



Eliminating Argumentative Behavior in a Young Student:
A Single Subject Case Study and
Intervention Plan

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Abstract

Behavioral difficulties that interfere with a student's school performance have long been a challenge for educators (Killu, 2008). Young students need to develop appropriate classroom behaviors. This study was developed to help a young kindergarten student eliminate arguing behavior and develop appropriate classroom behavior. A functional behavior analysis was conducted and a behavior intervention plan was created.

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Part 1: Introduction

As the kindergarten teacher at Bethany Lutheran School in Kenosha, WI, God has blessed me with the responsibility of educating and equipping young Christians to lead lives that glorify the Lord. During the 2010-2011 school year, the Lord gave me the opportunity to reach out with his love to a young boy who struggled with inappropriate behaviors. My project was intended to help the boy change these behaviors before they further inhibited the development of his Christian relationships and learning.

The 1997 Amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Final Regulations now require schools to develop functional behavior assessments (FBA) and behavior intervention plans (BIP) for students with disabilities who experience significant behavioral problems (Drasgow, Yell, Bradley, & Shriner, 1999). These new requirements represent the intent of Congress to broaden the alternatives available to schools to deal with disruptive behavior (Clark, 1998). Functional behavior assessments and behavior intervention plans became required because students with special needs were not realizing an acceptable level of behavior changes (Buck, Polloway, Kirkpatrick, & Patton, 2000). Although the young boy in the study had not been formally labeled with a disability, his inappropriate behaviors indicated a need for such assessments and intervention. While normal classroom procedures and rules were in place, this young boy's failure to follow them showed the necessity of further assessment and intervention.

Purpose of the Study

The young boy was an energetic, active, and inquisitive 6 year old. He lived with his mother and his grandmother. His father resided in a different state and had no contact

with him or his mother. Because his mother worked, he spent a lot of time with his great grandparents. The young boy struggled with behavioral issues in childcare prior to coming to kindergarten. In kindergarten he was very active, but had difficulty playing with other children especially when he did not get what he wanted. He was very disruptive in class and had difficulty paying attention. However, the behavior of greatest concern was his constant arguing. He constantly argued with the teacher when asked to do daily activities. He wanted to do things his own way and got upset when asked to do something he did not want to do. This behavior was also evident during lunch when he was asked to eat what was packed for him. In the classroom the arguing behavior was evident when he was working on challenging assignments, when he was asked to clean up after free time, or when he was asked to do any activity during the day. Since he was just beginning formal schooling, he needed to be taught alternatives to arguing. His argumentative behavior could be modified and he could learn to show love and respect to teachers and adults instead of arguing.

When IDEA 1997 was reauthorized in 2004 as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA), an FBA was required prior to the development of a BIP for students with disabilities (Killu, 2008). The BIP outlined strategies and tactics for dealing with the problem behavior along with the role that educators must play in improving student learning and behavior (Killu, 2008). The young boy in this study would benefit greatly from an FBA leading to a BIP. The information gathered from the FBA would be used to create a BIP that could address the young boy's argumentative behavior and possibly improve it.

Definition of Terms*Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)*

“Assessment that enhances understanding of the purpose and effect of the behavior(s) of concern, and which provides information that is useful in the development of the student’s IEP” (Clark, 1998, p 5).

Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)

“A written, specific, purposeful and organized plan which describes positive behavioral interventions and other strategies that will be implemented to address goals for a student’s social, emotional and behavioral development within the context of the IEP process” (Clark, 1998, p. 7).

Externalizing Behavior Disorders

“An emotional problem that takes the form of overt hostility, acting out behaviors, excessive anger, fighting with other children, and defiance towards teachers” (Lerner & Kline, 2006, p. 527).

Inclusion

“The placement of students with disabilities in the general education classroom setting, along with suitable supports for students with disabilities” (Lerner & Kline, 2006, p. 130).

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

“The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 calls for instructing students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment; that is, with peers who do not have disabilities, to the greatest extent appropriate” (Lerner & Kline, 2006, p. 130).

Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

“A written plan for the education of an individual with disabilities” (Lerner & Kline, 2006, p. 13).

Part II: Literature Review

Introduction

Teachers report that teaching young children who exhibit defiant and challenging behavior is the most difficult component of their work (Keat, 2008). Throughout history, students have exhibited behaviors such as control, power, and anger. In the 1970s teachers were encouraged to recognize the child's need for control and exert an authoritative style of discipline so students could experiment with control under appropriate adult supervision. In the 1980s research indicated that young children are able to put forth effort to control themselves for their own benefit and for the benefit of those around them. Teachers were encouraged to implement consequences and problem solving strategies instead of punishments. In the 1990s, and into the new millennium, neuroscience aided researchers in understanding students' self-regulation. Control of emotion and behavior is a learned activity, not an inborn tendency. Teachers need to teach students these self-regulation skills by designing relationships and environments where children learn how to control themselves and influence others appropriately (Keat, 2008).

Functional Behavior Assessment

FBA's have been emerging as an effective model used to assess classroom behavior problems (Mueller, Sterling-Turner, & Moore, 2005). In the past, functional behavior assessments have focused on self-injury and aggressive behaviors with students who have severe developmental disabilities (McComas, Hoch, & Mace, 2000). FBA procedures for more mild to moderate behaviors are relatively new (Olympia, Heathfield, Jenson, & Clark, 2002). The reauthorization of the IDEA Amendments of 1997 (Public

Law 105-17) specifically requires that a functional behavior assessment must be conducted for students with disabilities when (a) the student has engaged in a safe school violation, (b) the student has been suspended for more than 10 days, (c) the student has been subject to expulsion or a change in educational placement, or (d) the student's problematic behavior is a direct manifestation of their disability (Dragow, Yell, Bradley, & Shriner, 1999). IDEIA- 2004 requires that if the child's behavior interferes with his or her learning, or with the learning of others, the IEP team will consider an FBA and develop positive behavioral intervention and supports (PBIS) (Lerner & Kline, 2006). Students with externalizing behavior disorders such as noncompliance, aggression, and arguing can benefit from an FBA (Gelfand, Jenson, & Drew, 1997). Other behavioral deficits such as limited on-task behavior, problematic self-management skills, poor social skills, and significant academic deficiencies are likely to engage students in safe school violations, suspensions, or expulsions (Olympia et al., 2002).

In the general education context, assessment-based early interventions may prove to be best practice for students. Early intervention is crucial in preventing students who exhibit problem behavior from becoming a student who needs special education (Vollmer & Northup, 1996). The implication of this position is that the FBA must be undertaken in general education classrooms by general education teachers (Scott, Bucalos, Liaupsin, Nelson, Jolivette, & DeShea, 2004). FBAs must be equally realistic and shared across general and special educators. As increasing numbers of students who are behaviorally diverse are being educated in general education classrooms, the need to conduct FBAs will increase (Scott, et al., 2004). Many schools fail to address the behavior problems of students with disabilities for two reasons. First, school personnel often provide

inappropriate interventions because they fail to identify the true cause of disruptive behavior. Second, behavior interventions are implemented haphazardly and are punitive rather than positive behavioral intervention plans (Buck, Polloway, Kirkpatrick, & Patton, 2000).

A multifaceted FBA incorporates indirect interviews and checklists, direct observation of behaviors, and antecedents and consequences. The underlying theme of the FBA is that all behavior has a function and occurs for a reason (Killu, 2008). The focus is to provide a comprehensive assessment of both behavioral excesses and deficits found in students with externalizing behavior disorders (Olympia et al., 2002). Educational professionals should analyze the contextual aspects of a behavior by describing the specific behavior in question and summarizing related information concerning precipitating conditions, consequences following the behavior, and possible reasons for the behavior's purpose (Buck et al., 2000). Another basic method that can yield valuable information and assess behaviors in students with externalizing behavior disorders is the antecedent-behavior-consequence (ABC) approach. The ABC approach involves the description of an observable behavior and the recording of events that immediately precede and follow the behavior (Olympia et al., 2002). The antecedent (A) is what leads to up to the behavior. The behavior (B) is what the student actually does. The consequence (C) is what the student receives from the behavior. The student could be seeking attention, avoiding an activity, wanting control, or acting stubbornly.

Once the reason for the behavior is determined, appropriate intervention strategies can be developed and implemented (Killu, 2008). Educators need to identify target behaviors and events that are observable and measurable (Shriver, Anderson, & Proctor,

2001). The only way to reach a valid conclusion about influences is to change the setting and/or the events associated with the behavior, then observe whether or not a change in behavior results (Buck et al., 2000).

Behavior Intervention Plans

Functional behavior assessment involves using several methods in determining factors for a behavior that lead to the development of intervention strategies to meet the individualized and unique needs of the student (Killu, 2008). FBA precede a BIP. There must be a clear link between the FBA data collected and the intervention selected (Clark, 1998). BIPs were included in the reauthorization of IDEA as IDEIA in 2004 (Killu, 2008). BIPs outline strategies and tactics for dealing with the problem behavior along with the role teachers play in improving student behavior. BIPs should emphasize the use of positive, inclusive, and least restrictive approaches to changing behavior (Clark, 1998). In addition to outlining the strategies to use, a BIP must indicate the necessary resources, support, and expectations of those carrying out the procedures (Killu, 2008). Lack of time and support, differences in philosophical orientations towards discipline, negative attitudes about special education, and a general lack of knowledge regarding the legal and procedural aspects of FBAs are among the factors that can impede the development of effective behavior plans (Buck et al., 2000). All people involved with the implementation of the BIP must have the necessary support and resources to fulfill their roles. Providing clear expectations for students is another essential part. Having clear expectations consists of defining rules and ensuring that students and teachers use common language to describe behaviors and consequences (Wheatley et al., 2009). To evaluate the effectiveness of the BIP, the behavior should be observed, measured, and recorded

before, during, and after implementation. The occurrence or nonoccurrence of the target behavior should be continuously assessed (Killu, 2008).

Intervention Strategies

Teacher interactions are vital to reducing inappropriate behavior in the classroom. Crowe (2010) observes that students often misbehave because they are asked to do something that is beyond their developmental stage. Teachers need to understand children's developmental stages in order to provide meaningful experiences. A mismatch between teacher expectations and the developmental needs of students will only compound their struggles. Teachers need to take a proactive approach to dealing with inappropriate behaviors. Teachers are the agents of prevention through interactions with students. They establish an environment that supports and encourages appropriate academic and social behaviors while recognizing and reinforcing those appropriate behaviors (Partin, Robertson, Maggin, Oliver, & Wehby, 2010).

Reinforcement is used to increase or change the target behavior. Reinforcement allows one to construct a reward system that will promote desired behaviors (Lerner & Kline, 2006). Positive and immediate reinforcements are most effective in fostering desired behaviors (Lerner & Kline, 2006). Praising students is a behavior management strategy that results in positive change. The use of token reinforcers is another effective strategy for managing student behavior. Tokens are usually delivered immediately following the occurrence of the behavior and are exchanged for desired reinforcers like toys or stickers (Wheatley et al., 2009). In a study conducted by Wheatley et al. (2009), students were given praise notes when they exhibited appropriate behaviors in the lunchroom. They were able to turn in their praise notes for a reward. They were also able

to fill up a praise note bulletin board to earn a group reward. Results showed an increase in targeted appropriate behaviors in the lunchroom as well as a decline in inappropriate lunchroom behaviors. Teacher praise and token reinforcers are effective strategies that can be part of an effective behavior intervention plan.

Summary

An FBA is a useful tool for outlining inappropriate behaviors in students. In order for proper intervention strategies to be developed, information on the behavior being studied must be obtained. An FBA consists of the process of gathering information to determine relations between behavior variables (Shriver, et al., 2001). FBAs give structure to the evaluation of the student's behavior so effective intervention strategies can be developed. Failure to conduct a comprehensive FBA may result in programming that is insufficient to deal with the target behavior (Killu, 2008). BIPs provide the necessary link between the assessment data collected and the intervention strategies. The BIP outlines the expectations of the student as well as others involved in helping the student be successful in learning. The BIP also describes behavioral goals that relate to increasing or decreasing the specific behavior (Buck et al., 2000). When creating and implementing interventions, educators ought to emphasize the use of positive interventions in order to create a supportive and effective classroom environment.

Part III: Implementation

Introduction

The young boy in this study had behaviors that warranted immediate intervention. The behavior that was seen as the most detrimental for future learning and development was constant arguing. This behavior was seen as disrespectful towards authority and a disadvantage towards creating a positive and supportive learning environment. The other students in the classroom were also impacted negatively being exposed to constant arguing. The teacher's strategies for managing such behavior were not effective in reducing the frequency of the arguing behavior. This behavior would need to be modified with a focus on emphasizing the positive behaviors shown by the student in an effort to reduce arguing.

Procedures

The purpose of the study was to positively modify the young boy's arguing behavior by focusing his attention on his positive behaviors such as listening the first time, obeying instructions immediately, and following directions. The young boy would focus his attention on the positive behaviors because he would be positively reinforced for an increased frequency of those behaviors. The frequency of the arguing behavior would decrease.

The project implemented a single subject design case study (Rassafiani & Sahaf, 2010). The single subject case study provided the framework for observation of the argumentative behavior. Before an effective intervention plan could be created, data had to be collected regarding the frequency of the arguing. Observation and anecdotal records would provide the necessary data on the frequency of the arguing behavior during a

regular day in the kindergarten classroom. The single subject case study would be conducted in the classroom using an ABA pattern. The single subject designs involved a period of non-intervention (A), followed by a period of intervention (B), and then to another period of non-intervention (A) (Rassafiani & Sahaf, 2010).

The young boy was observed without any interventions (A) for one week. The teacher recorded what happened and the time of the day the arguing behavior took place. At the end of the week, the teacher wrote a short journal describing the young boy's behavior patterns observed during the week. During the next week, the young boy added a marble (B) to a jar each time he demonstrated a positive behavior and did not argue. Each time the young boy argued, he had to physically remove a marble. At the end of each day, the young boy counted the marbles in the jar. If there were more than 10, he chose a special activity the following day. The special activities included extra computer time, reading with a friend, or playing a game with a friend.

The marble intervention continued for three weeks. At the end of each week, the teacher wrote a journal entry that described the young boy's behavior during that week. After the three weeks, the teacher removed the marble jar and returned to using no intervention (A). The teacher would see if the young boy had internalized the positive behavior or if he would revert back into the arguing behavior. The teacher completed the week with a journal entry that detailed the results.

While the single subject case study was being completed, an FBA was created using data from the single subject case study (See Appendix B). The FBA outlined the antecedents and consequences of the arguing behavior. Once the antecedents and consequences of the arguing behavior were determined, an effective BIP was created

(See Appendix C). The BIP was written to clearly detail the behavior and the intervention procedures that would be necessary to help the young boy reach his goal of positive behavior in the classroom.

Results

The results of the project were significant and meaningful for the young boy. The young boy demonstrated a positive attitude towards the intervention and worked hard to cooperate with the teacher. The results emphasized the young boy's determination to be successful in the classroom environment as well as a willingness to please the teacher.

The young boy's arguing behavior was studied for a total of five weeks. The first week was an observation week where no intervention was used. The purpose of that week was for the teacher to document the frequency of arguments. The following three weeks were the intervention weeks. The marble jar was introduced and used as a means of increasing positive school behavior and decreasing the arguing behavior. The fifth week was a week without the intervention of the marble jar. The purpose was to see if the frequency of the arguing behavior would decrease after the intervention without the incentive of the marble jar.

A description of the young boy's argumentative behavior was recorded during the first week (See Appendix D). The arguments could be categorized into two main groups: work time and transition time. The young boy seemed to have the greatest difficulty of compliance during work time when it involved writing. This academic area was a struggle for him. He struggled writing letters correctly as well as writing his own sentences. He also struggled during reading time. Transition times, such as clean up time, work time after free time, and settling down after recess were times when arguments

would also occur. The following chart outlines the number of arguments each day as well as the number of arguments that occurred during work time or transition time.

Table 1

Pre- Intervention Arguments

Date	Frequency	Work time/ Transition time
3-28	11	4/ 7
3-29	12	9/ 3
3-30	7	3/ 4
3-31	4	0/ 4
4-4	8	3/ 5

The next three weeks were the intervention weeks using the marble jar. The young boy knew the procedures and what was expected of him to earn a marble. He also knew what behavior warranted removal of a marble. He was very determined to receive marbles. The following charts describe the frequency of the arguing behavior by stating the number of marbles the young boy put in the jar, the number of marbles he was required to take out due to arguing, the total number of marbles at the end of each day, and whether or not he received the bonus activity. The chart also shows the number of arguments during work time and during transition time.

Table 2

Results for Intervention Week 1

Date	Marbles in/ Marbles out	Total Marbles/ Bonus yes or no	Arguments at Work Time/ Transition Time
4-5	13/ 8	5/ no	0/ 8
4-6	10/ 2	8/ no	0/ 2
4-7	13/ 4	9/ no	0/ 4
4-8	10/ 1	9/ no	0/ 1

The results for week 1 indicated the marble intervention was positively impacting the young boy's behavior in the classroom. The number of total marbles received each day increased. However, the young boy never reached his goal of 10 marbles at the end of the day. Therefore, he never received the bonus activity during this week. The number of marbles the young boy was required to remove also decreased.

The results for week 2 showed a low number of marbles that the young boy was required to remove for arguments. The arguments that occurred were not during work time but during transition times and in between lesson and work time. On 4-11, the young boy did reach his goal of 10 marbles and received the bonus activity.

Table 3

Results for Intervention Week 2

Date	Marbles in/ Marbles out	Total Marbles/ Bonus yes or no	Arguments at Work Time/ Transition Time
4-11	10/ 0	10/ yes	0/ 0
4-12	6/ 2	4/ no	0/ 2
4-13	5/ 1	4/ no	0/ 1
4-14	6/ 1	5/ no	0/ 1
4-15	8/ 0	8/ no	0/0

Table 4

Results for Intervention Week 3

Date	Marbles in/ Marbles out	Total Marbles/ Bonus yes or no	Arguments at Work Time/ Transition Time
4-18	6/ 0	6/ no	0/ 0
4-19	7/ 0	7/ no	0/0
4-20	6/ 1	5/ no	0/ 1
4-21	6/ 0	6/ no	0/ 0

During week 3, the young boy demonstrated positive behavior with few arguments. Only one argument occurred during a transition time on 4-20. However, the young boy did not reach his goal of 10 marbles during this intervention week.

Table 5

Post- Intervention Arguments

Date	Frequency	Work time/ Transition time
4-26	1	0/ 1
4-27	2	0/ 2
4-28	5	2/4
4-29	1	1/0

This week was a return to the conditions previous to the intervention with the marble jar. The arguments occurred mostly during transition times except two times on 4-28. Those two arguments occurred during lesson times.

Part IV: Reflective Essay

The young boy in this study needed intervention and aid to control his inappropriate behavior in the classroom setting. The arguing behavior he was exhibiting might have lasting negative impacts on his cognitive and social development if not addressed. The purpose of this study was to analyze the young boy's arguing behavior through the use of an FBA and single subject case study to develop an effective BIP that would eliminate the arguing behavior.

The results of the single subject case study demonstrated that the young boy indeed needed an effective intervention plan. The first week of the study showed the impact of the young boy's arguing behavior in the classroom. The frequency of arguments during a school day for one week was 11, 12, 7 and 4 respectively. These numbers represent an unacceptable frequency of arguing behavior for a young kindergarten student. Although the class size was small, to expect the teacher to redirect the young boy so often was unrealistic. Throughout the day, the young boy would argue with the teacher when he was required to do work as well as during transition times. Additionally, the young boy struggled with writing as well as reading. At the time of the school year that this study took place, writing and reading were subjects that required focused time and effort. The young boy's lack of effort was evidence that he was unmotivated by school. Students need a strong desire to learn in school because much of academic learning requires persistent, hard work over a period of time (Lerner & Kline, 2006). The young boy had difficulty writing sentences in his journal and reading independently. Therefore, these were activities he did not enjoy and was not motivated to

complete. Due to the lack of motivation, the young boy became argumentative when he was required to work.

Transition times were times during the day when the young boy would have to stop what he was doing and move to a new location in the classroom or to a different activity. The young boy was naturally very sociable. He wanted the attention of the other boys in the classroom and transition times provided him with an opportunity to get that attention. However, the means he chose to get that attention were not appropriate. Therefore he would argue with the teacher hoping to attract the attention of the other students. This behavior was detrimental to the learning of the other students. The interruption caused the other students to lose focus on their work. By analyzing the antecedents and consequences of the arguing behavior, an FBA was developed that provided the information necessary for the creation of a BIP that could be used to improve the young boy's behavior.

The single subject case study performed provided the framework for the BIP. The single subject case study called for three weeks of intervention using the marble jar. The results of those three weeks of intervention showed positive results in eliminating the negative arguing behavior. The first week of the intervention demonstrated the young boy's ability to control his behavior in the classroom. He was so focused on getting the marble that he began listening attentively, obeying instructions, and doing his work. He was excited to add marbles. The first day he also had to remove eight marbles for arguing, evidence that this would be a difficult process for him. He had been so accustomed to arguing for attention that the arguing would not cease immediately. The rest of the week's results led to similar conclusions. The young boy strived hard to add

marbles to the jar but still had to remove several marbles each day. His goal was to have 10 marbles in the jar at the end of each day. While he never obtained that goal the first week, he had one day with eight and two days with nine marbles each day. Weeks two and three of the intervention plan continued the use of the marble jar. The frequency of the arguing behavior decreased during the second and third weeks of the intervention. The young boy focused his behavior positively so he would continue to receive the marble. By the third week of the intervention, the young boy argued one time and had to remove one marble the entire week.

The marble jar intervention was influenced by several variables. The intention of the intervention was to modify the young boy's arguing behavior by adding and removing marbles. Throughout the weeks of intervention, attention from his classmates influenced the young boy's behavior. The other students gave him encouragement and positive reinforcement with smiles and comments when he added a marble. Since the FBA showed that he was a boy who craved attention, adding marbles to a jar for positive behaviors gave him the attention that he desired. This attention became a positive reinforcer for the young boy to behave appropriately. When he was asked to remove a marble, he received negative attention. The other students either did not pay attention to him or gave him disapproving looks as he removed the marble. This attention was not what the young boy wanted. Therefore, the negative attention also acted as a reinforcer for him to behave appropriately and earn a marble.

Another variable that affected the young boy's behavior was attention. When he added a marble to the jar, the teacher gave him a big smile and a high five. The attention reinforced the positive behavior in two ways. First, it allowed him to see that his behavior

was pleasing the teacher. He needed that positive attention from the teacher to encourage him. Teacher praise has been a behavior management strategy that has seen positive results. Praise that is contingent on a desired behavior leads to increases in the desired behavior, indicating that teacher praise can be used to reinforce some student's appropriate behavior (Partin et. al., 2010). Second, the teacher praise caught the attention of the other students. They realized that his behavior pleased the teacher, and they praised him for his positive behavior.

The attention may have been the motivator that changed the arguing behavior. The marble jar was the physical object that was used to gain the attention the young boy needed. The marble jar provided the young boy with a physical action that helped him focus on positive behavior. The young boy quickly learned that when he physically added a marble, he received attention. This attention reinforced positive behavior and helped focus the young boy's attention away from arguing. The positive attention and praise encouraged him to continue to show good behavior in the classroom. When he removed a marble, he did not receive attention or praise. This lack of attention and praise motivated the young boy to behave appropriately. The attention and praise may have been the cause of the decrease in arguing behavior.

The young boy only met his goal of 10 marbles once during the three weeks of intervention. The purpose of the bonus activity was to give the young boy another positive reinforcement for him to display positive behavior in the classroom. The young boy had shown interest in playing educational games on the computer as well as being given special activities that the rest of the class did not receive. Although the young boy was certainly aware of the bonus activity, it did not impact the results. The young boy

met his goal of 10 marbles the first day of the second week of the intervention. He chose extra computer time. Computer time was an individual activity. The young boy would receive no extra attention from the teacher or the students while doing this activity. Extra computer time was not enough of a social experience for the young boy. He was receiving the social attention that he needed by adding and removing marbles from the jar. Therefore, the computer time he received that day did not impact his behavior beyond the marble jar. After his day of meeting this goal, he showed no intention of reaching that goal for the remainder of the intervention. However, the frequency of arguments continued to decline. This result showed that the attention and praise were higher motivators for appropriate behavior than the marble jar itself.

The fifth week of the single subject case study was a non-intervention week to document the impact the intervention had on the young boy's arguing behavior. The goal of this week was to observe what behaviors occurred when the marble jar intervention was removed. The young boy would not always have a marble jar available to him for instant physical reinforcement and would have to demonstrate appropriate behavior without it. The results showed a lower argument frequency than before the intervention. However, inappropriate arguing did occur during the post intervention period. Since he did not add marbles, he also did not receive the corresponding attention and praise from the students or the teacher. As stated above, these results indicated that the attention and praise influenced the young boy's behavior more than the physical adding or removing of the marbles. The young boy had learned that he was able to control his arguing behavior, but he had not yet reached his fullest potential. The process had begun, but the evidence demonstrated the need to continue the intervention to help the young boy develop more

control. He had spent most of his young life arguing, and it would take more than three weeks to teach him positive behavior.

The results of the marble jar intervention showed the importance of positive reinforcement when working with students with characteristics similar to the young boy in this study. The young boy had been so accustomed to receiving attention for his behavior that he acted in ways that led to receiving the attention that he deemed essential. Although it appeared that he did not have control of his actions, this study demonstrated he did have control, and he was able to change his behavior to obtain the results he wanted. He needed the opportunity to see the impact of acting appropriately and he needed to realize that positive consequences occur when positive behavior occurs.

The young boy ought to continue to be exposed to more and possibly varied reinforcement procedures in all aspects of his life. Reinforcement is always defined by its impact on a particular student (Lerner & Kline, 2006). Token reinforcers such as sticker charts, marble jars, coupon rewards, or verbal praise are examples of reinforcers that the young boy needs to continue to experience. These should be delivered in a lovingly firm manner so the young boy can focus on positive behaviors in the school and home environments. Results may not come immediately. Experiences that are consistent and fair will yield results in time.

Each reinforcer may yield different results. Would the young boy have responded similarly to coupons as he did to marbles? Would he have responded differently to verbal praise alone? Would his arguing have decreased if the marble jar was the only intervention? The results of the study showed that the young boy controlled his behavior with an intervention, but whether it was the marble jar or the attention and praise was

unclear. A future study in which each variable is applied separately would yield valuable insights into the motivation behind the young boy's behavior. Such future studies could also provide more information on the types of reinforcers that could aid the young boy in internalizing positive behavior.

Many young students could benefit from similar experiences. They need the opportunity to experience not only the consequences for unacceptable behavior, but also the consequences for exhibiting acceptable behavior. However, young students need patience and time to internalize such experiences. Teachers can help young students realize their ability to control their own behaviors. By providing reinforcement, young students can be given the opportunity to experience positive consequences from positive behavior. Students who are successful achievers attribute success to their own efforts (Lerner & Kline, 2006). When young students are given such opportunities, they begin to understand that they have control over their actions and that they can change their behavior to achieve the consequences they desire.

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Appendix A

Journal Entry Week 1

3-28 through 3-31.

This was the observation week of the young boy's arguing behavior. No intervention was being used. All arguing behaviors were noted along with the time the incident occurred. Looking at the observation notes, the majority of the arguing took place in regards to the young boy doing his work. Academically, the subject that warranted the most arguing was his writing. The young boy struggled with writing including forming the letters as well as journal sentences. Since most of the academic work was assigned in the morning, the majority of the arguments occurred during that time of the day. Throughout the mornings, writing was a struggle for him and was generally the time he argued most frequently. The occasional math arguments stemmed from being asked to write numbers and following the directions.

Another time of frequent arguing was transition times. Whether it was time to clean up toys and come to lesson time, put his work away if it was not done, or moving to a new activity these were the times of frequent arguing. The young boy was very strong willed and some of his arguing occurred when he was asked to do an activity when he wanted to do another.

Journal Entry Week 2

4-4 through 4-8.

This is the first week of the marble jar. The young boy had been introduced to the concept of the marble jar at the end of the previous week. He was very excited to see the marble jar when he got into the classroom on Monday morning. He was very determined to get a marble. When he did get his marble, he was very excited to come up to the desk and put the marble into the jar. He worked hard on his work especially his writing to earn a marble.

The young boy's arguing during this first week occurred at transition times during the morning such as clean up time, putting work away, and sitting still after an active activity. The other time during the day was during afternoon devotion and story time. He was very upset when he had to take a marble out of the jar.

The young boy earned 5 marbles on Monday. He earned 8 marbles on Tuesday, 9 marbles on Wednesday and Thursday. School was not in session on Friday. Since he did not have 10 marbles on any day, he did not receive the bonus activity any of the days this week.

Journal Entry Week 3

4-11 through 4-15.

This was the second week using the marble jar with the young boy. This week the young boy worked very hard to get marbles throughout the days. He did his work well. He was very excited to come and put marbles in the jar for positive behavior. The times of argument were the occasional transition times as well as work times especially when the work consisted of writing. The young boy was upset when he had to take a marble out of the jar especially after being given the privilege to put several marbles in the jar.

The young boy earned 10 marbles on Monday. He chose extra computer time on Tuesday as his bonus activity for reaching his goal of 10 marbles on one day. He was allowed on the computer to play educational games during a time in the day when the rest of the class was required to work in their seats. On Tuesday and Wednesday, he earned 4 marbles each. Thursday he earned 5 marbles, and on Friday he earned 8 marbles.

Journal Entry Week 4

4-18 through 4-21.

This was the third and final week using the marble jar to modify the young boy's arguing behavior. This week was a week of positive behavior for the young boy. The young boy focused his attention on positive behaviors and worked very hard to do what he was asked. He was respectful and pleasant to the teacher as well as to the other students in the classroom. The only noted argument was related to not being able to use the computer one afternoon towards the end of the school day.

The young boy earned 6 marbles on Monday, 7 marbles on Tuesday, 6 marbles on Wednesday and 6 marbles on Thursday. School was not in session on Friday. The young boy did not reach his goal of 10 marbles any day during this week so he did not receive the bonus activity.

Journal Entry Week 5

4-26 through 4-29.

This week was the week the marble jar was not used. The purpose of this week was to return to no intervention and see if the intervention was effective in modifying the

arguing behavior. The goal was for the frequency of arguments to be less than the pre intervention week. The observation record recorded only the arguments during the day.

The young boy's arguments focused on transition times and work times. The arguments occurred during carpet activity times. Only one of the arguments occurred while working. The total arguments for Monday were 1, Tuesday was 2, Wednesday was 5 and Thursday was 1. School was not in session on Friday.

Appendix B

Functional Behavior Assessment

Student Name: ___ Young Boy ___ ID: _____ DOB: ___ 11-30-2004 ___ Case Manager _____

Data Sources: Observation | Student Interview | Teacher Interview | Parent Interview | Rating Scales
| Normative Testing

Description of Behavior (No. __1__):

The young boy demonstrates inappropriate arguing with the teacher and occasionally with the other students in the classroom. Student visually frustrates the teacher and causes class to lose instructional time.

Setting(s) in which behavior occurs:

Varied times during the school day. The behavior occurs mainly in the classroom, but also at lunch.

Frequency

Varies from 5 to 12 arguments per day.

Intensity (Consequences of problem behavior on student, peers, instructional environment):

Unable to complete work on time, interrupts peers from work, alienation from peers, frustrates the teacher

Duration:

5- 12 times per day.

Describe Previous Interventions:

Verbal redirection, lost free/ recess time, parent conferences, time outs

Educational impact:

Disrespect towards adults, lack of appropriate behavior in classroom environment, lack of appropriate social relationships, failure to complete work

Function of Behavior (No. __1__): Specify hypothesized function for each area checked below.

Affective Regulation/Emotional Reactivity (Identify emotional factors; anxiety, depression, anger, poor self-concept; that play a role in organizing or directing problem behavior):

Young boy has a poor self-concept. He sees himself as bad and not intelligent.

Cognitive Distortion (Identify distorted thoughts; inaccurate attributions, negative self-statements, erroneous interpretations of events; that play a role in organizing or directing problem behavior):

Young boy says he is not as smart as other classmates and that they do not want to play with him.

Reinforcement (Identify environmental triggers and payoffs that play a role in organizing and directing problem behavior):

Antecedents: The young boy wants to get attention from the teacher and from the other students. His arguing behavior is his way of getting attention.

Consequences: He gets attention from the other boys. He gets the teacher visibly upset.

Modeling (Identify the degree to which the behavior is copied, who they are copying the behavior from, and why they are copying the behavior):

Family Issues (Identify family issues that play a part in organizing and directing problem behavior)

He lives with his mother and Grandmother. Grandmother gives him what he wants. Mother tries but is constantly battling Grandmother. Mother works many hours so young boy spends much time with Grandmother.

Physiological/Constitutional (Identify physiological and/or personality characteristics; developmental disabilities, temperament; that play a part in organizing and directing problem behavior):

The young boy is very active and social. He knows how to manipulate to get what he wants.

Communicate need (Identify what the student is trying to say through the problem behavior):

The young boy needs positive attention. He needs to be disciplined in a lovingly firm manner so he knows his boundaries.

Curriculum/Instruction (Identify how instruction, curriculum, or educational environment play a part in organizing and directing problem behavior):

The young boy struggles with writing and reading. He gets frustrated easily in these subjects.

Appendix C

Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)

Student Name: Young Boy ID: _____ DOB: 11-30-2004 Case Manager: _____

Behavior #	Expected Outcome(s) Goal(s)	Intervention(s) & Frequency of Intervention	Person Responsible	Goal/Intervention Review Notes
1	<p>Reduces the frequency of arguing during transition times in the classroom to 5 or fewer times per day.</p> <p>Completes work on time with 5 or fewer arguments per day.</p> <p>Has 10 marbles in the jar at the end of each day.</p>	<p>Will receive a marble to add to a marble jar each time he willingly obeys the first time and completes work with no argument. Daily.</p> <p>Will have to physically remove a marble each time an argument occurs. Daily.</p> <p>Will receive a bonus activity of his choice (extra computer time, special resting spot, or reading with a buddy) if has 10 marbles at the end of the day. Daily.</p> <p>Will receive verbal teacher praise when adding a marble to the jar. Daily.</p>	<p>teacher</p> <p>teacher</p> <p>teacher</p> <p>teacher</p>	<p>Frequency of arguing behavior has decreased from pre intervention week.</p> <p>Last two weeks of intervention recorded few arguments.</p> <p>Only received extra bonus activity once during the 3 weeks of intervention.</p> <p>Reacted very positively to verbal teacher praise.</p> <p>Significant decrease in arguments after 3 weeks intervention than pre intervention.</p>

* Review Codes: GA = Goal Achieved | C = Continue | DC = Discontinue Expected Review

Dates: 4-29-11

| _____ | _____

Signatures: _____

Appendix D

insisted on being done instead of cleaning	28-Mar	8:21 AM
argued when told to stop pulling thread	28-Mar	8:37 AM
argued about what to write in journal	28-Mar	9:39
refused to put work away for lesson time	28-Mar	11:10 AM
argued about not being allowed to play	28-Mar	12:07 PM
argued when asked to sit still for devotion	28-Mar	12:33 PM
argued when asked to use bathroom	28-Mar	12:41 PM
argued when asked to give up pillow at rest	28-Mar	1:00 PM
threw fit when asked to do work	28-Mar	1:43 PM
talked back when asked to sit and read	28-Mar	2:07 PM
argued about having to read	28-Mar	2:14 PM
argued when asked to do morning journal	29-Mar	8:09 AM
argued that work made sense when asked to redo	29-Mar	9:25 AM
argued when had to do revisions	29-Mar	9:26 AM
argued about writing sentence	29-Mar	9:36 AM
argued about completing a fix	29-Mar	10:06 AM
argued that another student's mat was his	29-Mar	12:42 PM
threw fit when I chose resting spot for him	29-Mar	12:46 PM
argued about handwriting	29-Mar	2:46 PM
argued about following instructions in science	29-Mar	2:53 PM
argued about not wanting to fix work	29-Mar	2:55 PM
argued about fixing his coloring	29-Mar	2:57 PM
argued about having to keep sweater on	29-Mar	3:02 PM
argued about having to do work in the morning	30-Mar	8:19 AM
argued when asked to put library book away	30-Mar	8:40 AM
refused to do morning journal	30-Mar	8:49 AM
argued when asked to keep toy in backpack	30-Mar	9:24 AM
argued about instructions in math	30-Mar	12:07 PM
argued when had to fix work before rest	30-Mar	1:15 PM
argued when had to give up computer time	30-Mar	2:10 PM
argued when asked to put gloves away	31-Mar	7:54 AM
argued when asked to remove wood chips	31-Mar	12:36 PM
argued when asked to come off loft	31-Mar	1:11 PM
argued about lost computer time	4-Apr	1:55 PM
argued about being done with his journal	4-Apr	8:10 AM
argued about putting away sport cards	4-Apr	9:16 AM
argued about zipping coat	4-Apr	10:07 AM
argued with other boys	4-Apr	10:24 AM
refused to use bathroom when asked	4-Apr	10:26 AM
argued he wasn't playing during quiet time	4-Apr	1:27 PM
argued about doing his math work	4-Apr	2:26 PM

argued about writing his letters	4-Apr	2:30 PM
(+) indicates adding a marble to the jar.		
(-) indicates removal of a marble from the jar.		
(+) began work on journal	5-Apr	8:04 AM
(-) argued about putting work away	5-Apr	8:17 AM
(+) sat and read quietly	5-Apr	8:34 AM
(+) listened/participated well at carpet time	5-Apr	9:07 AM
(+) did work willingly	5-Apr	9:20 AM
(+) left classmate alone to do work	5-Apr	9:35 AM
(-) refused to be quiet	5-Apr	9:43 AM
(-) yelled at student	5-Apr	9:45 AM
(-) refused to clean up	5-Apr	9:50 AM
(-) pushed a classmate when upset	5-Apr	9:55 AM
(+) ate snack sitting correctly	5-Apr	9:57 AM
(+) obeyed and put coat on quietly	5-Apr	10:07 AM
(+) obeyed and sat in desk without arguing	5-Apr	10:36 AM
(-) argued with teacher when asked to sit still	5-Apr	10:45 AM
(+) waited patiently to be excused	5-Apr	12:06 PM
(+) stood in line quietly	5-Apr	12:08 PM
(+) sat down quietly after recess	5-Apr	12:45 PM
(-) argued when asked to wash hands	5-Apr	12:49 PM
(-) argued about using bathroom	5-Apr	12:55 PM
(+) laid down for rest time nicely	5-Apr	1:25 PM
(+) read quietly when asked	5-Apr	2:08 PM
(+) sat and did work after being asked	6-Apr	8:47 AM
(+) recited memory work willingly	6-Apr	9:01 AM
(+) cleaned up and sat quietly	6-Apr	9:45 AM
(+) turned around when asked	6-Apr	10:01 AM
(+) lined up quietly	6-Apr	10:02 AM
(+) entered room and sat quietly after recess	6-Apr	10:25 AM
(+) got ready to wash for lunch quietly	6-Apr	11:26 AM
(-) argued when asked to leave shirt alone	6-Apr	12:45 PM
(+) laid quietly at rest time	6-Apr	1:20 PM
(+) read quietly at reading time	6-Apr	1:34 PM
(+) sat and listened to directions for work	6-Apr	1:55 PM
(-) argued with teacher	6-Apr	2:02 PM
(+) got to work when asked	7-Apr	8:02 AM
(+) participated well with Bible story	7-Apr	8:37 AM
(+) cleaned and sat quietly when asked	7-Apr	9:25 AM
(-) argued when asked to tuck shirt in	7-Apr	10:30 AM
(-) argued about being ready for lunch	7-Apr	11:35 AM
(+) was quiet and got ready for recess well	7-Apr	12:03 PM
(+) obeyed instructions well for play	7-Apr	1:07 PM

(-) argued when asked to sit after play	7-Apr	2:08 PM
(+) waited patiently for help with work	7-Apr	2:15 PM
(-) argued when had to work instead of play	7-Apr	2:22 PM
(+) read a book when asked quietly	7-Apr	2:28 PM
(+) waited to read aloud patiently in seat	7-Apr	2:34 PM
(+) cleaned up immediately when asked	7-Apr	2:52 PM
(+) did work in seat	7-Apr	3:02 PM
(+) found quiet activity when finished	7-Apr	3:05 PM
(+) waited for instructions after prayer	7-Apr	3:12 PM
(+) stood nicely in line at end of day	7-Apr	3:14 PM
(+) sat down and began work	8-Apr	8:02 AM
(+) worked on journal when asked	8-Apr	9:14 AM
(+) walked nicely down to get milk	8-Apr	9:50 AM
(+) lined up quietly when reminded	8-Apr	9:55 AM
(-) argued three times about being kind	8-Apr	12:50 PM
(+) laid quietly and rested	8-Apr	1:13 PM
(+) obeyed when asked to put mat away	8-Apr	1:34 PM
(+) started reading when asked	8-Apr	1:52 PM
(+) got off computer when time was over	8-Apr	2:09 PM
(+) did work quietly in seat	8-Apr	2:55 PM
(+) chose puzzle and sat quietly	8-Apr	3:02 PM
(+) sat and worked quietly	11-Apr	8:40 AM
(+) participated well during carpet time	11-Apr	9:16 AM
(+) got to work when asked	11-Apr	9:40 AM
(+) cleaned up and waited for instructions	11-Apr	10:00 AM
(+) did work well when it was work time	11-Apr	10:50 AM
(+) sat and read quietly	11-Apr	1:27 PM
(+) got off computer when time was over	11-Apr	1:44 PM
(+) found quiet activity when finished with work	11-Apr	2:56 PM
(+) cleaned up and came for story time	11-Apr	3:08 PM
(+) got packed up quietly	11-Apr	3:12 PM
(+) found quiet activity after journal	12-Apr	8:24 AM
(+) participated well during Bible story	12-Apr	8:39 AM
(+) sat and listened when asked for story	12-Apr	9:07
(-) argued when asked to get ready for test	12-Apr	11:02
(+) laid still on mat at rest time	12-Apr	1:15 PM
(+) got book basket and read in seat	12-Apr	1:40 PM
(+) got off computer when asked	12-Apr	1:50 PM
(-) disobeyed teacher's direct instruction to sit	12-Apr	1:52 PM
(+) got library book and lined up quietly	13-Apr	8:29 AM
(+) did work quietly in seat	13-Apr	9:36 AM
(+) raised hand and waited patiently for help	13-Apr	9:48
(+) stopped playing when asked before lunch	13-Apr	11:27 AM

(-) came in noisily after lunch	13-Apr	12:03 PM
(+) cleaned up and sat in seat quietly	13-Apr	2:15 PM
(+) got in line quietly	14-Apr	9:57 AM
(+) obeyed and sat down when asked	14-Apr	10:37 AM
(+) sat in seat when told to get ready for lunch	14-Apr	11:26 AM
(+) laid down for quiet time	14-Apr	12:56 PM
(+) listened during fire drill	14-Apr	1:28 PM
(-) argued about watering his bean plant	14-Apr	2:55 PM
(+) packed up and sat quietly	14-Apr	3:12 PM
(+) sat down and did work without being asked	15-Apr	8:03 AM
(+) cleaned up right away	15-Apr	9:32 AM
(+) lined up quietly/ waited patiently	15-Apr	10:03 AM
(+) got in line quietly after getting snack	15-Apr	10:32 AM
(+) obeyed directions to get stuff ready	15-Apr	11:15 AM
(+) ate lunch without playing	15-Apr	12:02 PM
(+) put book box away when asked	15-Apr	1:56 PM
(+) did art quietly well	15-Apr	2:56 PM
(+) sat and fixed when asked	18-Apr	9:28 AM
(+) cleaned and came and sat down	18-Apr	11:25 AM
(+) came up to get help with a book	18-Apr	2:00 PM
(+) read a book quietly when asked	18-Apr	2:30 PM
(+) put book box away when asked	18-Apr	2:32 PM
(+) did work right away when asked	18-Apr	2:50 PM
(+) cleaned up and come for Bible time	19-Apr	8:17 AM
(+) fixed journal when asked	19-Apr	9:25 AM
(+) put toys away and got ready for lesson	19-Apr	9:46 AM
(+) ate lunch and walked to classroom	19-Apr	12:02 PM
(+) fixed handwriting willingly	19-Apr	1:43 PM
(+) sat and read books at reading time	19-Apr	2:13 PM
(+) found quiet activity when done with work	19-Apr	2:45 PM
(+) counted nicely	20-Apr	9:02 AM
(+) ate snack quietly when reminded	20-Apr	10:37 AM
(+) cleaned up right away for lunch	20-Apr	11:26 AM
(+) sat down quietly to be excused for recess	20-Apr	12:07 PM
(+) got book box and read when asked	20-Apr	1:42 PM
(+) sat and waited for instructions	20-Apr	2:32 PM
(-) argued about not being able to use computer	20-Apr	2:34 PM
(+) cleaned up and came for Bible time	21-Apr	8:20 AM
(+) got jacket on and lined up quietly	21-Apr	9:59 AM
(+) found quiet activity after work	21-Apr	11:15 AM
(+) waited patiently to be excused	21-Apr	11:26 AM
(+) was asked to stop playing and obeyed	21-Apr	12:45 PM
(+) put book box away and sat quietly	21-Apr	2:10 PM

argued about sitting and facing the front	26-Apr	12:38 PM
argued about laying down at rest time	27-Apr	1:07 PM
constantly argued when asked to sit in seat	27-Apr	3:02 PM
argued about having to face front on carpet	28-Apr	8:23 AM
argued/pouted when had to listen to story	28-Apr	9:20 AM
constantly argued when asked to sit in seat	28-Apr	12:37 PM
argued when asked to stop making faces	28-Apr	12:55 PM
argued work was right instead of fixing it	28-Apr	1:36 PM
argued about having to listen to story	29-Apr	9:17 AM