

Functional Analysis

Individualized Behavior
Intervention for Early Education

Behavior Assessments

- Purpose
 - Analyze and understand environmental factors contributing to challenging or maladaptive behaviors
 - Determine function of behaviors
 - Develop best interventions based on function
 - Determine best replacement behaviors to teach student

Types of Behavior Assessments

- Indirect assessment
 - Interviews and questionnaires
- Direct observation/Descriptive assessment
 - Observe behaviors and collect data on antecedents and consequences
- Functional analysis/Testing conditions
 - Experimental manipulations to determine function

What's the Big Deal About Function?

- Function of behavior is more important than what the behavior looks like
- Behaviors can serve multiple functions



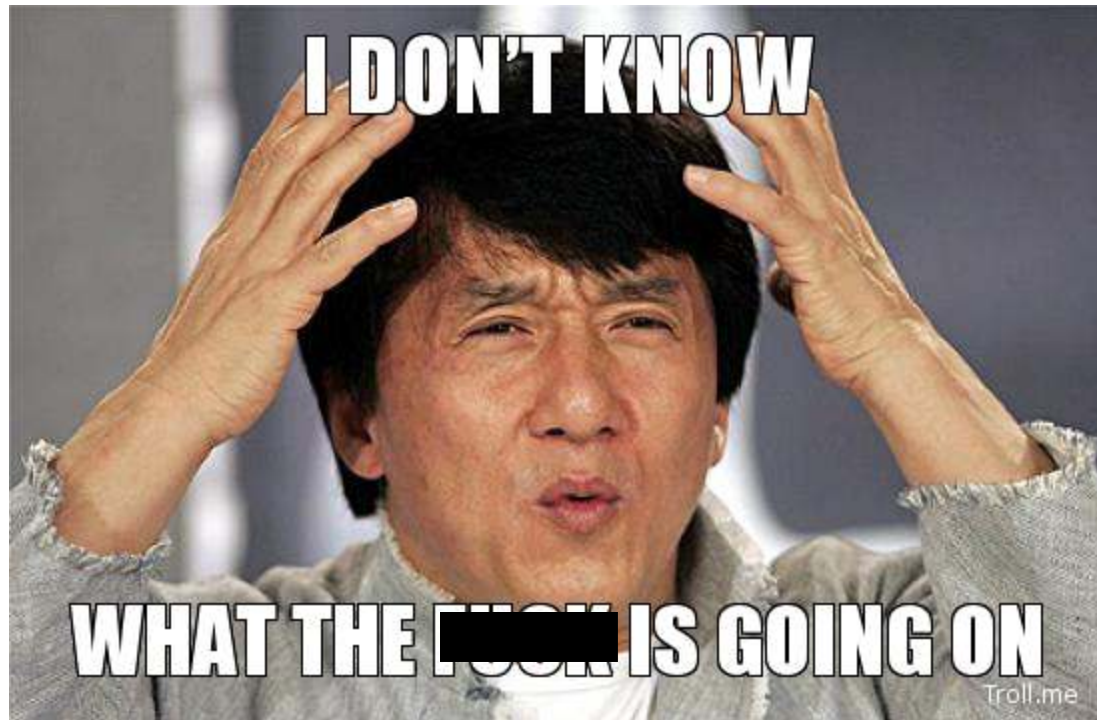
Why bother with testing?

- Current understanding of function is not correct
- Therefore, current interventions are not working



Why bother with testing?

- What the heck is the function?!
- Observations alone have not been able to determine function



Functional Analysis

- Experimental manipulations and testing for function of behavior
- Conditions
 - Test for Attention
 - Test for Escape
 - Test for Tangible
 - Test for Self Stimulatory
 - “Play” condition, which serves as the control

Test for Attention

- Attention or Self Stim?
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dETNNYxXAOc&feature=related>
- Ignore student, but stay near by
- Pay attention each time he screams, see if behavior increases

Test for Escape

- Escape or attention?
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wb43xEVx3W0> (second part of video)
- Present work or task demands
- Remove demand each time she says “no” or giggles, see if behavior goes up

Test for Tangible

- Tangible or escape?
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wb43xEVx3W0> (first part of video)
- Give tangible access each time she tantrums, see if behavior increases (only done if indicated in other assessments)
- Used sparingly

Test for Self Stimulatory Behavior

- Ignore student completely and place self away from student
- Behavior occurs across sessions at similar levels
- Environmental changes do not affect rate of behavior

The Control Condition

- This condition is usually called “play”
- Student has access to highly preferred items/activities/attention and there are no demands
- Does behavior occur even in the play condition?

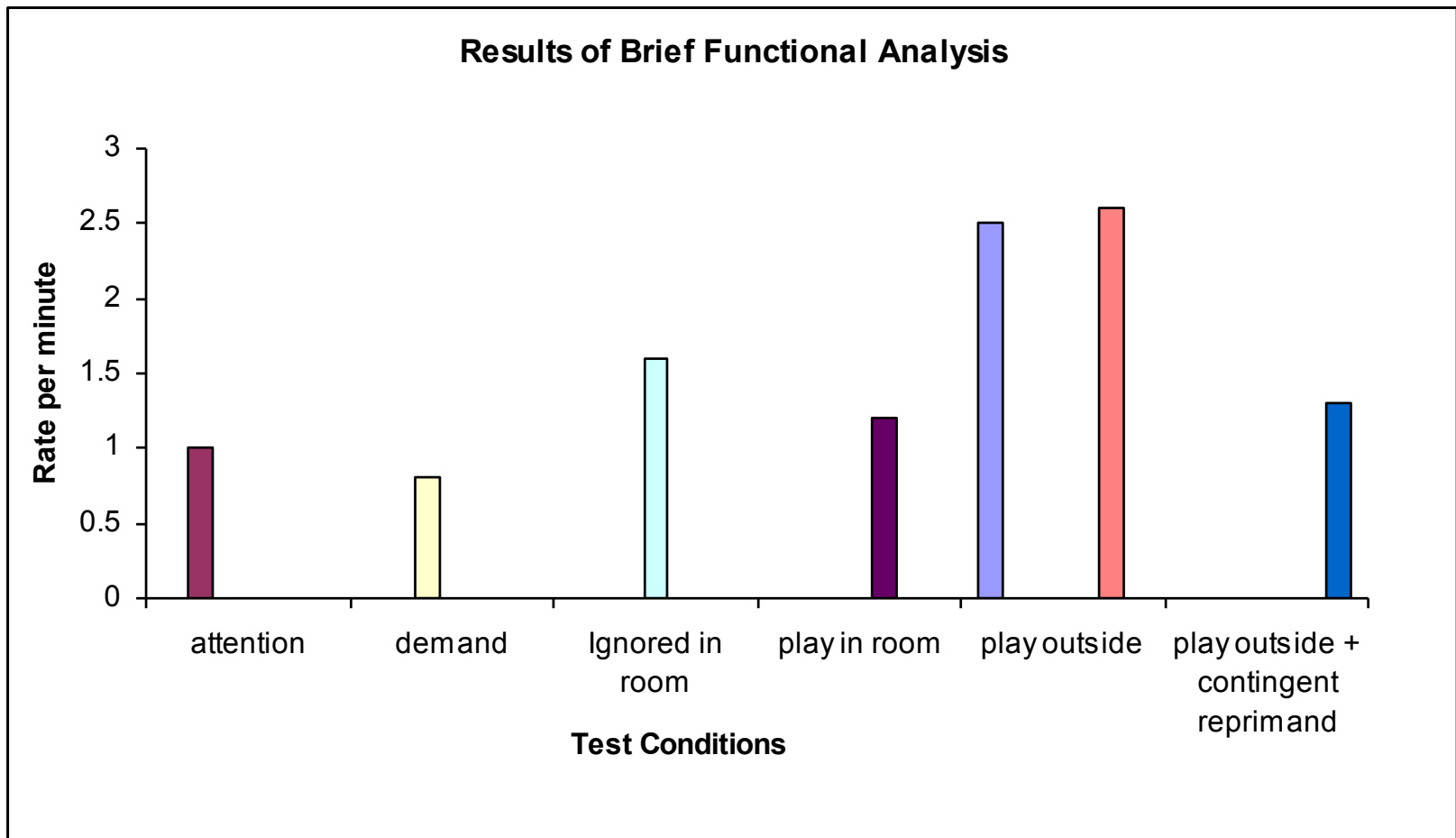
Case Study 1

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Target Behavior | Screaming: Short burst of loud, screechy, high pitched screaming. |
| Baseline rate | Average of 1-2 times per minute throughout the day |
| Pre-assessment function | Attention or self stimulatory/sensory |
| Pre-assessment intervention | No set intervention. Usually ignored or intermittent contingent reprimand provided |

Case Study 1

- Test conditions
 - Attention in test setting
 - Demand in test setting
 - Ignored in test setting
 - Play in test setting (control condition)
 - Play on playground (control condition)
 - Attention on playground

Results of Functional Analysis Testing



Case Study 1

- Attention was not a function
- Self Stim/Sensory most likely function
- Contingent mild reprimand actually reduced behavior
- This can be incorporated into intervention
- Follow up: Screaming down to 1-2 times a day during class time

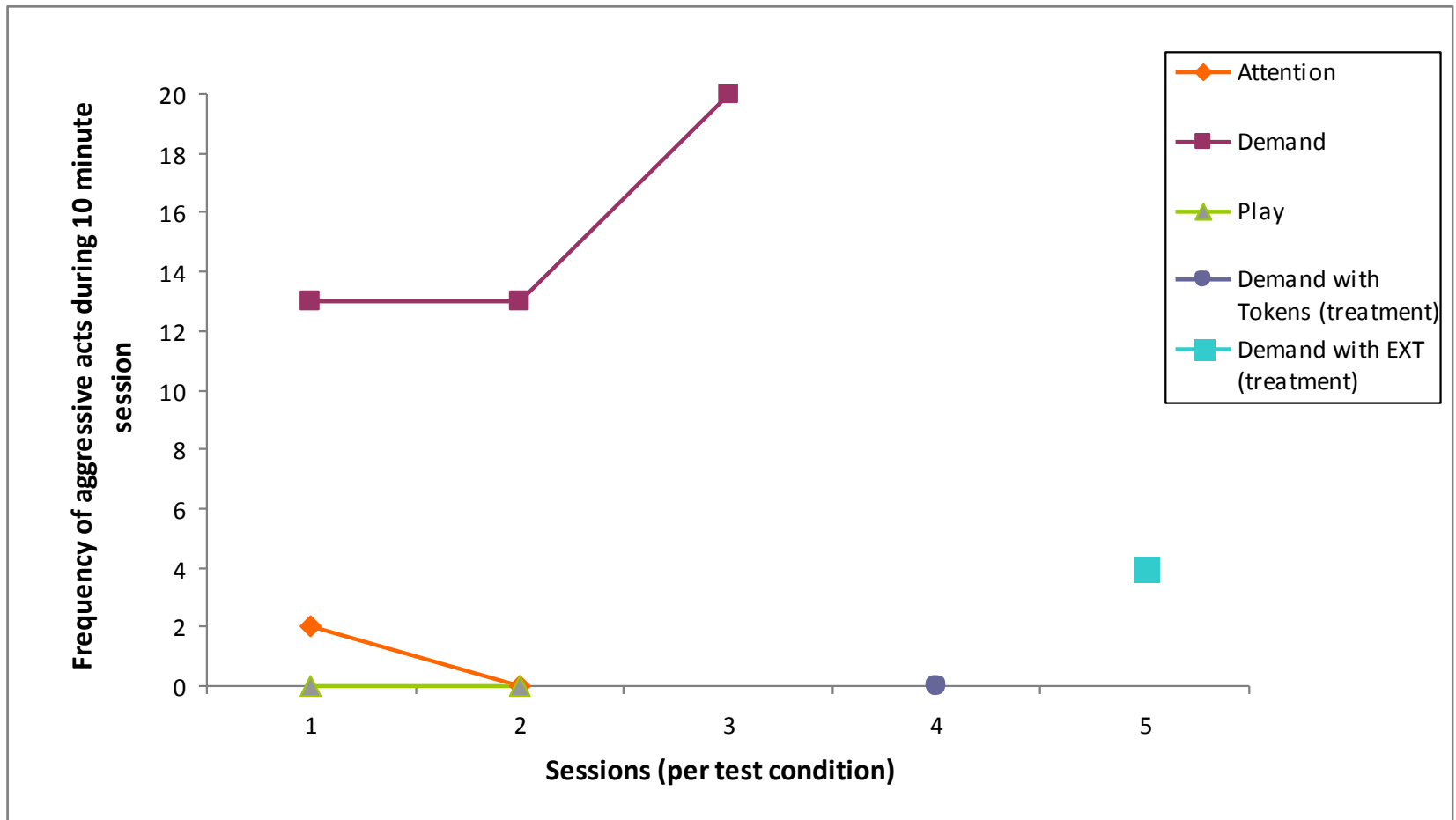
Case Study 2

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Target behavior | Aggression: Punching, pinching, kicking, scratching, throwing objects at others. Often accompanied by laughter, verbal threats or verbal jargon. |
| Baseline rate | Average of 5 episodes a day. Each episode can include 1-8 individual aggressive acts as outlined above. |
| Pre-assessment function | Attention seeking |
| Pre-assessment intervention | Ignored and demand was often delayed or changed |

Case Study 2

- Test conditions
 - Attention
 - Escape
 - Play (control condition)
 - Two treatment conditions
 - Demands with token chart
 - Demands with Escape Extinction

Results of Functional Analysis Testing



Case Study 2

- Attention was not the function
- Escape from demands was most likely function
- Ignoring student and delaying work was actually reinforcing the aggression
- Follow up: Aggression down to average of one episode a month. Zero rates since start of new school year.