Intervention Planning: Moving from Observation, Reflection, to Intervention Suggestions to Implement

> **Service request:** A group that is presenting numerous challenges, making teaching very difficult and behaviors are constantly interrupting the flow of what the adults are trying to do with the students.

Classroom Observation – What Am I Looking For?

Tier 1 Interventions [1, 2]	**What I see** (Classroom Observation)	**What is missing** (Reflection)	**What is needed** to help meet the needs of the group _(and be the foundation for Tiers 2 and 3 students who are in this class group)_ (Intervention suggestions to implement)

Teacher greeting and engaging their students individually and as a group (in morning and after each transition) [2, 3, 4]	Is the teacher consciously greeting students as they arrive in the morning?
	 Is the teacher distracted, getting things ready for the day – the student enters without connecting with teacher?
	 Is this done consistently after each separation/time of transition (recess, lunch, phys. Ed., French, etc.)?
	 Does the teacher have different ways of capturing student's attention?
	     Rhythmic sounds, chants, clapping, singing, calling out?
	 Does the teacher decrease other distractions (ex. Music playing in the background) to help prime attention in their direction?
	 Does the teacher have a 'morning routine' that becomes a mode of priming student's attention?
		If greetings are sporadic and/or inconsistent, they will not carry the same weight and value as an intervention
		 Does the teacher understand the importance and value of this intervention?
		 Is the teacher aware that some students are not 'tuned into' what they are saying when they begin to deliver instructions?
		     If yes, what do they do about it, strategies?
		     If not, how can these be supported to prime their attention towards the adult who is speaking?
			Provide examples of how this can take place.
			 Encourage that the teachers find their 'personal' way of greeting as this will increase the probability of it being done consistently.
			 Share the link to CEBM website for examples & resources. [3, 4]
			 Speak to the importance of having everyone's attention prior to giving instructions as this will prevent numerous repetitions and the students calling out _'I don't know what to do!'_
			     'Call for attention,' pause, 'call' again (if needed), PAUSE, THEN give leading instructions.

Well established structures and routines [2]	Is the teacher in the lead, explicitly – alpha stance, tone, and presence?
	 Is there a daily schedule, well visible for the students?
	     Is this reviewed at the start of each day?
	     Is it referred to during the day to show the progress in time of the day?
	 Is there an explicit 'Morning Routine, 'Returning from Recess/Lunch Routine'?
	 How are transition times handled?
	 How does clean-up take place?
	 Is the room organized, clutter-free?
	 Is it easy to see 'what' goes 'where' when you scan the room? (e.g., Lunch boxes, agendas, games, etc.)
	 If different workstations are available, how are they being accessed? Organized & calm OR Chaotic, loud, rushing to grab a spot?
	 Are the work tools readily accessible, ex. Community Basket', if a student can't quickly find theirs when beginning a task?
		Are the students responding to the adult requests?
		 Does the adult's intervention grab the students' attention to have them follow the adults' requests?
		 Are the students aware of what comes next?
		 Are the students able to get ready for the next task independently when 1-2 prompts are given by the adult?
		 What are the 'points of friction?' When things are not going well.
		     Tuning in to the teacher when 'called for attention'
		     Having work tools out & ready to work
		     How easy is it for the students to find what they need?
		     Getting on task
		     Staying on task
		     Disrupting others
		     Staying in one's place and/or area
		     Transitions
		     Clean-up
		     Lining up
		     Preparing for the end of day departure
			Encourage reading and viewing: 'How We Lead Matters' Ch.3 (p. 31-39) from _Reclaiming Our Students_ by Hannah Beach and Tamara Strijack.
			 Discussion with the teacher to share observations – prioritize changes where the greatest impact can be profited from first. Then address others sequentially.
			 Having clear, explicit & consistent structures and routines, creates a predictable environment where the students feel safe. This has a direct impact on reducing misbehavior and outbursts which require intervention and derail the focus of the group.
			 Organization of materials - color-coding, labelled, in desks vs in group bins.
			 Encourage the teacher to have 1-2 Community Baskets [5] filled with tools ready to work – it helps to reduce 'getting on task time' and frustrations.
			 Discussion of dependence vs independence (readiness, maturity).
			 Suggest regular 'desk clean-up' as part of the end of week routine – helps to de clutter and remove unnecessary items – ready to start the next week on a good foot!

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Visuals to cue desired behaviors [2]	Physically the class is laid out with clear sections, easy passage from one area to another. Desk organization facilitates the students 'looking AT the teacher'. Areas are labelled. Clean & organized. Work tools are available in each area. Clutter free – low visual distraction. Visual calendar is placed in location easily seen by students. Items on walls are pertinent and timely. Academic tools are placed in a logical location for its use and are large enough to facilitate its use from different areas of the room.	Clear, wide passageways between rows or clusters of desks facilitates movement and helps to reduce frustration and disruptions. When the classroom is disorganized, the students stray to different areas rather than move about with purpose. Clear, predictable set-up enables quick, efficient transitions. The design of the physical layout in a class can either prime attention towards the teacher or prime peer attachment – ensure that the layout meets the needs of students and their maturity level. When the number of students per area is identified, less adult intervention will be needed to have the students respect the classroom parameters. Having work tools at each workstation reduces roaming back-and-forth, disrupting others, and increases on task time. Following the daily schedule helps students know 'where' they are in the day and helps them look forward to the times they enjoy most. When the classroom decorations fill the room, the important pieces of information get lost, and the students no longer refer to the tools that could be a support to them.	Consider adapting the layout of the classroom to widen passage space to reduce friction and frustration. Consider shifting the angle of vision for the students who struggle with paying attention to the teacher. Please refer to the CEBM website – document on Classroom Physical Layout & Priming Attention. [2] Consider moving to a less distracting location the students who struggle to maintain 'on task attention'. Offer suggestions to reduce clutter and visual distractions. Pack-up & put away items that are not being used during this period of the year. Send home artwork that is completed after each short display. Encourage labelling of the different areas in the classroom, adding a visual to identify the number of students who can be in each area at a time. Establish 'helpers' to assist in keeping work tools in workstations 'ready for use'.

Short work periods [2]	How long are students expected to be 'on task'?
	Are they expected to be at their desk, or can they be in different locations?
	Are instructions clear of what is expected to be done? Is this reviewed explicitly?
	    How can they get assistance from the adult? Raise hand, call out, walk around? Come to the teacher?
	    What is done for the for the students who struggle with understanding what they need to do? Who struggle to begin the task?
	    Do students know what they can do when they have completed their work?
	    Do they follow through and move on to these possibilities?
	    What is done/coached when the students who have finished, roam and disturb others who are still on task?
		Which portion of the group can stay on task for the period requested by the teacher?
		    Is the expected 'on task time' appropriate for this age group?
		For students who require scaffolding tools to assist them with their tasks, are they available from the start or do they need to ask for them?
		For students who need support – do they ask? Is there a management strategy in place to help them to have support to begin their task?
		For Fast Finishers, do they know what is available for them, do they shift to this next task independently or with prompts?
			Are the work periods too short, just right or too long? Have this discussion with the teacher.
			    Identify the signs, behaviors observed – particularly when the time is too long, and the students struggle to maintain attention, effort, and energy.
			Encourage the teacher to break tasks into manageable chunks to increase engagement and motivation to do tasks.
			Consider providing scaffolding of tasks to support students – Implementation of Executive Functioning Intervention Guidelines and Strategies. [7]
			Encourage the use of Brain Breaks in between these 'steps' within longer tasks.

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Alternate seating options – different items to sit on or sit in [2,7]	Scan the room, how many different options are available for the students? Chairs, different types of stools, options on the ground.	Are students sitting in an ergonomic position that meets their needs (height of chair and desk/table)? If their desk and work surface are not properly aligned with the height for their body, this can have a direct link with their struggle to attend, stay on task, sit calmly in their workstation. Hence, increased frustration and behaviors may result.	Discuss with teacher alternate seating options – are they aware of the range, their possibilities, and benefits? Share links to the CEBM website for information, *Maximizing Your Classroom* [7] document, that provides a wide range of options and visuals. Discuss the importance of properly introducing these work TOOLS, how to access an expected behavior while using these tools. SAFETY is of highest importance; this needs to be addressed consistently. Encourage a review of each student's work position – adjusting desk height, change in chair (if needed) as this can make a significant difference in a student's demeanor and availability for learning throughout the school day.
Alternate workstation options – different locations within the classroom for students to work [2,7]	Scan the room, how many different options are available for the students? Are all students sitting at desks? Are some standing at their desk or in different locations throughout the room? Are there places where the students can work on the ground comfortably?	Some students' needs are met with a desk and chair, while others benefit/need alternate working positions to keep their brain engaged and learning. If alternate workstations are not present in the class, does the physical layout facilitate its introduction?	Discuss with teacher alternate workstations – are they aware of the range, their possibilities, and benefits? Share links to CEBM website for information, in particular the *Maximizing Your Classroom* [7] document that provides a wide range of options and visuals. Discuss the importance of properly introducing these workstations, how to access them, the number of people per station and the expected behavior while working there.
Physical movement (high or low energy) "Brain Break" – after each work period [2,8,9]	Are physical (high energy) and quiet (low energy) brain breaks used to separate work periods throughout the day? Is the teacher leading the brain break activity or are they using a video on Smartboard? Which portion of the group is actively participating in the brain break activity?	Brain Breaks are a great time for teachers to be playful and have fun with their students – it is best that THEY be the leader. Do they repeatedly engage in the same activities, or do they mix it up frequently? Do they sometimes have students be the leaders? This could encourage students to participate and engage more readily.	Discuss the benefits of Brain Breaks to help the students to get energy out, shift their brains to something else as this will help them apply themselves for the next upcoming task. Share the CEBM website link for the Brain Break page – a wide range of resources and references that are based on neuroscience and its benefits to growing brains. [8,9] Encourage teachers to share ideas and materials to have a wider range of activities in their repertoire of brain break activities.
Individual "Quiet Time" (low energy) activity – ex. small craft, sketching, mandalas/coloring pages, Search'N Find, etc.) [2,10]	Are there different quiet activities (low energy) readily available for students to access during transition times, when they have finished work or need a break to help manage their emotions? Do they have easy access to these? Does the selection change periodically?	Quiet brain break activities are a good way for students to have activities that are rhythmic and soothing to the brain. Are they aware that this is available for them? Do they know its intended purpose?	Discuss with the teacher the benefits of these quiet activities to help channel emotions, shift attention and have some calming time. Brainstorm with the teachers the types of quiet activities they offer and that they may consider adding to their present selection. It's important to change the variety periodically to maintain interest and engagement. [10]

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Emotional release activity with the whole group – daily [2,11]	When emotions rise in the group, what are the teacher's interventions? How is this addressed? What is done to help the students channel this energy? Are there lessons, discussions and activities being done with the group around emotions? Naming, expressing, sharing.	Is the choice of intervention helping to reduce the intensity and frequency of these episodes? Is there a pattern to when this unfolds? (Ex. After recess, returning from lunch) What is done on a prevention level? Is the technician providing supportive intervention to assist the students with emotional expression, processing and managing challenging situations?	Share with the teacher information on the *Emotional World of students* [13] and the benefits of providing opportunities for emotional release on a regular basis. Please refer to the **Inside-Out Handbook** that accompanies the **Reclaiming Our Students** book by Hannah Beach and Tamara Strijack. Encourage support from Technician to implement activities to help students express, process, and manage their emotions. [11] Encourage the use of targeted children's literature to help prime and build a language of emotions. [14] Providing support on the playground will go a long way to helping them grow into being able to express and manage their emotions productively.
Designated Area for students to retreat to within the classroom when a break is needed from the group and/or their work [2,14]	Is there a Designated/Quiet Area within the classroom? If yes, are the students able to 'go into & cocoon?' A private area where others cannot see them. Does it have sensory materials: things to touch, fidgets, weighted animal? Does it have visual props to cue breathing techniques? Are there calming items to look at – nature scenes, photos of animals, mazes, search and find books or tracing activities? Is there something comfortable to sit on – foam tiles, bean bag, large pillows? Is the area and its items being used appropriately? Are the students aware and respecting that this intervention area is for 1 student at a time?	Each Designated Area will be different; the key is that there are a range of items that help meet the needs of the students in this particular class. Are the students who are using this intervention area benefiting from this intervention? It's important that things be changed periodically to prime interest and engagement. Although this can be a very good intervention tool within a classroom, it can also be challenging for students to use this space appropriately, safely and consider the materials as tool and not toys. It is important that this be reviewed regularly and that items that are not properly being used be removed for a block of time (or replaced). They can be reintroduced, with explanation, at a later date. Safety is a top priority when visiting and using the Designated Area.	If an area is present, review with teacher how this was introduced with their students. How is it being used? Do they find that it is presently being used well? Is it beneficial to their overall intervention strategies? Consider making changes if there are challenges in this area – it is important that the teacher regularly review how this space is to be used and its purpose within the classroom. Encourage the support of the Technician to assist in coaching students with its proper use. Share the CEBM website link for the *Designated Area* – video capsule and document to provide additional ideas and understanding. [14]
Community projects (1-3 per classroom) Puzzles, building game (Lego, maze building, mural weaving) [2,15,16]	Are there community projects present within the classroom? If yes, are students aware 'when' they can go to these? Is it clear that all students can contribute to its assembly/evolution?	This is a great means to help build group identity and a sense of belonging in a class. It's important that these be age appropriate and of interest to the particular students in this group, otherwise they will not be interested, nor will they engage. It's important that things be changed periodically – involve your student to choose the next projects!	Encourage the teacher to welcome 2-3 ongoing projects within their class, this is a great way for the students to channel energy, create and problem solve. Puzzle [16], ongoing building & creating project, group craft project (ex. mural, large collage, weaving, loom knitting, large mandala coloring). Share the CEBM website link for *Building & Creating* as this will provide different ideas and suggestions. [15]

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Increased opportunities to be outside – structured games, learning times, play [2,8]	Does the teacher seize opportunities to bring learning outside? Are the students given additional recess time outdoors when their energy level in the classroom is not productive? For the students who struggle during recess and lunch, is there a plan to help structure their time outdoors to help them engage well and have fun?	Some students really struggle with long blocks of time indoors, what means is put into place to help them manage themselves, so they won't get into trouble?	Share with the teacher the link to the CEBM with the benefits of bringing movement into learning – increased retention. [8] Some students need additional movement to be able to function well within the classroom – seek support from the Technician if this can be beneficial for your students.
Sensory stimulation - Overall physical environment [2,17,18]	How is the natural lighting in the room? Are neon lights being used? Visual decor: Sparse and purposeful? Cluttered and overbearing? Are different sensory tools available for use by the students to help them regulate their emotions and energy? (Ex. Fidgets, sensory area with things to touch/feel, egg chair or covered table as an area to cocoon in)	Are blinds present, are these used strategically as natural lighting changes during the day? Is the 'feel of the room' calm and inviting, or crowded and overwhelming? When the students struggle with their energy level, what do they gravitate towards in the class? Where do they move to?	Share the CEBM website link for Sensory & OT Perspectives [17] and Sensory Materials [18] sections as these will provide different intervention suggestions and greater understanding of their potential benefits.

1. https://www.cebmmember.ca/pyramid-of-interventions
2. https://www.cebmmember.ca/practices-in-the-classroom
3. https://www.cebmmember.ca/attachment-and-right-relationship
4. https://www.cebm.ca/post/creating-a-conscious-invitation-into-relationship
5. https://www.cebmmember.ca/accessibility-to-work-tools
6. https://www.cebmmember.ca/academic-resources
7. https://www.cebmmember.ca/individual-work-stations
8. https://www.cebmmember.ca/brain-break-activities
9. https://www.cebmmember.ca/physical-outlet-movement-station
10. https://www.cebmmember.ca/fine-motor-quiet-activity-area
11. https://www.cebmmember.ca/emotions-intervention-area
12. https://www.cebmmember.ca/emotional-world
13. https://www.cebmmember.ca/children-s-literature
14. https://www.cebmmember.ca/cocoon-area
15. https://www.cebmmember.ca/building-creating-area
16. https://www.cebmmember.ca/puzzle-area
17. https://www.cebmmember.ca/sensory-and-ot-perspective
18. https://www.cebmmember.ca/sensory-materials

Tier 1 interventions are UNIVERSAL interventions that benefit the whole group to function within the classroom