

“You Can’t Make Me” An ABC Project



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Behavioral Issue Overview

❖ Target Student and Setting

- ❖ Seventh Grader called Kevin in third hour choir
- ❖ This is his second year in choir

❖ Problem Behavior

❖ *Defiant*

- ❖ Defiant students, “resist authority and carry on a power struggle with the teacher” and “they want to have their way and not be told what to do” (Brophy, 1996, p. 227).
- ❖ Kevin rarely participates appropriately during class, but rather, talks, blurts out, argues about not wanting to do something, reminds me that I cannot make him do anything because I am not his mother, plays with other materials, laughs at others, ignores directions, sits out, or lashes out in anger without warning

❖ *Underachieving and Unmotivated*

- ❖ Students are often, “indifferent to school, do minimum amounts of work, and are poorly motivated” (Brophy, 1996, p. 136).
- ❖ Kevin does not know the value of a good education and puts in the bare minimum effort to get by. He also comes from a background that has taught him that he is not going anywhere and school will not help

Data Collection & Analysis

❖ *Methods*

- ❖ Data was collected on a modified behavior chart as seen below for three days
- ❖ Compared Kevin with another student who sometimes does not participate

Target behavior: not participating by sitting out, blurting, or playing with books/pencils				
# of Target Behaviors DAY ONE				
Time/Activity	Warm-Ups- 5 mins	Sight-reading- 10 mins	Song Rehearsal- 20 mins	Theory- 15 mins
Kevin	1- scribbling on planner, sitting	0- participating	1-slouching in chair, blurting out	1/2- sort of participating or slouching in chair doing nothing
Zach	0- participating	0- participating	0- participating	0- participating

- ❖ A “1” was used if he was not participating and then a note was made of what he was doing instead; A “0” was used if he participated; A “1/2” was used if he partially participated

❖ *Behavior Patterns*

- ❖ The results of this process did not reveal any specific patterns or provide much insight into cause
- ❖ Behavior is not setting, instructional format, student interactive, or activity dependent
- ❖ Behavior was found to be erratic and highly dependent on factors not related to the class (home life)

Strategy Plan

❖ Goal

- ❖ The goal of the intervention is to increase participation in each of the four main class activities: warm-ups, sight-reading, song rehearsal, and theory work
- ❖ By the end of the intervention I seek to have Kevin fully participating in at least three of the four class activities every day

❖ Strategies

❖ ***Behavior Chart with Weekly Incremental Goals***

- ❖ Kevin and I will track whether or not he is participating during each classroom activity on a daily basis
- ❖ If he is not participating, we will note what he was doing instead (talking, playing with other materials, etc)
- ❖ Each week the goal for participation will increase starting with participating in at least one of the four activities and moving to four of the four activities.
- ❖ If weekly goal is reached, Kevin will be able to select a musical reward such as playing a music game at the end of class or listening to one of his favorite songs

❖ ***Increased Effective Praise***

- ❖ Using the I-Feed-V model: Immediately-Frequently-Enthusiasm-Eye Contact-Description-Variety

❖ ***Banking Time***

- ❖ Every Friday during lunch we will meet to discuss the behavior of that week, talk to get to know more about one another, and play games to break the ice

Rationale

❖ Strategies

❖ *Behavior Chart with Weekly Incremental Goals*

- ❖ According to Best Practices, “when we collect data on ourselves, our unconscious pattern of behavior is interrupted and our behavior is temporarily changed” (1996, p. 110)
- ❖ In addition, “self-recording has been used with classroom talk-outs, off-task, and out-of-seat behavior” and has been successful in increasing positive behavior (Reavis et al, 1996, p. 113)
- ❖ A teacher should also implement, “some type of reward contingency” for motivation (Reavis et al, 1996, p. 113)

❖ *Increased Effective Praise*

- ❖ “Research has found that the use of teacher praise and attention to be helpful in improving on-task time...while also reducing behavioral disruptions” (Reavis et al, 1996, p. 59-60)
- ❖ “A lot of kids will take any kind of attention they can get, negative or positive” and the purpose of praise is to change the perception of attention getting behavior and show students that they will get more attention when they participate (Brophy, 1996, p. 229)

❖ *Banking Time*

- ❖ “Teachers who...ask about their hobbies and interests, and see[m] to care about them and believe they can be successful” helps to encourage positive responses (Brophy, 1996, p. 200)

Strategy Effectiveness

❖ *Changes in Target Behavior*

- ❖ Has been able to increase his participation from at least one out of four activities a day to consistently two out of four activities a day
- ❖ Participation numbers overall steadily increased each week, even if the weekly goals were not met
- ❖ Decrease in arguments and blurting out, revert to more passive and less distracting lack of participation
- ❖ Changes attributed to tracking method, reward contingency, and banking time relationship building

❖ *Recommendation*

- ❖ Would highly recommend this plan with a few slight changes:
 - ❖ *First-* increase the amount of time that a student can earn a reward at each incremental level. In the current plan, the target number increased each week, making it difficult to be consistent enough to reach the goal every week. Future use of the plan should extend each incremental period to two or three weeks or more depending on the student.
 - ❖ *Second-* provide smaller rewards for little achievements that are reached such as consistently participating in the same activity every day or decrease in particular unwanted behaviors

Pre-Professional Stance

❖ *Strengths in Maintaining an Effective Stance*

- ❖ Maintained overall positive relationship outside of class
- ❖ Sincerely believed that he was capable of being successful
- ❖ Reminded him that I was disappointed in behavior not in him as a person
- ❖ Determined to help him find success and show him that someone cares

❖ *Shortcomings in Maintaining an Effective Stance*

- ❖ Felt Frustrated and defeated
- ❖ Second-guessed my abilities and took behavior personally
- ❖ Unable to stay calm and patient, leading to defensive reactions
- ❖ Argued and engaged in power struggles
- ❖ Daily negative behavior led to my believing that every day would be negative

Post-Professional Stance

❖ *Changes in Stance*

- ❖ Feel relaxed and calm because the responsibility for participation is being placed on Kevin
- ❖ Have a greater understanding that his responsibility is not personal but merely a cry for help
- ❖ Ability to avoid power struggles and positively handle arguments
- ❖ Expecting more positive behavior and less classroom distractions
- ❖ Realizing that I truly cannot make him do something; he must decide to do it for himself

❖ *Strategies for Maintaining An Effective Stance*

- ❖ Avoid arguments by simply repeating directions in a calm voice until he complies or withdrawals
- ❖ When he is not participating I no longer tell him to participate, I politely remind him to participate because we could really use his help
- ❖ Take a deep breath and remind myself that his behavior is related to issues out of my control and that I must stay patient because change does not happen over night

References

- ❖ Brophy, J. (1996). Teaching problem students. New York: Guilford.
- ❖ Reavis, H. K., Sweeten, M. T. ,Jenson, W. R., Morgan, D. P., Andrews, D. J., & Fister, S. (1996). BEST Practices: Behavioral and educational strategies for teachers. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.