

The “You-Me” Game

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Implementing Behavioral Strategies

Purpose:

This set of behavioral strategies was developed for classroom teachers to use with students who may require academic and/or behavioral support. The strategies are intended to support teachers working with students with primary academic deficits and challenging behaviors. For students with more intensive behaviors, potential intensification strategies also are included.

Structure:

Each strategy includes a description of the (a) purpose and overview; (b) type of strategy; (c) behavior(s) addressed; (d) setting; (e) required materials; (f) implementation procedures and considerations; (g) sample scripts or formats; (h) potential intensification strategies; and (i) additional resources (where available).

Terminology and Definitions:

- 1. Reinforcement:** Actions to make a target behavior more likely to occur in the future.
 - **Positive Reinforcement:** Adding something pleasant or desirable (e.g., toy, food, attention) to make a target behavior more likely to occur.
 - **Negative Reinforcement:** Taking something unpleasant or undesired away (e.g., aspirin to relieve a migraine) to make a target behavior more likely to occur.
- 2. Reinforcers:** Incentives (either a reward or the removal of something undesired) that are given to students after they display an appropriate/expected behavior. Use of reinforcers should increase students' continued demonstration of the appropriate/expected behavior.
- 3. Punishment:** Strategies used to decrease or terminate students' demonstration of a challenging behavior, including time-out or loss of privileges.
- 4. Consequences:** Events that occur after the demonstration of any behavior. Consequences can be positive or negative.
- 5. Consequence Clause:** A clause that identifies specific consequences that will be delivered if students do not meet goals/success criteria.
- 6. Replacement Behavior:** An appropriate behavior that a student is taught to use to replace a challenging behavior. The replacement behavior should serve the same function as the challenging behavior.
- 7. Consequence Modification:** Strategies to encourage students' demonstration of an appropriate/expected behavior.
- 8. Antecedent Modification:** Strategies to prevent students' demonstration of challenging behavior by clearly defining appropriate/expected behaviors.
- 9. Schedule of Reinforcement:** Established rules or procedures that a teacher follows to deliver reinforcers.

10. Intermittent Reinforcement: Delivering reinforcers at random time intervals that do not follow a pattern.

Considerations for Successful Implementation:

- These strategies may coincide or be used along with other interventions/strategies (e.g., Check In Check Out).
- The strategies should be aligned with school- and class-wide expectations.
- The reinforcers should be aligned with the hypothesized function of student behavior (e.g., attention, escape, avoidance, sensory).
- When using behavior management systems that award students points for demonstration of appropriate/expected behavior, it is important not to take away points after students earn them. Taking away earned points diminishes their value and may cause students not to care about earning future points.
- When using consequence clauses that include a form of punishment (e.g., time-out, loss of privileges), it is important to accompany them with strategies to teach replacement behaviors and/or strategies that encourage student demonstration of appropriate/expected behavior.
- For students with more intensive behavior, individualize class-wide strategies (using the potential intensification strategies) and consult with a behavior specialist/team in the event that strategies are not resulting in progress.

Examples of Reinforcers

Tangible	Activity-Based	Social	Intangible
Tokens, stickers, posters, prize from a prize box, snack or favorite food item (if appropriate), coloring page, books	Extra time on computer, silent reading time, partner reading, allowed to be a leader, given a classroom job, assisting secretary or teacher	Tell a joke, lunch with teacher, positive phone call home, game with a friend, being a peer model for a younger student	Verbal praise, smiles, thumbs-up, giving eye contact, positive comments written on work

The “You-Me” Game

Purpose and Overview:

Have students compete with the teacher to earn points. Points are earned by students when the teacher “catches” them meeting behavioral expectations. Points can be redeemed for access to preferred reinforcers or activities. When implementing any system, a teacher needs to be clear about the expectations and how students may earn points.

Expectations should be concise, stated each time a new activity or task begins, and visually displayed for easy reference. Teachers should reinforce the behaviors they want to increase by immediately attending to them. A reinforcement system should be in place to help motivate students. Reinforcers can be tangible, activity based, social, or intangible.

Type of Strategy:

Antecedent modification and/or schedule of reinforcement strategy

Behavior(s) Addressed:

Off-task behaviors during whole- or small-group activities (e.g., blurting out answers, getting out of seat, interrupting others)

Setting:

Whole-class or small-group activities

Materials:

- A chart with “You” and “Me” columns (one chart for each student if using the strategy with a small group or an individual student, or one large chart if using the strategy with a large group)
- Pen, pencil, or marker

Implementation Procedure:

1. Create a chart with “You” and “Me” columns.
2. Establish criteria for success (e.g., 10 “You” points and no more than five “Me” points).
3. Demonstrate how points can be earned during instruction by holding a practice session. If there is an individual student who struggles with a targeted learning skill, have him or her model the expected behavior and provide him or her with feedback before the strategy is incorporated within instruction. Peers also can model learning skills.
4. During instruction, award points to the class in the “You” column when they are meeting behavioral expectations. If a reminder has to be given to the students, award a point to the

teacher in the “Me” column. Points also can be awarded to an individual student during class-wide or small-group activities.

5. When awarding points, teachers should explicitly state why they were earned.
6. Students are encouraged to support one another. If individual students are causing the class not to earn a “You” point, then the strategy should be individualized.
7. If students meet the established criteria for success, they can earn access to a reinforcer.

Implementation Considerations:

- For class-wide implementation, the reinforcer may be connected to another behavior management/token economy system (i.e., meeting the criteria equals one handful of beads toward a classroom party).
- If used for individuals, it may be helpful to use the specific “You/Me” points in conjunction with a daily behavior report card.
- For older students and/or students with self-monitoring skills, they can be responsible for awarding themselves a point in the appropriate column.
- More frequent reinforcement should be provided initially and then gradually faded.

Sample “You/Me” Chart and Scripts

Sample Script

When giving a point to the class:

“I see that everyone is following along with their finger. That’s a point for each of you.”

When giving the teacher a point:

“Not everyone was on task. That’s a point for me. Who can raise their hand and tell me what needs to be done next time for students to earn a point?”

Sample Chart

YOU	ME

Class goal: More than 10 tallies in the “You” column AND no more than five tallies in the “Me” column equals one handful of beads for our classroom party (these point values may vary based on student age, timing, and so on).

Potential Intensification Strategies:

- Individualize the behavioral expectations by incorporating replacement behaviors that a student is learning.
- Use peer modeling to support students who struggle with demonstrating the appropriate behavior prior to implementing the strategy during a large-group instructional activity.
- For students with more challenging behavior, include a “consequence clause” in the event that the student does not meet his or her established criteria for success and identify consequences up front.
- Increase a student’s schedule of reinforcement to include more frequent reinforcers throughout the day (as identified by student need) or include a bonus reinforcer when a student exceeds his or her established criteria for success.
- Identify if the student has a skill deficit that inhibits his or her ability to demonstrate the appropriate/expected behavior and teach the required prerequisite skills for successful performance.