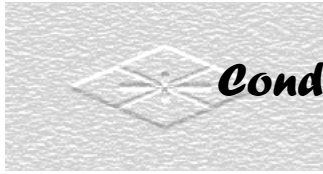


# Functional Behavioral Assessment



## ***Conducting a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)***

### **Why a Behavior Assessment is Important**

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When a student's behavior disrupts classroom instruction, teachers often address the problem by manipulating events that follow the misbehavior (e.g., verbal reprimands, isolation, detention, suspension). Experience has shown that this approach fails to teach the student acceptable *replacement behaviors* (i.e., behaviors that are expected and appropriate for the circumstances). The student may respond to the consequences for the moment, but in many instances, what has been absent is a method for determining “why” the student misbehaved in the first place. Today, there is good reason to believe that the success of classroom behavior interventions hinges on identifying the likely causes and purposes of problem behavior, as well as finding ways to teach and promote appropriate replacement behaviors that serve the same “functions” as the inappropriate behaviors.

We know that inappropriate student behavior may have the same form (e.g., Charles and James both talk back to the teacher) but serve different functions (e.g., Charles is seeking peer approval while James is attempting to control an aversive teacher-pupil interaction). Functional assessment helps educators to understand what function

the problem behavior serves for the student. This enables them to determine interventions that reduce or eliminate specific problem behavior by replacing it with acceptable behavior that serves the same purpose or function for the student (e.g., teaching Charles more acceptable ways to gain peer attention).

The logic behind an FBA is that practically all behavior occurs within a particular context and serves a specific purpose. Students learn to behave (or misbehave) in ways that satisfy a need or that result in a desired outcome. Students will change their behavior only when it is clear that a different response will more effectively and efficiently result in a desired outcome. Identifying the purpose of problem behaviors or more specifically—what the student “gains,” “controls,” or “avoids” through those behaviors—can provide information that is essential to developing instructional strategies and supports to reduce or eliminate behaviors that interfere with successful classroom performance or participation.

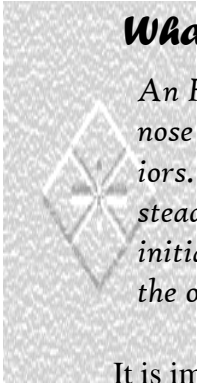
Conducting an FBA is generally considered to be a problem-solving process that looks beyond the behavior itself. The focus when conducting an FBA is on identifying

significant, pupil-specific social, affective, cognitive, and/or environmental factors associated with the occurrence (and non-occurrence) of specific behaviors. This broader perspective offers a better understanding of the function, or purpose, behind student behavior. Intervention plans based on an understanding of “why” a student misbehaves are extremely useful in addressing a wide range of problem behaviors. Keep in mind that an FBA is usually the first

of a two-pronged approach to addressing student problem behavior. Conducting an FBA lays the foundation for developing a BIP. In reviewing existing data, the team may determine that more information is needed before an effective plan can be designed. **Note that, if the team decides to gather more information than already exists in the records, prior parental consent is needed (as for any initial evaluation or reevaluation).**

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### ***What is a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)?***



*An FBA is an approach that incorporates a variety of techniques and strategies to diagnose the causes and to identify likely interventions intended to address problem behaviors. In other words, the FBA looks beyond the demonstrated behavior and focuses, instead, upon identifying biological, social, affective, and environmental factors that initiate, sustain, or end the target behavior. This approach is important because it leads the observer beyond the “symptom” (the behavior) to the underlying motivation for it.*

It is important to note that the cause of a behavior is not usually considered inappropriate. Rather, it is the behavior itself—the result—that is judged appropriate or inappropriate. For example, getting good grades and acting-out may serve the same function (i.e., getting attention from adults). Through an FBA, the team can determine that a student is seeking attention by acting-out. They can then develop a plan to teach the student more appropriate ways to gain attention, thereby filling the student’s need with an alternative behavior that serves the same function as the inappropriate behavior. At the same time, strategies may be developed to decrease or even eliminate *opportunities* for the student to engage in the undesirable behavior.

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### **Who Conducts an FBA?**

Identifying the underlying cause of behavior will take many forms; and, while the IDEA advises a functional assessment approach to determine specific contributors to behavior, it does not require or suggest specific techniques or strategies to use when assessing behavior. If a student with behavior

difficulties is a child with a disability, his or her needs must be addressed in an IEP. In such cases, the IEP team (which includes, at the minimum, teachers, an administrator, related service personnel, parents, and the student, when appropriate) is responsible for developing the IEP. Regular education

teachers who interface with the student are also involved with developing the IEP and are responsible for implementing it. When behavior is an issue to the point where discipline procedures such as suspension or expulsion are used, the IEP team must include in the student's IEP a BIP based on an FBA. (See page 6.) Although it is not required by law, it is a recommended best practice to do this *before* a behavior issue reaches that point. In addition, conducting an FBA and implementing intervention strategies that in-

clude a formal BIP or modifications, accommodations, and/or goals and objectives for addressing behavior is recommended for non-disabled students as well.

The school Student Assistance Team (SAT) or other school-based group that handles pre-referral issues could be called upon to do or help with an FBA, as needed. Select members of an IEP team can conduct an FBA or the IEP team may have a qualified professional, such as a psychologist, do it.

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## ***Conducting an FBA***

*Below is a summary of the stages involved in a method of conducting an FBA. They are discussed in detail on the pages that follow.*

- ▶ *Describe and define the target behavior in specific, concrete terms*
- ▶ *Collect information on possible functions of the target behavior*
  - Use direct and indirect measures of behavior*
  - Check accuracy of behavior measurement*
- ▶ *Categorize behavior—Is it linked to a skill deficit or a performance deficit?*
- ▶ *Analyze information to form a hypothesis (conjecture or presumed function)*
- ▶ *Devise interventions and/or develop a BIP*

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Most teachers recognize that many classroom discipline problems can be resolved by consistently applying standard management strategies. Strategies proven to be effective include teaching students how to comply with well-defined classroom rules, providing students more structure in lessons, making strategic seating assignments, and posting a class schedule. These proactive procedures can sometimes even alleviate the need for Teachers to learn about other solutions to the

problems they face through student assistance or intervention assistance teams. Regardless of the source of this information, school personnel generally should introduce one or more standard strategies before seeking to initiate the more complex, and often time-consuming, process of FBA. A formal assessment usually is reserved for serious, recurring problems that do not readily respond to intervention strategies, or classroom management techniques and impede a student's learning, or are ongoing.

# Conducting the FBA

## Step 1: Identify and Define the Problem Behavior

Before an FBA can be conducted, it is necessary to pinpoint the behavior causing learning or discipline problems, and to define that behavior in concrete terms that are easy to communicate and simple to measure and record. If descriptions of behaviors are vague (e.g., poor attitude), it is difficult to determine appropriate interventions. This table shows how vague, generalized descriptions can be stated as specific, concrete definitions.

<i>Problem Behavior</i>	<i>Concrete Definition</i>
<i>Trish is aggressive.</i>	<i>Trish hits other students during recess when she does not get her way.</i>
<i>Carlos is disruptive.</i>	<i>Carlos makes irrelevant and inappropriate comments during class discussion.</i>
<i>Jan is hyperactive.</i>	<i>Jan leaves her assigned area without permission. Jan completes only portions of her independent work. Jan blurts out answers without raising her hand.</i>

In collecting preliminary information about student behavior, the team should take into consideration teacher expectations for student academic performance as well as classroom conduct. It might be that teacher expectations for the student exceed or fall below the student's ability to perform. The resulting behavior problems may stem from a sense of frustration, fear of embarrassment, or boredom. **In assessing a student's behavior, it is also important to consider whether a particular response may relate to cultural differences or expectations.** For example, in some cultures, making eye contact with adults is considered rude; in others, peer competition is discouraged. Remember that no two students (or their families) are the same, regardless of their gender,

cultural, or ethnic background. As part of the team, parents can provide valuable information regarding the behaviors their culture values. School personnel should be aware that differences may exist, respect these differences, and work to adopt the family's perspective when considering student behavior. When making judgments about cultural differences or expectations, professionals who are qualified to make such statements may be another resource to the team. Such individuals may be in a good position to assess the impact of cultural differences on learning. The questions that follow can be used as a way for the team to judge the significance of the behavior exhibited by a student.

- ▶ Does the student's behavior significantly differ from that of his/her classmates?
- ▶ Does the behavior lessen the possibility of successful learning for the student and/or others?
- ▶ Have past efforts to address the behavior using standard interventions been unsuccessful?
- ▶ Does the behavior represent a skill or performance deficit, rather than a cultural difference?
- ▶ Is the behavior serious, persistent, chronic, or a threat to the safety of the student or others?
- ▶ If the behavior persists, is some disciplinary action likely to result?

It may be necessary to carefully and objectively observe the student's behavior in different settings and during different types of activities. Interviews with other school staff and caregivers may help pinpoint the specific characteristics of the behavior. A "yes" answer to any of the questions above can be used to determine if an FBA is appropriate. Once the team has defined the problem behavior in con-

crete terms, they can begin to devise a plan for conducting an FBA to determine functions (causes) of the behavior. For students with disabilities, it is important to note that overall planning for conducting the FBA must be done within the framework of an IEP meeting. The following sections can be used to guide teams in choosing the most effective techniques to determine the likely causes of behavior.



## **Step 2: Collect Information to Determine Function**

By collecting and analyzing various kinds of information about behavior that significantly disrupts the teaching and learning process, school personnel are better able to select the most appropriate interventions. Information on the social and/or environmental context, *antecedent* and *consequent* events (i.e., events preceding or following the behavior, respectively), and past events that may influence present behavior. It also assists teams in predicting when, where, with whom, and under what conditions a certain behavior is most and/or least likely to occur.

A well developed assessment plan and a properly executed FBA should identify the contextual factors that contribute to behavior. Determining the specific contextual factors for a behavior is accomplished by collecting information on the various conditions under which a student is most and least likely to exhibit the problem behavior. That information, collected both indirectly and directly, allows school personnel to predict the circumstances under which the problem behavior is likely and not likely to occur.

*A thorough assessment plan would include collecting information during most or all of the following circumstances:*

- ▶ *times when the behavior does/does not occur* (just prior to lunch, during a particular subject)
  - ▶ *specific location of the behavior* (classroom, playground)
  - ▶ *conditions when the behavior does/does not occur* (in small groups, during unstructured time)
  - ▶ *individuals present when the behavior is most/least likely to occur* (certain students, substitute)
  - ▶ *events or conditions that typically occur before the behavior* (assigned to a certain reading group)
  - ▶ *events or conditions that typically occur after the behavior* (student is sent out of the room)
  - ▶ *common setting events* (during bad weather, during testing)
  - ▶ *other behaviors that are associated with the problem behavior* (series of negative peer interactions)
- 

Multiple sources and methods are required for conducting a behavior assessment. A single source of information generally does not produce sufficiently accurate information, especially if the problem behavior serves several functions that vary according to circumstance (e.g., making inappropriate comments during class may serve to get peer attention in some instances, while in other situations it may serve to avoid being called on by the teacher).

It is important to understand, though, that contextual factors are more than the sum of observable behaviors. They include certain *affective* and *cognitive* behaviors, as well. In other words, the trigger, or antecedent for the behavior, may not be something that anyone else can directly observe, and, therefore, must be identified using indirect measures. For instance, if the student acts out when given a worksheet, it may not be the worksheet that caused the acting-out, but the fact that the student does not know what is required

(a skill deficit) and thus anticipates failure or ridicule. Information of this type may be gleaned through a discussion with the student or a review of information gathered in the FBA process.

Since problem behavior stems from a variety of causes, it is best to examine the behavior from as many different angles as possible. Depending on the nature of the behavior of concern, it is crucial that multiple means be used to collect information about the behavior. This might include a review of the student's records (educational and medical), along with an evaluation of a sample of the student's academic products (e.g., in-class assignments, tests, homework). In addition, the team will want to use various observation procedures, questionnaires, interviews with parents, teachers, and other school personnel (e.g., bus driver, cafeteria workers, playground monitors), as well as interviews with the student—whatever the team decides is needed to better understand the causes of the specific problem behavior.

## Direct and Indirect Measures of Student Behavior

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Different behaviors may require different data collection techniques. **Direct assessment** consists of actually observing the problem behavior and describing the conditions that surround the behavior (its context). This context includes events that are *antecedent* (i.e., that occur before) and *consequent* (i.e., that occur after) to student behaviors of interest.



There are several tools to select from in recording direct assessment data. Each has its particular strength. Assessment teams should consider what they want or need to know about the presenting behavior and select direct observation strategies and recording tools accordingly. The most commonly used tools and the kinds of data they can help gather are described below. Reproducible sample data tools are included at the end of this section.

Often, initial observations can be accomplished through the use of a **scatterplot**.

The purpose of a scatterplot is to identify patterns of behavior that relate to specific contextual conditions. A scatterplot is a chart or grid on which an observer records single events (e.g., number of student call-outs) or a series of events (e.g., teacher requests and student responses) that occur within a given context (e.g., during teacher-led reading instruction, at lunch, on the playground). Scatterplots take various forms, depending on the behavior of interest and its social and/or physical context. Some require observers to sequentially record (by category) various events (e.g., format of instruction, teacher behavior, student and/or peer responses, likely purpose of student reaction). See pages 21-22 for a sample and reproducible scatterplot form.

Another way to observe student behavior is with an **ABC Observation Form** (Antecedent-Behavior-Consequence). This approach allows an observer to organize anecdotal or descriptive information on the student's interactions with other students and adults in such a way that patterns of behavior often become clear. A modified ABC chart might be individualized to contain several predetermined categories of teacher or peer antecedent behavior, student responses, and consequent events, along with space for narrative recording of classroom observations. See pages 23-24 for a sample and reproducible ABC Observation Form.

We know that student behavior usually is related to the context in which it occurs. However, the assessment team will not always be able to directly observe all the

events that bring about or maintain specific student behavior. So-called “setting events” can exist within the classroom (e.g., Charles is asked to join a new reading group), or be far removed from it but still exert a powerful influence over student behavior (e.g., Charles has an argument with another student at the bus stop before school). External events of this nature may increase the likelihood of conflict in the classroom, especially if the student is struggling academically and/or dislikes the subject matter. These setting events (or specific antecedents for the behavior) often may not be directly observable. In other cases, the behavior may be serious but not occur frequently enough in settings accessible to adults to be readily observed (e.g., verbal or physical aggression). In these instances, the behavior must be assessed by using indirect measures.

**Indirect assessment** relies heavily on the use of **interviews** with teachers and other adults (e.g., parents bus drivers, cafeteria workers) who have direct contact with the student. In addition, a semi-structured interview with the student could provide critical insight into the student’s perspective of the situation and yield a more complete understanding of the reasons behind the inappropriate behavior. It may be useful to follow the same interview format with both the student and significant adults (e.g., special and regular classroom teachers, parents, and support personnel) and to compare these two sources of information. Even elementary aged students can be credible informants, capable of sharing accurate information about contextual factors that influence their behavior. Indirect measures can yield



valuable information, but because they are more subjective, assessment teams must be careful not to put too much faith in information derived from informant accounts alone. See pages 25-26 for lists of functional interview questions, one for the teacher or parent and one for the student. Similar information can be gathered in the form of surveys or questionnaires.

In collecting information regarding the context of a behavior problem, it is important to understand that contextual factors may include certain affective or cognitive behaviors, as well. For instance, Juan repeatedly acts out during instruction when given lengthy and difficult assignments. Even so, it may not be the assignment itself that triggers the acting-out behavior. Rather, it may be that he knows he doesn’t have the skills necessary to complete the work that prompts an anticipation of failure or ridicule. Or, he may have a family member who is critically ill; therefore, he finds it difficult to concentrate.



### **Step 3: Categorize Behavior; Form a Hypothesis**

The purpose of conducting a FBA is, ultimately, to find the most effective way to address a persistent problematic behavior. Once the team has defined the behavior and gathered data about when, where, and how it is demonstrated, the team is ready to determine WHY the behavior may be occurring. For example, knowing that Abby repeatedly steals from her classmates does not necessar-

ily mean that she is selfish or disregards the value of possessions. In fact, it could stem from being embarrassed about not having the money and/or possessions others have and not wanting to be looked down upon by her peers. Therefore, a very important part of the FBA is for the team to ascertain and form a **hypothesis** about why the behavior is occurring.

*There are three basic ways to categorize why a behavior is occurring:*

- ▶ **Function**—*why the student is demonstrating the behavior, usually to get/seek something desired or to escape/avoid something painful or undesired. Examples: to get attention or stimulation, to elicit a desired response, to get a desired activity, to escape demands/requests, to escape an activity or person, to escape an environment, to control something.*
- ▶ **Skill deficit**—*a behavioral or academic skill that the student does not know how to perform. Example: In a disagreement, the student hits the other student because he does not know other strategies for conflict resolution. In cases of skill deficit, the BIP needs to describe how the skill will be taught and how the student will be supported while learning it.*
- ▶ **Performance deficit**—*a behavioral or academic skill the student does know, but does not consistently perform. Example: A student is chronically late for the classes she doesn't "like." In cases of performance deficit, the BIP may include strategies to increase motivation.*

In assessing behavior use caution in assuming that a particular behavior exhibited by a student is by choice, i.e. the student does it even though he “knows better.” For example, a student who interrupts may, or may not, be aware that there are alternative, more appropriate ways to be

heard. When analyzing a behavior, consider if it is more likely that the student “can’t” behave differently because he does not know differently, or if he does know differently and just “won’t.” In general, “**can’t**” indicates a **skill deficit**, whereas “**won’t**” indicates a **performance deficit**.

While categorizing behavior by function is integral to an FBA, recognition that problems can also relate to either skill or performance deficits, or both, can contribute significantly to development of a sound BIP. Finally, it is also important to remember that one behavior may have an impact on other behaviors the student may engage in.

It is the assessment team's responsibility to consider all relevant information and form a hypothesis about the behavior that will be used to develop a BIP. **The hypothesis, then, is the statement describing the team's conclusions about the probable cause(s) and deficit(s) for the student's manifestation of the behavior.** One way to reach that conclusion is by using a graphic tool that helps analyze all the compiled information. This tool, called a data triangulation chart or a data triangle, provides a framework on which the team can pull together and visually compare

information collected from various sources (scatterplots, ABC charts, interviews). From there the team members attempt to identify possible patterns of behavior, conditions that trigger the target behavior, functions that maintain or continue the behavior (get, control, or avoid something), and finally, deficits that the problem behaviors fill for the student. See pages 27-28 for a sample and reproducible **Data Triangle Chart**.



*The success of the behavior interventions to be developed for a student depends on the accuracy of the team's efforts to define and evaluate the problem. Teams may want to use this framework for stating their hypothesis:*

*When (X-target) behavior occurs, it is usually in the context of (X-where and/or when) and preceded by (X) trigger(s).*

*The student's response is (X-describe in specific behavioral terms).*

*The result of the behavior is usually (X), which serves to (X-describe "pay-off").*

*The function and/or purpose of this response is likely to be a (X-to get/seek...or to escape and/or avoid...).*

*The behavior appears to be a (X-skill deficit or performance deficit) because (X).*

**Example:** When taunting occurs, it is usually in transition times and is preceded by an upcoming period of social time (recess, lunch). Sara's response is to criticize or make hurtful comments about other girls. The result of the behavior is usually hurt feelings and Sara's separation from the other girls, which serves to remove Sara from the social group. The function and/or purpose of the behavior is likely to be that Sara is purposely attempting to avoid having to interact with and be accepted by peers. The behavior seems to be a performance deficit, because Sara only displays this behavior when she feels pressured to be accepted by other girls.

# Sample of Completed Scatterplot Form

## SCATTERPLOT

Student: Carl Clark

Date(s) 10/6-10/10/03 Grade: 5 School: Barton Elem.

Observer: Mr. Dennison (principal)

Behavior of Concern: verbal outbursts of anger and protest followed by refusal to respond to directions by teacher/adult authority

Additional relevant information: Carl is with Ms. Wills in the a.m. for Reading/Lang. & with Mrs. Bryant in p.m. for Math/Sci./Soc.St.

Code used (if any): tally mark for each observed instance

Setting or Class	Times or Intervals	Day/Date M. 10/6	Day/Date T. 10/7	Day/Date W. 10/8	Day/Date Th. 10/9	Day/Date F. 10/10	Total Times Observed
Reading	8:45-10:00	//	///	/	/	///	10
Transition	10:00-10:10		/				1
Language	10:10-11:50	///	//	///	//	///	13
Transition	11:50-12:00	/					1
Lunch	12:00-12:30			/			1
Transition	12:30-12:40					/	1
Recess	12:40-1:00						2
Transition	1:00-1:10					/	1
Math	1:10-1:55	/		//			3
Transition	1:55-2:00		/				2
Sci./Soc.St.	2:00-2:45	/	//		/		4
					/		

### Observation Notes

(e.g., specific circumstances under which the behavior occurred, particular antecedents that triggered the behavior, times/conditions during which the behavior does not occur, patterns observed, etc.)

Carl acts out more frequently in Read./Lang., which are in the a.m. and with Ms. Wills. Though he may like the p.m. subjects better, his behavior could be a reaction to the subjects, the teacher, or the time of day. I suggest observing Carl when there is a substitute for Ms. Wills, Mrs. Bryant, or both, and/or interviewing him about these classes.



# Sample of Completed ABC Observation Form

**ABC OBSERVATION FORM**

Student: Cindy Adams Grade: 2 School: M.L.King Elementary  
 Date(s) Oct. 10 & 15, 2003 Observer: Janet Hoffman, Special Ed. teacher  
 Behavior of Concern: Mars/destroys school property

	Date: <u>10/10/03</u> Time: <u>9:25-10:10</u>	Date: <u>10/10/03</u> Time: <u>1:05-1:45</u>	Date: <u>10/15/03</u> Time: <u>9:25-10:10</u>
<b>CONTEXT OR CIRCUMSTANCES</b>	Cindy is in Reading Group from 9:25-9:45, then working independently at a table with two other students.	Cindy is in Math Class. The teacher is giving examples of 2-digit subtraction on the board.	
<b>ANTECEDENT</b> (what happens just prior)	The students take their books and materials to the table. Students are to share a bucket of crayons.	The teacher asks for a volunteer to come to board and solve the problem. Cindy jumps out of seat and says aloud "Ooh, me, please."	
<b>BEHAVIOR</b>	Cindy dawdles a bit, then takes a crayon and begins to scribble on the desk. Another student calls out to the teacher about it.	When the teacher does not select Cindy, she scowls and throws her math book on the floor, wrinkling several pages.	
<b>CONSEQUENCE</b> (what happens right after)	The teacher stops her lesson and goes to the table. She asks Cindy why she did that. Cindy says she doesn't know.	The teacher gives Cindy a stern look but does not stop the lesson. Cindy makes a face and picks up the book.	
<b>COMMENTS OR OTHER OBSERVATIONS</b>	Though negative, Cindy seems pleased to have the teacher's attention. Cindy's "answer" only encourages more questions.	Cindy seems to not be able to handle times when the teacher is not attending directly to her.	

## ABC Observation Form

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Observer: \_\_\_\_\_

Behavior of Concern: \_\_\_\_\_

	Date: _____ Time: _____	Date: _____ Time: _____	Date: _____ Time: _____
<b>CONTEXT OR CIRCUMSTANCES</b>			
<b>A</b> <b>ANTECEDENT</b> (what happens just prior)			
<b>B</b> <b>BEHAVIOR</b>			
<b>C</b> <b>CONSEQUENCE</b> (what happens right after)			
<b>COMMENTS OR OTHER OBSERVATIONS</b>			

### Sample Interview Script—Teacher/Parent

Concern has been expressed about \_\_\_\_\_'s behavior, specifically \_\_\_\_\_. We are gathering information for the purpose of identifying possible reasons for the behavior so that we are able to develop and recommend appropriate interventions.

Q. In what specific settings or under what conditions do you observe the behavior?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

Q. Are there settings, conditions, or situations in which the behavior does NOT occur?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

Q. Characterize your observation of the frequency, intensity, and duration of the behavior.

A. \_\_\_\_\_

Q. Who is present when the behavior occurs?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

Q. Which of these, if any, typically precede the behavior?

- directive or request from authority*     *provocation from peers*     *academic activity*  
 *unstructured setting*     *transition time*     *certain time of day*

Describe the activity or interaction that takes place just prior to the behavior.

A. \_\_\_\_\_

Q. Which of these, if any, typically immediately follows the behavior?

- behavior is socially reinforced by peers*     *receives attention*     *gets corrective feedback*  
 *is removed from the setting*     *privileges are withheld*     *negative consequence*  
 *no consequences or behavior is ignored*     *no obvious consistency*     *other*

Describe the typical result of the behavior and consequence of it.

A. \_\_\_\_\_

Q. Are there other behaviors that usually occur along with the problem behavior?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

Q. What positive reinforcers have you used with this student and how effective were they?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

Q. What negative consequence have you used with this student and how effective were they?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

Q. For what reasons might the student be showing this behavior? (e.g., to get, control, or avoid something)

A. \_\_\_\_\_

Q. In your opinion, what would be an acceptable way for the student to achieve the same outcome?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

Q. Do you feel that this student does not “know how” to achieve his needs using appropriate behavior (can't), or does the student know how to behave differently, but consistently chooses not to (won't)?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

Q. What other insight can you offer about this student or the behavior that might assist us in developing appropriate, effective interventions? (Parents: any health, eating/sleeping habits, other patterns?)

A. \_\_\_\_\_

### Sample Interview Script—Student

We are gathering information in order to better understand what goes on in and out of the classroom. We would like to know and consider the students' point of view as well as the adults'. We need your help to get an accurate "picture." Please answer these few questions as openly and honestly as possible.

Q. Do you think that what goes on outside of school affects how a student works and behaves in class?  
How (give example)?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

Q. What about you? What is happening in your life outside of school that affects you while in school?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

Q. Most students are bothered by someone or something that goes on at school. What bothers you?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

Q. Have you recently been punished or reprimanded for something you did in school? Why?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

Q. How about (*identify the target behavior*)? What was going on the last time or other times you behaved that way? What happened just before or what caused you to behave that way?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

Q. What usually happens right after you or another student behaves differently than your expected to?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

Q. What do you think was expected of you? Was the judgment fair or not, and why?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

Q. How do you feel about (*specific subject, teacher, students, situation*)?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

Q. How do you think (*specific teacher, students, other person/people*) feels about you?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

Q. What happens when you DO do exactly as you are expected? What SHOULD happen?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

Q. What consequence has that behavior had for you? What SHOULD the consequence be?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

Q. Can you think of any times or situations in school that you would really avoid if you could?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

Q. Can you think of anything that you wish would happen that doesn't happen often or at all?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

Q. Name one or two things you wish were different about school.

A. \_\_\_\_\_

Q. Name one or two things you wish were different outside of school.

A. \_\_\_\_\_

Q. Name one or two things you wish were different about yourself.


A. \_\_\_\_\_



## Sample of Completed Data Triangle Chart

**DATA TRIANGLE CHART**

Student: Tim Jameson Grade: 7 Date: October 26, 2004  
 Behavior of Concern: Enthusiastic about oral work, hostile and negative toward written work.

<p>Scatterplot Date <u>Oct. 13, 14</u>          Tim was observed participating, even volunteering, in class discussions in history and science. Tim is bright and has a lot of knowledge, which he is willing to share, but only verbally. When asked to take a quiz or do homework, he refuses, and says he doesn't care about grades.</p>	<p>ABC Chart Date <u>Oct. 15</u>          In every case of Tim's refusal to perform, the antecedent was the teacher expecting a written product. Half the time, Tim says, "I don't care" and the other half is more verbally hostile ("I don't give a ---") Despite obvious ability and willingness to "shine" in verbal tasks, he is getting mostly D's.</p>
	
<p>Name <u>Teacher &amp; Tim</u> Date <u>Oct. 19</u>          Mrs. Wilkins says Tim is bright and very pleasant when involved in oral activities. She says he CAN write, but will only do so if it's not to be graded. Tim says he used to get great report cards, but that was "before we had all this writing to do." Tim thinks that unless his writing is "perfect" that it is "no good." He says he writes "too slow;" his written work makes him look "stupid." He says if he "can't write 'right,' why bother?" and Mrs. Wilkins doesn't "count" what he knows, only what he can write.</p>	

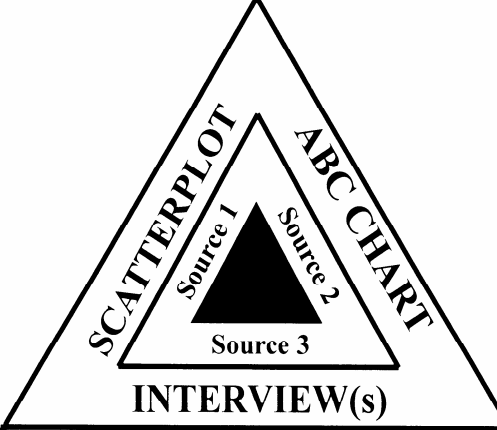
- Precipitating Events (conditions/circumstances under which target behavior occurs): Tim "shuts down" when his teacher gives a written assignment or when a written test is administered.
- Functions that Maintain the Behavior (what he/she gets, controls, or avoids as a consequence of the action): By not writing, Tim avoids having to fall short of his own expectations and looking "stupid."
- Deficit(s) (skill or performance): Tim is demonstrating both a skill deficit (handwriting) and a performance deficit (he "won't"). He lacks motor skills and confidence to write fast and well.

Interpretation Summary: Tim is proud of his intelligence, but feels that he cannot express himself in writing (and get perfect grades). He would rather fail from not trying than try and fail.

# Data Triangle Chart

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

Behavior of Concern: \_\_\_\_\_

Scatterplot Date _____	ABC Chart Date _____
 <p>The diagram is a large triangle with a smaller triangle inside it. The left side of the large triangle is labeled 'SCATTERPLOT', the right side is labeled 'ABC CHART', and the bottom side is labeled 'INTERVIEW(s)'. Inside the large triangle, there is a smaller triangle with three vertices labeled 'Source 1', 'Source 2', and 'Source 3'. Below the 'INTERVIEW(s)' label, there is a line for 'Name _____' and a line for 'Date _____'.</p>	
Name _____ Date _____	

• **Precipitating Events** (conditions/circumstances under which target behavior occurs): \_\_\_\_\_

• **Functions that Maintain the Behavior** (what he/she gets, controls, or avoids as a consequence of the action): \_\_\_\_\_

• **Deficit(s)** (skill or performance): \_\_\_\_\_

**Interpretation Summary:** \_\_\_\_\_