

In order to demonstrate understanding of the principles of behavior, each student will plan, develop, and execute a behavior analysis project. The report of the project will include at least the following elements:

1. Selection of the participant. While it may be more convenient to modify one's own behavior, it is recommended that you select another person for this role. You may select a mate, member of the family, or someone you work with.
2. Selection of the target behavior. Be sure to give consideration to the careful definition of the target behavior, as well as its operant level. If you choose to develop an entirely new behavior, consider the response class it falls in, and any competing or incompatible behaviors already in the repertoire. If you choose to reduce the frequency or rate of an existing behavior, give consideration to also reinforcing an alternative behavior more appropriate to the situation and desired by the participant.
3. Functional assessment of existing contingencies. Particularly if you choose to try to reduce the rate of an existing behavior, your intervention strategy must be informed by a careful functional assessment. Ideally, a functional analysis would also be done, but time constraints during the semester preclude that option.
4. Selection of an intervention strategy. Depending on the selection of the target behavior, and whether you seek to increase or decrease its rate, select an appropriate strategy. Give consideration to the ABA document: "The Right to Effective Behavioral Treatment". If you plan to use any aversive elements in your contingencies, be sure to discuss the plan with your instructor prior to intervention.
5. Collection of baseline data. Develop a system for plotting the data so that you can share it with the class at the celebration. You should collect at least two weeks of baseline data.
6. Intervention! Follow your plan, but keep careful watch on the rate of the target behavior. Remember Skinner's words: "Regard no practice as immutable. Change and be ready to change again. Accept no eternal verity. Experiment."
7. Adaptation of your plan as needed. See item 6 above.
8. Record the data carefully, so you can assess the effectiveness of your intervention.
9. Collect anecdotal feedback from your participant and any other involved individuals. Remember that each application of behavior analysis is a single-subject experiment (even without reversals), and an opportunity to learn.
10. Prepare a presentation based on your project. Be sure to include some narrative in response to each step outlined above, as well as your data clearly showing the baseline and the result of your intervention on the target behavior.

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