

Sending a Note Home: A Great Motivational Factor for a Seven-Year-Old Female Learning Basic Subtraction Problems

Marcie Lucas & William Wolking

Discovering a personally meaningful motivator can increase one's rate of learning. Latoya was a participant in the "At-Risk Project". She was failing to accomplish the basic tasks of a second grade student. She was especially behind in her mathematical skills. She made errors with her basic arithmetic facts. I used Precision Teaching and charted her progress in many academic areas, but my main concern was mathematics. A deck of 15 cards (SAFMEDS) was used and she was timed three times a week.

Not much seemed to motivate Latoya. I tried verbal reinforcement, stickers, extra recess time, but nothing seemed to motivate her. She constantly complained of stomach pains or headaches.

Three times a week for ten weeks, Latoya was taught and then timed for one minute. For the first seven weeks, Latoya only showed slight improvement. Then, in the eighth week, I told Latoya that if she got a couple more correct than the previous day, I would send a positive note home to her parents. All of a sudden, Latoya could not wait to be timed. She began to practice her problems at home. Her overall aim was to reach 25 correct and 0 errors.

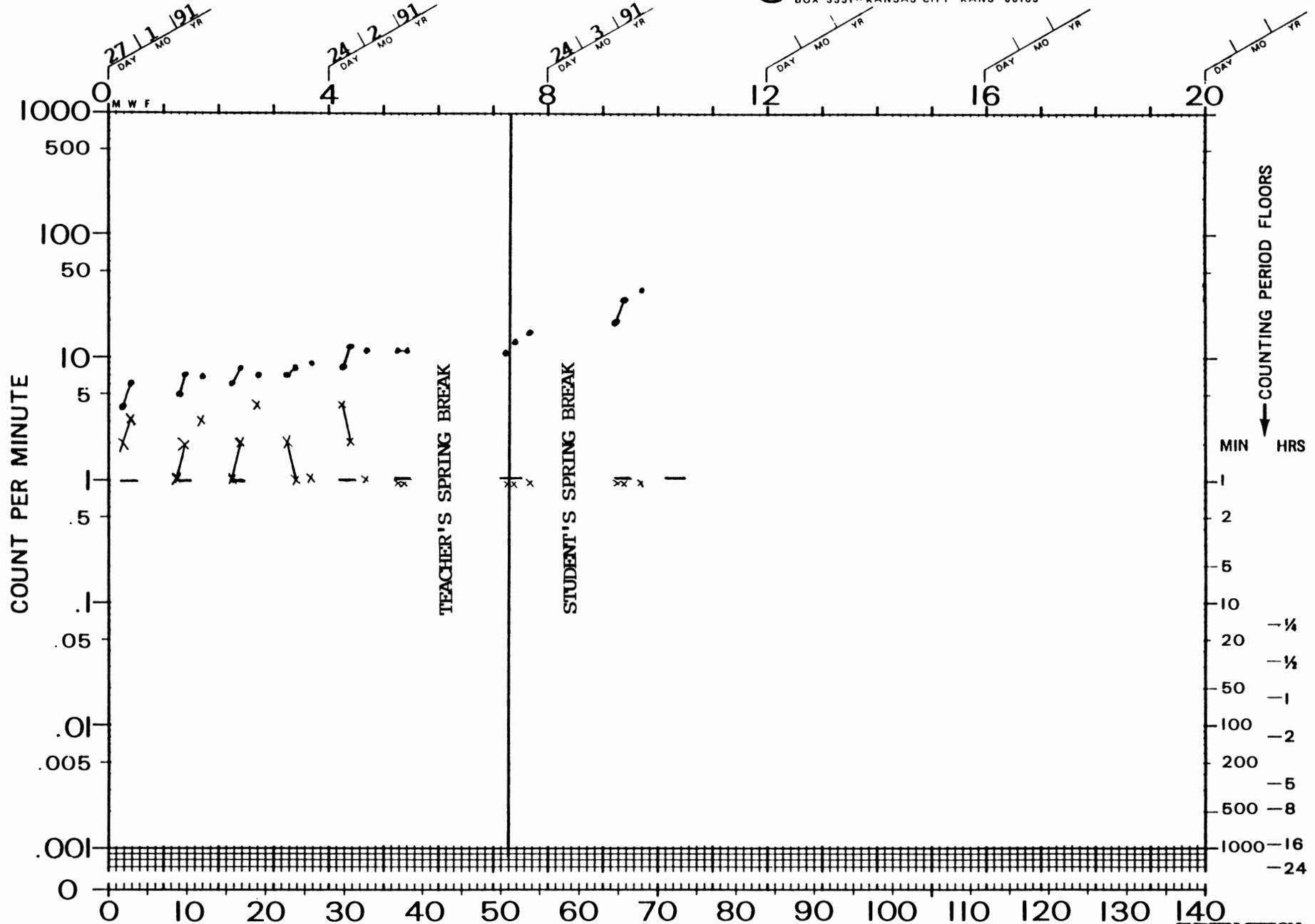
On January 29, 1991, Latoya performed four correct responses and two errors. On April 5, 1991, she reached 34 correct answers and 0 errors. Latoya's acceleration lines for correct responses increased from $x1.18$ to $x1.85$. Her acceleration line for errors in phase 1 was $+1.21$. Her acceleration line for errors in phase 2 was $x1.0$ because there were no errors. Also, Latoya was one of four students out of 30 in her classroom who showed the greatest improvement in all academics over an eight week period.

The importance of personal motivation is vividly shown in this project. I have learned that motivation has a remarkable effect on the learning rate of a student. Motivation seems to be very individualistic. The use of Precision Teaching made it possible for me to observe Latoya's improvement. Sending a note home was a positive reinforcer for Latoya to want to learn more.



DAILY BEHAVIOR CHART (DCM-9EN)
 6 CYCLE - 140 DAYS (20 WKS)
 BEHAVIOR RESEARCH CO
 BOX 3351 - KANSAS CITY KANS 66103

CALENDAR WEEKS



SUCCESSIVE CALENDAR DAYS

<u>DR WOLKING</u>		<u>MARCIE LUCAS</u>		<u>LATOYA</u>		<u>7</u>		<u>SEE-SAY</u>		<u>0 - 9</u>	
SUPERVISOR		ADVISER		BEHAVIOR		AGE		LABEL		COUNTED	
<u>DEPOSITOR</u>		<u>AGENCY</u>		<u>TIMER</u>		<u>COUNTER</u>		<u>CHARTER</u>			

SUBTRACTION FACTS