

# Instructional Practices for Behavior Management

Research shows that the link between classroom behavior and instruction is a powerful one. Certain instructional practices are associated with increased task-appropriate behavior. Here's how you, the classroom teacher, can take advantage of this link to improve instruction and overall behavior.

Behavior is defined as anything a child does, appropriate or inappropriate . . . anything! In education, we often use character traits when defining a student's behavior. A behavior should be defined so that it is very specific, making it observable and measurable. Below are examples of typical character traits that have been rewritten as observable and measurable behaviors.

Character Trait	Behavior
Is cooperative	Waits in line for a turn to shoot baskets
Works hard	Completes homework on time
Bullies others	Pushes children to the ground
Shows low self-esteem	Says, "I'm stupid," and hits head

Each behavioral event, referred to as a three-term contingency, is made up of three parts:

- Antecedent - anything that happens before a behavior occurs.
- Behavior - any observable and measurable act of an individual.
- Consequence - anything that happens after a behavior.

Antecedent → Behavior → Consequence

Antecedent	Behavior	Consequence
Teacher asks a question.	Student answers correctly.	Teacher praises student for correct answer.
Teacher distributes test papers.	Student yells, "I'm not doing this stupid test!"	Teacher sends student to the principal.
Emma gives Juan a marker.	Juan says, "Thank you."	Emma smiles at Juan.
The bell for changing classes rings.	Tyler stays in his seat.	Tyler is late for the next class.

By utilizing effective teaching principles and classroom management strategies when designing and delivering instruction, a large number of supervision problems can be prevented. Through careful analysis, you can determine how to alter the level and delivery of instruction to positively impact student behavior.

To teach effectively and meet the needs of all students, the following key elements must be in place:

- Clearly defined teaching objectives
- Proven instructional strategies
- A means to measure student progress

In most cases, when students are exhibiting off-task behavior, it is because one of these key elements is missing. Often, the solution to correcting this is to analyze the instructional approach rather than the content.

The checklist on the reverse side provides specific information to help you determine if you are implementing effective behavior management practices in your classroom.

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Read each item on the checklist and consider the degree to which you implement it in your classroom. For each item, circle the number that corresponds to your overall implementation of that item.

- 1 = Not observed: You do not implement this item in your classroom.
- 2 = Inconsistent: You implement this item sometimes, with some content areas or students.
- 3 = Established: You implement this item consistently across all areas of the curriculum and with all students.

Add the numbers circled in each column and place the sum in the box at the bottom of the column. Add the sums of the three columns to calculate your total points.

1	2	3	Classroom rules are explicitly taught and clearly displayed.
1	2	3	A system is in place for praising and acknowledging students' academic and behavioral accomplishments.
1	2	3	Routines are clearly defined and posted in the classroom.
1	2	3	A process is in place for quick recording of both academic and behavioral data.
1	2	3	Classroom organization and structure allow for smooth transitions between groups, classes, and activities.
1	2	3	Procedures are in place for dealing with severe/dangerous behaviors.
1	2	3	Instruction is explicit, interesting, varied, age appropriate, and individually appropriate.
1	2	3	The teacher ensures that prerequisite skills are mastered before continuing.
1	2	3	The teacher assures predictability and provides transitional warnings.
1	2	3	Instruction is provided in a variety of formats: one-to-one, small group, and large group.
1	2	3	The pacing of instruction maintains student attention.
1	2	3	Instructional materials are designed to meet varying student performance levels.
1	2	3	Time is provided for corrective feedback and error correction.
1	2	3	Independent activities are designed to provide instructionally-relevant practice.
1	2	3	A process is in place to assess the effectiveness of instruction.
			TOTAL

## Interpreting Results

- 36-45 points is indicative of a classroom with strong evidence of strategies characteristic of effective classrooms
- 22-35 points is indicative of a classroom moving toward effective instructional practices
- 21 or fewer points is indicative of a classroom that requires more emphasis on effective instructional practices

Checklist adapted from Darch, C. B. and Kame'enui, E. J. (2004). *Instructional Classroom Management: A Proactive Approach to Behavior Management*. Canada: Pearson Prentice Hall.