

FUNCTIONAL BEHAVIORAL ASSESSMENT

Purpose

Individualized Functional Behavioral Assessment is typically used only in instances where behavior interferes *significantly* with the student's learning or that of his/her peers despite the consistent implementation of behavioral interventions developed from less formal behavioral assessments. Effective classroom management approaches embedded within effective instructional design and delivery appropriately address the majority of behavioral issues occurring in classrooms.

Process

A functional behavioral assessment is a process consisting of information-gathering procedures that result in a hypothesis about the function(s) that the behavior is serving for the student. The process also results in the identification of environmental antecedents and consequences that are maintaining the behavior.

First, information must be gathered indirectly through a team interview of person(s) who have observed the behavior of the student for an extended period of time in a variety of settings and conditions. The purpose of the interview is to review a large number of potential variables and narrow the focus to those variables that are of particular importance to the individual.

Information must also be gathered through direct observation with data collection of the behavior across settings and times with consideration of a variety of other environmental factors (i.e., other persons present, task demands, changing conditions). Information that was gathered during the interview portion of the functional behavioral assessment is used to narrow the focus of data collection during direct observations. A graphic representation of the data collected along with written descriptions collected through structured anecdotal reports during direct observations, together with the interview information results in the following:

1. Development of a specific, clear description of the behavior of concern
2. Identification of the environmental factors (antecedents and consequences) that correspond with occurrences of the behavior
3. Identification of the perceived function(s) of the behavior of concern

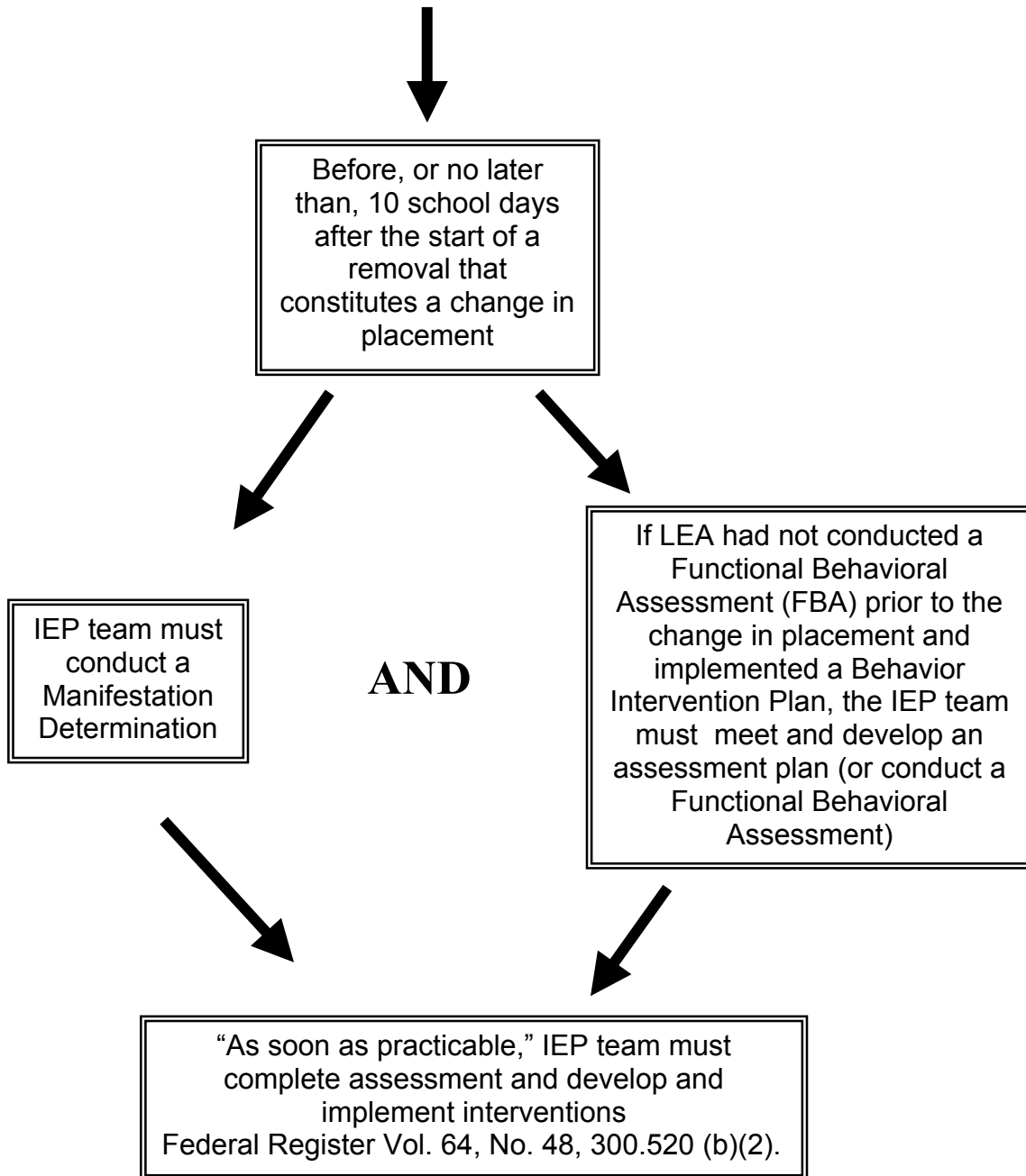
This information then serves as the basis for the development of a Behavior Intervention Plan that manipulates environmental factors and consequences while providing instruction in the acquisition of new, more appropriate behaviors. Throughout the baseline and intervention phases, data is collected and evaluated, and decisions are made based upon analyses of the data. Ongoing revisions to the Behavior Intervention Plan are data-driven throughout the intervention phase.

When must a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) be conducted?

IDEA Requirements

Disciplinary Change in Placement Occurs (exclusion of a student with disability)

- ◆ More than 10 school days consecutively, **OR**
- ◆ More than 15 school days cumulatively in a school year, **OR**
- ◆ When days 11-15 constitute a pattern of exclusion, **OR**
- ◆ An exclusion of even one school day for a student with mental retardation



FUNCTIONAL BEHAVIORAL ASSESSMENT

STEP 1: INTERVIEW

The IEP team, including persons who have observed the behavior of the student for an extended period of time in a variety of settings and conditions, completes the interview questions focusing on antecedents, behaviors, and consequences.



STEP 2: DIRECT OBSERVATION WITH DATA ANALYSIS

Direct observation in the student's natural environment provides objective data to support or refute the interview information; thus leading to more accurate hypothesis formation. The parameters of the observations and the data collection methods are determined by information gathered during the interview phase (STEP 1).



STEP 3: SUMMARY

The IEP team summarizes the interview information with the data collected during direct observation to form a hypothesis identifying the function(s) the behavior is serving for the student. The IEP team uses this information to build an Effective Behavior Intervention Plan. Ongoing analyses of data collected during the intervention phase of the Behavior Intervention Plan guide the team in measuring progress and making necessary revisions.

STEP 1: FUNCTIONAL ASSESSMENT INTERVIEW

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

School: _____ Grade: _____ DOB: _____

Educational Program Description: _____

Instructions: IEP team interview including team members who have observed the behavior of the student for an extended period of time in a variety of settings and conditions. When the answer is YES, add details on the line provided.

I. Description of the Behavior of Concern (specifically describe what the behavior looks like): _____

II. Physiological and Medical Factors:

1. Could the behavior be a result of a medical condition or any form of physical discomfort?

NO

YES _____

2. Could the behavior be related to a side effect of medication?

NO

YES _____

3. Could the behavior be the result of some physical deprivation condition (thirst, hunger, lack of rest, etc.)?

NO

YES _____

III. Antecedents and Establishing Operations:

1. Are there circumstances in which the behavior ALWAYS occurs?

NO

YES _____

2. Are there circumstances in which the behavior NEVER occurs?

NO

YES _____

3. Does the behavior occur only (or more often) during particular activities?

NO

YES _____

4. Does the behavior occur only with (or more likely with) certain people?

NO

YES _____

5. Does the behavior occur in response to certain stimuli? (demands, termination of preferred activities, tone of voice, noise level, ignoring, change in routine, transitions, number of people in the room, etc.)

NO

YES _____

6. Could the behavior be related to any **skill deficits**? (check all that apply)

Academic – Task requirements as presented are too difficult for the student.

Social – The student has difficulty acquiring and/or maintaining peer friendships. The student often withdraws from social interaction. The student is often verbally and/or physically aggressive in social interactions. The student often commits rule infractions or defies adult authority.

Communication. The student appears "off track" and loses his/her train of thought. The student's volume and/or tone of voice are inappropriate. The student has difficulty getting messages across successfully. The student has difficulty processing verbal messages. The student doesn't use active listening habits such as eye contact, head nods, asking, clarifying, or verifying questions.

Sensory processing. The student has difficulty interpreting sensory information (i.e., sights, sounds, movements, touch, tastes, smells) and/or organizing multiple sensory information. The student seems unable to ignore irrelevant sensory information and/or to focus on relevant sensory information.

*If YES, please refer for further assessment (i.e. Speech & Language evaluation, Occupational Therapy evaluation, curriculum-based assessments).

IV. Consequence Factors:

1. Does the behavior allow the student to gain anything?

A. Preferred activities or items?

Indicators: The behavior often occurs when you take a particular item away from the student or when you terminate a preferred activity followed by the student sometimes or always regaining the item or activity. The behavior often occurs when you inform the student that he/she cannot have a certain item or cannot engage in a particular activity followed by the student sometimes or always gaining access to the activity or the item. The behavior rarely occurs when you give the student free access to his or her favorite items or activities.

NO

YES _____

B. Peer or adult attention?

Indicators: The student frequently approaches you or others. The student frequently initiates social interaction. When the behavior occurs, you or others usually respond by interacting with the student in some way (i.e. verbal reprimand, redirection, comforting statements). The behavior rarely occurs when the student is receiving lots of attention.

NO

YES _____

2. Does the behavior allow the student to postpone, avoid, or escape anything (task demands, social interaction, etc.)?

Indicators: The behavior often occurs when you place task demands on the student and the student sometimes or always postpones or escapes the tasks. The behavior rarely occurs when you place few demands on the student or when you leave the student alone. The student is often noncompliant when asked to complete tasks and the student sometimes or always postpones or escapes the tasks. The behavior often occurs prior to predictable demands and the student sometimes or always avoids or postpones the tasks.

NO

YES _____

3. Does the behavior provide stimulation activity (an alternative to a lack of active engagement in activities)?

Indicators: The behavior occurs frequently when the student is alone or unoccupied. The student seems to have few known reinforcers or rarely engages in social interaction activities. When the student engages in the behavior, you and others usually respond by not attending to the behavior.

NO

YES _____

STEP 2: DIRECT OBSERVATION WITH DATA ANALYSIS

- A.** The interview (indirect) portion of the FBA results in a measurable description of the behavior of concern and information which leads to focused observation with data collection and analysis.

Direct observation with data collection and subsequent analysis:

- ◆ Serves to more clearly define the behavior
- ◆ Supports or refutes interview information
- ◆ Allows for assessment of behavioral events in the student's natural environment
- ◆ Leads to a more accurate hypothesis regarding the function(s) of the student's behavior of concern
- ◆ Serves as a baseline to measure the frequency, duration, and/or intensity of the behavior prior to intervention
- ◆ Provides information that is necessary to build a behavior intervention plan
- ◆ Supplies the team with progress monitoring data to evaluate the implemented interventions and guide adjustments to the plan

B. Data Collection Steps:

- ◆ Define the behavior in observable and measurable terms.
- ◆ Determine the purpose for data collection—the type of information needed from each data collection session (i.e. frequency counts, identifying antecedents and/or consequences).
- ◆ Outline the schedule including where, when, how often, and who will collect data.
- ◆ Design tools that will result in the collection of the type of data needed and that are functional with clear coding systems.
- ◆ Transfer the data to a visual representation (graph) and analyze it for trend, level and variability.

C. Suggested Data Collection Methods

- ◆ Frequency and/or duration recording indicating time of day, location, activities occurring, people present.
This is best accomplished by recording the data onto the student's written schedule (often called a scatter plot) (see page 11)
- ◆ Structured Anecdotal Recording in an A-B-C format providing a written description of the student's behavior as well as the antecedents and consequences present. This type of data must be collected multiple times across settings when the behavior of concern occurs as well as when the behavior of concern does not occur.

D. Appendix A contains sample data collection tools for use during direct observation followed by a graphic (visual) representation of the data to facilitate data analysis.

E. Appendix B contains blank data collection forms for you to use directly or adapt to fit your needs.

STEP 3: SUMMARY

History of interventions for current behavior of concern

Antecedent (prevention) strategies:

Consequence strategies:

Observation Data Summary (attach graphic representation of observation data collected)

1. How often does the behavior of concern occur, and/or how long does it last, and at what intensity does it occur?

2. Describe any patterns to the occurrence of the behavior of concern detected through analysis of the data.

Antecedent and Consequence Factors

1. What antecedents (see pg. 5 and data collection) are present when the behavior of concern occurs? *(describe specifically and include all identified)*

2. What consequences (see pg. 6 and data collection) appear to be maintaining the behavior of concern? *(describe specifically and include all identified)*

Hypothesis Regarding Function(s) of the Behavior of Concern

To get: *(describe)*

- Attention _____
- Activities _____
- Items _____
- Sensory stimulation _____

To avoid, delay, or escape: *(describe)*

- Attention _____
- Activities/Items _____
- Sensory stimulation _____

APPENDIX A

I. **Structured Anecdotal Report**- provides a written description (narrative report) of a student's behavior in a particular setting or time period. Used to clearly identify antecedents, consequences, and specific behaviors so that they can be measured; often used as a first step in recognizing specific behaviors and their related environmental events.

A. Open A-B-C Style

Student:		Setting: (activity and individuals present)	
Time & Date	Antecedent	Behavior	Consequence
9:45 a.m. Sept. 5	1. Teacher to class "Get your materials out for English."	2. Bill begins tapping his pencil. 4. B. continues to tap. 6. B. pulls his arm away. 8. B. throws pencil in the air. 10. B. puts his pencil on the desk.	3. T: "B, Please stop that. You are annoying others." 5. T puts her hand on B's arm. 7. T: "B, what did I tell you?" Other students laugh +/- or stare. 9. T writes B's name on the board.

B. Behavior Card

Student:	Activity:	Individuals Present:	Time & Date:
Antecedent(s): <input type="checkbox"/> Asked to do something <input type="checkbox"/> Attention given to others <input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing behavior interrupted <input type="checkbox"/> Bored- no materials/activities <input type="checkbox"/> Could not get desired item <input type="checkbox"/> Appeared to be in discomfort <input type="checkbox"/> Loud/disruptive environment <input type="checkbox"/> Other student provoked <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____		Behavior of Concern: <input type="checkbox"/> Off-task <input type="checkbox"/> Noncompliance <input type="checkbox"/> Running away <input type="checkbox"/> Physical/verbal aggression <input type="checkbox"/> Playing with objects <input type="checkbox"/> Screaming/tantrumming <input type="checkbox"/> Self injurious behavior <input type="checkbox"/> Fidgeting <input type="checkbox"/> Provoking/Teasing others <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	Consequence(s): <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal redirection to activity <input type="checkbox"/> Physical redirection to activity <input type="checkbox"/> Required to continue activity <input type="checkbox"/> Ignoring <input type="checkbox"/> Time out (duration ____) <input type="checkbox"/> Within room area <input type="checkbox"/> Outside room area <input type="checkbox"/> Physical discomfort relieved <input type="checkbox"/> Interruption/blocking <input type="checkbox"/> Physical restraint <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

II. **Scatterplot** – provides a visual depiction of occurrences of the behavior of concern across the student’s daily activities. Used to detect patterns (if any) of the occurrence of the behavior of concern.

Student Schedule

Student _____ Behavior of Concern _____

Time	Activity	M (date)	Tu (date)	W (date)	Th (date)	F (date)
8:30-8:42	Homeroom	/	//	//	//	////
8:45-9:35	General Science	/	/	/	/	//
9:38-10:28	Health/Study Hall	(H)	(SH) ///	(H)	(SH) ///	(H)
10:31-11:21	Business Math		//			///
11:25-12:00	Lunch	//	///	//	///	/// /
12:03-12:53	Industrial Arts		//		/	///
12:56-1:46	World History	/	//		//	////
1:49-2:39	English 10	///	/	////	///	/// /
2:42-3:32	P.E./Art	(A)	(PE)	(A)	(PE)	(A) /

III. **Event Recording**- directly and accurately reflects the number of times a behavior occurs. Suitable for behaviors that have an obvious beginning and end. Recording tools include: tally marks, checkmarks, abacus, hand-held frequency counters, stitch counters, smile faces, tokens, etc. (Ex. word recognition, coin counting, verbal yes/no responses, drinking from a cup.)

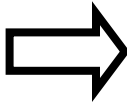
A. Basic Event Recording:

Student _____

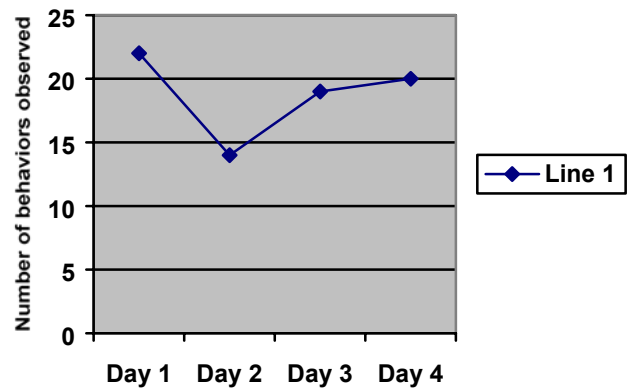
Observer _____

Behavior _____

Date	Time	Tally	Total
3/16	8:35a.m.- 9:00	////////////////////	22
3/17	8:35a.m.- 9:00	////////////////	14
3/18	8:35a.m.- 9:00	////////////////////	19
3/19	8:35a.m.- 9:00	////////////////////	20



Graphic Display of Event Recording Data



B. Event recording for controlled presentations when the teacher structures the number of opportunities the student will have to perform the behavior:

Name _____

Task _____

Date _____

10	10	10	10	10
9	9	9	9	9
8	8	8	8	8
7	7	7	7	7
6	6	6	6	6
5	5	5	5	5
4	4	4	4	4
3	3	3	3	3
2	2	2	2	2
1	1	1	1	1

Comments _____

This chart easily transforms into a graphic representation of the data.

IV. Interval Recording-used to record the occurrence of a behavior within a specified time period. Results in an estimate of the actual number of times a behavior occurs.

A. Partial-Interval Recording: The observer records whether the behavior occurred at any time during the interval. Used to record high-frequency behaviors (ex. drooling, out-of-seat, cursing, hitting).

1. Ten second interval recording for an individual student.

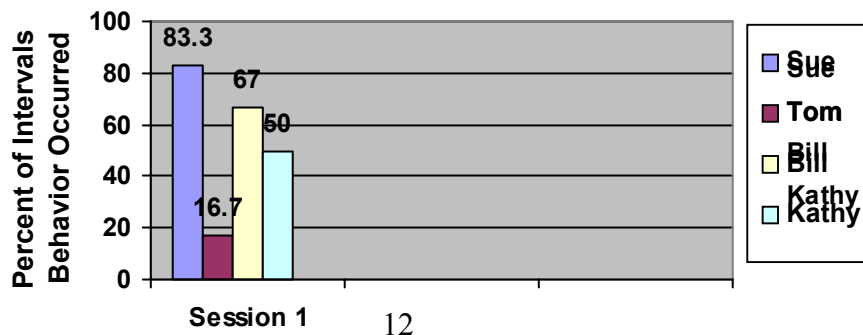
Student: _____			Behavior: _____		
Date/Time: _____			_____		
Observer: _____					
10 sec	20 sec	30 sec	40 sec	50 sec	60 sec
+	+	0	0	+	0

1a. Ten minute interval recording for multiple students

Student: _____		Behavior: _____				
Date/Time: _____		_____				
Observer: _____						
Name:	10 min	20 min	30 min	40 min	50 min	60 min
Sue	X	X	X	0	X	X
Tom	0	0	0	0	X	0
Bill	X	X	0	0	X	X
Kathy	0	X	0	X	0	X



Graphic Display of Interval Recording Data



B. Whole Interval Recording- The observer records the presence of a behavior only if the behavior occurs across the entire interval. Used to record continuous behavior when there is not enough time to record duration data (ex. *crying or attending to task*).

Student: _____ Behavior: _____

Date/Time: _____

Observer: _____

—	—	—	+	—	—
10 sec	20 sec	30 sec	40 sec	50 sec	60 sec

C. Time Sampling- The observer records whether the behavior was occurring or not occurring when the student was observed. Often a timer is used to alert the observer that it is time to observe. Used to record behaviors that are present much of the time and limited time is available for observation (ex. *thumb sucking, attending to task*).

Student: _____ Behavior: _____

Date/Time: _____

Observer: _____

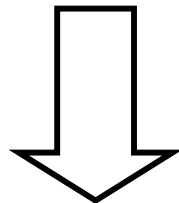
+	+	—	—	—	—	+
5 min	10 min	20 min	25 min	30 min	35 min	40min

- V. **Duration Recording** – used to measure the length of time a student engages in a particular behavior. Suitable for behaviors that have a clear beginning and end. A timer is used to measure duration (ex. *talking, screaming, interacting with peers, length of restroom breaks*).

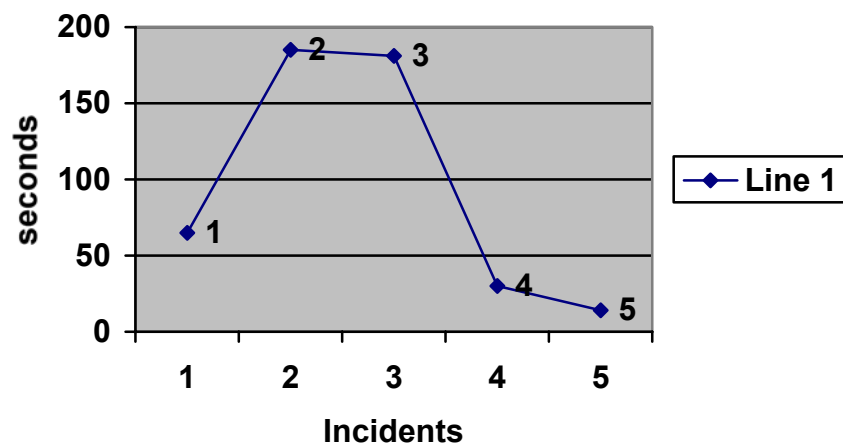
Student: _____ Behavior: _____

Observer: _____

Date	Time of Behavior Initiation	Time of Behavior Completion	Duration
4/13	9:07:05	9:08:55	1min 5sec
4/13	9:10:11	9:13:16	3min 5sec
4/13	9:17:00	9:20:01	3min 1sec
4/13	10:21:32	10:22:02	30sec
4/13	10:27:44	10:27:59	14sec

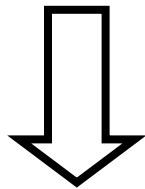


Duration of Behavior

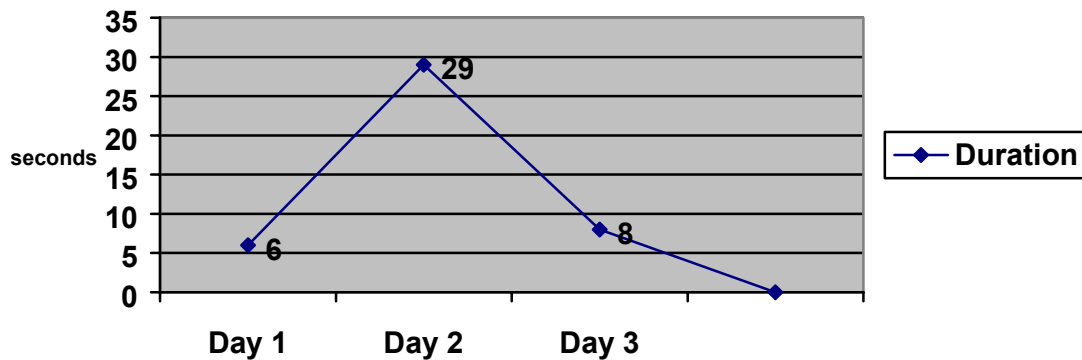


VI. Latency Recording- used to record the length of time that elapses from the time the student is cued until (s)he begins the behavior (*ex. beginning academic assignments, beginning to put away toys*).

Student _____		Behavior _____	
Observer _____			
<u>Date</u>	<u>Time of Cue</u>	<u>Time of Initiation of Behavior</u>	<u>Latency</u>
2/18	1:07:05	1:07:11	6 sec
2/18	1:11:00	1:11:29	29 sec
2/18	1:22:54	1:23:02	8 sec



Graphic Display of Latency Recording Data



APPENDIX B

I. Anecdotal Reports

A. Open A-B-C Style

Time & Date	Antecedent	Behavior	Consequence

B. Behavior Card

Note: Use antecedents, behaviors, and consequences specific to the student.

Student:	Activity:	Date:	Time:
Antecedent(s): <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Behavior of Concern: <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Consequence(s): <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	

II. Scatterplot

Student Schedule

Student _____ **Behavior of Concern** _____

Time	Activity	M (date)	Tu (date)	W (date)	Th (date)	F (date)

III. Event Recording

A. Basic Event Recording:

Student _____			
Observer _____			
Behavior _____			
Date	Time	Tally	Total

B. Event Recording for controlled presentations when the teacher structures the number of opportunities the student will have to perform the behavior:

Name _____				
Task _____				
Date _____				
10	10	10	10	10
9	9	9	9	9
8	8	8	8	8
7	7	7	7	7
6	6	6	6	6
5	5	5	5	5
4	4	4	4	4
3	3	3	3	3
2	2	2	2	2
1	1	1	1	1
Comments _____				

IV. Interval Recording and Time Sampling

Student: _____ **Behavior:** _____

Date/Time: _____

Observer: _____

Time & Date						

V. Duration Recording

Student: _____ **Behavior:** _____

Observer: _____

Date	Time of Behavior Initiation	Time of Behavior Completion	Duration

VI. Latency Recording

Student: _____		Behavior: _____	
Observer: _____			
Date	Time of Cue	Time of Initiation of Behavior	Latency