

Abstract studies on
improving problem
behavior rates of



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Abstract The purpose of this paper is to evaluate the effects of Social Studies on improving problem behavior rates of two young children without disabilities in the general education classroom using a multiple baseline across participate design. The results of this paper will indicate that Social Stories were effective in decreasing problem behaviors for both of the participants.

Keywords: Challenging Behaviors; Social Stories
Introduction The concept of social stories was introduced by Gray and Garand (1993) to decrease problem behaviors in children with autism. Social Stories are individualized short stories that can be used to help individuals to interpret and understand challenging or confusing social situations, to help understand that other people have perspectives that may differ from their own, and to address problem behaviors (Gray, 1997). They are written for an individual to provide a script for that individual to be successful in a specific situation or setting.

Social stories are an individualized short story written to describe a situation, specific activity, and the behavior expectations associated with that activity (Gray & Garand, 1993). Social stories are used to enhance an individual's understanding of social situations and teach expected behaviors in a given setting. In essence, Social Stories become a "how to" story for initiating, responding to, and maintaining appropriate behaviors. Social stories serve a variety of purposes, and they have shown to help children in the general education classroom with problem behaviors. Social stories have used as a successful intervention for a variety of challenging behaviors, but much of the research has been specific to Autism Spectrum Disorder
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(ASD). This research includes behaviors such as screaming, crying, and hitting which have all been targeted with some success (Adams, Gouvousis, VanLue, and Waldron, 2004).

Agosta, Graetz, Mastropieri, and Scruggs (2004) reported that participants in their study demonstrated a decrease in challenging behaviors such as loud screaming, humming, yelling, and other distracting verbal behaviors during class activities through the use of social stories. Adams, Gouvousis, VanLue, and Waldron (2004) found that social story was an effective intervention on decreasing the challenging aggressive behaviors in a reversal case study design. Topils and Hadwin (2006) assessed the effective use of social stories with children who do not have autism spectrum disorder, but who demonstrate challenging behavior within the school setting. The study found that social stories were an effective intervention for three out of the five students.

These three students demonstrated perspective - taking difficulties relative to their age. This difficulty is referred to as "theory of mind". Theory of mind is an individual's ability to understand another person's knowledge, beliefs, emotions, and intentions and using that understanding to navigate social situations. Other research has demonstrated much less success in the use of social stories, Watts (2008) used social stories as an intervention to decrease challenging behaviors of six participants diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder. In this case, the results reported that the social story only worked for one of the six participants.

It was also reported that there was no significant decrease in the amount or duration of the challenging behaviors as a result of the social story intervention for the remaining participants. Graetz (2003) reported similar results in his research in that the social story intervention was successful in decreasing challenging behaviors in some participants, but did not demonstrate any effect on the challenging behaviors of other participants. The review of literature on the use of social stories has some limitations. Some of the research has used social stories in addition to other intervention strategies.

These intervention strategies were usually verbal and physical prompts (Swaggart, et al, 1995; Scattone, Wilczynski, Edwards, and Rabian, 2002).

Method Two five-year-old boys will participate in this study. The boys attend kindergarten at a public elementary school with 576 students. There are thirteen kindergarten classes with an average of 24 students per classroom. Both students are in the same kindergarten classroom. To ensure confidentiality for both boys, the participants' names and any other identifiable information will be changed for this study. They will have the fictitious names, " Brian and Alex". The boys demonstrate significantly more aggressive behaviors than their same aged peers within the classroom and all school settings.

Aggressive behaviors will be defined as hitting, pushing, pulling at other's clothes, body, and hair, kicking, throwing objects, and spitting. Both boys test average to high average academically. They are both within normal limits on their hearing and vision screenings completed in November 2017.

Procedure Training The boys' teacher (Chelsey Hawkins is the teacher <https://assignbuster.com/abstract-studies-on-improving-problem-behavior-rates-of/>

of both boys) and three additional general education paraprofessionals will be trained on the appropriate use of social stories.

The paraprofessionals are on duty when both boys are at lunch and during lunch recess, and one of the paraprofessionals is in the general education kindergarten classroom. These are potentially difficult settings and times for both boys. Both the teacher and paraprofessional will review the training materials developed by Gary (2000). The teacher will be familiarized with social story examples and the purpose of the social stories. She will have a specific guide to follow on the implementation procedures outlined in this study.

Preference Assessments A Multi-stimulus without replacement preference assessment will be used to determine preferred items. Chazin and Ledford, 2016 suggest that the teacher follow the following procedure in implementing a multi-stimulus without replacement preference assessment. An array of items will be placed in front of each boy. The teacher will allow him to select one item from the array. The item will be removed from the array once it is selected. It is considered a trial each time the array is presented to the boy.

The trials are repeated until there are no items left in the array (Chazin and Ledford, 2016). The items that each boy selects first during his trials will be considered his most preferred item of the array. Any items that each boy refuses to choose will be considered his least preferred items. The teacher will rotate the items after each trial.

In addition, the teacher will use a variety of preferences. In addition,

the teacher will also provide each boy a variety of both preferred and non-
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preferred items to confirm that each boy is making choices based on his own preference (Chazin and Ledford, 2016). Table 1 will provide the exact directions for this procedure. Before beginning, you should collect the following materials: Data collection sheet An array of 5-7 bite-sized edible items or 5-7 toys Sit across from the child at a table or on the floor. Place all items in a straight line within the child's reach, in order by assigned letter. If the child is unable to wait until your task direction to make a selection, block view of the items with a large book or clipboard.

Lift the book or clipboard (if you are blocking the child's view), and give the task direction, " Pick one" or " Which one do you want?" If the child reaches for more than one item, block access to both items, and repeat the task direction, " Pick one" or " Pick one for now. We'll pick another one next."

Allow the child to consume the edible item or play with the toy. Block access to the remaining stimuli during this interim. While the child is consuming the edible or playing with the toy, move the leftmost item over to the rightmost position.

This will allow you to detect if the child is only choosing from one side. If you are using toys, remove the chosen toy after 15-30 s and put it out of sight. If you are using edibles, wait until the child has finished the edible, and don't replace it in the array. Thus, for every trial, you will have one less item available than in the previous trial. Repeat steps 4-7 until there are no items left in the array, or until the child refuses to make any further selections.

Chazin and Ledford, 2016

Table 1 Functional

Assessments

Teacher will make direct observations of the boys

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targeted behavior to develop and support her hypothesis on the function of the behavior. The observational data on the boys' targeted behaviors will be collected using an Antecedent - Behavior - Consequence chart to record descriptive information about the boys' behavior in the general education classroom, at recess, when transitioning between environments, and during their lunch. The data will likely show that the boys' aggressive behavior is being maintained by attention from peers. For both boys', the data will also show that the boys' targeted behavior is most likely to occur in non-structured settings with peers throughout the school. The brief Functional analysis (Pane, Sidener, and Nigudkar, 2015) including attention, access to a tangible, and demand conditions will be conducted in a fixed - order sequence (Hammond, Iwata, Rooker, Fritz, and Bloom, 2013). Each condition will be 8 minutes with 1 minute between each session.

During the access to the tangible condition, the boys will have unlimited access to their preferred item no attention or demand will be made of either boy during this time. The preferred item will be determined using a multiple - stimulus without replacement preference assessment. During the attention condition, the boys will be given the verbal statement " I have papers to correct.

You can play with these items." The boys' will be given access to preferred items, but not the most preferred item used in the tangible condition. If the targeted behavior occurs during this time, the teacher will turn towards the boy and provide him with verbal attention for 10 seconds. During the control condition, the teacher will provide the boys' access to another highly preferred item (second choice in MSWO).

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The teacher will provide everattention every 20 seconds as long as the target behavior does not occur for 5seconds.

A brief functional assessment willbe performed with both boys. It willinclude Design

This study will use an ABC and multiple - baselineacross participants design.

In thisdesign, the intervention order will be offset across the participants andtrials will be repeated for each participant during the intervention. After the baseline phase (A), a social storyindividualized for each boy will be implemented. The social stories will be the intervention(B). During the C phase, the socialstory will be removed, and the intervention will be continued with a neutralbook.

The neutral book will be an ageappropriate book of similar length and size to that of the social story. Benish and Bramlett (2011) used a similiardesign in their study. They suggestedthat by reversing the order of treatments, it would allow for greater controlover the extraneous factors that threatened the validity in their study. These factors included added attention to thechild gets while reading the story, maturation, testing, and history.

In doing this, one of the boys will havephases B and C reversed (ACB).