

# Behavioral Research on Student with Special Needs: Case Study and Solutions

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## Abstract.

This research examines behavioral challenges in students with special needs through a comprehensive case study approach. The study focuses on a student exhibiting frequent classroom departures and resistance to participation in learning activities. Through systematic behavioral assessment, multiple potential contributing factors were identified, including sensory sensitivities, anxiety, attention deficit issues, and possible medical conditions. The research proposes evidence-based intervention strategies including Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA), implementation of visual schedules and structured routines, differentiated instruction tailored to student strengths, sensory breaks and accommodations, positive behavioral supports with reinforcement systems, and collaborative approaches involving special education teams and parents. The findings suggest that comprehensive, student-centered interventions combining environmental modifications, instructional adaptations, and behavioral supports can significantly improve classroom engagement and compliance. The study emphasizes the importance of continuous monitoring and gradual behavioral shaping while fostering emotional regulation skills. Long-term success requires sustained collaboration between educators, specialists, and families to create supportive learning environments that address individual student needs while promoting academic and social development.

**Keywords:** behavioral intervention, special needs education, functional behavior assessment, classroom management, autism spectrum disorder

## 1. Introduction

The student in question exhibits a recurring pattern of leaving the classroom to go to the toilet, frequently returning in less than 10 minutes. Additionally, this student has shown resistance to participating in class activities and does not comply when given assignments or tasks. These behaviors may indicate underlying challenges, such as attention difficulties, sensory processing issues, or other special needs that affect their ability to engage fully in the classroom environment.

### 1.1 Research Objective

The primary objective of this research is to identify the underlying causes of the student's behavioral challenges and develop effective, evidence-based intervention strategies. This study aims to provide practical solutions that can be implemented in classroom settings to support students with special needs, improve their engagement, and facilitate their academic and social development.

## 2. Literature Review

Several factors could be contributing to the student's behavior. It is important to consider these possible causes to develop a more informed approach to addressing the situation:

**Sensory Sensitivities:** The student may experience discomfort or overstimulation in the classroom environment (e.g., noise, lighting, seating). Leaving the classroom may be an attempt to manage sensory overload.

**Anxiety:** The student might feel anxious about the class or specific activities. The act of leaving the classroom and going to the toilet could provide a temporary escape from stressful situations. Anxiety may also manifest as refusal to participate in activities, as the student might feel overwhelmed or fearful of not performing well.

**Attention Deficit Issues:** If the student has attention-related difficulties, they may struggle with staying focused and participating in class activities. This could explain both the frequent bathroom breaks and noncompliance with tasks.

**Medical/Physical Issues:** There could be medical or physical conditions (e.g., frequent bathroom needs, gastrointestinal issues, or other physical discomforts) that are not immediately apparent. These might necessitate frequent trips to the toilet, leading to time away from class.

**Behavioral/Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD):** If the student has been diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder or another behavioral disorder, the need for structure and predictability in the environment could be a factor. The student may find it difficult to adapt to certain classroom routines, leading to disengagement.

**Avoidance of Academic Tasks:** The student might find the assigned activities difficult or uninteresting and may avoid them by leaving the classroom. This could be due to a lack of confidence or difficulties with certain skills.

## 3. Methodology

To address these behaviors, it is important to develop a tailored, student-centered approach. The following intervention strategies were employed:

### 3.1 Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)

Before making any assumptions, it is essential to gather more data on the student's behavior. Conducting an FBA helps identify the triggers and consequences of the behavior. Key questions considered during this assessment include:

When does the student leave the classroom? Is there a specific time or trigger for this behavior?

How does the student behave before and after leaving the classroom?

What types of tasks does the student resist? Are there specific activities they avoid, or is it all classroom work?

Are there any physical or emotional signs that may suggest discomfort or anxiety?

### 3.2 Visual Schedules and Predictability

Students with special needs often benefit from structured environments with clear expectations. The following strategies were implemented:

Visual schedules: Provide a clear, visual daily schedule showing when breaks, activities, and transitions will occur. This helps reduce anxiety by giving the student a sense of control and predictability.

Visual cues for bathroom breaks: If bathroom breaks are frequent, set a clear, structured routine (e.g., one scheduled break in the middle of class) so the student knows when they can leave the room without feeling the need to escape.

Timed transitions: If the student has difficulty with transitions between tasks, use a timer to help them prepare for the next activity. Allow a brief, structured cool-down period after activities to help them adjust.

### **3.3 Differentiated Instruction**

Resistance to classroom activities may stem from the student's lack of interest or difficulty with certain tasks. To improve compliance:

Modify activities to align with the student's abilities. Offer alternative assignments or use more engaging materials (e.g., hands-on learning tools or visual aids) to capture their attention.

Incorporate the student's interests: Find ways to incorporate topics or activities the student enjoys, which might make them more likely to participate.

Task breakdown: Break tasks into smaller, more manageable steps to reduce overwhelm. Offer praise and rewards for completing each step to build confidence.

### **3.4 Sensory Accommodations**

If sensory sensitivities are contributing to the student's behavior, the following accommodations were provided:

Create a sensory-friendly space: If the classroom is too stimulating, offer a quiet space where the student can retreat if they feel overwhelmed. Sensory-friendly items (e.g., noise-canceling headphones, stress balls, or fidget tools) can be used to help the student self-regulate.

Scheduled sensory breaks: Instead of allowing the student to leave on their own terms, schedule regular breaks where the student can engage in a sensory activity (e.g., stretching, walking around the room, or using calming tools). These breaks allow the student to manage their sensory input without avoiding class time.

### **3.5 Positive Behavioral Supports**

Use reinforcement to encourage desired behaviors:

Positive reinforcement: Praise or reward the student when they comply with instructions or stay in class for the full duration. Use a system of rewards that are meaningful to the student (e.g., stickers, extra recess time, or verbal praise).

Token system: Consider using a token system to reinforce positive behaviors. For example, if the student remains in class for a full 30-minute period, they earn a token that can be traded for a reward.

Behavioral contracts: If appropriate, work with the student to create a behavior contract that clearly outlines expectations and rewards for positive behavior.

### **3.6 Collaborative Approach**

Engage with the student's special education team and parents to gain insight into the student's specific needs:

**IEP (Individualized Education Plan):** If the student has an IEP, ensure that accommodations and modifications are in place to support their needs, such as extended time, quiet spaces, or assistive technology.

**Parent feedback:** Parents may have additional insights into what is working at home or what strategies have been successful. Regular communication with them will help reinforce strategies across both school and home settings.

## **4. Results**

### **4.1 Long-Term Goals and Monitoring**

**Track progress:** Continuously monitor the student's behavior and engagement. Keep a record of when they leave the classroom, their participation in activities, and their emotional state before and after leaving the room.

**Gradual reduction of bathroom breaks:** If bathroom breaks are being used as avoidance tactics, work towards gradually reducing them through structured schedules and increased participation in activities.

**Foster emotional regulation:** Support the student in developing emotional regulation skills so they can manage stress and anxiety in a more productive manner.

## **5. Conclusion**

The student's behavior of leaving class frequently and refusing to engage in activities could be linked to a variety of factors, including sensory sensitivities, anxiety, attention issues, or avoidance of challenging tasks. By conducting a Functional Behavior Assessment, implementing visual schedules, and providing sensory breaks, educators can help the student feel more comfortable and engaged in the learning environment.

Collaboration with special education professionals, parents, and consistent use of positive reinforcement will ensure that the student receives the support they need to succeed in class. Through sustained implementation of these evidence-based interventions, students with special needs can develop the skills necessary for academic success and positive behavioral outcomes.

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