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Introduction:

Although I graduated from Michigan State University with a degree in special education learning disabilities, I have been spending the last three years teaching a general education second grade class. Throughout these three years I have encountered a variety of student academic, social and emotional levels and needs. Towards the end of last school year, I was introduced to a student who my principle planned on placing in my classroom the following year. As a first grader this student, Danny, was known by his teachers to be disrespectful, disruptive, uncooperative and at times violent with peers and adults.

Once I was aware Danny would be in my classroom I took it upon myself to get to know him a little better. Not only did I want to spend time getting to know him, I wanted to make my own impressions of him. I talked with Danny's first grade teachers and asked if there was a time in the day he could come join my class. As it worked out read aloud became the time Danny joined my room. During these encounters Danny sat at a table by himself listened to stories and raised his hand when he wanted to share and also joined in during think-pair-share opportunities. At first I was not seeing any signs of the negative behaviors I had been talked to about. After getting to know Danny more I started noticing certain characteristics about him. He was obsessive and direct about certain things and ideas. If he could not come down to read with my class he would make a point to say something to me or his teacher, such as, "I was suppose to go to Miss Hunt's class" or "You forgot come get me for read aloud Miss Hunt." The more time I spend with Danny the more I was starting to see the behaviors I was told about.

This year Danny is a second grader in my classroom. Knowing what I knew about Danny, I wanted him to have a fresh start with a fresh new year. I did not want to hold anything from his past against him. Prior to the school year starting I met Danny, his mom and therapist on meet and greet night. His mom seemed somewhat nervous and uncertain about her child's new class. In the past, his mother shared, his teachers blamed her for Danny's behavior and she also expressed that she did not feel support from the school. Knowing this, I knew a positive relationship with Danny's mom was going to be my first step in facing Danny's challenging behaviors.

While Danny played with recess toys he found on my shelf, I talked with his mom and therapist. His therapist and mom shared a great deal of information with me, that helped me piece Danny and his behavioral choices together. Danny has been diagnosed ODD and Asperger's. He sees his therapist on a weekly at home basis and is considered a high challenge. He also meets with a psychologist on a monthly basis. He lives with his mom, grandma and grandpa, but his primary caregivers are his mom and grandma. His mom works with the therapist on ways to communicate with Danny and handle some of his challenging behaviors.

As the school year began Danny and I started to form a fairly positive relationship. The first few weeks of school Danny seemed upset, mad and angry but listened to directions and participated in class. Within these first few weeks I emailed his mom on many occasions highlighting the good choices and behaviors I was seeing from Danny. Once again, I was working to build a positive relationship with his mom. I also made sure to point out how proud I was of him. After the first several weeks came a few "horrible" days. Danny would yell at me when I asked him to do something he didn't want to do or refuse to do it. He began talking out of turn on multiple occasions to the point where I would have to ask him to move back to his seat. He began arguing with almost all peers and adults more than I had ever seen before. The school social worker and principal got involved which led to a meeting about how we were going to make Danny's school year

more successful. Danny's mom was also present at the meeting. Her presence was a great help in understanding the change in Danny's behavior. She shared that Danny's medication had been changed and she had also been seeing negative effects at home that she planned on bringing up to his doctors. From this meeting came Danny's behavior folder. Unlike last year where all his negative choices were documented I wanted this folder to be a place to not only reflect on the day but also celebrate the good choices Danny was able to make. As we began to reflect, at the end of everyday. I was also able to document the areas Danny and I needed to work on the most. It became very obvious within the first week that defiance and respect were the top behaviors that we needed to work on more closely.

Day to day I find the defiance behavior to be most challenging when working with Danny. Danny is defiant in many ways. Instead of asking for more time on an assignment or asking permission to go use the restroom he tells you what he is going to do. He communicates this way with both peers and adults. When told he needs to ask he becomes very upset, usually ending in him yelling at me or him making a violent choice.

I have tried many different techniques when these situations occur. I have tried cueing. Before I was about to play the song that indicates its time to clean up, I went over to Danny's desk to give him a heads up, therefore, he could get a head start and be at the next spot on time. This did not work for Danny. He still got very upset when I told him his time was up and he needed to come be with the class.

I have also tried satiation. Coming to the carpet area with the rest of the class and stopping an assignment is very difficult for Danny. Since this behavior is not harmful I let it run its course. While I explained the directions to the group Danny sat at his desk and worked, however, he was unprepared for the next assignment and got very angry that he was not included in the directions. Even when explained that those were the consequences of the choices he made. He got very upset and yelled, "You don't care about me! Everybody hates me!"

After many instances similar to these the special education team, Danny's mother and I came together to develop a plan specific to Danny's behaviors and needs. At the start of everyday Danny gets a new sheet of paper, which indicates the days schedule. Next to each subject/event in the day there is a happy and sad smiley face. Happy faces are given when Danny is working cooperatively in class. Sad faces are given when Danny has made poor choices and has needed to be removed from class to take a social/emotional break with the social worker. During these breaks he is also required to reflect on the choices he made. We also incorporated hand signals and reinforcements into this plan. There are three hand signals that I can give to Danny that mean different things. One of them reminds him he needs to stop and think about the choices he is making. Also worked into the plan are reinforcements. After receiving three smiley faces in a row Danny is given a Lego break.

At first this plan had Danny only "learning" one Lego break a day, which we noticed he worked for but then gave up working for it the rest of the day. Since then we have tweaked the plan, making more than one opportunities for Danny to earn a Lego break. Since making these changes, Danny has grown leaps and bounds. He has stopped using phrases that indicate others or I hate him. He is much less violent when something is unplanned or does not go his way. I am very proud of the strides he has made, but there is still much work to be done. Danny is still i on his defiant behavior with myself, his mother, therapist and school social worker.

## Chapter 1:

Based on Brophy's readings I would define Danny's behavior as passive-aggressive. My experience with Danny fits directly into the characteristics described by Brophy; subtly oppositional and stubborn, try to control, show borderline compliance with rules, mar property rather than damage, disrupt surreptitiously and drag their feet. These characteristics are also the leading causes of the challenges this student brings to my teaching. Danny appears very stubborn and oppositional. For example, my students always start their day at their desk with a task that appears on the board. Although Danny does not start his day in the room, when he enters we are finishing up the task. Once the task is complete a song is played, which indicates it is time to go to the carpet and clean up. This has been our class routine since the beginning of the year, yet Danny still almost never makes it to the carpet before the song is done playing. When reminded about where he is supposed to be he gets very angry and states, "I know! I'm coming." Danny also appears very controlling. From the first day of school Danny has been working with the school social worker on asking adults and peers questions, rather than, ordering something be done. For instance, at the beginning of the year many conflicts occurred surrounding reading workshop. Danny would say to me, "I'm not going to read I am going to write at my desk." This is both an example of his stubborn and controlling behaviors.

When these behaviors occur I find myself feeling challenged. The challenging feeling can be described as overwhelming, frustrated and/or determined. I naturally want the inappropriate behavior to end, but try to solve the situation in a calm manner using various techniques. As Brophy states, "Using good instruction, management, and socialization techniques will go a long way toward minimizing the need for disciplinary interventions" (Brophy, pp. 21). Ultimately my goal is to change the challenging moment into a "teachable moment."

Some of the techniques I have in place include acceptance of the individual, but not the behavior, firm but flexible limits and modeling (Brophy, pp. 23). Danny is now aware and feels a sense of belonging in our classroom family, but is aware that certain behaviors are not welcomed into the room. I also provide Danny with flexible limits; simple and clear rules along with consistent reinforcement. Lastly I practice modeling the behaviors I preach such as politeness and good manners. When I am challenged I feel I need to focus on becoming more patient and determined. Even when I am feeling challenged I want Danny to know I will always work with him to improve these situations one step at a time.

After taking time to observe Danny's behavior I was able to notice when problems occur and do not occur. At times the problem behaviors appeared sporadic. There were days this week when Danny came to school looking very angry and upset, hinting that something had come about before school. However, when confronted Danny said he was fine. On these days Danny's morning behaviors were more troublesome. His defiance and stubbornness were very apparent when asked to do something he did not want to do.

For example, Danny was put in a math group with two girls to conduct a measuring project. The students needed to talk together to discuss appropriate units and tools they would need. Danny became very controlling and told his group what he wanted to use and began the task without talking to his group members. When his group members confronted him about the group needing to work together Danny got very close to one of the girls and started yelling in her face. The yelling was very loud and inappropriate that I intervened. I calmly asked to talk with Danny. He was quite upset and as he walked with me yelled at me about how he didn't do anything. Unfortunately, Danny's behavior and yelling only escalated, which ended with me following his behavior plan of sending him for a reflection break with the school social worker.

During this situation I noticed myself first feeling frustrated and calm. Although I was instructed to not place Danny in small groups within my classroom, I do. I have closely monitored him in groups and discussed and modeled working with peers many times. I have observed Danny able to appropriately participate in a group setting, however, this day was not one of them. After seeing Danny's frustration with the situation my feelings changed to be mostly determined. More than anything I wanted Danny to be able to go back and work with his group, but I also know the importance of consistency, therefore, I chose to give Danny and break.

Danny seemed to be well adapted to the classroom when he was partnered with one student, sitting at his spot at our carpet area and working independently at a private nook. During these times Danny was on task, non disruptive to others and able to complete his work.

Danny was observed working well with one student partner during a reading activity. The students were asked to share their findings with one another after they had read alone. I know Danny loves to read and is a great reader. He was recently put in a new reading group where his reading comprehension is being pushed and he is being challenged. His partner was purposely picked based on their reading levels and personalities. His partner was a young girl who also loves to read and is a role model student when it comes to talking with a partner and taking turns listening and talking. She is also a student that is patience and will work with Danny to practice taking turns. She even reported that working with Danny was awesome!

Another situation that I observed Danny adapted well was during a read aloud session at the carpet area of the classroom. Again, Danny has recently been given a new seat. Danny now sits in the corner of the class benches where he is given limited space to spread out and forced to keep to him. When planning where to place Danny I thought about his previous behavior at the carpet and the problems that were occurring. Before, Danny would spread out his body, becoming very distracted with various classroom objects. He would also be the last student to the carpet, since his seat was on the outer part of the area. Lastly, the door or the phone ringing; running to answer either of them would distract Danny. Now, I have observed Danny coming to the carpet with the class, therefore, he is not stepping over peers. He is also much more focused. His eyes are on the speaker and he has nothing distracting him.

The third time I observed Danny well adapted to the classroom happened during writing workshop. The task was to write two different leads on sticky notes. I set a visual timer and asked Danny to move to a private nook in the room. I observed Danny following all directions without any hesitation. I saw him check the timer while working, which led to him staying on track and completing the task.





















During these times I gave him verbal positive feedback and as well as a thumbs up, which between him and I means he is on the right track. In addition to the immediate feedback, Danny and I were able to easily fill out his celebrations section of this behavior folder. He was able to recall those moments in the day and record them, to later share with his mom.

Chapter 2:

Danny's Behavior Plan and Data Collections Sheet

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Daily Schedule

Breakfast		 REFLECTION
Math		 REFLECTION
Word Study		 REFLECTION
Writing	 <b>Lego Break!</b>	 REFLECTION
Lunch		 REFLECTION
Partner Reading		 REFLECTION
Encore: <i>Music Art Gym</i>	 <b>Recess Choice!</b>	 REFLECTION
Reading		 REFLECTION
Scholastic News		 REFLECTION
Science/Social Studies	 <b>Lego Break!</b>	 REFLECTION

Danny has a daily behavior plan/schedule that we keep on a clipboard in class. This clipboard stays with Danny throughout the day and travels with him around the school. I used his daily schedule, seen above, to collect my data. After or during each event of the day I circle a smiley face if the event was completed with out defiance issues or problems and a frown face when Danny's defiance became an issue. The reasons the frown face has reflection written underneath is due to the existing behavior plan. The plan currently includes Danny leaving the room and taking a reflection break when the frown face is circled, however, I do not feel this plan has not been successful

and needs work, which is why I want to continue focusing on Danny and working to create a successful behavior plan.

While analyzing my data collection I found patterns in when Danny's behavior occurred and didn't occur. His defiant behavior occurred most frequently during any class carpet meeting time including morning meeting, math launch, reading mini-lesson; as well as during, reading book group meetings (small group), independent writing time, walking in the school hallways and anytime Danny was asked to stop doing an assignment that he viewed as "not done." There were also patterns in when Danny's behavior became less frequent. These times included during breakfast, lunch, computers, and independent reading.

I also found connections in that classroom environmental and Danny's defiant behaviors. When his behavior was most frequent he was mostly in a whole group setting. Whether he was asked to sit at the carpet with the entire class for a lesson or to listen to a story Danny had a hard time following directions and waiting his turn to share out ideas. Danny also became very defiant with peers in an "un-supervised" reading group. Danny is a very advanced reader and has recently been asked to join a book group with similar academic leveled peers. The students have been taught how to have book-centered discussion about their readings, however, Danny struggled with peer confrontations and disagreements surrounding their book. Independent "desk work" is that last pattern that appeared to be when analyzing my data. Danny struggles to sit quietly at his desk and not disrupt those around him. When silence and little movement are expected he really seemed to struggle. Danny became very defiant in these situations when peers or I asked him to stop and change his behavior. For example, Danny was tapping his pencil over and over and shaking his head obnoxiously. The student next to him asked him to stop by giving him a silent reminder (something known to the students in my class), and he responded by yelling, "I'm not doing anything! Stop doing that!" These same behaviors also occurred when Danny and the class were asked to stop their work and clean up. Danny's defiant behaviors were much less prevalent when he was out of the classroom for things such as lunch, breakfast and computers. He also was much less defiant when working with an adult or teacher figure one-on-one. He appeared happy and appreciative of the personal attention he was receiving from an adult.

When the entire class was involved or the lesson/task was teacher led Danny's behaviors became much more frequent. These times directly correspond to the environmental factors affecting Danny's behavior. When working with peers Danny's defiant behavior occurred when he was asked to work with peers that were less advanced academically as he is. Danny's behavior was not apparent when he worked with an academically similar peer or when he was able to work one-on-one with a teacher figure. There were two specific teacher figures that stood out to be positive influences in Danny, Ms. Becky a school/classroom aide and Ms. Lenard the school librarian, with whom Danny spends breakfast time with.

Overall, I found that when Danny works with academically similar peer, works on the computer, can organize or do something while listening to task directions or when he is able to move his seat during an independent time his behaviors were much more positive. Now that I am aware of these conditions I plan to incorporate more of these situations throughout Danny's day. When planning partnership activities I can plan partnerships that are based on academic understanding. Knowing his engagement and behaviors while on the computer I can use the computer as a break or learning tool. I also use my iPad in my classroom, which could also be used as an educational tool. I can also make Danny aware of appropriate spots in the room for him to move to during

any independent work time. This way Danny has already planned locations in the room that are just right for him to work at. Seeing the positive relationships with Ms. Becky and Ms. Lenard I can use them for breaks and encouragement throughout the day. They could be used as a problem solving resource and person to talk to about feelings throughout the day.

### Behavior Plan

After making observations and analyzing the data I want to first focus on Danny's work engagement, focus and completion during independent work time. Many of Danny's passive aggressive behaviors start during independent work times. When observing Danny during these times he appeared distracted, disruptive, fidgety and resistant. Without a direct goal or intervention that Danny can achieve, his behavior will continue or possibly worsen his academic progress. The goal is to get Danny to complete his work during a given independent time in class without many interruptions.

To reach this goal I plan on introducing and explaining optional seating to Danny. I plan to introduce Danny to three different locations in the room that will enable him to focus on his goal. I have two private desk areas that face the walls of my classroom. These desks are placed in locations where students can easily block out the actions of other students. Another location that will provide Danny with ample workspace is the carpet area close to my small group table. I feel this would be a good choice considering the flexibility of the area. I feel this plan follows the two strategies Brophy shared to be beneficial for students like Danny who are passive-aggressive (1) Students can be allowed autonomy and choices concerning their assignments and the conditions under which they work (Brophy 207) and (2) Brophy shares giving students work stations to work alone in or at (Brophy 207). I see both of these strategies helping Danny meet this goal of completing his independent work.

I am expecting these strategies to work based on the observations I have conducted on Danny's behavior and Brophy's readings. Danny is currently unsuccessful during independent time because he talks to peers, fidgets in his seat and gets out of his seat frequently. The interventions that I am planning are giving Danny choices in the conditions that he works, as well as, giving him vary in the areas that he can work. Based on my observations I have seen Danny's work improve once he started working in a more private workstation and had all the materials he needed before starting his assignment. Again, this intervention will allow Danny to focus due to the lack of distractions and peer influence.

As part of this behavior plan I will shift my stance back into a helpful stance. Instead of attending to every passive-aggressive behavior displayed by Danny I will pick and chose which behaviors I attend too. As Brophy has stated, a strategy for coping with passive-aggressive behavior is to "not hover but remain nearby to reinforce appropriate behaviors..." (Brophy 207). The locations I have picked for Danny are locations I can stay nearby without hovering. I can keep an eye on his behavior and work while keeping an appropriate distance. I will also be share to reward Danny's behavior when he has chosen to work appropriately and independently. With this strategy I also plan to ignore possible attempts to manipulate peers and myself (Brophy 207). While keeping nearby I will be able to ignore more behaviors than before. Since Danny will be away from peers they will also be able to more easily ignore his attempts to manipulate and distract those around him.

Chapter 3:

1. At the end of last week I created a writing goal with each of my students. Overall, I am looking to increase student engagement during writing workshop. In my initial observations Danny was very talkative at his seat during writing workshop. Since observing the behaviors of my class I have sat down with small groups of students to create writing goals. Danny's goal was "I can stay super focused during writing workshop by picking an appropriate seat and self-recording my talking." With his small group I shared the observations I had made. We then problem solved ways we could improve their use of time during writing. They wrote their goal and drew a picture of themselves meeting that goal. All the goals are now posted on a board in my classroom. I have been referring to the goals daily since making them. Along with making a goal, Danny and his group members received a self-recording tracking sheet. As stated in the Best practices book, self-recording involves systematic observations of one's behavior along with recording the behavior with some device. Each time they talk during writing workshop they record it. On the first day each of the group members had to mark an X for talking. After the one X was recorded they changed their seat and did not have to mark another X that day. After the second day of self-recording I checked in with the boys to discuss their progress.

2. I have had to make changes to my plan along the way. The more I thought about Danny the more I thought he wasn't ready to pick his own seat when needed. Instead of giving him optional seating I decided to introduce one optional seat each week and focus on just writing workshop time. I decided the options were too open ended for Danny. I plan to introduce Danny to another optional seat at the beginning of next week. After three weeks I will revisit the idea of Danny choosing a seat between the ones he has practiced working in. As I have implemented this strategy I noticed my stance change. Danny is much more focused on completing his work, which makes me feel accomplished and has pushed me to see Danny differently. The attribute of projecting positive expectations has become clearer. I can clearly see him as a good person, wanting to do the right thing. I know he has obstacles but he is not a bad person nor does he have bad intentions when interrupting others during independent work. Another huge improvement is I feel Danny is enjoying his time spent with me as his teacher. The attribute of social attractiveness has grown. Every day this week before getting on the bus Danny has given me a hug, whether his day was overall good or bad. I have been seeing more smiles and happiness out of Danny when working with his peers and me.

### 3. Problems and Prospects

Overall I feel my strategy is working for Danny. Danny has been able to accomplish more writing with fewer interruptions. As previously stated I did take a step back. I am easing Danny into the optional seating arrangements. Based on prior experiences with Danny, I feel too many options at the beginning of the intervention would be much less beneficial. There have been many times that Danny has struggled to make decisions, which led to less successful work time. Knowing this, I took a step back to avoid these same issues from recurring.

The first time I moved Danny's seat I moved him to an isolated desk in my classroom. Although the desk is secluded from other student desk it is fairly close to my kidney table. During writing workshop I pull small groups of students to that table to work. I guess I overlooked the seating arrangements for Danny, because my talking to other students immediately became a distraction for Danny. While I was working with a small group Danny would join in on conversations or give suggestions to other students while he was working at the isolated desk. I quickly realized that was not a good optional seat for Danny when I am working with students at the table. The next day I moved Danny to a new isolated desk in the room. Once he starting working I only had to give him one



reminder to stay on track, otherwise, he stay super focus on his writing and did not have to record any X's on his self-recording sheet.

So far I have not seen any problems with this strategy. I want to continue introducing Danny to new locations in the room that he can move to during the day, especially independent working times. I feel what has made a lot of this strategy a success is the opportunities it has given Danny and I to talk. Danny has always shown his best behavior when he is working one-on-one with a teacher figure. I have been able to have many positive conversations with Danny regarding his behavior, which has seems to gradually make a difference in his overall attitude towards me and school.

After doing some more digging into the strategy of self-recording I am concerned about what to do when this strategy becomes less effective. When Danny becomes accustomed to the self-recording program, it will no longer be reactive. The Best Practices reading suggest two possible solutions. First, I could change the device used to self-record. If Danny has become accustomed to the paper pencil tracking sheet I am currently using I can use a golf counter or another instrument to record the behaviors. I think finding something meaningful to Danny would be most beneficial in to this strategy. The second solution includes a reward contingency. I have already pondered about using this with the current tracking sheet. As the book suggest "the best solution may be a combination of both suggestions."

When and if my strategy becomes less effective I will be more than willing to mix up or alter the current strategy. I will not give up on Danny reaching his goal. I have made an appropriate, reachable goal for Danny, which I will continue to work towards with him. I will also continue to use the key elements of effective socialization from Brophy to increase the social skills of Danny and my class. I very much enjoy seeing Danny happy at school and will continue to use the attribute of social attractiveness to continue his positive attitude.

#### Chapter 4:

At the start of the intervention Danny was showing progress. The first few times he used the self-monitoring sheet I had to remind him to mark an X in his box. After a few days he began self-monitoring his talking during writing workshop on his own. Although Danny minimized his talking during writing workshop he continued to be distracted during this time. In this weeks reading about distractible students I could not stop thinking about Danny. Brophy describes distractible students as "having difficulty adjusting to changes, rarely completing tasks and easily distracted." Danny has all of those characteristics. Brophy stated, "with children who primary problem is attention deficit, attention itself is the target behavior to be changed and teaching them to self monitor their on-task behavior or work productivity tends to improve their task attention and work completion rates," therefore I strongly believe self-monitoring is the right strategy for Danny. To my surprise, Danny's progress has recently had a stand still. Danny's overall behavior in school has recently changed. In my eyes Danny has in some ways reverted back to his "old ways." Danny has become extremely defiant with adults and peers throughout his bus rides to and from school, as well as, in school. His mother has also seen a change in his behavior at home. This change has negatively affected the writing workshop intervention. Danny has been sent out of the classroom due to his defiant behavior numerous times. When he is sent out of the room he is spending time with the school social worker and one of our school resource room teachers. His other teachers and I have dug deeper into his behavioral change. From talking with his mother we have found that his therapist recently decided to move and his medications have slightly changed. Danny has had the same therapist for many years. We believe Danny is struggling with having to trust a new therapist and saying good-bye to someone he previously trusted and thought of as a friend. I say we "believe" this because Danny has

not been open about his emotions with his mother, or us so we are not truly certain how Danny feels about the changes taking place in his life.

Because of the changes taking place, I have not been able to focus on the writing workshop intervention as planned. I have been focusing on Danny staying calm, being less defiant and staying in the classroom. I feel I have been very patient with Danny. I have been calm and collective with my phrases and conversations with Danny regarding some of his behavior choices. I have also worked to reassure Danny I care about him and I am a person he can talk to when he needs to. Danny has definitely tested my patience. He has been yelling and not following directions throughout the entire day. At these times I practice staying patience. I have been giving him private reminders about the choices he makes. The private reminders have not worked consistently. I believe the intervention plan is both feasible and realistic, however, I am not sure if Danny is ready for this plan. The changes in Danny's life have taken over; therefore, writing workshop is not is top priority at this time. Once Danny becomes adjusted to the changes I plan on reintroducing the intervention plan to Danny. I would and have recommended the self-monitoring strategy with colleagues. Another second grade teacher is currently using it to motivate one of her students to increase his writing stamina and avoid the talking distractions from taking place. Overall, I feel self-monitoring is a strategy that works when the right student is using it at the right time. I will continue to work at monitoring Danny's behavioral progress and use the tools and strategies I have learned to lead him to success. I will continue with Brophy's idea of achieving gradual improvements over an extended time period.