

Behavior Change Project  
Old Dominion University

**Operational definition**

Giselle is a nine-year-old girl who is currently in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade at a local elementary school.

Giselle has test scores that report that she reads four years below her grade level. The interfering behavior Giselle displays is tantrums. Typical behaviors seen with these tantrums are aggressive towards her peers, taunting her teacher and peers, not working on task, leaving her seat without permission, and destroying property. After being interviewed and observed by the team they would like to decrease her talking back to the teacher. The team focused on using a replacement behavior to make sure the intervention focuses on reinforcement and positive support. The replacement behavior is for Giselle to stay on task when working on assignments. This should decrease the talking back to the teacher and allow Giselle to have opportunities to receive positive feedback.

**Data collection**

The data collection tool that the team found most appropriate for Giselle would be duration recording. Duration recording measures how long a behavior occurs and is a technique used when the desired outcome is to increase or decrease how long a behavior occurs (i.e., talking back, staying on task).

**Antecedent**

The antecedent is a condition of environmental event that occurs right before specific behaviors. The teacher was quickly able to identify the immediate antecedent that resulted in Giselle's miss behavior. She observed that when Giselle is assigned an assignment, she sees how long the lesson is then refuses to do it which in turn she acts out (leaving her seat, taunting teacher, and peers, being off task).

**Consequence**

Giselle behavior is maintained because although she is reading at a first-grade level, she is continuing to be assigned fourth grade reading level work. The teacher observed that Giselle is displaying inappropriate behavior because the assignments are too long and too difficult.

**Hypothesis**

Giselle misbehaves in class because she isn't given the correct assignments for her reading level.

**Deficit**

The target behavior Giselle demonstrates is a skill deficit. Based on the data collection by the team, Giselle does not fully have the skills she needs to stay on task. She is unable to complete the task given to her because they are not on the reading level that she is at.

**Evidence-based intervention**

According to the team's observations and reviewing Giselle's test scores, two evidence based interventions that will be implemented are Task analysis (TA) and positive reinforcements. Task analysis (TA) is a practice often used to teach multi-step skills or behaviors related to academics, communication, and social skills. Giselle tends to talk back to the teacher when given an assignment on that is not on her reading level. The appropriate behavior when this happens would be stay on task. The teacher can reinforce this behavior by giving Giselle assignments they are modified to fit her needs. The second evidenced based strategy that will be used is positive reinforcement. This is a procedure that maintains or increases a behavior because of the consequences experienced following the behavior. Giselle's teacher will praise her and reward her when she stays on task.

## References

Hall, J., & Scheuermann, B. (2012). *Positive behavioral supports for the classroom*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education Inc.