

FBA Opening Skit

Teacher 1: sitting at the table

Teacher 2: comes in and joins Teacher 1

1: Hi, how did your morning go?

2: Well, it started off really well. I decided to try that reading strategy that we discussed in our PLC the other night. We re-read our story and then I was just explaining the strategy and what was going to happen next...

1: Uh-oh, sounds like something derailed the lesson.

2: It was Susan again. She followed along as we read the story and then out of the blue she hauls off kicks Rashad and Emily. The whole lesson was kaput.

1: Huh, what is up with her?

2: I don't get it. She can be such a sweet girl, but she is making enemies fast with all this violent behavior. I'm worried that she is going to really hurt one of the other students one of these times.

1: How often is this happening?

2: Well, this is the first time this week, and last week was good, but the week before she did it twice.

1: Wow. Is it just during reading or do you see it at other times too?

2: You know, I was thinking about that. I think every time it's happened it's been right as I give directions to the whole class. The first time was during a math lesson and the second time I was giving directions for an art project.

1: Huh. So, she kicks the kids sitting next to her?

2: Yes, it's always been the students seated next to her, but the first time she pinched Emily really hard on the arm and the next time she shoved Rashad hard into Pablo who sits in front of him.

1: So, you must have to stop everything and call for help when she does that, right?

2: Well sure, I call Stacy and she comes down and takes Susan back to her room. And you know what? Stacy says she has been polite and will talk to her about her behavior in her room! Susan usually makes up some excuse for why she does it – like Rashad was on her space on the carpet or Emily stuck out her tongue at her. And you know what else?! I gave her the benefit of the doubt the first time and she missed recess and free time in the classroom and apologized to Emily, but the next time and this time, I told Stacy that she can't come back in the room for the rest of the day. I have to keep the other kids safe.

1: So, where will she be the rest of the day?

2: I guess it's sort of an in-school suspension. She'll spend the rest of the day in the behavior interventionist's office or the main office I guess if Stacy has to go somewhere.

1: Huh.

2: Yeah, last time she was actually pretty productive with classwork down there. I overheard the secretaries commenting on how grown up she sounds when she was talking to them.

1: Are you thinking about referring her to EIT?

2: I'm not sure. Stacy mentioned that today too, but she also said something about an FBA. I didn't really get that. I had to do one of those for Conrad last year. Remember him? He always reminded me of Dennis the Menace. But he's in special education and those FBAs are just for kids in special ed., and I don't think I'm at that point with Susan... yet.

1: Well, yeah, and aren't those FBAs a whole lot of work?

2: Absolutely. They have to interview teachers, parents, even the student, do observations, I don't remember how many of those, and probably other things I wasn't even aware of with Conrad.

1: But what's the reason for doing all that anyway?

2: Well, I would have to say that we put together a pretty good plan for Conrad when that was all said and done.

1: Really? Like what kind of plan?

2: Well, we kind of figured out that he usually had a good morning getting ready for school but someone was teasing him on the bus and that just put him in a growly mood. So then, when I gave the kids reminders as they came in to start working on the morning math facts worksheet, which was always a hard thing academically for him, he would shut down – you know, put his head down, refuse to listen, fiddle with things in his desk – and I would have a heck of a time getting him out of that.

1: But it's not like you can be on the bus to stop that kid from teasing him or tell his parents to drive him to school instead.

2: Right, the principal talked to the teaser and his teacher, but Conrad also started meeting with the social worker and they practiced the words he could use to respond to that kid and some self-talk strategies that he could use to deal with the teasing. The social worker taught his mom the same things so they could practice at home before he got on the bus. The social worker met him at the front door for awhile to check in with him about the bus ride.

1: And that solved the problem?

2: Well, no, not entirely. I had to think about that morning math sheet too. I needed to do a quiet reminder to individual kids or use some kind of gesture that I'd taught the kids was a reminder to get to that sheet instead of verbal reminders to the class. Conrad and I had a special signal when he was working on it like he was supposed to because he didn't really like to be praised in front of other kids.

1: Did that work everyday?

2: No, it didn't. There were still shut-downs, but a lot less of them.

1: How did you handle the shut-downs then?

2: Well, we figured out some different ways for him to tell me that he was feeling overwhelmed. We made him two passes and taught him how to use them. One was a pass for the worksheet which meant he skipped the worksheet that day, but he understood that meant he had to be ready to work on the next activity. You know, I never thought that would work, but most of the time he was ready after just sitting there for a few minutes, usually fiddling with something in his desk. The other pass was to the beanbag chair in the back of my room. The kid loved Captain Underpants books and we kept a supply of them back there for him to look at. Once again, I didn't really think he would be able to move on from that, but he usually was ready to go with the rest of the class when I started the next activity.

1: That's pretty cool.

2: Yeah, it did work pretty well. From there we moved on to all the problems he was having on the playground but that's a whole other story.

1: Too bad you can't do that FBA thing on kids like Susan before they get to special ed.

2: Yeah, she definitely could use a plan. Maybe I need to talk to Stacy a little more about what I can do with Susan.

1: Well, enough shop talk during lunch. Your lunch looks a lot more interesting than mine. What is that?

2: Oh, just a simple pheasant under glass and cheese soufflé I whipped up after school yesterday.