

Desired State
- measureable skills that predict favorable student outcomes (SEB & academic)

Scott, Hirn, & Cooper 2017
STUDENT CENTERED SUPPORT

Essential Question:
Is the student successful at this level of support?

The difference is the intensity and frequency of supports.
CLASSROOM CONTINUUM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classroom Capacity</th>
<th>Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total # of Students (%)</td>
<td>30 (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5% of Total (N &lt;= 5)</td>
<td>1-2 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15% of Total (N &lt;= 15)</td>
<td>4-5 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60% of Total (N &lt;= 60)</td>
<td>24 students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

List your students whose behavior performance is unsatisfactory. The number should be less than or equal to 5% of your classroom population.

List your students whose behavior needs improvement. The number should be less than or equal to 15% of your classroom population.

List your students who (8) meet or exceed expectations, and (10) are proficient with support. The number should be greater than or equal to 60% of the classroom population.
PHASES OF LEARNING

- Acquisition
- Fluency
- Maintenance
- Generalization

Simonsen & Myers, 2014
CLASSROOM CONTINUUM

**Classroom Capacity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total # of Students (N)</th>
<th>30 Students</th>
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<tr>
<td>5% of Total N = x/30</td>
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<td>4-5 Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80% of Total N = x/4</td>
<td>24 Students</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Unsatisfactory Performance**

List your students whose behavior performance is unsatisfactory. The number should be less than or equal to 5% of your classroom population.

**Improvement Needed**

List your students who need improvement. The number should be less than or equal to 15% of your classroom population.

**Proficient with Support**

List your students who are proficient with support. Students and (c) are proficient with support if their performance is greater than 80% of the total students.

**Meets or Exceeds Expectations**

List your students who meet or exceed expectations. The number should be greater than 80% of the total students.
| Purple: Gain Attention | Blue: Avoid Attention | Green: Avoid Task |

**Maximize Structure**

1. **Classroom Expectations**
   - Clarify expected behavior and provide specific precorrects
   - Teach student how to:
     - Ask for attention
     - Self-Monitor
     - Ask for a break
   - Consider student participation in social skills instructional group
   - Teach academic skills

2. **Classroom Procedures & Routines**
   - Teach Procedures
   - Teach how to ask for help
   - Individualize procedure for use of resources (e.g., assistive technology, 100’s chart, multiplication table, graphic organizers)
   - Check to see if student has needed materials and if not, provide them before they are needed

3. **Active Supervision**
   - Increase Active Supervision
     - Schedule more frequent interactions
     - Proximity Control
     - Provide task check-in (e.g., 3 more minutes...)

**Respond to Behavior**

4. **Encourage Expected Behavior**
   - Increase reinforcement of expected behavior
     - High rates of verbal and non-verbal feedback
     - Increase positive communication between home and school
   - Provide increased opportunities for interaction with adults and/or peers
   - Provide opportunity to earn time for self-selected activities
   - Reward student for attempting tasks, staying focused on tasks

5. **Discourage Unexpected Behavior**
   - Provide consistent and calm response
   - Limit verbal interaction for problem behavior
   - Teacher ignore problem
   - Prompt peers to ignore problem behavior
   - Non-verbal signal
   - Offer brief assistance
   - Offer alternative methods or materials for task
   - Schedule standard times to make up work

6. **Opportunities to Respond**
   - **Increase OTR**
     - Partner/Group
     - Verbal and Non-verbal options
     - Pre-conference with student(s) to build a variety of engaging response strategies
   - Use technology
     - Interactive Games
     - Discussion Boards

7. **Task Difficulty & Academic Success**
   - Design assignments to meet student skill level
   - Pre-teach content
   - Modify amount or type of activity
   - Provide extra help/check for understanding

8. **Activity Sequencing & Offering Choice**
   - Provide opportunity to help other students
   - Provide option to work independently
   - Provide task list and allow student to choose order of completion
   - Provide opportunity to engage in a preferred activity first
   - Allowing student to choose location, materials, etc

**actively Engage Students in Observable Ways**

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**Using the Gregi**

- Increase OTR
- Partner/Group
- Verbal and Non-verbal options
- Pre-conference with student(s) to build a variety of engaging response strategies
**During:**
Work time

**When:**
Teacher circulates near

**Student will:**
Drop pencil, get tissues, go to the trashcan

**Outcome:**
Teacher moves on

**Function:**
Avoid attention

---

**ALLISON**

**Maximize Structure**

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**Respond to Behavior**

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**Actively Engage Students in Observable Ways**

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<th>KEVIN</th>
<th>Maximize Structure</th>
<th>Respond to Behavior</th>
<th>Actively Engage Students in Observable Ways</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>During: Class instruction and work time</td>
<td>1. Classroom Expectations</td>
<td>4. Encourage Expected Behavior</td>
<td>6. Opportunities to Respond</td>
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<td>When: The teacher is working at the board</td>
<td>- Clarify expected behavior and provide specific precorrects</td>
<td>- Increase reinforcement of expected behavior</td>
<td>- Increase OTR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student will: Make loud noises, tap others, make faces, dance</td>
<td>- Teach student how to:</td>
<td>- High rates of verbal and non-verbal feedback</td>
<td>- Partner/Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Ask for attention</td>
<td>- Increase positive communication between home and school</td>
<td>- Verbal and Non-verbal options</td>
<td>- Pre-conference with student tk to build a variety of engaging response strategies</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Self-Monitor</td>
<td>- Provide increased opportunities for interaction with adults and/or peers</td>
<td>- Use technology</td>
<td>- Interactive Games</td>
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<td>- Ask for a break</td>
<td>- Provide opportunity to earn time for self-selected activities</td>
<td>- Discussion Boards</td>
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<td>Consider student participation in social skills instructional group</td>
<td>- Reward student for attempting tasks, staying focused on tasks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teach academic skills</td>
<td>- Provide consistent and calm response</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Classroom Procedures &amp; Routines</td>
<td>- Limit verbal interaction for problem behavior</td>
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<td>- Teach Procedures</td>
<td>- Teacher ignore problem</td>
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<td>- Teach how to ask for help</td>
<td>- Prompt peers to ignore problem behavior</td>
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<td>- Individualize procedure for use of resources (e.g., assistive technology, 100’s chart, multiplication table, graphic organizers)</td>
<td>- Non-verbal signal</td>
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<td>- Check to see if student has needed materials and if not, provide them before they are needed</td>
<td>- Offer brief assistance</td>
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<td>- Schedule more frequent interactions</td>
<td>- Offer alternative methods or materials for task</td>
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<td>- Proximity Control</td>
<td>- Schedule standard times to make up work</td>
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<td>- Provide task check-in (eg, 3 more minutes...)</td>
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<td>- Increase Active Supervision</td>
<td>- Provide consistent and calm response</td>
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<td>- Provide opportunities for interaction with adults and/or peers</td>
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| |   - Offer brief assistance | }

**Outcome:** Students laugh

**Function:** Gain attention
**Routine – During…**
Class work time

**Antecedent (Trigger) – When...**
The teacher gives a direction

**Behavior - Student will...**
Refuse, shout rude and disrespectful comments, sigh dramatically

**outCome:**
Other students laugh

**Function:**
Gain attention
INTENSITY + FREQUENCY

• General education classroom
  • Several students not meeting behavior expectations

• Teacher focused on intensity and frequency use of effective classroom practices

• Positive student outcomes
  • Decrease instances of unexpected behavior