

Sharing Some Strategies and Tactics

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Many of the procedures used in teaching applied behavior analysis could probably be classified as "strategies and tactics". Most if not all of the ones I use may be familiar to you. Students engage in timed practices covering course material each class period, monitor their own performances daily, and spend the majority of class time orally explaining concepts, examples and non-examples to their instructor and classmates.

The basic strategies used in teaching the course seem to number four or five:

- select optimal instructional materials
- contingency manage daily behavior
- monitor learning and practice
- avoid lecturing
- monitor student reaction to the instructional package

My tactics involve using one's current best guess as to how to implement each of the above strategies.

Optimal materials

Text: *Elementary Principles of Behavior* (2nd. Ed.) by Donald Whaley, Richard Malott, and Maria Malott. This book reflects top-of-the line pedagogy, as well as clear, careful consideration to principles and terminology. In addition, the

writing style rewards the reader for reading.

Manuscript: *Skinner on Measurement*, by Ogden Lindsley. I find this controversial paper, rejected by the *American Psychologist* for the special issue on B. F. Skinner, a crucial link in understanding some undercurrents of behavior analysis.

SAFMEDS: *Flashcard Fluency Follies* by Richard Malott. Cardstock sheets contain the essential information of the course. I found many of them to be longer than the usual "Say All Fast Minute Every Day Shuffled" (SAFMEDS) decks in the amount one learns to say. Even though not all the parameters have been researched, these appear to be of crucial importance if students are to become fluent with concepts.

Workbook: *How to Analyze Behavioral Contingencies*, by Richard Malott. The Contingency Diagram procedure introduced in this workbook goes a long way toward transforming the student from a reader to a participant—a critical thinker who not only knows definitions but how to apply them to situations.

Consequence Daily Behavior

"Free-Write." Each class session began with a four-minute timing in which the student attempted to summarize the reading assignment with a prioritized structured output.

Points Grade. The written timing produced points with no upper limit. Class participation also produced points, and

two short projects also produced points. Absences produced no points.

SAFMEDS practice. Students would pair up with a different partner each day and take turns attempting the Flashcard Fluency Follies in a one-minute timing. Sometimes one's partner would be the instructor. SAFMEDS performance produced an independent grade.

Monitor Learning and Practice

Standard Celeration Charts. Each student charted hit and miss frequencies on the daily one-minute timings, including their timings on days the class didn't meet.

Scoresheet for Point Totals. Standards set for various grades along with the requirement that students update their point total (and average) daily provided daily feedback for how one was doing in the course.

Avoid Lecturing

With optimal materials, students spend class time actively, rather than listening to someone tell them what they should know.

Monitor Student Reaction

Programming in some opportunity for periodic timed written student feedback seems to help focus much of the conditioned whimpering behavior to a productive minimum without interfering with the important action.

TBA Special Interest Group

Contact Dick Malott, now, to let him know you want to be a member. This will strengthen our request to the Association for Behavior Analysis council on Friday, October 1, 1993 for permission to start the TBA SIG.

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