

## What Is It?

**Precorrection** is a strategy to prevent challenging behaviors from occurring. The teacher identifies the context in which a problem behavior is likely to occur. Then he provides prompts and reinforcement for expected social and academic behaviors.

## When to Use It

Precorrection can be used when a teacher knows the context in which a problem behavior is likely to occur (i.e., difficulties transitioning back after recess) and wants to establish an expectation of behavioral routines and procedures in the classroom.

### Steps to Implementation / How to Do It

	1. Identify predictable problem behaviors and the context (i.e., time and location) in which the problem behavior is most likely to occur.
	2. Prior to the challenging behavior occurring, identify the expected behaviors. Specify what is and is not acceptable behavior and provide examples.
	3. Modify the context in which the problem behavior is most likely to occur. If necessary, re-arrange the classroom to minimize opportunities for students to engage in problem behaviors.
	4. Practice the expected behavior. Have students rehearse or role play what is and what is not acceptable.
	5. Provide reinforcement for appropriate behaviors. Acknowledge when students are engaging in appropriate behaviors and provide behavior specific praise (i.e., "I really like the way John went right to his seat and began working."). Assess student preferences and establish goals to work towards (i.e., end of the week computer time).
	6. Provide prompts for expected behaviors.
	7. Record data and monitor progress (i.e., how often the student engages in expected behaviors each day). (Colvin, Sugai, & Paching, 1993)

### Example

*Mr. Webb, a 5th grade teacher, notices that several of his students are having difficulties reengaging in classwork after lunch. Several students are loud, out of their seats, and gathered around other student's desks when the bell rings. Mr. Webb finds himself repeatedly having to remind his students to get back to their seats and pull out classroom materials.*

*Mr. Webb first takes data to determine the time and place (context) in which his students are most likely to engage in out-of-seat behavior. He sees that this is most likely to happen at the beginning of the school day, and when returning to class after lunch. He also notices that the students are most likely to congregate at the desks closest to the front door.*

Mr. Webb determines that he would like his students to enter the classroom with voices quiet, sit at their assigned seats, and locate materials. He writes these three rules on a large piece of butcher paper and places it on the front wall of the classroom. He also rearranges the classroom so that his students' desks are spread out and away from the front door.

The following morning, Mr. Webb discusses the new rules posted on the front wall. He provides examples of expected behaviors and asks his students for input. Under each rule posted on the wall, Mr. Webb writes down student ideas. He prompts the class to role play scenarios and practice appropriate and inappropriate classroom behaviors. He then explains that he will be awarding class points for appropriate behaviors, and that 10 points will earn the class a game day on Friday afternoon. Throughout the week, Mr. Webb provides behavior specific praise for expected behaviors. He prompts students to engage in expected behaviors using gestures and verbal reminders. He monitors his students' progress each day, and records how long it takes his students to reengage in classwork at the beginning of class and after lunch.

### How to Increase Effectiveness

- Implement multiple precorrection sessions across several different contexts. The problem behavior may occur in multiple contexts. Addressing each context will increase the likelihood that precorrection is effective.
- Provide additional examples of what is and what is not acceptable. Allow students to role play expected behaviors, and discuss why expectations are important.
- Post rules and expectations on the board or on a wall at the front of the classroom. Refer to class rules when defining expected behaviors and giving verbal reminders.
- Provide specific students with a copy of the rules and expectations to keep at their desks.
- Address the class and review expectations before the times identified problem behaviors are most likely to occur.
- Take additional data to determine if problem behaviors still occur during specific times and contexts.
- Use additional reinforcement strategies in conjunction with precorrection.
- Change reinforcers frequently to increase the likelihood that the class/students will not satiate on the reinforcer.

### Resources

Colvin, G., Sugai, G., & Patching, B. (1993). Precorrection: An instructional approach for managing predictable problem behaviors. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 28, 143-150.

Crosby, S., Jolivette, K., & Patterson, D. (2006). Using precorrection to manage inappropriate academic and social behaviors. *Beyond Behavior*, 16(1), 14-17.