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Improving Classroom Behavior Through Effective Instruction: An Illustrative Program Example Using *SRA FLEX Literacy*

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Abstract

Research has demonstrated a strong positive correlation between behavior problems and low academic achievement. Student success and/or failures are in large part determined by how well teachers provide effective instruction to their students. This article overviews key behavior-management approaches related to academic and behavioral success that are integrated within a reading intervention system for struggling readers in grades 3–12 (i.e., *SRA FLEX Literacy*). These management approaches have been shown to enhance classroom behavior and set the occasion for better academic performance. Specific program examples are shared to illustrate these management approaches.

Keywords: behavior management, effective instruction, *SRA FLEX Literacy*, reading, computerized instruction, digital-based learning

Student misbehavior has been and still is the main concern of educators across the country (Dunlap, Iovannone, Wilson, Kincaid, & Strain, 2010; Martella, Nelson, Marchand-Martella, & O'Reilly, 2012; Westling, 2010). In fact, "there may be no greater hurdle in public schools today than that presented by students who exhibit challenging behavior" (Westling, 2010, p. 48). When students misbehave, they learn less. "Disruptive behavior in any classroom impedes learning . . . and the time spent in redirecting students back to task takes away from valuable instruction time, which in turn affects student academic performance" (Musti-Rao & Haydon, 2011, pp. 91–92). In addition, students who misbehave interfere with the learning of their peers and consume teachers' time, disrupting the classroom and school. McKinney, Campbell-Whately, and Kea (2005) and Crothers and Kolbert (2008) indicate that difficulty managing student behavior is a factor associated with teacher burnout, stress, and dissatisfaction. For example, "50 percent of urban teachers leave the profession within the first five years of their career, citing behavior problems and

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management as factors influencing their decision to leave" (McKinney et al., 2005, p. 16). More should be done to create effective classroom environments through the use of better classroom management and instructional approaches (Crothers & Kolbert, 2008; Kern & Clemens, 2007; McKinney et al., 2005; Westling, 2010).

Historically, classroom management has been considered separately from classroom instruction, yet everything that goes on in the classroom should be thought of as instruction (Ausdemore, Martella, & Marchand-Martella, 2005). Behavior management involves the creation of successful learning environments for both classroom behavior and academic performance. Therefore, the focus should be on how to provide instruction in a manner that not only increases academic performance but also improves classroom behavior (Martella & Nelson, 2003). Specifically, teachers should provide a comprehensive approach where instruction for both behavioral and academic skills is consistent with what has been found to be effective through empirical investigation (Gable, Tonelson, Sheth, Wilson, & Park, 2012; Kern & Clemens, 2007; Nelson, Martella, & Marchand-Martella, 2002).

Positive or negative student behavior is affected by teacher performance in creating an effective environment for student learning experiences (Stewart, Benner, Martella, & Marchand-Martella, 2007; Stewart, Martella, Marchand-Martella, & Benner, 2005). Research has demonstrated a strong positive correlation between behavior problems and low academic achievement (Gest & Gest, 2005; Landrum, Tankersley, & Kauffman, 2003). Above and beyond being correlated, Payne, Marks, and Bogan (2007) report that behavioral and academic problems are reciprocal in nature. In other words, behavior problems may cause a disruption in academic engagement and, as a result, students may fail to master skills because of this lack of academic engagement.

The opposite is also true—a classroom where there are high levels of academic achievement will be a classroom with low levels of behavior difficulties. This point is critical. Students do not generally come to school hating to be there. If students experience more failure than success, they frequently learn to hate school. As Scott, Nelson, and Liaupsin (2001) note, "academics become aversive" (p. 313). Therefore, the more students find the classroom aversive, the more likely they will be to exhibit unwanted behaviors (Payne et al., 2007; Scott et al., 2001; Wehby, Lane, & Falk, 2003). Student success or failure are in large part determined by how well teachers provide effective instruction to their students.

Effective instruction is dependent on both teacher behavior and the instructional program that is being used. The effective teaching

literature has shown what excellent instruction is. Excellent instruction comes from having appropriate curriculum pacing, lesson pacing, and transition management (Hofmeister & Lubke, 1990; Marchand-Martella, Blakely, & Schaefer, 2004; Martella et al., 2012). According to Slavin (2009), "Students who are participating in well-structured activities that engage their interests, who are highly motivated to learn, and who are working on tasks that are challenging yet within their capabilities rarely pose any serious management problems" (p. 329). Therefore, the goal for educators is to help students become successful in the classroom both academically and behaviorally.

The purpose of this article is to discuss key behavior-management approaches related to academic and behavioral success integrated within a reading intervention system for struggling readers (i.e., *SRA FLEX Literacy*). These management approaches enhance classroom behavior and set the occasion for better academic performance. Readers interested in learning more about effective behavior management approaches are referred to Martella et al. (2012) for more detailed information.

SRA FLEX Literacy

SRA FLEX Literacy (Marchand-Martella et al., 2014) is a comprehensive reading and language arts intervention system for struggling readers in grades 3–5 (Elementary System) and grades 6–12 (Secondary System). More than 90% of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English Language Arts (see http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy for details) are covered in the Elementary System with 85% assessed; 85% of the CCSS are covered in the Secondary System with 80% assessed.

Students participate in three learning experiences (digital, print, project) to enhance their college and career readiness skills to prepare them for 21st-century challenges. An online teaching tool called FLEXWorks connects these learning experiences for planning, instruction, assessment, and progress-monitoring purposes. The Digital Experience provides an opportunity for computer-based learning (25 minutes of instruction); more than 1,000 English language arts objectives are taught through approximately 5,000 activities. The Digital Experience covers the CCSS related to literature, informational text, foundational skills, and language. The Print Experience (25 minutes of instruction) provides shared, interactive reading opportunities that allow students access to complex text spanning 32 weeks of instruction. Teachers lead a group of students in debate, discussion, and individualized skill application, with in-depth focus on developing more complex comprehension strategies. The Print Experience covers the

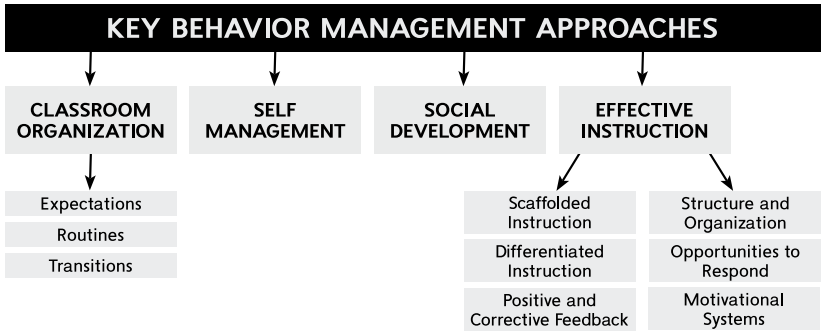


Figure 1. Key behavior-management approaches.

CCSS related to literature, informational text, and language. Finally, in the Project Experience (40 minutes of instruction) students build higher-order thinking skills through writing-centered projects that include research, presentation, collaboration, reflection, and evaluation. Students work in teams to complete projects related to science, social studies, and life skills to make cross-curricular connections. Twenty projects include activities for each of 15 days of instruction. The Project Experience covers the CCSS related to informational text, speaking and listening, writing, and language.

Key Behavior-Management Approaches Integrated Within *SRA FLEX Literacy*

Although there are many behavior-management approaches used when implementing *SRA FLEX Literacy*, we discuss the key behavior-management approaches integrated within the program (see Figure 1). Further, we provide specific program examples to illustrate the integration of behavior-management approaches within an instructional program.

Classroom Organization

An important aspect to behavior management is how the classroom is organized. Classroom organization involves using and teaching effective expectations and routines (Hirn & Park, 2012; Kern & Clemens, 2007; Trussell, 2008) and managing transitions (Slavin, 2012).

Expectations. When teachers use and teach effective expectations, the probability of problem behaviors occurring can be decreased (Barbetta, Norona, & Bicard, 2005; Kern & Clemens, 2007). To create effective classroom expectations, several issues should be kept in mind (see Martella et al., 2012, for a detailed discussion of these issues). First, students should be informed about why expectations are important

STAR
Sit tall (or) sit in the learning position
Track with your finger
Answer on signal
Respect others

Figure 2. STAR expectations.

and they should be asked to provide input on these expectations. Second, the number of expectations should be kept to between three and five. Third, expectations should contain student-friendly language. Fourth, expectations should be stated positively. Fifth, different sets of expectations should be used for different learning situations. Sixth, there should be consistency between classroom and school expectations. Seventh, expectations should be explicitly taught using an *I do*, *we do*, *you do* procedure. Eighth, classroom expectations should be posted in a prominent location. Finally, expectations should be monitored and reviewed over time.

SRA FLEX Literacy *example*. *STAR* expectations (see Figure 2) are recommended and trained during publisher-sponsored professional-development opportunities. However, teachers and instructional staff may use already-established classroom expectations so long as they are taught explicitly to students. Teachers are also prompted to review their own classroom expectations at the beginning of each 15-day cross-curricular project in the Project Experience.

Routines. Effective classroom expectations are critical aspects of preventing behavior-management problems. However, an equally important, and sometimes overlooked, area is the teaching of classroom routines. If we observed an orderly classroom, we would see one where teachers have likely taken the time to teach students what to do in the classroom. "In classes where routines and procedures … are clearly delineated, taught, reviewed, and used … appropriate behavior is much more likely to occur, and the class is more likely to run smoothly" (Archer & Hughes, 2011, p. 121). For example, there should be a procedure for moving from the computer to a round table or a desk when students are signaled to transition from one activity to another. There may be start-up routines to get students ready for the day

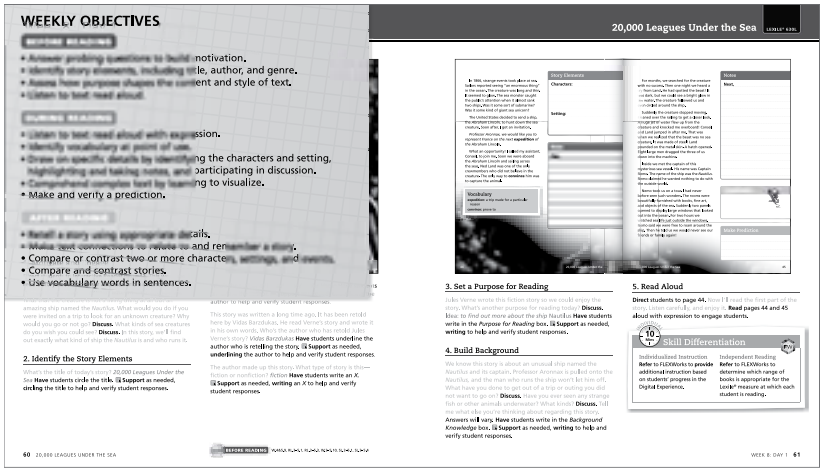


Figure 3. 15-day lesson sequence.

such as a short activity for students to complete while teachers access materials. As with expectations, routines should be explicitly taught to help with the smooth flow of activities in a classroom.

In addition to typical classroom routines, there is also a need for consistent and predictable instructional routines or formats (Kern & Clemens, 2007). Students are better able to predict what is going to occur next when predictable instructional formats are used. When students have learned what the routines or formats are, they are more likely to follow them and experience less stress and anxiety; they tend to do better academically as well (Kern & Clemens, 2007). "Predictability predicts ability," as Archer and Hughes (2011, p. 121) so aptly note.

SRA FLEX Literacy *example*. Students are taught to move an avatar through a lesson walk-through in the Digital Experience. During this predictable routine, they initiate instructional activities by walking the avatar into the floating cubes that appear throughout this walk-through. Each cube opens to reveal a screen that displays an icon and name for each category of instructional activity. Students click a Start button to begin each activity.

In the Project Experience, a 15-day lesson sequence is used for each student project. This sequence involves the following activities: (a) Engage (Day 1), (b) Prepare (Days 2 and 3), (c) Research (Days 4 and 5), (d) Research/Write (Day 6), (e) Write (Days 7–9), (f) Write/Present (Day 10), (g) Present (Days 11–14), and (h) Reflect and Evaluate (Day 15). In addition, 5-day lesson plans follow a familiar and

efficient classroom routine sequence during the Print Experience: Before Reading (Day 1), During Reading (Days 2 and 3), and After Reading (Days 4 and 5) (see Figure 3).

Transitions. One area that takes up much of the time devoted to instruction is transitions, moving from one activity to the next, for example. Unfortunately, transitions tend to increase the likelihood that students will misbehave (Archer & Hughes, 2011; Martella et al., 2012; Slavin, 2012; Witt, LaFleur, Naquin, & Gilbertson, 1999). Thus, transition management is an important consideration in behavior management. According to Slavin (2009), "Transitions are the seams of class management at which classroom order is most likely to come apart" (p. 334). When teachers decrease their transition times they are able to increase the time they have to instruct, which increases student motivation and decreases behavior-management problems (Slavin, 2012). Therefore, teachers should plan for transitions and try to decrease the amount of time it takes for them to occur. Transitions can be improved by teaching the classroom expectations and routines as described earlier. In addition, transitions can be improved by arranging the physical setting and the location of instructional materials so problem behavior is less likely to happen.

SRA FLEX Literacy *example*. The classroom is set up to optimize student involvement for up to 90 minutes per day—25 minutes each for the Digital and Print Experiences and 40 minutes for the Project Experience.

As shown in Figure 4, students are organized into two groups—one group completes the Digital Experience independently while the second group completes the Print Experience with the teacher. After a 25-minute session, the groups transition to switch experiences. The two groups then come together, transitioning to work in their collaborative teams for the last 40 minutes in the Project Experience. Time management is also optimized when the Digital Experience and the Print Experience occur simultaneously.

Effective Instruction

Effective instruction increases student success and, in turn, decreases behavior problems. Effective instruction includes: scaffolded instruction, structure and organization, differentiated instruction, opportunities to respond (OTR), positive and corrective feedback, and motivational systems (see Martella et al., 2012; Vaughn & Bos, 2012).

Scaffolded instruction. Scaffolded instruction involves instructional components that move students from little to no knowledge of a skill to a demonstration of skills or knowledge at high levels. There are five components within scaffolded instruction: (a) explicit modeling, (b)

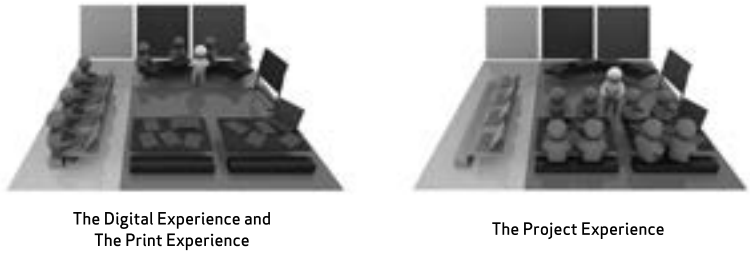


Figure 4. Classroom setup to improve transitions.

guided practice, (c) independent practice, (d) assessment of mastery, and (e) review for maintenance. These instructional components are known to affect student achievement in a positive manner (March-and-Martella & Martella, 2013) and can, in turn, decrease problem behaviors (Stewart et al., 2005).

Explicit modeling (Model) involves demonstrating the skill to be learned to students. The background knowledge necessary to complete the task may be provided; new content is presented in this component of instruction. Clear goals and objectives for the skill are given, step-by-step instructions and directions are explained, and careful demonstrations are used (Hofmeister & Lubke, 1990; Sabornie & deBettencourt, 2009). The presentation of new content is often referred to as teacher demonstration (Marchand-Martella & Martella, 2013; Meese, 2001), teacher modeling, or *I do*.

Following explicit modeling, guided practice opportunities (Guide) are provided. Guided practice is also called prompted practice (Meese, 2001), guided rehearsal (Sabornie & deBettencourt, 2009), or scaffolding (Vaughn & Bos, 2012), and it is the we do of instruction because the teacher or computer is actively participating with the students ("let's do some together"). During guided practice, the level of assistance begins to fade as the students perform the tasks; feedback (both positive and corrective) is provided based on student performance.

Once students are performing at least 80% correct in guided practice, independent practice (Monitor) is used. During independent practice, students "show what they know" by demonstrating the skill without teacher or computer support; this practice is also known as the you do of instruction. During independent practice, the teacher or computer actively monitors student performance and reteaches if students are not at least 80% successful.

Once students demonstrate skills independently, they should be assessed for mastery (Mastery Check) in a format they will likely

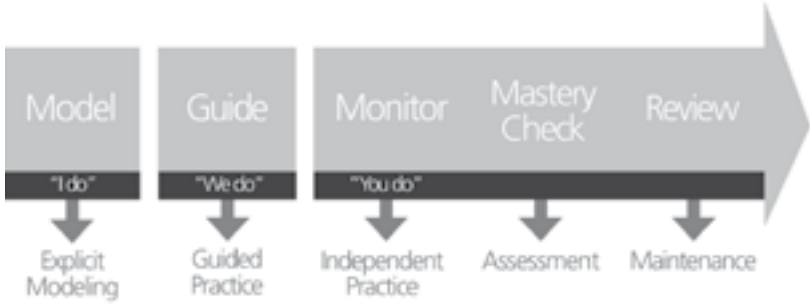


Figure 5. Gradual-release model.

experience in the future (i.e., standardized test format). This assessment serves as a measure of skill generalization. After students demonstrate generalized performance, the skill is typically reviewed (Review) so it is not forgotten. If skill atrophy is evident, re-teaching is provided.

SRA FLEX Literacy *example.* A gradual-release model is used to scaffold instruction (see Figure 5). In this model, students receive Model, Guide, Monitor, Mastery Check, and Review opportunities to learn critical reading skills and complex strategies. Specifically, students receive strong support when they are "novice learners," which fades to mediated scaffolding and then to student independence when they become "experts."

Figure 6 shows an example of how the gradual-release model scaffolds instruction for singular and plural nouns in the Digital Experience. During the Model, activities explicitly introduce the objective of the skill. They initially present information through entertaining animated videos, and then they transition to modeling for students how to think through and complete question items on the skill. During the Guide, activities provide re-teaching of the skill and additional modeling for completing question items on the skill. They also include question items for students to complete on their own. The instructional host characters provide feedback based on student responses. During the Monitor activities, no instruction or modeling is provided, but students do receive feedback based on their responses. The last Monitor activity in a skill sequence is presented in a multiple-choice "test prep" format to prepare students for the Mastery Check activities. During the Mastery Check, summative assessment activities for the skill are provided. No instruction, modeling, or feedback is given. Finally, Review activities are conducted that follow the same format as Monitor activities. They appear in the lesson sequence after the Mastery Check to maintain proficiency with each skill.

Figure 6. Scaffolded instruction within the gradual-release model.

Structure and organization. We know that if there is a lack of structure and organization in the instruction we provide, our students are more likely to misbehave (Kern & Clemens, 2007; Konrad, Helf, & Joseph, 2011). Structure and organization relate to how lessons are planned and formatted to ensure maximum teacher and student success. Structure and organization can occur in the following ways: (a) lessons are planned for each day or across several days; (b) lessons are scripted, with an easy-to-follow daily plan of instruction; and (c) lessons are systematic in nature so a logical order to the instructional tasks keeps errors to a minimum.

Structure and organization allow for the maximization of the amount of time students are engaged and successful, resulting in better student outcomes. When students are successful during instruction, they are said to be experiencing academic learning time. Consider the following statements: "for academic progress to occur, students must not only be on-task, but must also achieve at high accuracy levels" (Olson & Platt, 2000, p. 172); the amount of time a student spends successfully engaged with an academic task "relates most strongly to achievement" in the classroom (Gettinger & Seibert, 2002, p. 3); and "academic learning time is one of the most important correlates of

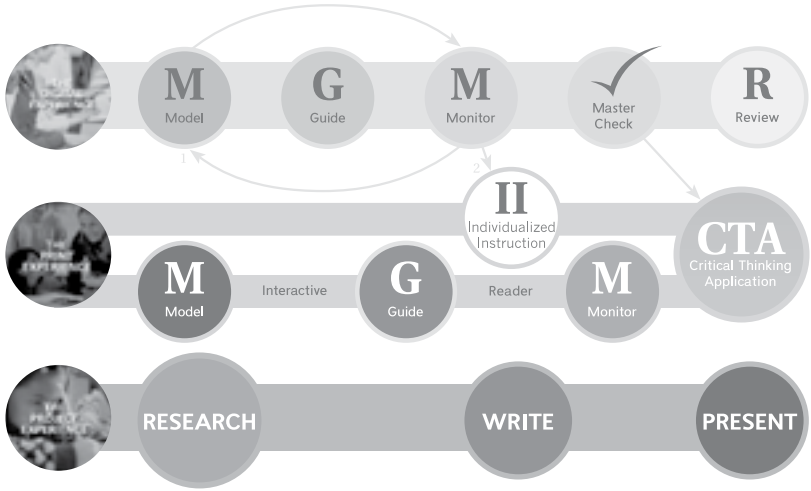


Figure 7. Integration of Digital, Print, and Project Experiences.

achievement, and its linkage with learning is one of the most consistent findings in educational research" (Gettinger & Seibert, 2002, p. 13). Therefore, true learning takes place when academic learning time is maximized (Marchand-Martella et al., 2004), not simply when students are on task.

SRA FLEX Literacy *example.* A built-in calendar can be used to plan instruction by the day, week, or month. Such a calendar allows teachers to structure and organize both instructional content and students or groups within the three learning experiences.

The Digital, Print, and Project Experiences are integrated for seamless and organized instruction, as shown in Figure 7. Lessons are scripted to aid teachers in effective instructional delivery. Each lesson is planned to ensure a logical order of the instructional tasks to keep errors at a minimum across the three learning experiences.

Differentiated instruction. Students come to us with varying skill levels. Differentiated instruction allows teachers to meet the needs of *all* students, moving from more teacher-directed instruction when students are naïve learners to more student-centered instruction when students have the skills to do it on their own. Two broad areas of differentiated instruction include multisensory instruction and instruction matched to a student's learning needs.

Multisensory instruction relates to instruction that incorporates all three learning sensory modes (auditory, visual, and tactile/kinesthetic) into each instructional session (see Shams & Seitz, 2008, for information

Figure 8. Three experiences allow for multisensory instruction.

on the benefits of multisensory learning). That is, an auditory aspect of the lesson ensures that students participate based on what they hear; a visual aspect ensures that students participate based on what they see; and a tactile/kinesthetic aspect of the lesson ensures that students participate based on what they do. In this way, all three sensory modes are strengthened and reinforced, meeting the needs of all students.

Matching instruction to a student's learning needs involves determining the appropriate placement level and instructional intensity required based on the student's skill level. If instruction is not matched to a student's skill level, problem behaviors may result. These problem behaviors may be the result of an inability of students to complete the required level of performance and may serve to motivate students to escape or avoid the academic task. These problem behaviors can be categorized as *can't do problems*.

Roberts, Marshall, Nelson, and Albers (2001) note that placement tests should be used to determine if these behaviors are escape or avoidance motivated. These assessments help to ensure that students are placed appropriately in the program, reducing the motivation to escape or avoid the academic task. In addition to the placement test, curriculum-based assessments such as mastery checks, fluency assessments, and critical-thinking applications should be included within a program to ensure that students are successfully progressing through the program. These assessments are critical because if students are experiencing difficulties, teachers can stop instruction and provide remediation to ensure firm responding. If students cannot achieve at least 80% correct on these types of assignments, the material may be too difficult or further instruction may be warranted.

SRA FLEX Literacy *example.* Students receive a wide range of instructional opportunities aligned to best practices in multisensory instruction. Students are exposed to the Digital, Print, and Project Experiences that engage students in auditory, visual, and tactile/kinesthetic learning opportunities (see Figure 8).

Differentiated instruction is achieved by ensuring that instruction matches each student's unique skill level. There are 116 skills

BY THE NUMBERS	
Skills	116
Lessons	480
Activities	~5000
Placement Points	9

LESSON BANDS	
A	BR
B	BR-330L
C	330L-405L
D	405L-480L
E	480L-580L
F	580L-675L
G	675L-770L
H	770L-860L
I	860L-945L
J	945L-1020L
K	1020L-1100L

Figure 9. How differentiated instruction is achieved.

taught in 480 lessons across approximately 5,000 activities in the Digital Experience. These 480 lessons are organized into 11 bands, labeled A through K (see Figure 9). Upon initial log-in into the system, students take a Lexile®-based placement test to determine the band into which they are placed. The placement test is administered and scored online, and each student's placement into a lesson band is automatic and immediate. The texts and skills presented in each band are aligned with a Lexile® range. The lessons in Bands A and B have a specific focus on early literacy skills, including phonemic awareness, letter-sound correspondences, basic decoding, and high-frequency word recognition. They primarily cover the CCSS associated with kindergarten and grade 1. The lessons in Bands C–K primarily cover the CCSS associated with grades 2–8, moving from more basic concepts to more sophisticated ones as the lessons progress. Student performance on these standards is continuously tracked through the *FLEXWorks* data management system. Data-based decisions are used to inform instructional practices across learning experiences.

The Print Experience focuses on shared reading, exposing students to more sophisticated text than they may be able to read on their own. Students are invited to participate in reading the selections if they have the necessary skills to do so; thus, differentiated opportunities allow students from multiple skill levels to participate in richer heterogeneous instruction. The instructional purpose of the Print Experience is not to teach students how to read these selections independently but, rather, how to engage with the selections as proficient readers do, thinking critically about the text and discussing its literary elements. An interactive reader, a consumable student component, is

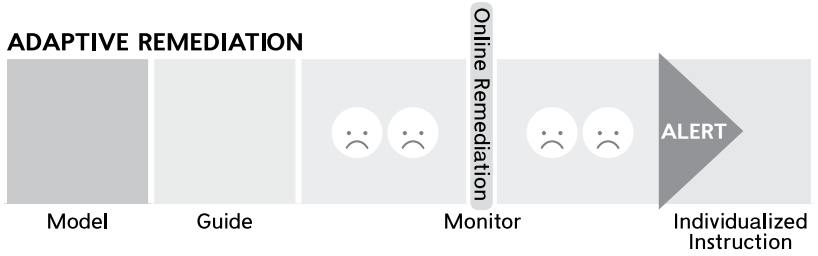


Figure 10. Adaptive remediation process.

central to the learning experience and serves as a personalized student portfolio showing growth and accomplishment in the program. Teachers may present lessons using an interactive whiteboard to enhance the learning experience.

Skill differentiation is provided based on how students progress though lessons. Also, independent reading and critical-thinking applications (generalization assessments linking digital-based with print-based learning components) are provided to students based on their level of skill development. Students should continually be provided opportunities to test their skills in novel ways.

As shown in Figure 10, if students average less than 80% in two consecutive Monitor activities during the Digital Experience, the computer system presents them with an intensive remediation lesson just for that skill. Students work through consecutive activities that re-present the skill and provide supported practice. After completing this remediation lesson, students return to the regular sequence of lessons. If they continue to struggle with that skill, the teacher is prompted to administer a one-on-one individualized instruction lesson to provide further remediation for the skill.

As shown in Figure 11, if students demonstrate mastery at 100% correct in three consecutive Monitor activities in the Digital Experience, they skip the remaining Monitor activities (except for the final activity) when they encounter them in each lesson.

Opportunities to respond. "Results from intervention research show that increasing opportunities for students to respond (OTR) correctly to academic questions, tasks, and demands also positively affects students' appropriate academic and social behaviors" (Moore Partin, Robertson, Maggin, Oliver, & Wehby, 2010, p. 172). Success promotes success. When students respond correctly and frequently, they learn more and misbehave less (Haydon, MacSuga-Gage, Simonsen, & Hawkins, 2012; MacSuga-Gage, Simonsen, & Briere, 2012; Stichter et al., 2009; Sutherland, Alder, & Gunter, 2003).

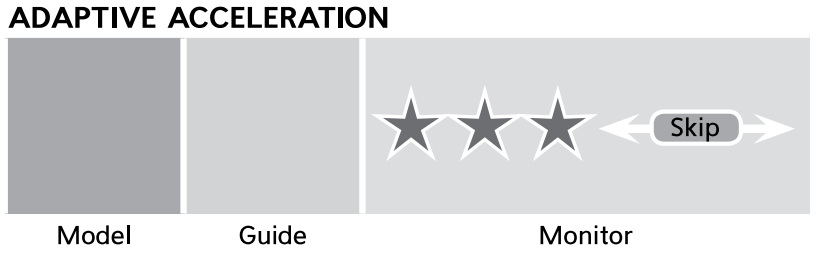


Figure 11. Adaptive acceleration process.

Effective use of OTR includes two important aspects: (a) successful engagement in academic tasks and (b) rapid pacing of student responding (Lewis, Hudson, Richter, & Johnson, 2004). Successful engagement is predicated on appropriate student placement. Students who are learning new skills must have the necessary prerequisite skills to participate, otherwise frustration and behavior problems may occur. During instruction of new material, students should be responding at a minimum accuracy engagement level of 80% correct; accuracy increases to 90% correct during activities with previously learned material (for details, see the guidelines published by the Council for Exceptional Children [CEC], 1987, as cited by Sutherland & Wehby, 2001).

Further, rapid pacing of student responding should be programmed. A foundational study conducted by Carnine (1976), measuring the effects of increased OTR, noted off-task percentages of 62% during slower presentations (teachers waited 5 seconds after a correct student response before providing another opportunity for students to respond) and 7% during faster presentations (teachers provided another OTR immediately after a correct student response).

SRA FLEX Literacy *example*. Students are placement tested to ensure successful engagement. Lessons are designed to ensure that students respond at a high pace. During the Digital Experience, OTR range from 0.72 per minute to 3.96 per minute. Opportunities to respond are dependent on the types of activities within a lesson. For example, if students are required to read a passage and cite text evidence, fewer responses are possible as compared to punctuation and mechanics activities that may require filling in a blank with a correct response from a list of choices. In addition, timing features embedded throughout the Digital Experience help keep students on task and maximize the time spent on instructional activities. Opportunities to respond are increased by building in these timing features, including the following. (a) Students have 10 seconds to move their avatar to

the next activity cube. After that time expires, an animation automatically moves the avatar to the next cube in the lesson walk-through and launches the activity. (b) If students take too long to respond during a lesson, there is a "time-out" after 45 seconds of total inactivity (no keystrokes or mouse movement followed by a time-out warning message that appears to ensure active student participation and account security). The time-out warning message lasts for 15 seconds, after which students are temporarily locked out of the application, and a time-out message window is displayed with a password entry field. Students can enter their passwords into the time-out message window to reenter the application exactly where they left off.

Positive and corrective feedback. Effective positive and corrective feedback is a critical aspect of effective instruction. Without such feedback, students who commit errors will continue to practice those errors (Vaughn & Bos, 2012). When students practice errors, they will have to spend time in the future relearning the skill that can lead to frustration and behavior issues. Alternatively, when students receive effective feedback, their correct responses are strengthened.

There are two primary aspects to effective positive and corrective feedback. First, feedback should be immediate. Immediate feedback has a much greater impact on behavior than does delayed feedback (Price, Martella, Marchand-Martella, & Cleanthous, 2002) because the behavior that occurs closest to the reinforcement (within a few seconds) will have a temporal relationship with it (Cooper, Heron, & Heward, 2007). Therefore, any effective instructional program must include immediate and frequent positive and corrective feedback to achieve the maximum results with student learning.

Second, effective corrective feedback in the form of error correction procedures should be used (Archer & Hughes, 2011). Effective error corrections often include: model (show the student the correct response), lead (help the student make the correct response), test (see if the student can make the correct response independently), and delayed test (see if the student can make the correct response at a later time). Effective error correction avoids negativity; for example, phrases such as "No," "That's incorrect," "You're guessing," "You can do better than that," and "You're not trying hard enough."

SRA FLEX Literacy *example*. Immediate feedback (positive and corrective) is provided during the Digital, Print, and Project Experiences. For example, during the Print and Project Experiences, teachers are encouraged to praise students for their effort and correct responses. During the Guide, Monitor, and Review activities in the Digital Experience, students receive praise for making the correct response; feedback is also specific to the task, noting what the student did correctly.

Teachers also provide immediate corrective feedback when errors occur during the Print and Project Experiences. Further, a two-step error-correction procedure is used during the Digital Experience when students respond incorrectly in Guide activities. A teaching tip (hint) is provided on the first student error with a prompt to try again. If the student makes a second error, the correct answer is given. A three-step error correction procedure is used when students respond incorrectly in Monitor and Review activities. On the first student error, the student is prompted to try again. If a student makes a second error, a teaching tip is provided, and the student is prompted to try again. If a third error occurs, the correct answer is given.

Motivational systems. One of the more important aspects of delivering effective instruction and decreasing management issues is the motivation of students to attend to instruction. Three primary motivational systems are important to promote positive student behavior. These systems include engaging lessons, praise, and point systems.

Engaging lessons can be useful motivating tools for students. If lessons are boring and laborious, students will be less likely to engage in them. "Not surprisingly, students are more likely to be engaged and on task when the lesson is presented at a lively pace, in which the lesson moves smoothly and quickly from input to response to feedback and back again" (Archer & Hughes, 2011, p. 193). Thus, teachers should make every attempt to make lessons as exciting and as interesting as possible.

Further, praise has been cited as an effective strategy for promoting school achievement and positive classroom behavior (Kern & Clemens, 2007; Martella, Marchand-Martella, & Cleanthous, 2002; Martella et al., 2012). The importance of praise cannot be overstated. One critical aspect of the use of praise and other motivational systems is to create a positive relationship with the student. Such a relationship can have a significant impact on student behavior (Musti-Rao & Haydon, 2011). For example, Marzano and Marzano (2003) conducted a meta-analysis of more than 100 studies and found 31% fewer discipline problems and rule violations for teachers who had positive relationships with their students during the course of a year than teachers who did not have such positive relationships. Thus, teachers should use positive methods of motivating their students, such as with the use of praise. We recommend a ratio of attending to five positive behaviors to every one negative behavior exhibited by students; this ratio is well supported by research (see Musti-Rao & Haydon, 2011, for details).

When praise is used, teachers should use specific praise at least 50% of the time (Martella, Marchand-Martella, Macfarlane, & Young,

Figure 12. Example of animated video to increase motivation.

1993; Martella, Marchand-Martella, Miller, Young, & Macfarlane, 1995; Martella et al., 2012). Specific praise statements are positive statements made in a neutral or positive/pleasant tone of voice to a desired behavior (e.g., "Good job working on the computer, Joe," rather than "Good job, Joe"). It is critical to tell students what behaviors they are exhibiting correctly.

Finally, point systems have been noted as effective motivators for students (Martella et al., 2002). Points are provided for specified student behavior. A point system may be used to provide grades to students and to award these grades in an objective way. In addition, points may be used for contingencies other than grades such as to trade in points for special activities such as computer time and awards.

SRA FLEX Literacy *example*. Student motivation is increased in several ways during *SRA FLEX Literacy* lessons. First, engaging animations introduce, explain, and demonstrate skills during the Digital Experience (see Figure 12 for a screen shot of an animated video). These animations are designed to be entertaining so as to capture student attention and interest, yet provide important background knowledge and instructional content.

Second, lessons incorporate interesting themes in the Digital Experience (e.g., amusement park, cartoon world, outer space, movie studio), level-appropriate reading titles in the Print Experience (e.g., "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow," "Hoot" [Elementary System]; "The

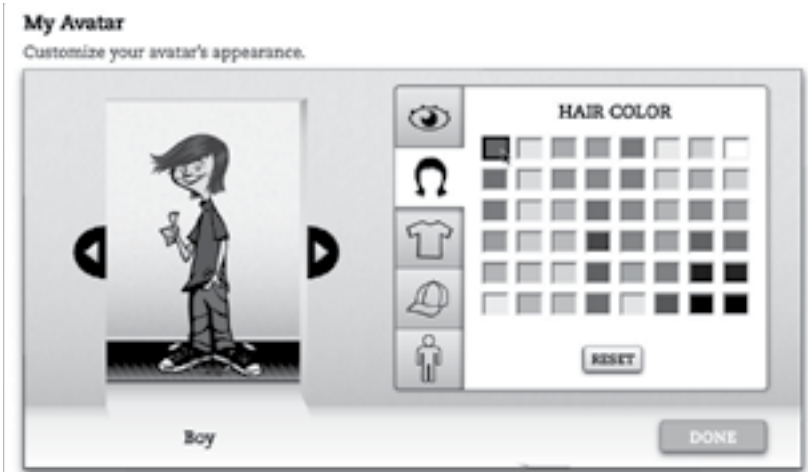


Figure 13. Use of a customized avatar to increase motivation.

Curse of the Hope Diamond," "A Real-Life Jurassic Park" [Secondary System]), and research-based projects with content-rich, technology-based learning in the Project Experience (e.g., "Save the Planet Campaign," "Surfing Around the World," "Time Capsule"). Further, in the Print Experience, high-interest, culturally diverse text (e.g., "Aung San Suu Kyi," "Dred Scott's Fight for Freedom") is incorporated, and poetry (e.g., "I Love the Look of Words" by Maya Angelou) provides a means to emphasize prosody and performance through an entertaining reader's theater approach (students learn lines and perform a mini-play, using the poems).

Third, an effort is made to establish positive teacher or computer/student relationships across the Digital, Print, and Project Experiences. Specific praise is provided for correct responses, and all errors are corrected in a positive manner.

Fourth, motivation is further enhanced during the Digital Experience in a student room. The starting point for each session is in this room. Students are taken to the room for the first time immediately after completing the placement test. Each time they log in, they are given the option to visit the room or to proceed directly to their next lesson. The doorway on the far right side of the student room is the portal to the lesson walk-through and the instructional activities. Students click the door to proceed to the next Digital Experience lesson.

Students are awarded 5 minutes of "play" time the first time they enter the student room. One minute is awarded for each lesson completed. Students can accumulate a maximum of 5 minutes. Students

Figure 14. Example of game activities to increase motivation.

also accumulate points as they move through the lesson. They can enter an item shop to purchase items with which to decorate their room.

Fifth, the Digital Experience personalizes lessons by allowing students to design their own avatar (see Figure 13). Students can choose from dozens of human and nonhuman characters, change to a different avatar anytime they are in the student room, and customize each avatar by adjusting the color of skin, hair, clothes, and accessories. Students move these customizable avatars through their student room and the instructional activities by using their mouse or arrows on the keyboard.

Sixth, the Digital Experience includes elements in a bar at the top of the screen, known as the Chrome, to keep students informed and motivated during the Digital Experience. These elements are: (a) a thumbnail image of the avatar the student is currently using; (b) a game timer that indicates the time remaining before the next lesson is automatically launched; (c) a lesson progress meter to show how many activities appear in each lesson and how many have been completed, which converts to an activity progress meter during instructional activities; and (d) a points counter that displays the current total number of points available for use at the item shop.

Finally, the Digital Experience includes game activities (see Figure 14). These games are brief engaging interactions that provide practice and reinforcement for previously introduced skills. These games incorporate entertaining and age-appropriate themes, such as off-road racing, carnival games, and jungle safaris. Reward points collected during these games contribute to the student's overall point total for spending in the item shop, but performance on these activities is not incorporated into the student's overall performance grade.

Self-management

One of the more effective behavior-management methods used today for a variety of students is self-management training (Dalton, Martella, & Marchand-Martella, 1999; Martella, Leonard, Marchand-Martella, & Agran, 1993; Martella et al., 2012). Perhaps the most important self-management skill for students to learn is self-evaluation. Self-evaluation involves teaching students how to measure their own behavior against some specified standard (Martella et al., 2002; Martella et al., 2012). Teachers can show students how to self-evaluate by modeling the procedure and by providing accurate feedback based on student performance. The ultimate goal of self-evaluation is for students to determine independently if they met some preestablished response criterion(a).

SRA FLEX Literacy *example*. Self-evaluation is incorporated throughout the program. For example, students evaluate how well they like the books they read from the Correlated Tradebook Library (Reading Log) and how they met the readers' theater expectations (see Figure 15) during the Print Experience.

Students also track how well they met their individual responsibility with regard to collaboration (see Figure 16), opinion writing, and presentation from separate assessment guides and from a writing checklist during the Project Experience. These materials aid students in evaluating their performance.

Self-Evaluation

For this week's Readers' Theater, think about how you met each expectation. Then circle a score for each.

Expectation	I always did this.	I usually did this.	I sometimes did this.	I never did this.
I spoke clearly when it was my turn to read my lines.	4	3	2	1
I worked well with my class to practice my lines.	4	3	2	1
I listened to others so that we spoke together on group lines.	4	3	2	1
I highlighted my lines so I knew when to speak.	4	3	2	1
I held the script so people could hear me. (I didn't hide behind the script or look at the floor.)	4	3	2	1
I used my voice to help people understand the poem.	4	3	2	1

	Active Participation	Interactive Reader	Critical Thinking Application	Week 31 Total
TOTAL POINTS FOR WEEK 31				

180 Samantha Cinderella Scott

Figure 15. Self-evaluation form used during reader's theater.

Social development

Students must develop social behaviors to have meaningful relationships with their peers, teachers, and parents. Social competence is considered a critical skill in today's world (Cook et al., 2008). There is an ever-increasing need to work with others to solve the complex problems we face today. If students are not adept at working with others to complete a project or to solve a problem, they will be at a distinct

Colaboration Assessment Guide

Name _____ **Date** _____

Scoring
High ★★★★ ★★★ ★★ ★ Low

Individual Responsibility	Criteria	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3
Contribute and Collaborate	Contributes to the development of the project.			
	Collaborates with the team on the project work.			
	Shows respect for another's ideas.			
Team Responsibility	**Criteria**	**Week 1**	**Week 2**	**Week 3**
Prepare and Share	Team works hard to complete their work.			
	Team shares the work fairly.			
Respect People and Ideas	Team shows respect for one another's ideas.			
	Team makes sure that all team members' opinions are heard.			
Resolve Conflict	Team follows discussion rules to resolve conflicts.			
	Team resolves conflicts with respect for all involved.			
Seek Understanding	Team stays focused on the topic.			
	Team asks questions to help understand the topic.			
	Team works together to improve each other's ideas.			
	Team helps each other understand one another's ideas and the ideas they research.			

Figure 16. Collaborative assessment guide.

disadvantage. Therefore, social behaviors must be supported in the classroom to the maximum extent possible (Snider & Battalio, 2011).

Social behaviors that are important to school success often include: individual responsibilities (e.g., social etiquette, project contribution) and team responsibilities (e.g., collaborating with team members, resolving conflicts with respect for all involved). Social behaviors can be integrated within academic instruction through

the use of modeling, role-playing, self-evaluation, and cooperative learning.

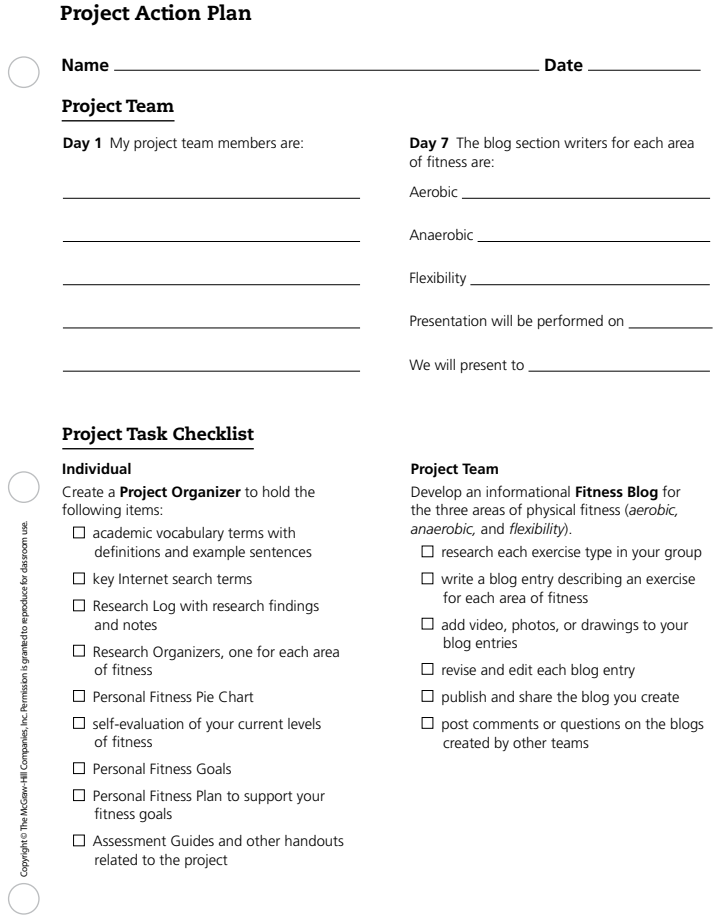
SRA FLEX Literacy *example*. In the secondary system Print Experience students learn important leadership behaviors by becoming discussion directors. Students are divided into small groups. One student in each group is assigned to be the discussion director. Discussion directors lead their groups in a discussion of important aspects of the text.

In addition, students are taught and expected to work together to complete cross-curricular projects designed to develop 21st-century skills during the Project Experience. A project information sheet and a project action plan (see Figure 17) are provided to groups to aid in the completion of projects. Through these projects, students are expected to demonstrate social behaviors that allow groups to work together in a collaborative manner (see the assessment guide in Figure 16).

Conclusion

Behavior management is one of the most critical areas of concern for teachers because it directly impacts students' academic performance. It cannot be separated from curriculum and instructional delivery. The use of effective instruction in the classroom should be thought of as a behavior-management issue. In fact, unwanted behavior may suggest that changes in instruction are needed. One of the more important developments on how best to meet students' needs involves the integration of behavior management and instructional systems (e.g., Aitken et al., 2011; Sadler & Sugai, 2009). *SRA FLEX Literacy* was highlighted in this article as an example program designed with this important development in mind.

The key behavior-management approaches integrated within *SRA FLEX Literacy* include classroom organization with an emphasis on expectations, routines, and transitions; effective instruction, including scaffolded instruction, structure and organization, differentiated instruction, opportunities to respond, positive and corrective feedback, and motivational systems; self-management; and social development. Other programs that explicitly incorporate behavior-management approaches include direct instruction (DI) programs published by SRA/McGraw-Hill such as Corrective Reading and Spelling Through Morphographs (see SRA/McGraw-Hill at https://www.mheonline.com/discipline/tags/1/3 along with the National Institute of Direct Instruction [NIFDI] at http://www.nifdi.org for details on DI programs). Martella and Nelson (2003) outlined behavior-management approaches that are integrated in several DI programs, including motivational systems such as praise, point systems, behavioral contracts, and progress charts.



Project Action Plan

Name _____ **Date** _____

Project Team

Day 1 My project team members are:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 7 The blog section writers for each area of fitness are:

Aerobic _____

Anaerobic _____

Flexibility _____

Presentation will be performed on _____

We will present to _____

Project Task Checklist

Individual

Create a **Project Organizer** to hold the following items:

- ☐ academic vocabulary terms with definitions and example sentences
- ☐ key Internet search terms
- ☐ Research Log with research findings and notes
- ☐ Research Organizers, one for each area of fitness
- ☐ Personal Fitness Pie Chart
- ☐ self-evaluation of your current levels of fitness
- ☐ Personal Fitness Goals
- ☐ Personal Fitness Plan to support your fitness goals
- ☐ Assessment Guides and other handouts related to the project

Project Team

Develop an informational **Fitness Blog** for the three areas of physical fitness (*aerobic, anaerobic,* and *flexibility*).

- ☐ research each exercise type in your group
- ☐ write a blog entry describing an exercise for each area of fitness
- ☐ add video, photos, or drawings to your blog entries
- ☐ revise and edit each blog entry
- ☐ publish and share the blog you create
- ☐ post comments or questions on the blogs created by other teams

Figure 17. Project action plan.

When integrating behavior-management approaches within curricular materials, several issues should be considered. First, it is critical to take into consideration the fidelity of how these programs are provided. Program components are carefully planned and integrated to ensure maximum effectiveness. Programs such as *SRA FLEX Literacy* are field tested and revised based on student performance and teacher feedback. Thus, if a program is not implemented as intended, it is not possible to predict what the effects will be and this may compromise student performance. Teachers should receive frequent feedback and

ongoing support related to the fidelity of implementation of programs such as *SRA FLEX Literacy*.

Second, additional management systems should be considered along with those integrated within the program. For example, students can use a self-recording sheet to track the number of activities completed during the Digital Experience. Classroom staff can utilize this recording as an additional motivational system by requiring a minimum number of completed activities to earn predetermined reinforcers.

Effective instruction is dependent on both the behavior-management approaches used in the classroom and the instructional program that is being implemented. Taken together, the key behavior-management approaches found in *SRA FLEX Literacy* and other programs, such as DI help, ensure better classroom behavior and set the foundation for improved academic performance in our schools.

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