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A self-monitoring device to increase the usage of certain study skills and behaviors of learning disabled students

Betty G. Dean
University of Dayton

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A SELF-MONITORING DEVICE
TO INCREASE THE USAGE OF
CERTAIN STUDY SKILLS AND BEHAVIORS
OF LEARNING DISABLED STUDENTS

MASTER'S PROJECT

Submitted to the School of Education
University of Dayton, in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science in Education

by

Betty G. Dean
School of Education
University of Dayton
Dayton, Ohio
July 1997

Approved by:

A solid black rectangular box redacting a signature.

Official Advisor

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Study skills are lacking among students who are enrolled in Learning Disabled (LD) programs. The researcher has observed many Learning Disabled students who are enrolled in the tutoring program at a certain Junior High School consistently being unprepared for tests, not keeping an adequate supply of paper and pencils, throwing important papers away, forgetting assignments because they did not write them down, and not completing assignments. These negative behaviors, along with not utilizing certain other study skills, appear to be a major contributor to their inability to be successful in school.

According to Polloway and Patton (1989), study skills have been recognized as a unique curricular concern for many students, especially those who are considered mildly handicapped, such as the LD students. Because educators have too frequently assumed that study skills develop automatically rather than needing to be taught, this domain has been referred to as the "invisible curriculum" (Toole, 1982).

Many educators think that study skills are indirectly taught through the academics. Evidence shows, however, that most students do not learn study skills unless they receive direct instruction in their use. LD students especially need

instruction in the use of study skills because they lack the ability to concentrate for long periods of time and to effectively process information. Petercsak (1986, p. 2) confirms this by stating,

"study skills instruction needs to be part of the curriculum at every grade level and needs to be taught through a developmental approach..." If these skills are not taught in the elementary years, students may not develop into independent learners later in life. According to Dobb and Shaughness (1988), students are arriving at colleges and universities lacking necessary study skills; the schools are having to offer developmental and remedial classes. Students seem to experience greater academic success as they acquire a repertoire of study skills.

The LD specialist can teach the LD students these study skills and encourage them to use them. "The specialist role with LD students is to help remediate deficits or weaknesses and to provide compensatory education when appropriate" (Moskowitz, 1988, p. 541). He also suggests that the learning disability specialists monitor the LD student and intervene when necessary to guide them toward a successful situation. As students with learning disabilities develop study skills, they will become more independent learners.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to evaluate a self-monitoring device used by a group of LD students while being tutored by the LD tutor. This device was used to monitor their use of study skills and behaviors that contribute to academic success. The researcher believed that this self-monitoring device would be a catalyst that would cause the students to increase their use of study skills and certain behaviors that contribute to academic success. The results of this study can be used by other LD specialists when trying to determine how to encourage LD students to use or increase their use of study skills.

At the beginning of the school year, the researcher familiarized each student in the study as to the meaning and or implementation of certain skills and behaviors listed on the pre-study Student Self-Evaluation Form (See Appendix A.). Then each LD student in the study group evaluated himself on this form as to his current use of study skills and behaviors that contribute to academic success. Examples of these skills and behaviors are time management, organization skills (which include having school materials ready when school starts, and arranging notes, quizzes, and tests in an organized fashion), completion of assignments, note taking, reading skills, using references, asking questions, seeking help, practicing good health habits (such as getting enough rest, doing something fun, exercising, and

eating nutritiously), spending time talking with parents, and giving oneself positive messages. The students were told to reply to the questions on the pre-study self-evaluation form as honestly as possible. As the intervention during the six-week study, each student was asked to complete the Study Skills and Behaviors Checklist (See Appendix C) each day they came for tutoring. This accomplished the dual purpose of reminding them about the different study skills and of determining whether they had used those skills and behaviors either that day or the day before. The students were also given a copy of the Study Skills and Behaviors Checklist to keep in their notebooks so that they could refer to it during the day. At the end of the six weeks, the students were given the original self-evaluation form again to determine if they had increased the use of these particular study skills and behaviors.

Limitations and Assumptions of Study

1. The study was limited to the LD students of one teacher in one school.

2. The literature survey was limited to the English language, the resources of the University of Dayton library, which included OhioLINK and Internet services, and the Dayton Public Library.

3. The results of this study can be generalized only to the extent of other LD students of the same age in a similar school in a similar community.

4. The students interviewed may possibly be biased or give inaccurate information because of their predisposition, the predisposition of the interviewer, the procedures used in conducting the interviews, or the reluctance of the students to express true feelings.

5. The sample was small so the study should be replicated with another group to strengthen the reliability of the study. The researcher considered splitting the students into two groups and performing a replication study with one of the groups but decided against this because of the probability of crossover of learning between the groups. There was always the probability that one student from each group would be within hearing distance of the other when the study was being conducted. In addition, the researcher felt strongly that all of the LD students should receive the teaching on the skills and behaviors and benefit from the self-monitoring device at the beginning of the year.

6. The data was valid because the students' teachers and parents along with the students evaluated the students' use of the skills and behaviors and found the students to be using them at the same rate as the students believed that they were with a few exceptions. If the students' evaluations of their use of the study skills and behaviors

differed from the majority of the teachers' and parents' evaluations, I accepted the teachers' and parents' evaluations over the students' evaluations of themselves. If the students and their parents seemed to differ in their evaluations from the teachers, I accepted the teachers' evaluations.

Definitions of Significant Terms

Academic success - The ability to achieve passing grades in a school.

Behavior - The response of an individual to his environment.

LD tutor Learning Disabled Students who are having difficulty and are not progressing in the regular classroom receive additional instruction from the LD Tutor. The students receive remedial instruction for development of basic skills and tutorial supportive work in academic skills. The LD tutor is responsible for yearly assessment of the LD Students and for Individual Education Plan (IEP) development and implementation. (Chalfant and Kirk, 1984, p. 283)

Ohio link -A computerized central catalog that maintains location and availability of information for more than 12 million items held in its member libraries. With it you can find and borrow items throughout the network. You can borrow items on-line or on-site.

Regular Student - A student who has not been diagnosed as having a learning disability.

Replication Study - A study performed more than once with a different groups at different times.

Resource Room Teacher - A Learning Disabilities teacher who teaches a group of learning disabled students in a specific classroom set aside for this purpose or in the regular classroom. If an LD teacher is teaching in an inclusive situation, she may also teach any of the regular students who are having difficulty learning along with the learning disabled students..

Self-Monitoring Device - A form completed by a student that helps them monitor their own behavior or performance on a given day.

Self-Evaluation Form - A form completed by the student that helps them determine their usage of certain skills and/or behaviors at a particular point in time.

Special Needs Student - A student who needs special help, beyond what is ordinarily given by the regular educator, in order to succeed in school.

Specific Learning Disability - "a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in any imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or to do mathematical calculations." (Ohio State Board of Education, 1982, p. 12)

The seven areas of disabilities as seen on an IEP are:

1. Basic Reading Skills
2. Reading Comprehension
3. Basic Math Skills
4. Math Reasoning
5. Written Language
6. Oral Expression
7. Listening Comprehension

SQ3R Study Strategy - A study strategy that includes Surveying the chapter to gain an overall impression of what it contains; posing Questions for which the student want to read to answer; Reading the entire chapter selectively to try to answer the questions; Reciting the important information gained from a section; and Reviewing the important concepts, generalizations, and facts that were gained from the chapter.

Study Skills - Techniques that a student uses to help them successfully learn classroom objectives.

Tutorial Supportive Work - The LD student receives help from the LD specialist to complete school assignments.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This literature search includes research that has shown that certain study skills and behaviors should be used by Learning Disabled students in order for them to achieve academic success and that these skills and behaviors need to be taught to the Learning Disabled students in school. Also included in this literature search is information about the benefits of students using a self-monitoring device in order to increase their use of these skills and behaviors.

Study Skills and Behaviors are Needed For Academic Success

As a result of their study of 59 college-bound high school students with learning disabilities (LD), Dietrich and Kelly (1993, p.6) stated, "Learning disabled high school students reported inconsistent effort and inadequate use of compensatory skills. They are experiencing problems with reading, writing, and mathematics and anticipate having similar problems in college. Their academic coping skills ranged from sporadic to absent."

In interviews conducted with 12 young adults with learning disabilities who were successful at the college level, as well as with their parents, Reis (1995) found that using certain study skills and behaviors were necessary for their success.

As a result of observing 29 seventh grade boys with learning difficulties, Loranger and Picard (1981, p.10) found that attention and participation (verbal and non-verbal) behaviors show a positive relationship to academic success.

According to Loranger and Picard (1981), existing research (Cobb, note 1,1972; Lahaderne, 1968; Perkins, 1965; McKinney, Mason, Perkerson and Clifford, 1975; Loranger, 1977) has shown that several behaviors are particularly related to academic performance, such as following teacher instructions, voluntary participation, appropriate interaction with peers and placement in appropriate locations. These studies were carried out at the elementary level.

Stanley (1989) found, by surveying school psychologists in Louisiana, that some of their preferred behavioral intervention techniques included reinforcement of academic success, counseling in study skills and in peer and parent tutoring.

After studying four successful learning disabled college students, Bronzo and Curtis(1986) discovered that these students overcame their learning disabilities by applying sound reading skills and a range of strategies to utilize their strengths and cope with their learning disabilities. If they ran into problems they couldn't cope with, they asked for help from a tutor or monitor.

After questioning 59 college-bound high school subjects as to their areas of concern, Dietrich and Kelly (1993) found that the three most common areas of concern were reading, mathematics and English and that the reading problems, according to the students were in part due to inadequate study skills. Some of the students listed specific study strategies such as access to another student's notes for clarification and development of individual study methods. Dietrich and Kelly (1993) also concluded from their study that other academic coping behaviors should be utilized by the students, such as scheduling appointments with faculty members, using supplemental aids and applying pre-writing techniques.

According to Reis, New, and McGuire (1995), high ability college students with learning disabilities, who have been successful in college, attributed their success to extended time to take tests, learning strategies (which included note taking, identifying key points, and planning techniques such as time management and setting work priorities) and having positive experiences outside of school. Reis, Neu, and McGuire (1995) stated, "These positive experiences outside of school enabled participants to survive and even constructively adapt their negative school experiences, resulting in positive personal attitudes that may have enabled them to succeed later in school." "Many of these students excelled in sports or athletics or

had hobbies or passionate interests outside of school. Their study also concluded that these successful LD students were committed to success and were their own advocates, along with their parents and teachers.

Dincher and McGuire (1994) concluded from a study using an intervention to improve the academic success of eighth-grade students that these students felt they could organize their materials more effectively. After observing these students, Dincher and McGuire (1994) found that the majority of assignments were understood but were late due to the students losing or misplacing them. A survey that Dincher and McGuire (1994) gave to these students revealed that these students asked for a second copy of handouts 90 percent of the time and that it took a long time for 80 percent of the students surveyed to locate necessary materials for class. Students responded to the survey that they did not complete homework because of losing assignment sheets.

Therefore, it is important to look at the fact that Albert and Joan Hodapp (1992, p.234) in Dincher and McGuire (1994, p.17) suggested "that notebooks are effective organizational tools when used consistently." Dincher and McGuire (1994, p.17) stated, "Notebooks would be a beneficial tool to the special education students due to the common deficits in the areas of spatial relations, understanding sequence, and time orientation.

Among the study skills and behaviors LD students need to use in order to achieve academic success, several others in the areas of health and nutrition need to be incorporated into their lives. According to Futrell and Cameron in Parker (1989, p.1) a growing number of our students are coming to school ill fed. "To help these students succeed in school, we must not only have high standards, but we must deal with the students' needs. Children cannot learn if they are malnourished." (Futrell and Cameron in Parker, p.1, 1989). Dr. Alan Meyers (1988) in Parker (1989, p.5) stated, "Breakfast Program participation by low income children is associated with: significant improvement in academic performance [standardized achievement test scores]; significant improvement in tardiness rates; and a trend toward improvement in absenteeism." Parker (1989, p.5) stated, "If you care about education, you should care about nutrition, because nutrition has a strong physical, emotional, and intellectual impact on a child's ability to learn."

Pangrazi and Hastad (1986, p.12) stated, "A study which has created much interest is the Trois Rivieres regional experiment (Shephare, 1984). The study provides a well-conceived design for showing the contribution of added physical activity to the academic achievement of students throughout their primary school years."

Another area that needs to be considered when thinking about skills and behaviors needed for academic success is the time children spend with their parents. Fuller(1990) said, "It is important for parents and children to spend time together in an unstructured environment in which the child feels cared about just for being herself and not for her performance or achievement." This time helps to reduce stress and avoid burnout. By doing this, parents help the children to stay motivated to learn and to participate in life itself.

Fuller (1990, p.20) stated, "Research shows that the more proficient a child is in spoken language, the more successful she will be at reading written language. Motivated children tend to have solid language skills." She continues her discussion by saying that the children must develop good language foundations and abilities at home because there is not enough time at school for this. "When communication lines between parent and child are open, learning and motivation are boosted." (Fuller, p. 1990, p.122).

Green (1991 p. 292) stated, "The commonly held belief that intelligence is the primary factor that determines school success discounts the role of focused, applied effort and efficient study skills in the academic achievement equation." Certain characteristics are shared by achieving students that set them apart from underachieving and

nonachieving students. These characteristics include but are not limited to motivation, diligence, and self-discipline. Some of the study skills and behaviors that they employ are defining goals, establishing priorities, recording assignments accurately, managing time efficiently, planning ahead, identification and recalling of important information, taking good notes, engaging themselves actively in the subject they are learning, organizing materials, meeting deadlines, checking for errors, and anticipating what is likely to be on the next test. Also, many of these students are involved in sports or some other extracurricular activity of choice. They are usually healthy and spend time communicating with their parents.

Study Skills and Behaviors Need to be Taught

Dietrich and Kelly (1993, p.4) stated, "A clear pattern emerged in response to the question concerning what high school teachers could do to prepare learning disabled students for college. Students emphasized requirements to study, instruction in study skills and higher expectations for academic performance."

Although they are able to intellectualize and articulate appropriate coping skills, they are unable to implement these behaviors without assistance. Dietrich and Kelly (1993) concluded that college-bound students need intensive instruction in study skills and strategies and

that they need to be made accountable for the use of these study skills and expect consequences for failure to employ them on a consistent basis. Dietrich and Kelly (1993) also found, when interviewing in many areas, that the college expectations of learning disabled high school students were the same as the perceptions of learning disabled students functioning successfully in college. They both felt that high school programs should include study skills courses.

Reis (1995) discovered, from her interviews with 12 young adults with learning disabilities who had been successful at the college level, that services provided by the University of Connecticut Program for Students with Learning Disabilities (UPLD) had a positive impact on these students. She learned that the students thought that the learning specialist at the college level was a critical factor in the academic success of the students participating in the study. Like previous elementary and secondary teachers, learning specialists at the post-secondary level provided valuable services, and they were particularly helpful with the instruction in learning strategies. The majority of the participants in this study said that they learned most of their compensation and learning strategies in college despite their participation in a program for students with learning disabilities at some point during elementary or secondary school. Reis (1995) found, unfortunately, that these programs at the elementary and

secondary levels, according to the students in this study, often focused on remediation of content, or the opportunity to do homework, or catch up on work missed in class instead of teaching the compensation strategies necessary for independent learning and self-reliance.

Bronzo and Curtis (1996) concluded from their findings, "that personal responsibility for learning outcomes can be reinforced in learning disabled students by developing healthy, internal attributions for academic success and failure and by encouraging learning disabled students to exploit their strengths and to develop appropriate coping strategies."

A summary of the data gathered in a study of eighth-grade LD students by Dincher and McGuire (1994) indicated a need for an intervention to assist students in the area of homework completion and organizational skills. Their evidence shows that most students do not learn study skills unless they receive explicit instructions in their use. This is particularly applicable to special needs students, because they lack the ability to concentrate for long periods of time and to process information affectively. This construct is supported by Pertercsak (1986, p. 2) in Dincher and McGuire (1994, p. 16) as he states... "the concept that study skills instruction needs to be part of the curriculum at every grade level and needs to be taught through a developmental approach...." Dincher and McGuire (1994, p. 17)

stated, "If teachers do not address these skills in the elementary years, students may not have the opportunity to develop as independent learners later in life."

Moskowitz (1988, p. 541) in Dincher and McGuire (1994, p. 17) stated, "The specialist role with LD students is to help remediate deficits or weaknesses and to provide compensatory education when appropriate." He also suggested that the specialist monitor the LD student and intervene when necessary to guide them towards a successful situation. Spector, Decker and Shaw (1991) in Dincher and McGuire (1994) suggest that this newfound role decreases the time spent receiving special services and leads students to the ultimate goal of mainstream classes. As students are mainstreamed, they develop a stronger self-esteem which can lead to achievement in school. (Motta, 1992, in Dincher and McGuire, 1994).

After Dincher and McGuire (1994) implemented the intervention of a 3-ring binder and assisted the eighth-grade LD students in learning how to separate and organize their tests and papers into the binder, a survey given to the students indicated 100 percent of the students were using a plan to organize materials in a notebook. In addition, the survey indicated that 100 percent organized materials in a notebook. The survey also indicated that 100 percent of the students could easily locate assignments in their notebook and 60 percent of the students surveyed were

completing ten out of ten assignments compared to 20 percent before the intervention. As a result of the usage of the 3-ring binder and the resulting improvement in homework completion, the grades of the students improved.

In summary, the research above has shown that certain study skills and compensatory behaviors need to be taught, especially to LD students, because they lack the ability to concentrate for long periods of time and process information. As a result of learning these skills and behaviors, their self-esteem improves, and they will begin to experience greater academic success.

Self-Monitoring Devices

According to Stanley (1989), one of the preferred intervention techniques for LD students, employed by School Psychologists in Louisiana is the use of a self-monitoring chart to focus the student's attention on certain specific behaviors. Reeder, Salend, and Whittaker, (1992, p. 204) stated, "Self-evaluation systems have been strongly influenced by components of cognitive behavior modification (CBM), including modeling, self-regulation, and reflective thinking (Bos & Vaughn, 1991). The behavior(s) to be changed are initially described and demonstrated by the teacher and then continuously modeled by peers." When the students are aware of the features of the target behavior, they monitor their own performance of the target behavior. At the end of

a specified time period, the students are given time to reflect on their progress. Salend, Whittaker, and Reeder (1992, p. 203) stated, "Individualized self-evaluation systems have been successful in modifying a wide range of behaviors in a variety of settings." Reeder, Salend, and Whittaker (1992, p.203) stated, "Sainato, Strain, Lefebvre, and Rapp (1990) improved the independent work skills of preschool children with disabilities by teaching them to use self-evaluation. Reeder, Salend, and Whittaker (1992, p. 203) also stated, "Rhode, Morgan, and Young (1983) employed self-evaluation procedures to modify the behavior of six elementary level students with behavioral disorders educated in a resource room and regular education program."

Elias and Tobias (1990, p.90) stated, "Many students experience a common set of problems around organizing themselves to do their academic work. This has been found to be a particular issue in the transition of students into middle, junior high, or high schools." They suggested that a Self-Responsibility worksheet be implemented by teachers, counselors, and learning specialists to help individual students gradually learn to identify academic organizations and related problems and move toward solutions. They suggested that the educator not stop using the worksheet too soon because many students still need its "prompt and cue" value to continue to be successful. "Internalization and

transfer of learning take considerable time." (Elias and Tobias, 1990, p.90)

According to Baer and Fowler (1984), Holman and Baer (1979), O'Leary and Dubey (1979), and Rose, Lessen and Gottlieb (1982) in Sainato, Stain, Lefebvre, and Rapp (1990, p.540), "For the child, the ability to manage his or her own behavior may help maintain newly learned skills across settings, teachers, and tasks."

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY (DESIGN)

Problem Statement

The purpose of this study is to answer this question: "Does reminding students on a frequent basis with a self-monitoring device increase their usage of certain study skills and behaviors?" To answer this question the following procedures were implemented.

Subjects

The subjects for this research were Junior High learning disabled students who were being serviced by a Learning Disabilities Specialist in the tutor room. The researcher determined that ten of the twelve students would be eligible to be in the study. One of the students was eliminated because he was being tutored in the general education classroom. This situation made it difficult for the student to complete the study skills and behavior checklist. Another student was eliminated early in the study because he worked so slowly that he would have taken all his tutoring time to complete the forms. One student moved away during the study, so he was eliminated. Consequently, the researcher ended the study with nine students.

All of the students in the study were seventh graders and none had been in the seventh grade before. All of the

students had attended school in the district the year before. Two of the students were twelve years old, six were thirteen years old and one was fourteen. There was one black student and eight white students. The black student had repeated a grade; none of the white students had repeated a grade. Four students were being raised by single parents, three of whom were unemployed at the time of the study. Two students were being raised by a biological parent and a step-parent; one student was being raised by a grandparent; and two students were being raised by both biological parents.

Setting

The study was conducted in a room devoted to the tutoring of LD students in a Junior High School containing only seventh and eighth grades. The school had an enrollment of 966 with 429 seventh graders and 453 eighth graders. The school was in a small suburban school district in southwest Ohio. The school had a total of 79 staff members. It had a multi-handicapped class with one certified teacher of the multi-handicapped, three certified teachers of the Developmentally Handicapped, and two Learning Disabilities (LD) Specialists who had self-contained classrooms. Two other LD specialists were involved in teaching their students, along with at risk students in the regular classroom under a Model IV grant. They also taught some of

their students in the Resource Room. The researcher also tutored one LD student in the regular classroom under the Model IV grant. However, this student was not included in the study. The school was situated on two floors with the two tutor rooms on the first floor between the band room and the library. Frequently, the band music and choir were heard in the tutor room. There was one principal, two assistant principals, two counselors, one librarian, one assistant librarian, and one computer specialist. There was a computer lab and several computers in the library which can be use by any student. The computers had the capacity to access the internet.

The town where the school was located had a population of 31,300, as of the 1990 census, of whom 28,913 were white, 1,290 black, 814 Asian or Pacific Island, 418 Hispanic, 123 Indian, Aleute, or Eskimo, and 160 others fit none of those categories. The median household income was \$27,558, and the average per capita income was \$13,053. The town was located within ten miles of a city of about 180,000 people, and there was a major Air Force Base within five miles.

Data Collection

Pre- and post-study Self-Evaluation Form Construction

To determine the study skills and behaviors needed by LD students to achieve academic success, extensive research was done as is noted in the Literature Review. Also, a

veteran Learning Disabilities Specialist, a school counselor, and a Learning Disabilities Supervisor were consulted. These skills and behaviors were identified on the self-evaluation form. It was decided that a Likert-type scale would be best to record the students' responses and to determine the students' amount of usage of these skills and behaviors. The statements used in the self-evaluation form were written using the students' vocabulary. An example of a statement that is on the form is: "I complete all assignments on time and turn them in." The student response choices were: ALWAYS/USUALLY/SELDOM/NEVER. (See Appendix A for Student Self-Evaluation Form.)

Administration of the pre- and post-study Self-Evaluation Form

The pre-study self-evaluation form was completed by the study group at the beginning of the first six weeks of school after the various skills and behaviors had been explained to them. The LD tutor read each question to each student. At times only one student was completing the form, and at other times two students were completing the form at the same time. Each student was told to complete the form as honestly as possible because it was intended to help him know which study skills and behaviors he needed to begin to utilize or to use on a more frequent basis. He was also told that no one would see his answers except the LD tutor. The

post-study self-evaluation was completed by each student in the study group at the end of six weeks to determine if the students had increased in their usage of certain skills and behaviors.

Skills and Behaviors Check List (Self Monitoring Device)

The same statements that were on the self-evaluation form were on the Check List. However, instead of the Likert scale for responses, the students were to check whether they had used the skill that day or the previous day. (Each student did not come to tutoring every day, and some came at the beginning of the day, so they could have used only a few of the skills at that point in the day.) For filling out the checklist, the student received one point each time toward rewards given by the LD tutor. The purpose of the checklist was to remind them to use these skills each day. The tutor did remind the students to get out their checklist each day they were in tutoring. She withdrew all other prompts regarding the use of study skills. At the end of the week, the students totalled up their checks for each skill or behavior used and compared them to the week before to see if they had increased their usage. They were given five points towards rewards for totalling up their checks [See Appendix D for Study Skills and Behaviors Checklist (Self-Monitoring Device)].

Teacher and Parent Evaluation Forms

The teachers and parents of each student in the study were each given an evaluation form (see Appendix A for parent and teacher evaluation forms) to fill out on the students before and after the study. These forms were accompanied by a letter explaining why they were being requested to complete the forms (see Appendix B for letters). The teachers were informed that the researcher was performing a study, but the parents were only told that the researcher was trying to increase their adolescents' usage of certain study skills and behaviors. The parent and teacher evaluation forms for each child were analyzed at the end of the study to see if the students had improved in their use of the skills and behaviors. They were also compared to the students' evaluation forms to check validity of the study. The parent form was somewhat different than the teachers' form because they witnessed different study skills and behaviors taking place, and the student's form contained all of the skills and behaviors. However, the same Likert scale that was on the student self-evaluation form was used. The parents and teachers were instructed to use no prompts except the study skills checklist to encourage the students to use their study skills. They could only remind the students to use their checklists.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

During the course of the study, it was determined that the responses of the students on their evaluation forms were not reliable based upon the parents' and teachers' evaluations and the tutors' observations of the students' behaviors. Therefore, the students' evaluation forms were not used to gather data for this study. Analysis of the data in the Parent and the Teacher Evaluation Forms returned as a part of this research showed that the Learning Disabled students' use of certain study skills and behaviors increased during the time the Study Skills and Behaviors Checklist (self-monitoring device) was being used. (See Table #1 for percents of increase and decrease of the use of the study skills and behaviors.) [All of the skills and behaviors from the student, parent and teacher forms were combined in this table, so when a particular number of a skill is mentioned, the skill and its number may be found in this table.] However, it was difficult to isolate the effects of this self-monitoring device from other influences in the students' lives, such as parental support and self-motivation.

An analysis of the Parent and Teacher Evaluation Forms was conducted to determine the skills in which most students improved their usage. The skill that had the greatest increase (78% of the students) was "I ask questions when I

TABLE 1
PERCENTS OF INCREASE OR DECREASE OF STUDY SKILLS AND BEHAVIORS
(Based on Parents' and Teachers' Responses)

STUDY SKILLS AND BEHAVIORS	NBR	PCT	NBR	PCT
	INCR	INCR	DECR	DECR
1. Gets to class on time.	2	22	1	11
2. Keeps at least 3 pencils and 3 pens in a pouch in a 3-ring binder or bookbag.	2	22	0	0
3. Keeps at least ten sheets of paper and all daily assignments, tests & quizzes in order by subject in a 3-ring binder or folder.	4	44	0	0
4. Writes down all assignments and important information immediately.	3	33	0	0
5. Asks questions if needed.	7	78	0	0
6. Pays attention in class.	3	33	0	0
7. Plans day to have time for doing homework and other activities.	0	0	0	0
8. Studies in the same quiet place at home every day.	0	0	0	0
9. Completes and turns in all assignments on time	4	44	2	22
10. Talks to parents and tells them what and how they are doing in school every day.	0	0	0	0
11. Gets 7 to 9 hours sleep every day.	1	11	0	0
12. Eats a healthy breakfast, lunch, and dinner every day.	0	0	0	0
13. Does something fun every day.	0	0	0	0
14. Studies by using SQ3R method.	0	0	0	0
15. Studies a little at a time for tests.	1	11	0	0
16. Asks for preferential seating if needed (seating close to board or teacher, away from noise or distractions, and/or next to good student).	6	66	0	0
17. Does make-up work or gets missed notes.	5	56	0	0
18. Asks teachers and tutor for permission to take tests in the tutor room when necessary.	4	44	0	0
19. Gets physical exercise every day.	0	0	1	11
20. Gets up on time to be at school on time.	0	0	0	0
21. Gets help with assignments.	3	33	0	0

need to" (question #5 on the Study Skills and Behaviors Checklist). The skill that had the second greatest increase in usage (67% of the students) was "I ask for preferential seating" (question #16 on the Skills and Behaviors Checklist). According to Loranger and Picard (1981), "existing research (Cobb, note 1, 1972; Lahaderne, 1968; Perkins, 1965; McKinney, Mason, Perkerson and Clifford, 1975; Loranger, 1977) has shown that several behaviors are particularly related to academic performance, such as following teacher instructions, voluntary participation, appropriate interaction with peers and placement in appropriate locations." The third highest increase in study skills usage (56% of the students) was "I do make-up work or get missed notes" (question #17 on the Study Skills and Behaviors Checklist). Only three students decreased in their usage of the skills and behaviors. One girl decreased in getting to class on time in two classes, and one boy and one girl decreased in the completion and submittal of homework in one class each. No direct correlation could be found between the increased use of the top three skills alone and the achievement of higher grades.

Analysis of the information provided in the Student, Parent, and Teacher Evaluation Forms revealed that every student increased their use of at least three study skills and behaviors during the six-week period that the self-monitoring device was being administered. The greatest

increase in the number of skills and behaviors used by a single student was ten; this level of improvement was achieved by a girl who was being raised by her grandmother. The students who increased their use of higher numbers of the study skills and behaviors, or who were already using higher numbers of the study skills and behaviors, generally ended up making better grades at the end of the grading period during which the research study was conducted. (See Table #2 for the number of skills increased compared to grades for the grading period. There was a definite correlation between the number of skills in which the students showed improvement and the grades they received for the grading period.

The Parent and the Teacher Evaluation Forms administered before and after the study were also analyzed for each skill/behavior to determine the number of evaluators who said that the student "used the skill always" (indicated by a score of "1"). With one parent form and four teacher forms for each rating event, it was possible for a student to score up to ten "1's" for a skill/behavior. The analysis showed that the students who were awarded higher numbers of "1's" made better grades for the grading period during which the self-monitoring device was being used. (See Table #3 for the numbers of "1's" scored in particular skills compared to grades for the grading period. The four

TABLE #2
NUMBER OF SKILLS INCREASED COMPARED WITH GRADES
FOR FIRST GRADING PERIOD

Student #	Grades	Skills Increased	Number of skills incr.
1. Girl	F, F, F, F	#5, #9, #17	3
2. Girl	F, C, B, D	#1, #3, #4, #5, #6 #9, #16, #17, #18 #21	10
3. Girl	F, F, D, D	#1, #5, #9, #16	4
4. Girl	B, D, D, D	#1, #5, #6, #16, #17, #18	6
5. Girl	D, D, D, D	#2, #3, #6, #16, #17, #18	6
6. Girl	C, C, C, C	#3, #11, #16, #18	4
7. Boy	F, F, F, I	#1, #5, #17, #21	4
8. Boy	C, C, B, D	#5, #9, #16, #21, #4	5
9. Boy	F, F, F, C	#1, #5, #18	3

TABLE #3
SKILLS WITH AMOUNTS OF #1 RATINGS COMPARED WITH GRADES
PER STUDENT

Student #	Number of 1's	Grades
1. Girl	7	F, F, F, F
2. Girl	36	F, C, B, D
3. Girl	12	F, F, D, D
4. Girl	34	B, D, D, D
5. Girl	21	D, D, D, D
6. Girl	46	C, C, C, C
7. Boy	10	F, F, F, I
8. Boy	42	C, C, B, D
9. Boy	9	F, F, F, C

skills for which most students received "1's" were #1 (I get to class on time), #5 (I ask questions if I need to), #9 (I complete and turn in all assignments on time), and #21 (Gets help with assignments). [Skill #21 appears only on the Parent Evaluation Form as skill #2 and on the Teacher Evaluation Form as skill #4. Due to an oversight by the researcher, this skill was not listed on the Study Skills and Behaviors Checklist.] Also, the skills that were used all the time (at least two of their four teachers rated them with a 1 in these skills on the post-study evaluation form) by the four students who made the highest grades during the grading period were #1(I get to class on time.), #5(I ask questions when I need to.), #6(I pay attention in class.), #9(I complete and turn in all assignments on time.), #17(I do make-up work or get missed notes.), #21(Gets help with assignments.) The students who made the poorest grades did not use these specific skills all the time: #6,9,17 & 21 (See Table #4 for the skills used all the time compared to the grades of the students.)

Since the students' grades were based on the average scores from their tests and homework, one of the major reasons for the students making more than one F or straight D's was their failure to turn in their assignments on time consistently or at all. Therefore, the lack of the consistent use of this study skill seems to be the major

TABLE #4
SKILLS USED ALL THE TIME BY STUDENTS
COMPARED WITH THEIR GRADES

Student #	Skills Used All the Time	Grades
1. Girl	1	F, F, F, F
2. Girl	1, 4, 5, 6, 9, 17, 21	F, C, B, D
3. Girl	1, 5, 16	F, F, D, D
4. Girl	1, 5, 6, 9, 17, 21	B, D, D, D
5. Girl	1, 4, 6, 16	D, D, D, D
6. Girl	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 9, 17, 21	C, C, C, C
7. Boy	1	F, F, F, I
8. Boy	1, 5, 6, 9, 16, 17, 21	C, C, B, D
9. Boy	1, 5	F, F, F, C

contributing factor to these students' failing or near failing grades.

These results agree with the findings of Loranger and Picard (1981, p.10) who, as a result of observing 29 seventh grade boys with learning difficulties, found that attention and participation (verbal and non-verbal) behaviors show a positive relationship to academic success. They also agree with Stanley (1989) who found that some of the preferred behavioral intervention techniques included reinforcement of academic success, counseling in study skills and in peer and parent tutoring.

In comparing the boys' with the girls' percents of increase in the use of the study skills and behaviors, the girls had a greater increase. (see Table #5 for percent of girls & boys that increased usage of certain skills and

TABLE V
PERCENT OF GIRLS AND BOYS THAT INCREASED
USAGE OF CERTAIN STUDY SKILLS AND BEHAVIORS

SKILL/BEHAVIOR	6 Girls % incr	3 Boys % incr
1. Gets to class on time.	0	67
2. Keeps at least 3 pencils and 3 pens in a pouch in a 3-ring binder or bookbag.	17	33
3. Keeps at least ten sheets of paper and all daily assignments, tests & quizzes in order by subject in a 3-ring binder or folder.	50	0
4. Writes down all assignments and important information immediately.	33	33
5. Asks questions if needed.	67	100
6. Pays attention in class.	50	0
7. Plans day to have time for doing homework and other activities.	0	0
8. Studies in the same quiet place at home every day.	0	0
9. Completes and turns in all assignments on time.	67	33
10. Talks to parents and tells them what and how they are doing in school every day.	0	0
11. Gets 7 to 9 hours sleep every day.	17	0
12. Eats a healthy breakfast, lunch, and dinner every day.	0	0
13. Does something fun every day.	0	0
14. Studies by using SQ3R method.	0	0
15. Studies a little at a time for tests.	17	0
16. Asks for preferential seating if needed (seating close to board or teacher, away from noise or distractions, and/or next to good student).	83	33
17. Does make-up work or gets missed notes.	67	33
18. Asks teachers and tutor for permission to take tests in the tutor room when necessary.	67	33
19. Gets physical exercise every day.	0	0
20. Gets up on time to be at school on time.	0	0
21. Gets help with assignments.	17	33

behaviors). The largest number of skills and behaviors increased was by a girl. She increased her usage of 10 skills. The smallest number of skills increased was 3 by a boy. The skill that increased the most (83%) for the girls was "I ask for preferential seating. Skills #5, "I ask questions if I need to;" #9, "I complete and turn in all assignments on time;" and #17, "I do make-up work or get missed notes" had the second highest increase by the girls. The skill that increased the most (100%) for the boys was #5, "I ask questions if I need to." The second highest increase was in skill #1, "I get to class on time." Overall, there was a greater increase in usage of eight skills and behaviors by the girls and a greater increase in usage of only three of the skills and behaviors by the boys. Therefore, the girls increased their usage of more than twice as many skills and behaviors as the boys. Therefore, the girls increased their usage of more than twice as many skills and behaviors as the boys.

There was no increase in usage of skills 7, 8, 10, 12, 13, 14, 19, or 20. However, all of these skills, except for #14 (using the SQ3R method) were being used to some extent at the beginning of the research.

There were some skills and behaviors that only the parents could witness and some that only the teachers could witness. In those situations in which the student differed from the parent's evaluation of himself, the parent's viewpoint was accepted to give a realistic evaluation. If

the student differed from the teachers and/or the parents differed from the teachers, the teachers' assessments of the students were accepted over the students' and/or parents' assessments. "I study in the same quiet place everyday," was inadvertently left off the parents' form; it should have been included. Also, "I get up in time to get to school" and "I get help with assignments" were both inadvertently left off the student forms; they should have been included.

It is worthwhile to mention some of the comments that the teachers and parents made in the comments section of the evaluation forms. The following table (#6) groups the comments for the students who ended up making the best grades at the end of the six weeks (no more than 1 F or better than all D's) and for the students who received the worst grades (more than 1 F and/or all D's). These comments seemed to back up Loranger and Picard's (1981) statement, "existing research (Cobb, note 1, 1972; Lahaderne, 1968; Perkins, 1965; McKinney, Mason, Perkerson and Clifford, 1975; Loranger, 1977 has shown that several behaviors are particularly related to academic performance, such as following teacher instructions, voluntary participation, appropriate interaction with peers and placement in appropriate locations." The comments also reinforced the fact that the students who made the best grades asked questions, paid attention in class, completed and turned in all assignments on time, and did make-up work or got missed

TABLE 6
COMMENTS OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS ON EVALUATION FORMS

STUDENTS WITH BEST GRADES	STUDENTS WITH WORST GRADES
1. Takes time doing homework	1. Has a real concentration problem
2. Has a good attitude	2. Very inconsistent
3. Is a good listener	3. Very disruptive
4. Work is usually done according to guidelines	4. Lazy
5. Enjoyable to have in class	5. Brings toys to class
6. Very attentive	6. Very disorganized
7. Keeps organized	7. Doesn't seem to care about school assignments
8. Work always turned in on time	8. Seems like a smart kid
9. Asks questions	9. Should have passed but didn't turn in notebook
10. Keeps track of own assignments	10. Talks instead of listening
11. Checks to see if behind in anything	11. Has missing papers
12. Realizes has responsibilities	12. Doesn't seem focused
13. Wants to improve grades	13. Puts head on desk
14. Shows interest in class	14. Doesn't follow directions or pay attention
15. Answers questions verbally in class	15. Behavior is increasing problem
16. Working to maximum capacity	16. Rarely does homework
	17. More concerned about social issues
	18. Difficulty completing work
	19. Rarely turns work in on time
	20. Daydreams

notes. The students who made the worst grades did not do these things on a consistent basis, and some were behavior problems and more interested in social issues.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

Study skills are lacking among students who are enrolled in Learning Disabled (LD) programs. Therefore, the intent of this project was to determine if a Study Skills and Behaviors Checklist completed by certain LD tutoring students each day they came to tutoring would encourage them to use these study skills and behaviors on a more frequent basis.

To determine the skills and behaviors used on the Checklist, the researcher consulted literature, a Special Education Teacher, a Special Education Supervisor, and a School Counselor. The students, parents, and teachers evaluated the students before and after their using the Checklist to determine if there was any increase in their usage of these skills and behaviors. The parents' and teachers' evaluations of the students were accepted as accurate if they differed from the students' evaluations of themselves and were used in the results and conclusions of this research.

The results of this study indicated that some skills increased and some did not. However, generally, those skills and behaviors that did not increase were already being used on a somewhat regular basis. Also, the researcher determined that the majority of the students who increased their usage

of these skills the most were those who were already motivated to do well and had parental support with their schoolwork. The girls seemed to increase their usage more than the boys in generally the same skills. The skills that were increased the most by the students who made passing grades during the research were "I ask for preferential seating," "I do make-up work or getting missed notes," and "I ask teachers and tutor for permission to take tests in the tutor room." The skills that were used consistently all through the study by the students who had passing grades at the end of the study were "I get to class on time," "I complete and turn in all assignments on time," "I ask questions if I need to," "I pay attention in class," and "I do make-up work and/ or getting missed notes."

Conclusions

Study skills and behaviors can be taught to, and utilized by, LD students. The skills and behaviors must be explained to the students, and it must be determined if the student understands how to use them. A study skills and behaviors checklist can help these students begin to use these skills and behaviors on a more frequent basis because it brings the skills and behaviors to their attention. However, the students must be motivated to want to increase their usage of these skills and behaviors, and they must use them all the time in order to succeed in school. They also need

parental or other help at home to carry through with the skills and behaviors while they are away from school.

Recommendations

The study skills and behaviors which increased during the usage of the Study Skills and Behaviors Checklist were identified as were the study skills and behaviors which were used the most consistently by the students who made the best grades during the study. This researcher thinks that it would be interesting to determine if the results of this study were typical by replicating this study with other groups of seventh grade LD students. Another interesting study would be to determine if regular education students utilizing the Study Skills and Behavior Checklist would increase their use of study skills and behaviors and which ones would be increased. This data could be compared with the data collected on the LD students to determine similarities and differences.

In conclusion, this study showed that the academic success of LD students is directly related to their consistent use of certain study skills and behaviors. These study skills and behaviors need to be taught to LD students and need to be reinforced at home by the caretakers of these students.

Appendix A
Evaluation Forms

STUDENT SELF-EVALUATION FORM

Tutor's Name _____ Student's Name _____

Grade Level _____ Date _____

FACTOR	ALWAYS	SOME TIMES	NEVER	DON'T KNOW
1. I get to class on time.				
2. I keep at least 3 pencils and 3 pens in a pouch in a 3-ring binder or bookbag.				
3. I keep at least ten sheets of paper and all daily assignments, tests & quizzes in order by subject in a 3-ring binder or folder.				
4. I write down all assignments and important information immediately.				
5. I ask questions if I need to.				
6. I pay attention in class.				
7. I plan my day to have time for doing homework and other activities.				
8. I study in the same quiet place at home every day.				
9. I complete and turn in all assignments on time.				
10. I talk to my parents and tell them what and how I am doing in school every day.				
11. I get 7 to 9 hours sleep every day.				
12. I eat a healthy breakfast, lunch, and dinner every day.				
13. I do something fun every day.				
14. I study by using SQ3R method.				
15. I study a each day for tests.				
16. I ask for preferential seating if needed. (Seating close to board, or teacher, away from noise or distractions, next to good student)				
17. I do make-up work or get missed notes.				
18. I ask my teachers and tutor for permission to take tests in the tutor room when necessary.				
19. I get physical exercise every day.				

PARENT'S EVALUATION FORM

Parent's Name _____ Student's Name _____

Tutor's Name _____ Date _____

FACTOR	ALWAYS	SOMETIMES	NEVER	DON'T KNOW
1. Completes all assignments on time.				
2. Gets help with assignments when needed.				
3. Keeps at least 3 pencils and 3 pens in a pouch in a 3-ring binder or bookbag.				
4. Keeps at least ten sheets of paper and all daily assignments, tests & quizzes in order by subject in a 3-ring binder or folder.				
5. Gets up in time to be at school on time.				
6. Plans his day to have time for doing homework and studying for tests.				
7. Eats breakfast and dinner.				
8. Gets 7-9 hours sleep per day.				
9. Gets physical exercise every day.				
10. Does something fun every day.				
11. Talks to you every day and tells you how and what he is doing in school.				
12. Studies all through week for tests.				
13. Does make-up work if absent.				

COMMENTS _____

Signature _____

TEACHER'S EVALUATION FORM

Teacher's Name _____ Student's Name _____

Subject _____ Date _____

Tutor's Name _____

FACTOR	ALWAYS	SOMETIMES	NEVER	DON'T KNOW
1. Completes and turns in all assignments.				
2. Comes to class on time.				
3. Asks questions when needed.				
4. Gets help with assignments when needed.				
5. Keeps at least 3 pencils and pens in a pouch in a 3-ring binder or bookbag.				
6. Keeps at least ten sheets of paper and all daily assignments, tests & quizzes in order by subject in a 3-ring binder or folder.				
6. Pays attention in class.				
7. Writes down assignments and other important information.				
8. Asks for preferential seating (or already has) near teacher, board, away from distractions, and/or next to good student.				
9. Does make-up work and/or gets missed notes.				
10. Asks to take tests in tutoring room when needed.				

COMMENTS: _____

Appendix B
Letter to Parents

September 17, 1996

Dear _____:

In order to encourage my students to use certain study skills and behaviors on a more regular basis, I am researching the use of a Study Skills and Behaviors Checklist that they will complete each time they come to tutor for six weeks. At the end of six weeks, I will decrease its usage on an individual basis depending upon how well and how often the students are using the skills and behaviors. I am including with this letter a Parent Evaluation Form for you to fill out regarding your adolescent's present usage of these skills and behaviors. After your adolescent begins to use the checklist, for six weeks I am requesting that, rather than suggesting that he or she use these study skills, you simply ask your child if he or she has been completing the Study Skills and Behaviors checklist when he or she comes to tutoring. At the end of the six weeks, I will send you another evaluation form to determine if he or she has increased the use of these skills and behaviors.

I think it is very important that your adolescent use these skills and behaviors in order for him or her to be successful in school. Many times a student who has learning disabilities thinks that he cannot overcome his disabilities. However, I have found that those students who overcome their disabilities use these skills and behaviors on a consistent basis.

I am recommending very strongly that your adolescent have a 3-ring binder in which he will keep all important papers, quizzes, tests, paper, pencils, and pens in an organized manner. The binder needs to be divided into sections with dividers with tabs for all of his classes that do not already require a separate 3-ring binder. He can place paper folders in it to be used for other required notebooks and clean notebook paper. An adequate supply of pencils and pens (3 to 4 a day) needs to be housed in a pouch in the binder (the zippered binders have holders for pens and pencils), so that he or she will have some for each day. Your adolescent should also keep an assignment notebook (I have given him one) with him at all times and should bring his 3-ring binder with paper, pens, and pencils, any assignments he needs help with (based on his IEP goals), and his up-to-date assignment notebook each time he comes to tutoring. He will be given incentive points toward rewards for doing so.

I hope that your adolescent is successful this year. I will do everything I can to help my students, but the student must do his or her part. If you have any questions about how tutoring works or anything pertaining to your child, please call me at the school after 2:40 PM, or send me a note by your adolescent. I am including a copy of the rules and discipline policy for tutoring and a short information sheet for you to fill out along with the evaluation form.

Thank you for reading this and filling out the forms. Together we can create an environment in which your adolescent has great potential for being successful. Please return both forms in the stamped, addressed envelope I have provided within one week, so he or she can begin using the checklist.

Sincerely,

Betty G. Dean
SLD Individual/
Small Group Instructor

Appendix C
Letter to Teachers

September 17, 1996

Dear _____:

As partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Masters degree in Education, I am implementing some research with my students this year. I am going to determine if a Study Skills and Behaviors Checklist, which the students will be completing every day they come to tutoring, will encourage them to use these skills and behaviors on a more regular basis.

In order to establish a baseline of their use of these skills and behaviors at the present time, I am requesting that you complete a Teacher Evaluation Form for each student that you have of mine. I am including the form(s) for you to complete with this letter. You will find a space on the form that is titled "unknown" that you may use in case you don't know if a student uses a particular skill or behavior. Please return the forms to me by September 30 so that I can begin the research.

I will be sending you a second evaluation form at the end of six weeks. This form will be used to determine if the student has increased in his usage of the skills and behaviors. The parents and students will also be filling out an evaluation form in order to validate the amount of usage of these skills.

Thank you for taking your valuable time to fill out these forms.

Sincerely yours,

Betty G. Dean
SLD Individual/
Small Group Instructor

Enc. (to be returned)

Appendix D
Study Skills and Behaviors Checklist

STUDY SKILLS AND BEHAVIORS CHECKLIST

Tutor's Name _____ Student's Name _____

Grade Level _____ Date _____

FACTOR	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI
1. I get to class on time.					
2. I keep at least 3 pencils and 3 pens in a pouch in a 3-ring binder or bookbag.					
3. I keep at least ten sheets of paper and all daily assignments, tests & quizzes in order by subject in a 3-ring binder or folder.					
4. I write down all assignments and important information immediately.					
5. I ask questions if I need to.					
6. I pay attention in class.					
7. I plan my day to have time for doing homework and other activities.					
8. I study in the same quiet place at home every day.					
9. I complete and turn in all assignments on time.					
10. I talk to my parents and tell them what and how I am doing in school every day.					
11. I get 7 to 9 hours sleep every day.					
12. I eat a healthy breakfast, lunch, and dinner every day.					
13. I do something fun every day.					
14. I study by using SQ3R method.					
15. I study a little at a time for tests.					
15. I ask for preferential seating if I need to (seating close to board or teacher, away from noise or distractions, next to good student)					
17. I do make-up work or get missed notes					
18. I ask my teachers and tutor for permission to take tests in the tutor room when necessary.					
19. I get physical exercise every day.					

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