

## Precision Teaching in a Day Treatment Facility

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Red is a 15-year-old boy who is receiving services for severe emotional and behavioral problems in an outpatient day treatment facility in south Mississippi. He has been diagnosed with Bipolar Disorder and Oppositional Defiance Disorder. In addition to his therapy, he also receives academic instruction for reading, math, and English in a self-contained classroom in this facility. Red was placed in the 8th grade because of his chronological age, however his academic performance ranged from the second to third grade level. His academic deficiencies can be attributed to his truancy throughout his educational history.

Upon initial placement in the day treatment facility, Red's reading deficits were so severe that he was unable to identify letter sounds. A corrective, direct instruction, decoding reading program was implemented for 11 nonconsecutive months prior to his participation in this precision teaching project. He attended the day treatment program for 9 months, and then he was removed from the program because he was noncompliant with his medication and his parents neglected to participate in his treatment. After a 4-month leave, he was re-admitted to the day treatment facility and continued with the corrective reading program for two more months prior to beginning this precision project.

During the course of his participation in the corrective reading program, Red's progress was astounding, and certainly alleviated any doubts of his ability to learn. He was able to decode words on approximately a 2.7 grade level, but his reading rate was very slow and he made frequent errors.

Red's teacher began implementing this precision teaching project because it was a requirement in a class she taking towards her Master's degree. This was her first experience using precision teaching. Prior to implementing the intervention designed to increase Red's reading rate and accuracy, baseline data were recorded for three consecutive days. He was instructed to read a passage while his teacher timed him for 1-minute and recorded the number of words he read correctly and incorrectly. His reading rate ranged from 12 to 14 words per minute with 5 to 9 errors. For this project, a reading error was recorded if the Red omitted, inserted, substituted, or mispronounced words. Hesitations for more than two seconds and self-corrects were also counted as errors.

After collecting Red's baseline data, his

teacher decided to set the aim at 100 words per minute with fewer than 5 errors. The intervention designed to increase Red's fluency and accuracy was as follows:

- 1) The teacher read the reading selection to Red.
- 2) Red was directed to silently follow along as the teacher read, and circle with a pencil any words he did not recognize.
- 3) After the teacher read, she used direct instruction to teach Red the words he circled (e.g., The teacher would say, "That word is morning. What word?" and Red would say "morning.").
- 4) When she finished going over each word he circled, she prompted him to read the words on his own.
- 5) The teacher continued to review the words Red circled until he read the word correctly within one second. This usually required two to three learning trials for each word.
- 6) After he read each word correctly, the teacher prompted Red to read the passage as quickly as he could and timed him for one minute.
- 7) Red entered his own data on the logarithmic chart on the computer immediately after he was timed. His teacher guided Red to access the saved chart, insert the data points (one for correct words per minute and one for errors), and save the updated information.
- 8) Upon completion of this procedure Red was rewarded with time to play games on the computer.

After 4 sessions of using the above procedure, Red stated that he did not want to play on the computer as a reward. Instead, he said, he would rather spend that time practicing reading so that he could increase his speed. So, on the ninth session, a phase change was implemented. The instructional procedures the teacher implemented were the same with the following exceptions: Red's teacher rewarded his participation by allowing him and a peer to practice reading together. They took turns reading the same passage the teacher used for instruction that day. This extra practice lasted approximately 10 minutes.

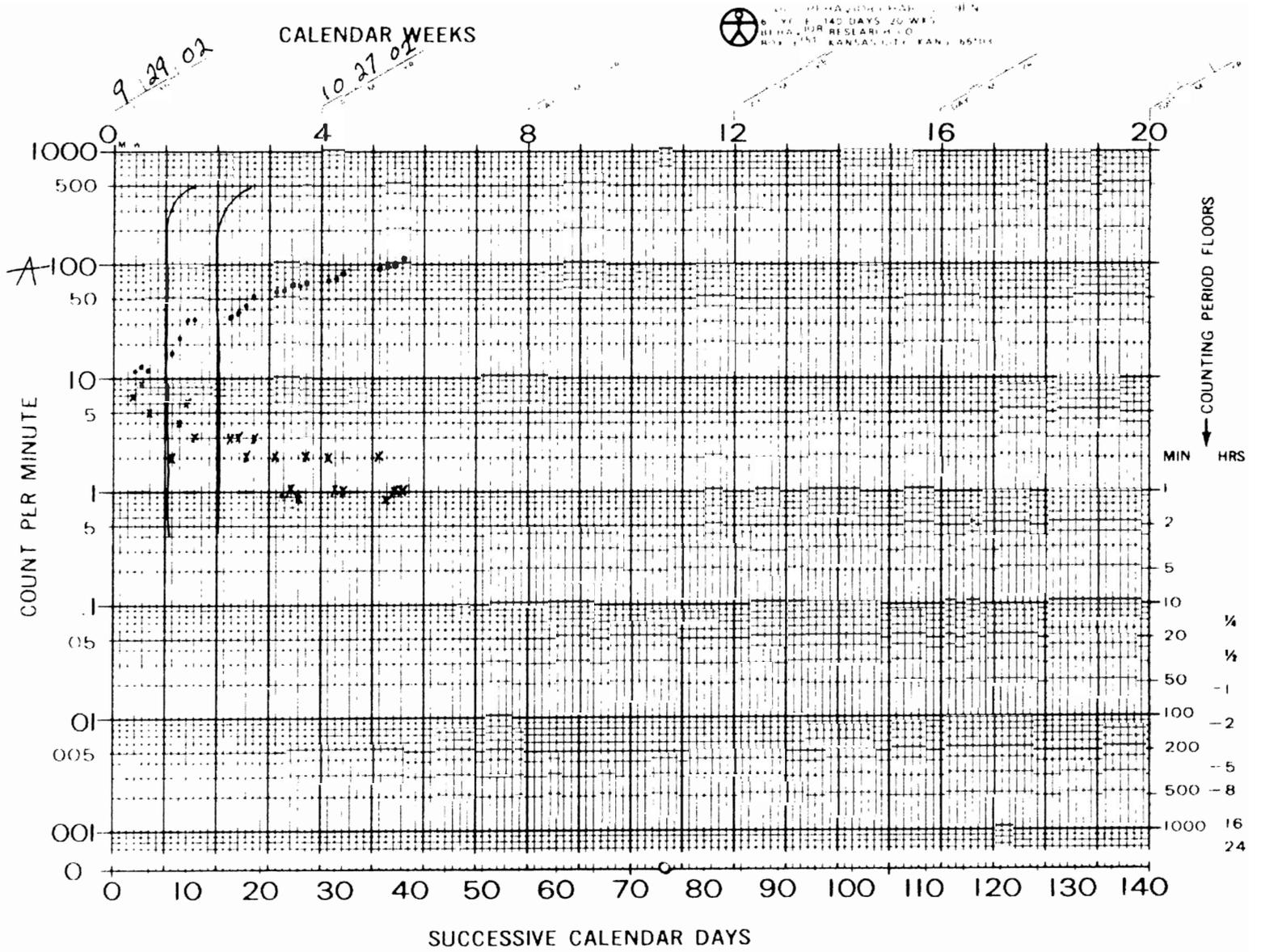
On the first day of the last phase change (the 9th session), Red read 39 words per minute and continued to increase his reading rate each

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session. By the 23rd session he surpassed his aim by reading 102 words per minute. Additionally, Red made fewer than 5 errors per minute throughout the duration of the last phase. This was a considerable leap from his first timing when he read 12 words correctly and made 7 errors.

Throughout this project, Red became increasingly more motivated to improve his reading rate and decrease his errors. He paid close attention to his teacher while she read aloud and made sure he marked each unfamiliar word. Initially the computer game time helped encourage Red's participation and compliance to instruction. However Red's continued success provided the needed motivation to practice reading, and external rewards became unnecessary.

Red finished this project by meeting the aim of one hundred words per minute with fewer than 5 errors. Red continues to ask for time to read aloud with his reading partner. His partner also wanted to chart his own progress, and this desire to increase reading fluency and plot data has spread to the rest of the students in his class.



SUPERVISOR	ADVISER	MANAGER		BEHAVIOR	AGE	LABEL	COUNTED
DEPOSITOR	AGENCY	TIMER	COUNTER	CHARTER			