Ability to build trusting relationships with students while remaining professional and objective.

Name: _______________________        Date: ____________

Instituting a Sound Classroom Management System: Arranging the Physical Environment

Please read the following scenario:

Betsy is a first grade student who is constantly out of her seat during lessons. She often walks around the classroom to sharpen her pencil, visit the class fish, and look at books in the reading corner. Betsy has trouble paying attention to lessons, and rarely completes worksheets or assignments. Betsy’s teacher is currently using token reinforcement to encourage Betsy to stay in her seat and remain on task. However, the teacher also wonders whether changes in the physical environment of the classroom might help Betsy to avoid inappropriate behavior.

Considering what you have learned in this lesson, how could Betsy’s teacher or paraprofessional change the physical environment of the classroom to help Betsy stay seated and attentive during lessons? Consider the following options, and then decide what Betsy’s teacher should do in this situation:

1. Divide the classroom into areas that have clear purposes. For example, use a bookcase and some beanbag chairs to delineate the reading corner and explain to students that the area is only for independent reading during free time. Help Betsy understand what happens in the different areas of the room, and explain what kind of behavior is appropriate in each area.

2. Monitor high traffic areas by seating Betsy near the front of the classroom and away from the pencil sharpener, water faucet and cubbies. Teach her how and when it is acceptable to use the high traffic areas of the classroom.

3. Control the degree of stimulation in the classroom so that Betsy is less likely to get distracted. Cover storage areas, keep posters and displays well-organized, and make sure that the fish tank motor is quiet.

4. Make another change, or multiple changes, to the physical environment of the classroom. Describe the behavior:

   1. What does the behavior of concern look like when it happens?

   2. What should the behavior look like (i.e., what behavior should you teach)?
Describe the conditions around the behavior:

3. When does the behavior take place?

4. What specifically occurs before the behavior takes place?

5. How do people respond to the behavior after it takes place?

Consider the options presented for the above scenario:

6. Which of the options (above) would you choose to use to address the challenging behavior? What is your reasoning for choosing this option over the other options?

7. Would you apply this strategy before, during, or after the challenging behavior occurs? What is your reasoning for this?

8. Imagine that you need to tell another paraprofessional how s/he should respond to the challenging behavior described in the scenario. Describe in detail, step by step, how this paraprofessional should carry out the strategy that you chose to use.