

Intervention Case Study 4

Introduction

The curriculum of a student can have an impact on their behaviors and should be considered as part of a behavior management plan.

Gizelle is nine years old and in 4th grade. Her problem behaviors in school include aggressing toward her peers, taunting her teacher and peers, not working on task, leaving her seat without permission, and destroying property. Her English class has six other students in it with one teacher and one teacher's aide. During class, Gizelle is required to complete an assignment on punctuation, abbreviations, and capital letters followed by a coloring assignment.

Functional Behavioral Assessment

The team looked at Gizelle's history of academic achievement, mental health, and family. They also interviewed Gizelle's teacher, her parents and Gizelle herself. The interviews attempted to identify those activities Gizelle enjoys as well as what might trigger her problem behaviors. The team also observed Gizelle in class.

When asked to do a lesson from her textbook, Gizelle often sees how long the lesson is and refuses to do it. In her interview, Gizelle reported that she found the lessons too difficult. Gizelle has test scores showing she is four years below her grade level in reading and it was decided that she needed easier reading tasks. The team also concluded that Gizelle would talk back to the teacher less if she had more choices.

Intervention

Gizelle's assignment was modified with her reading level in mind. She was expected to read at a fourth grade level while her tests showed that she was at a first grade reading level. The team believed Gizelle's appropriate behavior would increase if the assignment was shortened, if she had more choices, and if visual cues were added to the instructions to help compensate for her reading level. Her assignments were divided and she was allowed to choose which section she did first. The assignments also included more examples of how to do the problems and important words in the instructions were underlined.

Measurement

Behavior was measured for 3-4 sessions while Gizelle completed the original assignment, 3-4 sessions with the modified assignment, then 3-4 sessions with a return to the original assignment, and finally 3-4 sessions with the modified assignment again. Observers looked at Gizelle's task engagement and problem behaviors during the sessions. Observers also measured how much attention the teacher gave.

Results

Gizelle had an average of 15% for problem behaviors while working on the original assignment and 0% for the modified assignment. She had an average of 16% task engagement while working on the original assignment and 99% while working on the modified assignment. She completed 90/137 of the problems from the original assignment and had 31% of those she

answered correct. She completed 126/126 items from the modified assignment and had 100% correct.

Dunlap, G., White, R., Vera, A., Wilson, D., & Panacek, L. (1996). The effects of multi-component, assessment-based curricular modifications on the classroom behavior of children with emotional and behavioral disorders. *Journal of Behavioral Education, 6*, 481-500.