

**The Nature of the Problem: A description of the particular problem you were addressing (What type of problem was it? How frequent/severe was the problem? How did it manifest itself in the classroom?)**

The student that I have been focusing on for my case study project is a student I have been referring to as Ted. Ted is a very defiant and passive aggressive student who “drags their feet” during at least 7 to 8 transitions of about 10 throughout the day, (Brophy 201). Ted also tries to control situations by being “stubborn and opposition,” arguing with adults, and display “borderline compliance with rules” in order to barely get by with what is expected, (Brophy 201). Ted also displays defiance by “making derogatory comments about the teacher to others,” nonverbally displays his defiance by “mimicking the teacher, posture with arms folded, looking away when being spoken to, laughing at inappropriate times, and deliberately doing what the teacher says not to do,” (Brophy 227).

The problem starting out about two weeks into the school year, but wasn't severe enough to manifest any serious concerns on my behalf about his behavior. At first I thought that this was his way of being social and that he just needed some slight reminders and socialization about what is expected in our classroom. I soon found that by the end of the first month of school I was redirecting and having to handle Ted's behavior 5 to 6 times during a 45 minute instructional block. During these 5 to 6 redirections about half of them required me to stop teaching and handle the situation with Ted outside of the classroom and/or contact an administrator to remove him from the classroom in order for me to continue to teach the rest of the class. As a result of Ted's behavior I became behind in teaching the curriculum due to the frequency and severity of the incidents, my students were seeing a much more frustrated and stressed teacher, and the classroom environment that we were trying to build together was not become a friendly and safe environment.

**Provide a description of the changes you made in your practice with this student. What changed? Which specific intervention(s) did you employ? Include a description of any intervention(s) you made with the student's parent if you included that component.**

Like many of us have found, no single strategy or intervention will hold the magic key to helping our students become successful (Brophy 389). For those reasons, I found that creating a complimentary set of interventions that would be functional for both home and school would work best for Ted (Brophy 233).

**Displaying Awareness of Student's Behavior:**

One strategy that I have tried to use with Ted in order to create a more positive interaction is letting him know that I am aware of his tactics and help him become more aware of it himself. I have been using the “Could it be...” questions suggested by Berres

and Long. (Brophy 208). This allowed me to interpret Ted's behavior for him, since he typically has a lack of response or reasoning when you ask him "why" he did something.

### **Post Conference/Meet in Private:**

In order to create a more positive relationship with this student, we needed to discuss and meet privately about the incidents that occurred during class. By calling Ted out in front of his peers or making my frustration obvious to those around us, I am only creating more repressed anger in Ted and could possibly create anger for myself. This would only worsen the situation and would possibly cause me to think negatively or treat Ted inappropriately, (Brophy 208). When a situation or incident occurred, I will take Ted aside or step into the hallway and always use a calm and caring voice to express my concern about the behaviors. (Brophy 187 & 234).

### **Satiation:**

By using satiation with Ted, I am "letting the misbehavior run its course by allowing or if necessary, requiring students to repeat the behavior until fatigue and boredom set in," (Brophy 29). This strategy is helpful in situations where Ted's misconduct is less severe and is not affecting other students. If he is purposely making noises or dragging his feet, he is not harming others and by ignoring it, he will not be getting the reaction he desires, so he may possibly discontinue the behavior, (Brophy 207).

### **Modeling:**

In order to help Ted express his anger and frustration in a more positive and acceptable way, I try to model how to deal with something when angry. For example, when Ted or another student get into an argument, I facilitate the interaction and guide them using "I messages." I prompt them with the right social cues and show them various ways of telling someone how you feel without hurting them or breaking the rules to show that you are in power, (Brophy 36).

### **Contracting:**

I have been using a behavior contract with Ted since October of 2009 that incorporates the home-note system (Best Practices 65-69). The contract was designed in order to send home daily reports of Ted's behavior at school, both positive and negative. The parents were to "follow up by delivering or withholding reinforcements" and returning the signed contract the next day, (Brophy 233).

### **Provide feedback to your peers about the effectiveness of your interventions:**

During the first two weeks of implementing these new strategies (contracting has been in place since October), I saw a slight change or awareness in Ted's behavior. Ted

was puzzled by the new calm and sincere voice that I was using with him. I was able to keep my composure and talk to Ted in a calm and caring way, which inhibited him from reacting with more defiance, because I was not giving him the reaction he wanted. Yet, after the first few days of having a more positive response from him, Ted regressed and had continual behavior issues for two days straight. During this time, I felt I did very well in keeping calm, concerned, and having a caring voice when speaking with Ted about each incident. Even though he did not respond in a positive way, I was still able to feel that I did my very best in helping Ted try to learn from his past behaviors. At the end of the week, Ted had a complete meltdown and began to belittle his classmates and talk back to his teachers excessively and had to be moved to the office. I was very conflicted with this decision, but Ted's behavior was getting out of control, it was preventing others from learning, and he made multiple children in my classroom cry (due to his harsh words towards them). The following week went much better for Ted and me. I began the week with a "fresh" start and point of view and again talked to Ted with a caring and calm voice every time I spoke to him. I was able to use the "Could it be..." strategy more often and this seemed to expose Ted's true reasons behind his behavior and again show my awareness of his behaviors.

When we returned from our 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter school break, Ted's parents were able to use large incentives like trips and video games as reinforcements for his behaviors. With these large and exciting rewards in mind, Ted did much better than the previous two weeks when I first started his new interventions. I was able to communicate how these incentives provided more motivation for Ted to do well and expressed how continued rewards (perhaps not always such large ones) could really help keep him on the right track. Once the rewards were given, Ted's behaviors returned and Ted no longer had any consistent rewards to keep him motivated. The vague and inconsistent expectations between home and school seem to create a pattern in Ted's behavior and therefore allow his oppositional behavior to resume (Brophy 233). I have a parent/teacher conference currently scheduled for the end of the week and hope that we can once again agree on some home-school collaboration in order to help Ted be successful once again.