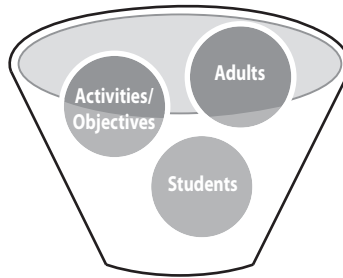
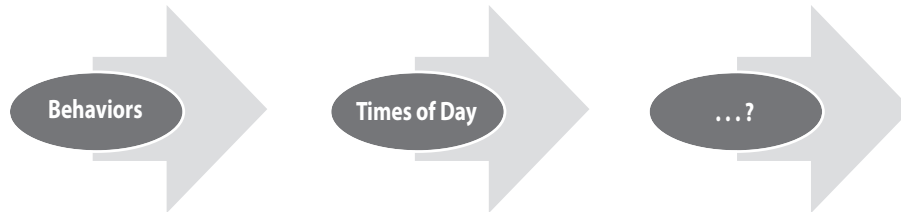


# Investigating Challenging Behavior: Thinking Map

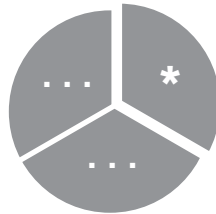
## *Gather Data*



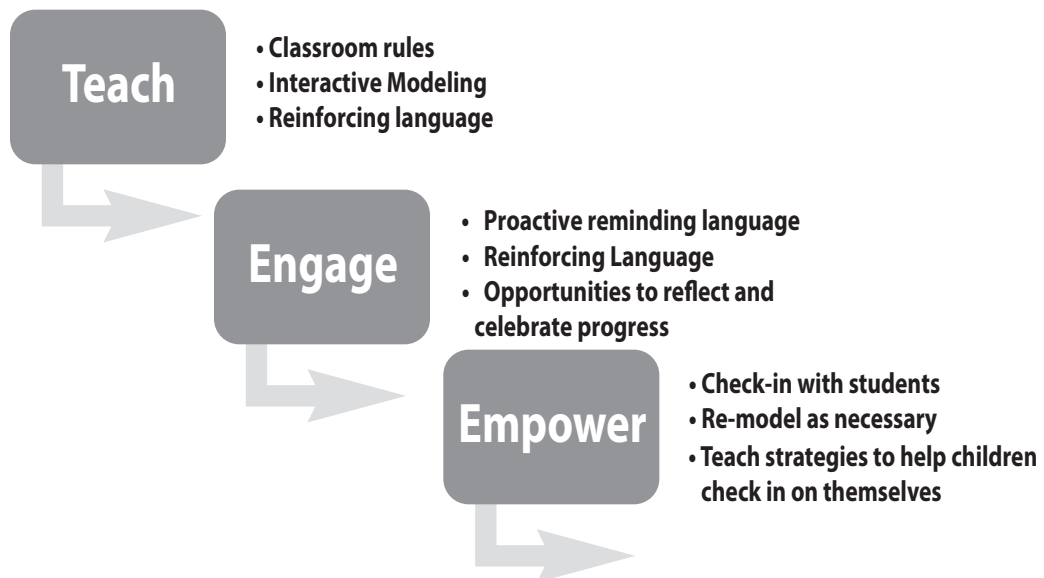
## *Analyze for Trends*



## *Identify a Priority to Address*



## *Develop a Plan and Plan to Follow Through*



## Sample Observation Data

The following sample data was gathered through observation of a first grade classroom over the course of a school day.

Section of the day	What is going on?
<b>Arrival</b>	Students walking in; backpacks are being hung; students go to chart; students start morning work; 2 students sit idle; 3 students start work, then stop, then start again.
<b>Morning Meeting</b>	Chime rings and students push in chairs. Most students go to the carpet. Some students move around and shift to find spot; one student puts hand out so another student won't sit there and motions for friend. Two students play and talk and wander. One student (Student 1) tears up paper because he is not done with morning work. Teacher intervenes and all students join Morning Meeting. Upset student takes a break.
<b>Guided Reading</b>	Students leave carpet and go to desk to get reader. Some students linger to put away papers that fell out of desk while they were getting their reader. Most students come back to the carpet. Teacher spends time helping students find their spot to sit in. Student 1 joins Guided Reading. During echo reading of the story, 2 students begin picking at their shoelaces and are asked to take a break.
<b>Reading Workshop</b>	Students look at board that shows the work stations they will be going to. Students excitedly rush off to centers. Teacher settles in with the small group she will work with. Five minutes into centers voices are loud. Teacher reminds. Two minutes later a student comes to the teacher to state that others at the table won't share the whiteboard markers. Teacher leaves group to redirect. Student 1 leaves work area and is wandering. Work is not finished. When redirected, he laughs and runs away to look at books. Teacher asks him to stay there. Student 1 stays in the book center looking at books. When workshop ends many students have not completed work or not completed it correctly.
<b>Specials</b>	Students go into the gym. Student 1 is immediately set off to the side and told to wait until he is ready. Students play with parachute. Most of the students are following the directions and expectations. Teacher keeps looking at Student 1. When he looks, Student 1 is not sitting properly. He states to Student 1 he can join when he sits up. Student 1 sits up but Teacher looks away and does not look back. Student 1 sits still for 2–3 minutes then gets up to tap Teacher on the shoulder and ask if he can join. Teacher sends Student 1 to sit back down. Student 1 pounds his fist on the floor. While Teacher is talking to Student 1, two students play around with the parachute and the class asks them to stop. Teacher hears loud voices and arguing and asks students to all take a time out and lose privilege of the game for the rest of class. When the classroom teacher picks up the students, Student 1 is crying. The P.E. teacher reports the game had to stop because the class was out of control.

Continued ►

## Sample Class Observation, continued

Section of the day	What is going on?
<b>Writer's Workshop</b>	<p>Students enter the classroom and get their writing journals from their cubbies. They are asked to look at their writing and add more detail to their stories using descriptive words. Many students add details to their pictures. Some rewrite the story word for word and some start talking. Teacher stops and gives more examples to students. Students keep talking rather than working. Teacher turns the lights out and the class takes a break. Students are then asked to go to the carpet. Student 1 refuses and is allowed to sit off to the side. Teacher gives examples of changing words to more descriptive words. Many students wiggle on the carpet and are asked to take a break.</p>
<b>Recess/ Lunch</b>	<p>Recess: Students go to the playground. Student 1 is asked to sit out until he can show control. Teachers walk around and monitor. Student 1 sits still for a few minutes then plays. Teacher comes back to check on him. He tries to straighten up but she tells him he needs to sit five more minutes. Student 1 picks up a rock and throws it at Teacher. A referral is written and he is sent to the office for throwing a rock at Teacher. Two students shove and push at the slide and are asked to sit down. Three children walk up to Teacher and cry because others are not taking turns with the football. One child gets hit in the mouth from running in front of the swings.</p> <p>Most students line up when the whistle is blown. Three children have to be reminded. Teacher reminds class to be quiet and threatens to take away recess the next day. Students walk in and go to lunch line. There is talking in the lunch line and the adults on duty tell students to go to the end. One student stomps on the way and is told to go to private dining and a tray will be given to him. Students move through line. Students sit at tables and begin talking. The talking is loud. The adult blows the whistle and says that is warning 1. Students quiet for a little while but voices again become loud. The teacher blows the whistle again and says that is warning 2. Students are quiet for a little while. The voices quiet and the second teacher on duty begins walking among the students giving the quiet signal and gently reminding. The classroom teacher arrives and students get up and throw away trash and move to the line. They walk back to class quietly.</p>
<b>Quiet Time</b>	<p>Students move to their desks. Many students put their heads down. Some students draw. Some students play with their "calm down glitter bottles." The chime rings.</p>

Continued ►

## Sample Class Observation, continued

Section of the day	What is going on?
<b>Math</b>	<p>Students move to the carpet. Students find their seats quickly and without discussion. The teacher has a student help with calendar math. The teacher then goes through 2 addition examples. She passes out whiteboards and markers. She gives the problem and asks students to draw out the problems. Students do the two problems. Students then go back to their seats to work on the rest of the math problems in the book. Student 1 is escorted back into the classroom. He has an apology letter to the teacher. Teacher accepts the apology letter and shows Student 1 the page to work on. Student 1 does the work in the workbook. The work is not correct. Teacher rings the chime and asks students to turn in their math or take it home for homework. Students begin ripping out the page. Two students rip the page and ask for tape. Three students spend time cleaning up papers that fell out of the desk when they tried to put the torn sheet in the folder. Others move to the carpet. Teacher waits for everyone to get there.</p>
<b>Science/ Social Studies</b>	<p>Teacher shows the class a big book on the Earth. All students, including Student 1, sit up excitedly. Students ask and answer questions about the story. Student 1 works his way up close to the teacher and raises his hand often to be recognized. Teacher asks Student 1 repeatedly to sit down. When asked, other students also check themselves and sit down. Students are shown a worksheet that asks them to color and label parts of the Earth. Students each take a sheet one by one and return to their desks. Most students, including Student 1, get to work. 3 students spend time rearranging their desks and putting away things they needed to move in order to get crayons. Student 1 scribbles hard lines as he colors. Teacher takes his paper and gives him a new one telling him to do it nicely. Student 1 rips the paper and puts his head down crying loudly. Student 1 is asked to take a break. He goes but kicks a chair on the way. The class completes the sheet and is asked to put it away in the folder if not done.</p>
<b>Closing Circle</b>	<p>Students are asked to get out their homework folders. They are reminded of homework. Students get out folders and place on top of the desk. Students are called to get their backpacks. Student 1 joins to do this. Students then walk to the carpet. The teacher asks students what they liked best that day and the students state they liked the book about the Earth. Students line up to go home. On the way to the bus the Principal stops Student 1 and Teacher to ask if the afternoon was better. Teacher says there was one more incident but he did a little better. The Principal and Teacher tell Student 1 that they will all try harder tomorrow.</p>

# Investigating Challenging Behavior: Process Outline

## Collect Data

How will data be collected? (Audio, video, notes, student feedback, colleagues . . .)

## Analyze the Data for Trends

What times are more difficult than others?

Are there behaviors that emerge consistently?

## Identify a Priority to Address

What challenging time or behavior will you address first?

What do you see happening currently?

What do you envision happening instead?

What changes to the environment might support student success (space, time, materials . . .)?

What skill sets are lacking (on-task talk, partner voices, proper use of materials . . .)?

## Develop a Plan and Plan to Follow Through

What skills will you model first?

When will you remind and reinforce what was modeled? What will you say?

► Proactive reminding language:

► Reinforcing language:

How will students reflect and celebrate progress? When? (closing circle, before transitions, with a partner . . .)

How will you gradually release responsibility to students? What strategies will you teach students to help them check in on themselves?

# Checking In: Helping Students “Catch Themselves”

by Jessica Minahan • ([www.responsiveclassroom.org/info-library](http://www.responsiveclassroom.org/info-library))

Often students struggling with emotional behavioral disabilities are overwhelmed by and over-reactive to daily events that seem mundane to others. They become easily stressed and frustrated, can feel out of control, develop self-doubt, and feel unsure about handling future situations. Empowering them to monitor their own behavior—to check in with themselves—sends students the message that although stressful situations are impossible to avoid, they can learn to cope and eventually remain in control.

Self-monitoring is the ability to recognize and keep track of our own behavior. If you’ve ever tried to quit smoking or lose weight, you might have been told to keep a log of how many cigarettes you smoke or how much food you consume. These logs, without any other interventions, can be powerful because just being aware of how much you’re doing something can enable you to change your behavior. Self-monitoring and awareness are the first steps to take before we’re able to “catch ourselves” acting inappropriately and work to terminate the inappropriate behavior altogether.

Self-monitoring skills help students maintain appropriate behavior. Here are three ways to help students develop these skills.

## *Regular Check-ins*

To self-monitor, a student must recognize when his behavior is inappropriate or disproportionate. Many students need a teacher to help them reflect on and evaluate their behavior throughout the day. At the end of each period, you can meet briefly with the student and invite him to talk about his behavior. You could use a sheet that rates success with common behaviors—following directions, keeping a safe body, or doing schoolwork. Emphasize reflection, instead of rewards or consequences. These conversations are opportunities to give feedback and help the student learn to evaluate himself accurately. Developmentally, students will learn to reflect on recent behavior before they learn to catch themselves in the moment.

Many students will need help with the evaluation. Your nonjudgmental conversations are opportunities for you to tell the student exactly how her behavior was inappropriate or disproportionate: “Remember how you growled at Ms. Jensen when you were frustrated?” or “You threw your pencil when you were frustrated.”

## *Class Check-ins*

Throughout the day, use a consistently worded “self-check prompt,” to signal students that it’s time to recognize and reflect on their behavior in that moment: “Everybody do a self-check and record your behavior.” Or, use more specific self-check prompts. “Body safety self-check! Are you keeping your hands to yourself?”

Regular “self-checks” with the entire class normalize the process and help students self-monitor specific behaviors (for example, paying attention to work). With frequent class check-ins, even students accustomed to being called out frequently for inappropriate behavior will have opportunities to notice how often their behavior is appropriate.

Students can record and tally their behavior on paper or with a mobile device. Some helpful apps for recording behavior:

- ▶ **Percentally:** Automatically converts tallies to percentages. (iPhone, iPad and iPod touch)
- ▶ **Streaks:** Records each day’s progress toward behavior goals. (iPhone and Android)
- ▶ **Tally Counter:** Helps track behavior frequency (iPhone, iPad, iPod)

## *Independence*

To reduce reliance on adults, you can prompt students to check themselves at set intervals by using self-monitoring aids like vibrating timers and mobile apps to help make self-monitoring habitual. Two helpful apps:

- ▶ **Repeat Timer:** Repeating interval timer and reminder for routine activities. (iPhone, iPad, Android)
- ▶ **MotivAider®:** Private vibration prompt calls attention to desired behavior. (Android, iPhone and iPad; separate electronic device also available.)

(Note: Most apps are free or available for a nominal fee. Often you can upgrade to a professional version for an additional expense.)

Developing self-monitoring skills reduces unwanted behaviors and empowers students. It’s an important step in helping them learn to cope with challenging moments while being aware of and managing their own behavior.



# Individual Written Agreement Planning Sheet

Student's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Thinking about the problem

What is the problematic behavior? (Pick one behavior that is both problematic and potentially changeable.)

What are some possible reasons for this behavior?

What other strategies have you tried?

Modifications to academic work:

Support to help the child meet academic expectations:

Proactive strategies such as referring to classroom rules and Interactive Modeling:

Other problem-solving strategies such as a problem-solving conference:

What behavior do you hope to see the student adopt? (Make sure these behaviors are specific, easy to measure, and limited in number.)

Continued ►

## Contacting the child's parents

How will you talk about this issue? What words will you use?

## Meeting with the student

*Reminder: Make sure you're feeling collaborative!*

When and where will the meeting take place?

How will you state the problem, remind the student of expected behavior, and connect it to classroom rules?

Steps in introducing an individual written agreement to the student:

1. Invite the student to a private meeting.
2. State the problem and describe the plan.
3. Set a goal, write it down, and sign it.
4. Agree on the reward.
5. Talk about which other adults need to know about the agreement and when to revisit it.

What's some language you will use to express your desire to help? How will you suggest having an individual written agreement?

Will you suggest working for a reward? If so, what are some appropriate rewards for this student? (Remember, a reward is optional.)

Continued ►

How will you and the student keep track of progress? (Possibilities are a chart or other visual system such as craft sticks or a cotton ball jar.)

How often will you check in and record progress? (Pick a manageable schedule that will provide the student with enough encouragement. Possibilities are every time the student uses the behavior, every academic period, or four times a day.)

Which other adults will be involved in implementing this agreement? (Consider special educators, administrators, behavior specialists, specialist teachers, previous teachers, and parents.)

How concerned is the student about keeping the agreement confidential?

When will you and the student meet again to evaluate progress?