INTERVENTION CENTRAL

RTI/MTSS Classroom Teacher Toolkit

Teacher as 'First Responder': How to Identify Academic Problems & Create Tier 1/Classroom Support Plans

Jim Wright, Presenter

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West Babylon UFSD
West Babylon, NY

Email: jimw13159@gmail.com
Workshop Materials: http://www.interventioncentral.org/westbabylon

How To: Define Academic Problems: The First Step in Effective Intervention Planning

Students who struggle with academic deficits do not do so in isolation. Their difficulties are played out in the larger context of the school environment and curriculum—and represent a 'mismatch' between the characteristics of the student and the instructional demands of the classroom (Foorman & Torgesen, 2001).

It may surprise educators to learn that the problem-identification step is the most critical for matching the student to an effective intervention (Bergan, 1995). Problem identification statements should be defined in clear and specific terms sufficient to pass 'the stranger test' (Howell, Hosp, & Kurns, 2008). That is, the student problem can be judged as adequately defined if a person with no background knowledge of the case and equipped only with the problem-identification statement can observe the student in the academic setting and know with confidence when the problem behavior is displayed and when it is not.

Here are recommendations for increasing teacher capacity to describe student academic problems in specific terms, and generate a hypothesis about why the problem is occurring.

1. Describe the academic problem in specific, skill-based terms with a meaningful instructional context (Batsche et al., 2008; Upah, 2008). Write a clear, brief description of the academic skill or performance deficit that focuses on a specific skill or performance area. Include information about the conditions under which the academic problem is observed and typical or expected level of performance.

    - *Conditions*. Describe the environmental conditions or task demands in place when the academic problem is observed.
    - *Problem Description*. Describe the actual observable academic behavior with which the student has difficulty. If available, include specifics about student performance, such as rate of work, accuracy, or other relevant quantitative information.
    - *Typical or Expected Level of Performance*. Provide a typical or expected performance criterion for this skill or behavior. Typical or expected academic performance can be calculated using a variety of sources, such as benchmark norms, local (classroom) norms, or expert opinion.

Reading-Related Problems: Sample Definitions		
Environmental Conditions or Task Demands	Problem Description	Typical or Expected Level of Performance
When shown flashcards with mixed-case letters for 3 seconds	Annika can name 38 of 52 correctly	while most peers in her class can name all letters correctly.
When asked to blend / segment onsets and rimes of single-syllable spoken words	Thomas (grade 1) is inconsistent in this skill	while this is a Kindergarten ELA/Reading standard.
When shown CVC words from all vowel families via flashcards	Terrance requires adult prompting, hints, and occasional direction to sound out and blend the words	while classmates perform the task with prompting only.
When reading aloud from a 1-minute 4th-grade passage	Benjamin reads an average of 45 words	while the fall norm (20th percentile) at Grade 4 is 68 words per minute.

When completing sets of 5 short-answer questions based on assigned readings…	Neda scores an average of 40% (2 of 5 correct)	while classmates score an average of 80%.
When directed to match terms and definitions for 20 social-studies terms…	Lucy can correctly match 10 items	while this entry-level vocabulary is a prerequisite for the course.
Math-Related Problems: Sample Definitions		
Environmental Conditions or Task Demands	Problem Description	Typical or Expected Level of Performance
When shown flashcards with multiplication math facts 0 to 12 for 3 seconds	Annika can answer 57 of 156 correctly	while most peers in her class can name all facts correctly.
When completing a beginning-level algebra word problem	Dennis is unable to translate that word problem into an equation with 1 variable	although this is a prerequisite skill for the course.
Given a 2-term addition or subtraction problem with proper fractions	Franklin (grade 7) cannot correctly solve	although this skill is a Grade 5 Common Core Learning Standard.
On math homework	Neda attempts approximately 60 % of assigned items	while peers typically attempt 90% or more of items.

2. Select a hypothesis to explain the academic skill or performance problem. The hypothesis states the assumed reason(s) or cause(s) for the student's academic problems. Once selected, the hypothesis acts as a compass needle, pointing toward interventions that most logically address the student academic problems. Listed below are common reasons for academic problems. Note that occasionally more than one hypothesis may apply to a particular student (e.g., a student may demonstrate a skill deficit as well as a pattern of escape/avoidance).

Academic Problems: Possible Hypotheses & Recommendations	
Hypothesis	Recommendation
• *Skill.* The student is unable to do the academic work.	• Provide direct, explicit instruction to acquire the skill. Reinforce the student for effort and accuracy.
• *Fluency.* The student possesses the necessary academic skills but lacks fluency in completing the work.	• Provide opportunities for the student to practice the skill and give timely performance feedback. Reinforce the student for fluency as well as accuracy.
• *Retention.* The student appears to have mastered the necessary academic skill(s) in one session but does not retain the skill(s) until the next session.	• Give the student frequent opportunities for practice to entrench a skill and help the student to retain it over time. Begin by scheduling more numerous practice episodes within a short time ('massed review') to promote initial fluency and then strengthen longer-term skill retention by scheduling additional periodic review ('distributed review') across longer spans of several weeks or more.
• *Generalization.* The student possesses the necessary academic skill(s) but fails to recognize opportunities when they should use those skills.	• Identify situations/settings in which the student should use the missing skills ('skills transfer') • Select a method (e.g., adult prompt; self-monitoring with a checklist) through which the student is alerted to apply those missing skills in the new setting.

• *'Academic Survival' Skills.* The student's lack of academic survival skills (e.g., homework regimen; organizational skills) interferes with their completing and submitting work.	• Identify the specific area(s) of academic survival skills that are lacking. Create a skills-checklist for each. • Use this checklist to teach the survival skill steps. Consider having the student then use the checklist to self-monitor performance.
• *Overprompting.* The student completes the work—but requires high rates of adult prompting during the task.	• Adjust the work to the student's ability level. • Use scaffolding and accommodation strategies to make the academic work more manageable, e.g., breaking larger tasks into smaller increments ("chunking"), allowing the student to take brief breaks during work sessions, etc.
• *Overhelping.* The student has the ability to complete the work—but seeks repeated assistance during the task.	• Ensure that the student has any supports that will increase confidence during independent work (e.g., completed work models to review; understanding of what fix-up strategies to apply when stuck, etc.). • Assign a fixed number of 'help requests' that the student can make (e.g., 3) during each work session. (Note: Consider also giving the • student incentive NOT to use all help requests by allowing them to 'cash in' unused help requests for points, prizes, privileges, or rewards.)
• *Lack of Confidence/Work Avoidance.* The student possesses the necessary academic skills but lacks sufficient confidence to attempt the work.	• Adjust the work to the student's ability level. • Use scaffolding and accommodation strategies to make the academic work more manageable, e.g., breaking larger tasks into smaller increments ("chunking"), allowing the student to take brief breaks during work sessions, creating a work plan for multi-session assignments, using checklists to outline multi-step cognitive strategies such as math problem-solving, etc.

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Identifying Academic Problems in the Classroom: A Guide for Teachers

Directions: When students struggle to complete in-class and homework assignments, teachers can find it difficult to pinpoint the likely cause of the problem. The table below contains 8 common reasons why students might experience academic difficulty. Educators can use the table as a tool to quickly identify obstacles to student learning as well as to find suggestions to help the learner and to measure the impact of their academic-intervention efforts.

NOTE: Many of the causes for student underperformance contained here require that you first rule out competing explanations before you can accept them. For example, if a teacher believes that a student fails to complete classwork because of a lack of confidence/work avoidance (explanation 8), that instructor must first rule out the alternative explanation that the student simply lacks the skills to do the assignment.

Reason for Academic Problem	What It Looks Like	How to Respond	How to Measure: Sample Ideas
1. *Skill.* The student is unable to do the academic work.	• All information sources (direct observation, work products, past records) indicate the student lacks the necessary skill(s) to do the work.	• Actively teach the target skill(s). • Give the student models of correct performance to consult as needed (e.g., correctly completed math problems on board). • Provide timely feedback about correct performance. Offer praise and encouragement for effort.	• Select any method for data collection that provides direct, observable evidence of the student's mastery of the academic skills being taught: e.g., teacher-made quizzes; rubrics; work products, etc.
2. *Fluency.* The student possesses the necessary academic skills but lacks fluency in completing the work.	• The student can complete the work but is inefficient, requiring substantially more time than classmates to do so. The student may also be committing large amounts of cognitive energy to the basic task, preventing them from focusing on higher-level problem-solving or comprehension.	• Provide opportunities for the student to practice the skill and receive timely performance feedback. • Reinforce the student for fluency as well as accuracy.	• Administer brief, timed measures to track growth in speed and efficiency. NOTE: Curriculum-based measures (CBM's) (e.g., Oral Reading Fluency) are useful tools to track fluency in basic academic skills.
3. *Retention.* The student appears to have mastered the necessary academic skill(s) in one session but does not retain the skill(s) until the next session.	• The student demonstrates success on an academic task (e.g., correctly recalling a set of math facts from memory) but on a following day cannot repeat this same task.	• Give the student multiple opportunities to drill on and 'over-practice' the skill.	• Track student mastery of academic items (e.g., basic math facts) using a Cumulative Mastery Record.

4. *Generalization.* The student possesses the necessary academic skill(s) but fails to recognize opportunities when they should use those skills.	• The teacher has evidence that the student possesses specific academic skills (e.g., reading comprehension techniques; an efficient note-taking strategy). However, the student fails to use those skills in appropriate situations or settings.	• Identify situations/settings in which the student should use the missing skills ('skills transfer') • Select a method (e.g., adult prompt; self-monitoring with a checklist) through which the student is alerted to apply those missing skills in the new setting.	• Choose those target situations/settings to which the student should generalize specific skills. • In those situations/settings, tally the number of times the student both (1) successfully displays the target skill(s), and (2) fails to display those skills.
5. *'Academic Survival' Skills.* The student's lack of academic survival skills (e.g., homework regimen; organizational skills) interferes with their completing and submitting work.	• The student's ability to complete assigned work is compromised because they are disorganized, manage time poorly, lack a strong study-skills or homework regimen, or have other survival-skill deficits.	• Identify the specific area(s) of academic survival skills that are lacking. • Create a skills-checklist for each. • Use this checklist to teach the survival skill steps. Consider having the student then use the checklist to self-monitor performance.	• For each academic survival skill that is lacking, create a checklist describing each recommended step or element. • Periodically use the checklist to track those elements that the student is now successfully carrying out. (Methods to verify student success on checklist elements might include interview, direct observation, examination of work products, etc.).
6. *Overprompting.* The student completes the work—but requires high rates of adult prompting during the task.	• The student does not complete the task without frequent prompting from adults (e.g., gestural prompt; verbal prompt; modeling prompt; manual prompt).	• A goal in reducing use of adult prompts is shift from more-intensive to less-intensive prompt types. For example, if a student requires that the teacher demonstrate the skill (modeling), that teacher may set as a goal that the student will instead be able to complete the task with a less-intensive verbal prompt. Once the student responds to verbal prompts, the teacher might provide	• During each session, record the number and types of prompt (e.g., gestural; verbal; modeling; manual) used to elicit student work. • The goal over time is to see (1) a replacement of more-intensive with less-intensive adult prompts and (2) an overall reduction in the number of prompts required to complete the work.

		the student with a checklist outlining steps to follow and simply point to the checklist (gestural prompt) to encourage the student to complete the task.	
7. *Overhelping.* The student has the ability to complete the work—but seeks repeated assistance during the task.	• The student seeks frequent adult help on the assignment even though all signs indicate that the student has the ability to do the work independently.	• Ensure that the student has any supports that will increase confidence during independent work (e.g., completed work models to review; understanding of what fix-up strategies to apply when stuck, etc.). • Assign a fixed number of 'help requests' that the student can make (e.g., 3) during each work session. (Note: Consider also giving the student incentive NOT to use all help requests by allowing them to 'cash in' unused help requests for points, prizes, privileges, or rewards.)	• Tally the number of help requests that the student makes during each independent-work session.
8. *Lack of Confidence/Work Avoidance.* The student possesses the necessary academic skills but lacks sufficient confidence to attempt the work.	• The student has the foundation skills to undertake the academic work—but displays an attitude of 'learned helplessness' that undermines confidence and work performance.	• Adjust the work to the student's ability level. • Use scaffolding and accommodation strategies to make the academic work more manageable, e.g., breaking larger tasks into smaller increments ("chunking"), allowing the student to take brief breaks during work sessions, creating a work plan for multi-session assignments, using checklists to outline multi-step cognitive strategies such as math problem-solving, etc.	• Track information about quality, completion, and speed of academic work: e.g., percentage of assignments turned in; number of items attempted on completed assignments; time-log tracking length of time required to complete an assignment.

How To: Define Intervention-Related Terms: Core Instruction, Intervention, Instructional Adjustment, Modification

Educators who serve as interventionists should be able to define and distinguish among the terms *core instruction*, *intervention*, *instructional adjustment*, and *modification*. (In particular, interventionists should avoid using modifications as part of an intervention plan to support a general education student in core instruction--as they can be predicted to undermine the student's academic performance.) Here are definitions for these key terms. (Tindal & Fuchs, 1999; Wright, 2007).

Intervention-Related Terms & Definitions

Core Instruction. Those instructional strategies that are used routinely with all students in a general-education setting are considered 'core instruction'. High-quality instruction is essential and forms the foundation of classroom academic support. NOTE: While it is important to verify that a struggling student receives good core instructional practices, those routine practices do not 'count' as individual student interventions.

Intervention. An academic *intervention* is a strategy used to teach a new skill, build fluency in a skill, or encourage a child to apply an existing skill to new situations or settings. An intervention can be thought of as "a set of actions that, when taken, have demonstrated ability to change a fixed educational trajectory" (Methe & Riley-Tillman, 2008; p. 37). As an example of an academic intervention, the teacher may select question generation (Davey & McBride,1986.; Rosenshine, Meister & Chapman, 1996), a strategy in which the student is taught to locate or generate main idea sentences for each paragraph in a passage and record those 'gist' sentences for later review.

Instructional Adjustment (Accommodation). An *instructional adjustment* (also known as an 'accommodation') is intended to help the student to fully access and participate in the general-education curriculum without changing the instructional content and without reducing the student's rate of learning (Skinner, Pappas & Davis, 2005). An instructional adjustment is intended to remove barriers to learning while still expecting that students will master the same instructional content as their typical peers. An instructional adjustment for students who are slow readers, for example, may include having them supplement their silent reading of a novel by listening to the book on tape. An instructional adjustment for unmotivated students may include breaking larger assignments into smaller 'chunks' and providing students with performance feedback and praise for each completed 'chunk' of assigned work (Skinner, Pappas & Davis, 2005).

Modification. A modification changes the expectations of what a student is expected to know or do—typically by lowering the academic standards against which the student is to be evaluated. Examples of modifications are giving a student five math computation problems for practice instead of the 20 problems assigned to the rest of the class or letting the student consult course notes during a test when peers are not permitted to do so. Instructional modifications are essential elements on the Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) or Section 504 Plans of many students with special needs. Modifications are generally not included on a general-education student's classroom intervention plan, however, because the assumption is that the student can be successful in the curriculum with appropriate interventions and instructional adjustments alone. In fact, modifying the work of struggling general education students is likely to have a negative effect that works *against* the goals of intervention. Reducing academic expectations will result in these students falling further behind rather than closing the performance gap with peers

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Classroom Accommodations for Academics: A Teacher Toolkit

An accommodation ("instructional adjustment") is intended to help the student to fully access and participate in the general-education curriculum without changing the instructional content and without reducing the student's rate of learning (Skinner, Pappas & Davis, 2005). An accommodation is intended to remove barriers to learning while still expecting that students will master the same instructional content as their typical peers.

Here is a list of possible accommodations that teachers can consider using for specific students or with the entire class.

1.	ALLOW PHYSICAL MOVEMENT. To accommodate the fidgety student, negotiate appropriate outlets for movement (e.g., allowing the student to pace at the back of the classroom during a lesson).	Attention/Impulsivity
2.	CHUNK CLASSWORK SESSIONS AND INCLUDE BREAKS. Break up lectures or student work sessions into smaller segments and include brief breaks to sustain student attention.	
3.	CREATE LOW-DISTRACTION WORK AREA. Set up a study carrel in the corner of the room or other low-distraction work area. Direct or allow distractible students to use this area when needed.	
4.	USE PREFERENTIAL SEATING. Seat the student in a classroom location that minimizes distractions and maximizes the ability to focus on the teacher's instruction.	
5.	USE SILENT CUES. Meet with the student and agree on one or more silent teacher cues to redirect or focus the student (e.g., placing a paperclip on the student's desk) during class instruction. Use the cue as needed.	
6.	USE 'VISUAL BLOCKERS'. Encourage the student to reduce distractions on assignments by using a blank sheet of paper or similar aid to cover sections of the page that the student is not currently working on.	

7.	REPEAT/REPHRASE COMMENTS. Repeat or rephrase student questions or comments to the class or group before responding.	Communication
8.	DIRECTIONS: ASSIGN A BUDDY. Assign a study buddy who is willing and able to repeat and explain directions to the student.	
9.	DIRECTIONS: SIMPLIFY. Simplify written directions on assignments to promote student understanding.	
10.	PROVIDE SCHEDULES/AGENDAS. Provide the student with an academic agenda or schedule for the class period or school day, to include: instructional activities, independent assignments, other tasks to be covered during the period, as well as their approximate duration. Preview with students to prepare them for upcoming activities.	

11.	ALLOW EXTRA WORK TIME. Allow the student additional time to complete an in-class activity or assignment. (For longer assignments, the instructor can announce to students at the start the amount of extra time available for those that need it.)	Independent Work
12.	ASSIGN A 'FALL-BACK' PEER. Choose a peer whom the student can check in with to get details about missing or lost homework assignments.	
13.	DEVELOP A STUDENT SELF-CHECK ERROR CHECKLIST. Meet with the student to generate a short list of their most common errors made on course assignments (e.g., 'In writing assignments, some words are illegible', 'Not all words at sentence beginning are capitalized'.) Format that list as a customized error-correction checklist for the student to use before turning in the work.	
14.	GIVE AN ASSIGNMENT HEAD-START. Allow students who require extra time to complete a lengthy or involved assignment to start it early.	
15.	HIGHLIGHT ESSENTIAL MATERIAL. Have the student use a highlighter to identify key ideas and vocabulary in text. (Provide training in this skill if needed.)	
16.	OFFER CHOICE: MODES OF TASK COMPLETION. Allow the student two or more choices for completing a given academic task: e.g., keyboarding vs. handwriting an essay; oral vs. written responding to math-fact worksheet.	
17.	OFFER CHOICE: ASSIGNMENT SUBSTITUTION. Present the student with two or more alternative activities to choose from with equivalent academic requirements: e.g., to review a textbook chapter, student can answer a series of questions independently or discuss those questions in a structured cooperative learning activity.	
18.	OFFER CHOICE: TASK SEQUENCE. When the student has several tasks to complete during independent work time, allow the student to select the order in which she or he will complete those tasks.	
19.	PROVIDE A WORK PLAN. For a multi-step assignment, give the student an outline of a work plan that breaks the task into appropriate sub-steps (e.g., 'find five research articles for the paper', 'summarize key information from research articles into notes', etc.). For each sub-step, (1) estimate the minimum amount of 'seat time' required to complete and (2) set a calendar-date deadline for completion.	
20.	PROVIDE TEXTS WITH EASIER READABILITY. Locate alternative texts for course readings with the same vocabulary and concepts as the standard text(s) but written at a lower reading level. Allow students to select the easier texts as substitute or supplemental course readings.	
21.	PROVIDE WORK SAMPLES / EXEMPLARS. Provide samples of successfully completed academic items (e.g., math computation or word problems) or exemplars (e.g., samples of well-written paragraphs or essays) for the student to refer to when working independently.	
22.	RESPONSE EFFORT: CHUNK INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENTS. To reduce the required response effort, break a larger in-class or homework assignment into smaller, more manageable 'chunks'.	

23.	RESPONSE EFFORT: START ASSIGNED HOMEWORK IN CLASS. Have students begin assigned homework in class. For reading assignments, have a skilled reader read the first several paragraphs aloud while students follow along silently. For academic homework, have students pair off to complete the first several items. Students are then expected to finish the work on their own.	
24.	STRUCTURE ASSIGNMENTS FOR INITIAL SUCCESS. Promote student motivation on worksheets and independent assignments by presenting easier items first and more challenging items later.	
25.	TEACH FIX-UP STRATEGIES. Teach the student steps to follow when stuck during independent work: e.g., "If I don't understand what I am reading, (1) slow my reading; (2) focus full attention on the reading; (3) underline unfamiliar words and try to figure them out from context."	

26.	CREATE STUDENT ORGANZATION FOLDER. Help the student to create work folder(s) to organizer materials for a course or content area. Each folder can include dividers and color-coding to organize materials by subject or topic.	Organization
27.	CLASS NOTES: CREATE GUIDED NOTES. Prepare a copy of notes summarizing content from a class lecture or assigned reading—with blanks inserted in the notes where key facts or concepts should appear. During instruction, prompt the student to write missing content into the blanks.	
28.	CLASS NOTES: PROVIDE A STUDENT COPY. Provide a copy of class notes to allow the student to focus more fully on the lecture and class discussion. This strategy can be strengthened by requiring that the student highlight key vocabulary terms appearing in the prepared notes as they are brought up in the lecture or discussion.	
29.	CLASS NOTES: PROVIDE LECTURE OUTLINE. Make up an outline of the lecture to share with students. Encourage students to use the elements of the outline to help to structure their class notes and to ensure that their notes do not omit important information.	
30.	LECTURE: TIE INFORMATION TO COURSE READINGS. When presenting important course concepts during lecture, explicitly link that content to page references in the course text or other assigned readings that also cover that information. Prompt students to write these page references into their notes.	
31.	PROVIDE CLASSROOM STORAGE SPACE. Provide the student with shelf space or container in the classroom to store work materials required for class.	
32.	PROVIDE MISSING WORK MATERIALS. Provide essential work materials (e.g., paper, writing utensil) for students who forget to bring them to class.	

33.	CUE IMPORTANT INFORMATION. In instruction and on handouts, identify academic content to be evaluated on upcoming tests and quizzes.	Test-Taking
34.	TEST: ALLOW EXTRA TIME. For tests that evaluate student knowledge or skills but do not formally assess speed/fluency with fixed time limits, allow the student a reasonable amount of additional time if needed.	
35.	TEST: HIGHLIGHT KEY WORDS IN DIRECTIONS. When preparing test directions, highlight key words or phrases (e.g., bold; underlined) to focus student attention.	

36.	TEST: PRACTICE UNDER TEST CONDITIONS. Create practice tests that mimic the actual test in format and environmental conditions (e.g., with time limits). Have the student complete practice tests to build endurance, reduce test anxiety.	

How To: Create a Written Record of Classroom Interventions

When general-education students begin to struggle with academic or behavioral issues, the classroom teacher will typically select and implement one or more evidence-based intervention strategies to assist those students. But a strong intervention plan needs more than just well-chosen interventions. It also requires 4 additional components (Witt, VanDerHeyden, & Gilbertson, 2004): (1) student concerns should be clearly and specifically defined; (2) one or more methods of formative assessment should be used to track the effectiveness of the intervention; (3) baseline student data should be collected prior to the intervention; and (4) a goal for student improvement should be calculated before the start of the intervention to judge whether that intervention is ultimately successful. If a single one of these essential 4 components is missing, the intervention is to be judged as fatally flawed (Witt, VanDerHeyden, & Gilbertson, 2004) and as not meeting minimum Response to Intervention standards.

Teachers need a standard format to use in documenting their classroom intervention plans. The *Classroom Intervention Planning Sheet* that appears later in this article is designed to include all of the essential documentation elements of an effective intervention plan. The form includes space to document:

- *Case information*. In this first section of the form, the teacher notes general information, such as the name of the target student, the adult(s) responsible for carrying out the intervention, the date the intervention plan is being created, the expected start and end dates for the intervention plan, and the total number of instructional weeks that the intervention will be in place. Most importantly, this section includes a description of the student problem; research shows that the most significant step in selecting an effective classroom intervention is to correctly identify the target student concern(s) in clear, specific, measureable terms (Bergan, 1995).
- *Intervention.* The teacher describes the evidence-based intervention(s) that will be used to address the identified student concern(s). As a shortcut, the instructor can simply write the intervention name in this section and attach a more detailed intervention script/description to the intervention plan.
- *Materials.* The teacher lists any materials (e.g., flashcards, wordlists, worksheets) or other resources (e.g., Internet-connected computer) necessary for the intervention.
- *Training.* If adults and/or the target student require any training prior to the intervention, the teacher records those training needs in this section of the form.
- *Progress-Monitoring.* The teacher selects a method to monitor student progress during the intervention. For the method selected, the instructor records what type of data is to be used, collects and enters student baseline (starting-point) information, calculates an intervention outcome goal, and notes how frequently he or she plans to monitor the intervention.

A completed example of the *Classroom Intervention Planning Sheet* that includes a math computation intervention can be found later in this article.

While a simple intervention documentation form is a helpful planning tool, schools should remember that teachers will need other resources and types of assistance as well to be successful in selecting and using classroom interventions. For example, teachers should have access to an 'intervention menu' that contains evidence-based strategies to address the most common academic and behavioral concerns and should be able to get coaching support as they learn how to implement new classroom intervention ideas.

References

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Tier 1: Classroom Support Plan

Case Information

What to Write: Record the important case information, including student, person delivering the intervention, date of plan, start and end dates for the intervention plan, and the total number of instructional weeks that the intervention will run.

Student:		Interventionist(s):		Date of Plan	
Intervention: Start Date		Intervention: End Date		Total/Intervention Weeks:	

Description of the Student Problem		
Environmental Conditions or Task Demands	Problem Description	Typical or Expected Level of Performance

Intervention

What to Write: Write a brief description of the intervention(s) to be used with this student. TIP: If you have a script for this intervention, you can just write its name here and attach the script to this sheet.

Materials	Training
What to Write: Jot down materials (e.g., flashcards) or resources (e.g., Internet-connected computer) needed to carry out this intervention.	**What to Write:** Note what training--if any--is needed to prepare adult(s) and/or the student to carry out the intervention.

Progress-Monitoring. Select a method to monitor student progress. For the method selected, record what type of data is to be used, enter student baseline (starting-point) information, calculate an intervention outcome goal, and note how frequently you plan to monitor the intervention.	
Type of Data Used to Monitor:	
Baseline	Outcome Goal
How often will data be collected? (e.g., daily, every other day, weekly):	

Tier 1: Classroom Support Plan

Case Information

What to Write: Record the important case information, including student, person delivering the intervention, date of plan, start and end dates for the intervention plan, and the total number of instructional weeks that the intervention will run.

Student:	Neda J. Gr 4	Interventionist(s):	Mrs. Kennedy	Date of Plan	5 Feb 2018
Intervention: Start Date	10 Feb 2018	Intervention: End Date	30 Mar 2018	Total/Intervention Weeks:	6 weeks

Description of the Student Problem		
Environmental Conditions or Task Demands	Problem Description	Typical or Expected Level of Performance
On a 2-minute multiplication-facts worksheet (0-12)	Neda computes 28 correct digits	while the benchmark for Grade 4 is at least 49 correct digits.

Intervention

What to Write: Write a brief description of the intervention(s) to be used with this student. TIP: If you have a script for this intervention, you can just write its name here and attach the script to this sheet.

Neda will be taught to use the Cover-Copy-Compare (CCC) math intervention.
She will use the self-guided strategy daily for 10 minutes during math independent seatwork.

At the end of each session, Neda will be given the math facts for her next session and will fill out her CCC worksheet for that session.

Materials	Training
What to Write: Jot down materials (e.g., flashcards) or resources (e.g., Internet-connected computer) needed to carry out this intervention.	**What to Write:** Note what training--if any--is needed to prepare adult(s) and/or the student to carry out the intervention.
Use the math CCC interactive form from: http://www.interventioncentral.org	Neda will meet with the teacher for 1 session to be trained to use the CCC strategy.

Progress-Monitoring. Select a method to monitor student progress. For the method selected, record what type of data is to be used, enter student baseline (starting-point) information, calculate an intervention outcome goal, and note how frequently you plan to monitor the intervention.	
Type of Data Used to Monitor: Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM) 2-Min Math Fact Fluency Worksheet: Multiplication Facts 0-12	
Baseline	Outcome Goal
28 correct digits/2 mins	49 correct digits/2 mins
How often will data be collected? (e.g., daily, every other day, weekly): **Weekly**	

A Toolkit: 38 Classroom Ideas to Help Students to Make Better Behavioral Choices

Behavior intervention plans are highly individualized--because every student displays a unique profile of behaviors. However, teachers will find that their chances of helping a student to engage in positive behaviors increase when they include *each* of these 3 elements in their classroom behavior intervention plans:

1. Antecedents: Strategies to promote positive behaviors and prevent misbehavior
2. Positive consequences: Responses that increase positive/goal behaviors
3. Extinction procedures: Responses that extinguish problem behaviors

Every one of these elements plays a crucial role in promoting the success of a behavior plan. Antecedent strategies prevent the student from engaging in problem behaviors in the first place. Positive consequences motivate the student to show desired behaviors, such as academic engagement. Extinction procedures remove the 'pay-off' to the student for engaging in problem behaviors. While any one of the elements might be inadequate to change the student's behavior, the combination of antecedents, positive consequences, and extinction procedures can result in a strong, flexible plan and successful intervention outcome.

Teachers can use this guide to build their own behavior plans using its research-based ideas for antecedents, positive consequences, and extinction procedures.

1. Antecedents: Strategies to Prevent Misbehavior

Teachers have the greatest array of options to influence a student to engage in positive behaviors when they focus on *antecedents*: actions they take *before* the student behavior occurs. Proactive antecedent actions to encourage desired behaviors are often quick-acting, can prevent misbehavior and attendant interruption of instruction, and usually require less teacher effort than providing corrective consequences after problem behaviors have occurred. Teacher strategies to elicit positive student behaviors include making instructional adjustments, providing student prompts and reminders, and teaching students to monitor and evaluate their work performance. Here are specific antecedent ideas that teachers can use to 'nudge' students to engage in desired behaviors:

Antecedents That Prevent Problem Behaviors

- ☐ Behaviors: Teach Expectations (Fairbanks, Sugai, Guardino, & Lathrop, 2007). Students must be explicitly taught behavioral expectations before they can be held accountable for those behaviors. The teacher should model positive behaviors, give students examples and non-examples of appropriate behaviors to clarify understanding, have students practice those behaviors with instructor feedback; and consistently acknowledge and praise students for successfully displaying positive behaviors.
- ☐ Instructional Match: Ensure the Student Can Do the Work (Burns, VanDerHeyden, & Boice, 2008). Student misbehavior frequently arises from an inability to do the academic task. When the student lacks skills necessary for the academic task, the instructor teaches the necessary skill(s). Additional strategies include adjusting the immediate task to the student's current skill(s) and pairing the student with a helping peer.

- ☐ No: Substitute a Preferred Alternative (Mace, Pratt, Prager, & Pritchard, 2011). If the student has a pattern of misbehaving when told that he or she cannot access a desired item or engage in a preferred activity, the teacher can use the 'no with preferred alternative' strategy. The teacher prepares by making a list of activities or items preferred by the student that are allowed during the academic situation or setting where problems arise. Then, whenever the student requests an item or activity that is not allowed, the teacher (1) tells the student that he or she cannot access the desired activity or item; (2) provides a brief explanation of why the requested item or activity is off-limits; and (3) immediately offers the student one or more items or activities from the prepared list that *are* allowable in the current situation or setting.

- ☐ Pre-Session Attention: Provide Antecedent Attention. If a student appears to misbehave to seek adult attention during an activity such as whole-group instruction, the teacher consistently gives the student a dose (e.g., 3 minutes) of positive individual attention *just before* the session begins (Wood et al., 2018). This pre-session attention can thus reduce that student's immediate attention-seeking behaviors.

- ☐ Relocate the Student: Remove From Temptation (US Department of Education, 2004). When the student's problem behaviors are triggered or supported by factors in the environment--such as a talkative peer or difficulty hearing or seeing the instructor--the teacher may choose to move the student to another, less-distracting location in the classroom. A good option is to seat the student within the teacher's 'action zone', close to the instructor and in the region of the room toward which that educator directs most instruction.

- ☐ Schedule: Increase Predictability (Kern & Clemens, 2007). When students know the "content, duration, and/or consequences of future events" (Kern & Clemens, 2007; p. 67), their level of engagement rises and problem behaviors decline—a good definition of motivation. A strategy to increase the predictability of events for individual students or an entire classroom is to post or otherwise provide a schedule outlining the day's classroom activities. In simplest form, such a schedule lists a title and brief description for each scheduled activity, along with the start and end times for that activity. Teachers may wish to add information to the schedule, such as helpful reminders of what work materials a student might need for each event. Students who have difficulty interpreting a written schedule may benefit from having their schedules read aloud and/or from having pictorial equivalents included in their schedules.

- ☐ Work Break: Make It Available on Request (Majeika et al., 2011). Sometimes misbehavior is an attempt by the student to engineer a break from an academic task. The teacher can choose an alternative method for the student to use to communicate that he or she would like a brief break, such as requesting that break verbally or pulling out a color-coded break card. Of course, the student will also require clear guidelines on how long the requested break will last and what activities are acceptable for the student to engage in during that break.

Antecedents That Encourage Goal Behaviors

- ☐ Checklist for Academic Skills: Make the Complicated Simple (Alter, Wyrick, Brown, & Lingo, 2008). When the student must apply several steps to complete a complex academic task, the teacher can give the student a checklist detailing each step and instructions for completing it. Before the activity, the student is prompted to preview the checklist; after the activity, the student uses the checklist to review the work.

- ☐ Checklist for Challenging Situations: Script Transition Times (McCoy, Mathur, & Czoka, 2010). Students often struggle with the complexity of managing multi-step routines such as transitioning between classroom activities or moving to different locations within the school. Teachers can assist by making up step-by-step

checklists that 'walk' the student incrementally through the routine. Instructors can use these checklists as guides to teach and measure student success in navigating transitions. Just as important, the student can use the checklist as a prompt and guide to follow the expected steps.

- ☐ Check Out: Exit Slips (Hirn & Park, 2012). As the student transitions from small-group or independent work to another activity, give the student an 'exit slip'. This slip can contain short-answer questions to prompt the student to reflect on the learning just completed. It can also include reminders for putting away materials, turning in completed work, or preparing for the next activity.

- ☐ Choice-Making: Allow for Student Preference (Green, Mays, & Jolivette, 2011). Students find it motivating to have opportunities to choose how they structure or carry out their academic tasks. Teachers can allow choice on any of a variety of dimensions of a classroom activity, such as where the activity takes place; who the child works with; what materials to work with (e.g., choosing a book from several options); when to begin or end the activity; or how long to engage in the activity.

- ☐ Clock It: Time-Based Check-In (Hirn & Park, 2012). While the student is working independently, the instructor checks in periodically (e.g., at 3- or 5-minute intervals) to ensure that the student remains actively engaged and to offer instructional support, praise, or encouragement.

- ☐ Fix-Up Skills: Foster Work Independence (Rosenshine, 2008). During independent work, the student should know procedures to follow if stuck (e.g., cannot complete an item; does not understand a word in a reading passage). The teacher creates a routine for the student in how to apply 'fix-up' skills for independent assignments: e.g., "If I don't understand what I have read, I should (1) reread the paragraph; (2) slow my reading;(3) focus my *full* attention on what I am reading; (4) underline any words that I do not know and try to figure them out from the reading" (McCallum et al., 2010).

- ☐ Greet Students at the Start of Class (Allday & Pakurar, 2007). As students arrive at the start of class, the teacher stands at the door and briefly greets each student by name. This modest effort has been shown to substantially increase student attention and focus. Teachers who commit to using student greetings rearrange their start-of-class routine to allow them consistently to be standing just outside or inside the classroom door as the students arrive.

- ☐ Goal-Setting: Get a Commitment (Martin et al., 2003). One tool to increase student motivation to perform an academic task is to have that student choose a specific, measurable outcome goal before starting that task. At the end of the work session, the student compares the actual outcome to the previously selected goal to judge success. For example, a student about to begin a writing task may choose the goal of locating 3 primary sources for a term paper. Or a student starting an in-class reading assignment might come up with two questions that he would like to have answered from the reading.

- ☐ High-Preference Requests: Build Behavioral Momentum (Kern & Clemens, 2007). Use 'behavioral momentum' to increase compliance by first directing the student or class to complete several short, simple, high-preference directives that they readily complete (e.g., "Take out a sheet of paper", "write your name on the paper", "copy the assignment from the board") before presenting the student or class with a low-preference directive that they typically balk at (e.g., "Open your books and begin the assignment").

- ☐ Maintain a High Ratio of Positive Interactions (Sprick, Borgmeier & Nolet, 2002). To keep relationships on a positive footing throughout the classroom, the teacher self-monitors encounters with particular students and sets

the goal of having at least 3 positive interactions for each disciplinary interaction. Positive teacher-student interactions can vary in format: for example, greeting, praise, conversation, smile, thumbs-up sign. By maintaining at least a 3:1 ratio between relationship-enhancing vs. disciplinary interactions, the teacher bends the odds in his or her favor that every student in the class will view the instructor as fair and caring.gr

- ☐ Opportunities to Respond: Let Feedback Be Its Own Reward (Partin et al., 2010). When students are academically engaged, they are usually also behaving appropriately. The teacher's goal, then, is to capture positive student behaviors by structuring lessons and work assignments to require a high rate of opportunities to respond (OTRs). In a complete OTR cycle, the student has an opportunity to respond (e.g., the teacher asks a question, or the student encounters an item on independent work), produces a response (e.g., the student responds to the teacher question or answers the work item); and receives timely performance feedback (e.g., the teacher says, "Right answer!", or the student uses an answer key to check a response).

  An efficient way to boost OTRs classwide is through group responding (Haydon, Borders, Embury, & Clarke, 2009). Strategies for group response include choral responding; show of hands; pre-formatted response cards (e.g., with YES and NO written on opposite faces of the card); and individual white boards.

- ☐ Paraphrasing: Have the Student Repeat Directions or Other Key Information (Mancil & Maynard, 2007). To ensure that the student understands challenging directions, the instructor has the student repeat those directions in his or her own words before starting the task. This paraphrasing strategy can also be used with any other key information (e.g., fix-up strategies) that the student needs for success on the task.

- ☐ Positive Teacher Requests: It's How You Say It (Braithwaite, 2000). Non-compliant students have a pattern of ignoring or defying teacher requests. However, instructors can increase the likelihood of student compliance by stating their requests in positive terms (e.g., "John, I can help you just as soon as you are back in your seat") rather than in negative terms (e.g., "John, I can't help you unless you are sitting in your seat").

- ☐ Pre-Correction: Plant a Positive Thought (De Pry & Sugai, 2002). Some students need a timely reminder of expected behaviors just before they transition into situations or settings in which problem behaviors tend to occur. At this 'point of performance', the teacher gives the student a timely reminder of goal behaviors, using such prompting strategies as stating goal behaviors, having the student preview a checklist of goal behaviors, asking the student to describe goal behaviors; or praising another student for demonstrating goal behaviors.

- ☐ Response Effort: Reduce Task Difficulty (Friman & Poling, 1995; Skinner, Pappas & Davis, 2005). The teacher increases student engagement through any method that reduces the apparent difficulty ('response effort') of an academic task - so long as that method does not hold the student to a lesser academic standard than classmates. Examples of strategies that lower response effort include having students pair off to start homework in class and breaking larger academic tasks into smaller, more manageable 'chunks'.

- ☐ Rewards: Choose Them in Advance (De Pry & Sugai, 2002). Just as the student is about to enter a challenging situation or setting in which he or she will need to show appropriate behaviors, the instructor reminds the student of the behavioral expectations and has the student select a possible reward from a menu. The student is later given that reward if behaviors were appropriate.

- ☐ Setting the Tone: Transition Signal (Hirn & Park, 2012). When moving from a high-structure learning task (e.g., independent seatwork) to a less-structured situation (e.g., lining up for lunch; preparing for dismissal), the

teacher uses an audible tone or other signal to clearly mark that transition. Such a signal helps all students more quickly and appropriately to match behaviors to the current classroom activity.

- ☐ 'Two by Ten': Engage in Brief Positive Chats (Mendler, 2000). If a teacher has a strained (or nonexistent) relationship with a particular student, that instructor may want to jump-start a more positive pattern of interaction using the 'two-by-ten' intervention. With this time efficient strategy, the teacher commits to having a positive 2-minute conversation with the student at least once per day across 10 consecutive school days. The active ingredient in the intervention is regular and positive teacher attention delivered at times when the student is engaged in appropriate behavior.

- ☐ Verbal Commands: Keep Them Brief and Powerful (Matheson & Shriver, 2005; Walker & Walker, 1991). Teacher commands are most likely to elicit student compliance when they (1) are delivered calmly, (2) are brief, (3) are stated when possible as DO statements rather than as DON'T statements, (4) use clear, simple language, and (5) are delivered one command at a time and appropriately paced to avoid confusing or overloading students. Effective teacher commands avoid both sarcasm or hostility and over-lengthy explanations that can distract or confuse students.

2. Positive Consequences: Responses That Increase Positive/Goal Behaviors

Consequences are those events following a student behavior that make it more or less likely that the behavior will occur in the future. This section looks at positive consequences, ideas that teachers can use to reinforce the student for being on-task and showing appropriate behaviors. Among strategies that promote behaviors are providing timely feedback ,praise, and teacher attention; as well as allowing students to take temporary work breaks. To foster specific behaviors, the teacher can use any of the following strategies:

- ☐ Performance Feedback: Information is Rewarding (Conroy et al., 2009). When students receive timely feedback about their academic performance, this information can reinforce academic behavior and reduce misbehavior. Instructional feedback comes in many forms: e.g., teacher oral or written feedback; class discussion and review of an assignment; oral feedback from class peers; student self-directed completion of a rubric or problem-solving checklist during an independent assignment.

- ☐ Praise: Catch Them Being Good (Kern & Clemens, 2007). Research suggests that teacher praise is one of the most powerful--yet underused-- of classroom management tools. When a student, group, or class displays an appropriate pro-social or pro-academic behavior, the teacher reinforces that behavior with a targeted praise statement containing two elements: (1) a specific description of the praiseworthy behavior, and (2) an expression of teacher approval (e.g., "You worked for the full independent-work period. Nice job!"; "I really appreciate the way that our student groups stayed on-task and completed their entire assignment.").

- ☐ Scheduled Attention: Rechannel Adult Interactions (Austin & Soeda, 2008). As every educator knows, teacher attention can be a potent motivator for student behavior. One strategy to increase positive behaviors is to 'catch the student being good' with regular doses of 'scheduled attention': (1) The teacher decides on a fixed-interval schedule to provide attention (e.g., every 8 minutes); (2) At each interval, the teacher observes the student; (3) If the student is engaged in appropriate behaviors at that moment, the teacher provides a dose of positive attention (e.g., verbal praise; non-verbal praise such as thumbs-up; brief positive conversation; encouragement). If the student is off-task or not behaving appropriately, the teacher briefly redirects the student to task and returns immediately to instruction until the next scheduled-attention interval.

3. Extinction Procedures: Responses That Reduce or Eliminate Problem Behaviors

Extinction means discontinuing the reinforcing consequences of behaviors to erase an individual's motivation to engage in those behaviors. In effect, extinction procedures 'cut off the oxygen' to problem behaviors. That is, explicit directions should be written into a behavior intervention plan to guide those working with the student to alter their responses to problem behaviors in a manner designed to remove reinforcement for the misbehavior.

An explicit plan to extinguish problem behaviors is an *essential* part of most student behavior plans (Hester et al., 2009). Without extinction procedures, educators are far too likely accidentally to continue reinforcing the very behaviors they are trying to eliminate. The teacher wishing to extinguish specific behaviors can try one or more of the following strategies:.

- ☐ Escape Breaks: Put Escape on a Schedule (Waller & Higbee, 2010). The teacher can manage a student who uses disruptive behavior to escape or avoid academic work by scheduling 'non-contingent escape breaks'. First the teacher selects a reasonable work interval for the student-- this should be an interval slightly shorter than the average amount of time that student *currently* will work before misbehaving (e.g. 5 minutes). Next, the teacher decides how long the brief 'escape break' will last (e.g., two minutes). Finally, the teacher identifies motivating activities that the student can engage in during escape breaks (e.g., coloring; playing a math application on a computer tablet). When the intervention is in effect, the teacher directs the student to begin work and starts a timer. When the student's work interval is done, the teacher directs that student to take a break and again starts the timer. When the break is up, the student is directed to resume work. This process repeats until the work period is over. As the student's behaviors improve, the teacher can gradually lengthen the work periods until the student is able to remain academically engaged for as long as typical peers; at this point, the intervention is discontinued.

- ☐ Choice Statements in 2 Parts: Frame the Alternative Consequences (Walker, 1997). The teacher frames a request to an uncooperative student as a two-part 'choice' statement: (1) The teacher presents the negative, or non-compliant, choice and its consequence (e.g., "John, you can choose to stay after school today to finish this in-class assignment."); (2) The teacher next states the positive behavioral choice that the student is encouraged to select (e.g., "Or you can finish your work now and not stay after school. It's your choice."). If the student fails to comply within a reasonable time (e.g. 1 minute), the teacher imposes the disciplinary consequence.

- ☐ Contingent Instructions: Move from 'Stop' to 'Start' (Curran, 2006; Gable. Hester, Rock, & Hughes, 2009). When the instructor observes that a student is engaging in problem behavior requiring a response, the teacher delivers contingent instructions in a 3-part format.

    1. *STOP statement.* The teacher directs the student to STOP a specific problem behavior, e.g., "Joshua, put away the magazine."; "Annabelle, return to your seat."

    2. *START statement.* After a brief (1-2 second) pause, the instruction describes the appropriate replacement behavior that the student should START, e.g., "Open your book to page 28 and begin the end-of-chapter questions."; "Work with your partner to solve the math problem on the board."

3. *PRAISE for compliance.* As the student begins to engage in the desired behavior, the teacher concludes by PRAISING the student for compliance. e.g., "Thank you for starting your book assignment, Joshua.", "I see that you and your partner are solving the math problem, Annabelle. Good!"

☐ If/Then Statements: Set the Conditions (Majeika et al., 2011). When the student is engaging in a problem behavior, the teacher can use an 'if/then' statement to prompt that student to engage in the appropriate replacement behavior. For example, if a student is out of seat without permission, the teacher says, "Shelly, if you return to your seat, then I will come over and answer your question." Of course, when the student responds by displaying the positive behavior, the teacher follows through with the promised action and praises that student for compliance.

☐ Planned Ignoring: Turn Off the Attention (Colvin, 2009). When the student engages in minor misbehavior to attract teacher attention, planned ignoring is a useful strategy. In planned ignoring, the instructor withholds attention when the student engages in the problem behavior. Ignoring problem behavior can remove the source of its reinforcement and thus help to extinguish it. Teachers should remember, though, that planned ignoring alone is seldom successful. Instead, planned ignoring becomes much more powerful when, at the same time, the teacher provides regular attention whenever the student engages in positive, replacement behaviors. In fact, the tandem efforts of (1) removing teacher attention from misbehavior while (2) rechanneling that attention toward positive behaviors is one of the most effective behavior management combinations available.

☐ Praise Peers: Shape Behavior Through Vicarious Reinforcement (Majeika et al., 2011). Teacher approval can be a powerful motivator . The teacher can capitalize on this fact by publicly praising on-task peers sitting near the target (misbehaving) student. When the target student then engages in academic work, the teacher makes sure to praise that student as well.

☐ Precision Requests: Make Directives and Consequences Clear (De Martini-Scully, Bray, & Kehle, 2000; Musser, Bray, Kehle, & Jenson, 2001). The *precision request* structures communication with the student in a concise, respectful format that preserves adult authority and increases the likelihood of student compliance. In preparation, the teacher decides on appropriate consequences for non-compliance. Examples of suitable consequences include loss of free time, phone call to a parent, loss of a point or token, or restriction of activities at recess. When making a precision request, the teacher follows these steps:

1. *Make first request: "Please...".* The teacher states a brief request that starts with the word 'Please' and --whenever possible--frames the request as a goal behavior rather than as a behavior to stop (e.g., "Rick, please open your math book and begin the assignment written on the board"). The teacher then waits 5 seconds for the student to comply. If the student complies, the teacher praises the student (e.g., "Thank you for starting your math assignment") .

2. *Make second request: "I Need...".* If the student fails to comply with the first request within 5 seconds, the teacher repeats that request. This time, the teacher starts the request with the phrase "I need..." (e.g., "Rick, I need you to open your math book and begin the assignment written on the board"). Again, the teacher waits 5 seconds for the student to comply. If the student complies, the teacher praises the student (e.g., "Thank you for starting your math assignment") .

3. *Deliver consequence for non-compliance.* If the student fails to comply to the second request within 5 seconds, the teacher follows through in delivering the pre-determined consequence for non-compliance.

- ☐ Redirect the Student: Get Them Back on Track (Dhaem, 2012; Simonsen et al., 2008). When the teacher observes the student begin to engage in problem behaviors, the instructor redirects that student back to task, either verbally (e.g., "Tom, stop talking and start your assignment") or non-verbally (e.g., giving that student a significant look and negative head shake). Redirects should be brief and calm in tone. NOTE: Teachers can also redirect without distracting the class by using 'tweets'--brief behavioral reminders written on post-it notes and placed on the student's desk.

- ☐ Response Cost: Deduct for Misbehavior (DuPaul & Stoner, 2002). Response cost is a strategy in which the teacher assigns an incentive (e.g., points, tokens, or classroom privileges such as free time) to the student at the start of the session. Each time that the student misbehaves during the session, that student loses a point, token, or increment of privilege (e.g., losing 5 minutes of free time). At the end of the session, the student is awarded any points, tokens, or privileges that remain. In preparation for response cost, the teacher must establish incentives that the student(s) would value--either setting up a classwide or individual point/token system tied to rewards or making available classroom privileges. The student(s) must also be trained in how the response cost system operates, including a clear understanding of what problem behaviors will result in response-cost deductions and what positive, replacement behaviors they are expected to display.

  Response cost, like all punishment strategies, should be used only when it is clear that the problem behavior is fully under the student's control. Before using response cost, the teacher should ensure that the student has the required skills, training, and self-control to avoid the problem behavior and to engage in a positive, replacement behavior.

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Activity: Write an Academic Problem-Identification Statement for Your Student

1. Choose a student you work with that has 1 or more significant academic challenges requiring a Tier 1/Classroom Intervention Plan. Answer these questions regarding your student:

    a. Academic Task. What specific academic task is the greatest academic challenge for this student?

    b. Current Performance. How does your student *currently* perform on this task?

    c. Expected Performance. What level of performance would you expect on this task from a typical/average student?

2. Write a 3-part Problem-Identification Statement. Use this organizer to rewrite your student's academic problem in the form of a 3-part Problem ID statement. For examples, see handout:

3-Part Academic Problem ID Statement		
Environmental Conditions or Task Demands	Problem Description	Typical or Expected Level of Performance

3. **Write a Hypothesis Statement.** Based on your knowledge of this student, write a 'hypothesis' statement that pinpoints the likely 'root cause' of the academic problem. See table below for a listing of possible hypotheses.
Hypothesis Statement

Reason for Academic Problem
1. *Skill.* The student is unable to do the academic work.
2. *Fluency.* The student possesses the necessary academic skills but lacks fluency in completing the work.
3. *Retention.* The student appears to have mastered the necessary academic skill(s) in one session but does not retain the skill(s) until the next session.
4. *Generalization.* The student possesses the necessary academic skill(s) but fails to recognize opportunities when they should use those skills.
5. *'Academic Survival' Skills.* The student's lack of academic survival skills (e.g., homework regimen; organizational skills) interferes with their completing and submitting work.
6. *Overprompting.* The student completes the work—but requires high rates of adult prompting during the task.