Validity and Reliability of Observations of Classroom Problematic or Unwanted Behaviors, “Spleems”

Evidence suggests that a method of direct behavioral observation in the classroom is reliable, can discriminate between normal and emotionally disturbed children, yields meaningful information on the nature of a child’s maladjustment to school when it is of the conduct problem type, offers data on the efficacy of a special class program, serves as a sensitive dependent variable measure of various acute therapeutic manipulations...


BUT...
The relevance of this measure to children with problems other than the conduct problem type has not been established.
How studies answered the question of relevance...

Measuring the Presence of and the Absence of Behavior in Child Development
Some examples of common spleems (not an exhaustive list):

- Arguing with a mean tone
- Blocking or stopping class activities
- Blurring out questions or answers
- Bothering a neighbour
- Breaking pencils
- Burping
- Doodling or desks or books
- Fiddling with objects
- Getting others into trouble
- Grinding the pencil sharpener
- Hamming it up

- Insulting other people
- Laughing at disruptive actions
- Moving at inappropriate times
- Looking away or ignoring the lesson
- Not sharing materials
- Obvious dawdling
- Obvious defiance
- Put-downs

- Saying rude things
- Sighing, groaning, moaning, or rolling eyes
- Slamming desktops or books
- Talking out to disrupt
- Tapping pencils
- Taunting or teasing
- Whispering or note passing at inappropriate times
- Chair tipping

A brief guide to the “Spleems Observation Form”

- Please fill in the top two rows of the observation form before starting to count spleems
- The “time” box should be the time the classroom observation officially begins (start of the 15 minutes)
- Remember to fill in the “Substitute yes/no bubble” (however, please observe the classroom while the regular teacher is there)
- Please print clearly
You can be an everyday scientist, too.
Before PAX GBG

1-Minute Baseline of Spleems
Playing the Second PAX GBG

Now count Spleems
References Cited

13. Lacourse E, Nagin D, Tremblay RE, Vitaro F, Claes M: Developmental trajectories of boys’ delinquent group membership and facilitation of


Appendix B: PAX Minutes
Explaining and Using PAX Minutes

PAX Minutes represent high quality time for teaching and learning. The more PAX Minutes you and your students create, the more engaged teaching and learning can happen. In the scientific literature, PAX Minutes would be called, “engaged learning.”

Teachers and instructional leaders familiar with writings of Dr. Robert Mazano, as well as Madeline Hunter a decade earlier, will recognize the notion of engaged learning, which happens with:

- Increased attention span,
- Reduced distractions,
- More effective transitions,
- Better ability to follow task instructions, and
- Wider and more equal participation in discussions by all students.

Without engaged teaching AND learning, students cannot rise to their maximum potential cognitively, academically and behaviorally in the world.

How PAX Increases Engaged Learning
PAX tackles five pathways for engaged learning, by providing both students and adults practical, proven strategies.

- **Increasing Attention Span** cannot happen by force, shaming, blaming, yelling, threats, or punishments. The PAX Game teaches children how to have voluntary control over their attention, reinforced by peers as a result of the teacher using the game for longer and longer periods. The neurological mechanisms of this are two fold, and true of all situations that result in children learning voluntary control over attention: 1) Slightly elevated neurotransmitters related attention and stress, with some “some stress” being essential for focusing as a result of the task and the soft-team cooperation required for a challenge; and 2) a clear goal that is perceived by the learning as intrinsically reinforcing like the Granny’s Wacky Prizes along with peer recognition. By learning to play the PAX Game successfully over longer and longer times—with very tight counting of Spleems, all the children’s skill increases over their attention.

- **Reducing Distractions** happens by reducing the total number of Spleems happening per hour in the classroom. This is why PAX Partners (who help mentor students and staff) do direct observations of Spleems to go into the PAX data system, which can create graphs for teachers and students to see their progress. For example, PAX Partners generated the graph below as a summary of 186 teachers in eight school districts across the United States, which shows that these teachers and students reduced Spleems by 75% in three months in their classrooms.
Improving Transitions happens rapidly with multiple PAX strategies. For example, PAX Quiet shrinks transitions typically from 2-5 minutes per transition to about 10 seconds—saving the equivalent of three whole weeks for additional teaching and learning. Other cues like PAX Voices, PAX Hands, PAX Feet or PAX lines reduce bullying, aggression, and trauma during transitions. Beat the Timer also significantly reduces transitions, while also sharpening the ability of the students to understand what the actual tasks are. The PAX Strategies—if also used school-wide significantly reduce problem behavior in the public areas, and reduce ADHD-like or anxiety-like reactions by children to stressful events in the school.

Improving Ability to Follow Task Instructions happens of several active ingredients of PAX: 1) Students learning to predict what PAX and Spleems are for new tasks as well as debrief what PAX and Spleems they heard, saw or did after the task; 2) Students taking on PAX roles to maintain PAX in the classroom creates greater ability to understand what tasks are in the instructional process, and to follow them by active participation in making the tasks happen; 3) Using PAX Quiet with the students eyes on the mouth of teacher giving the instruction assures that 80% rather than 20% of the students move in the right direction of the task.

Increasing Equality of Participation by All Students occurs a result of multiple PAX strategies, all of which have their own scientific and common sense proof: 1) PAX Stix or random calling strategies are one of the sure-fire ways of creating equity, participation, and improved academic success; 2) PAX Pinch Slates (Multiple-choice response cards) allow all students to respond and get feedback, thereby improving engaged learning and actual academic success; 3) PAX Roles (rotating meaningful classroom job roles) permit every student to improve the learning environment, and have been shown to improve standard achievement among children of all social classes; 4) PAX prediction/debrief after activities increases students ability to navigate new situations successfully, reducing their anxiety or blunders that might shut down participation; and 5) Optional PAX Genius Package piggy-backs off the same principles that drive the PAX Game except it can be directly applied to academics using a within-class peer tutoring process with rapid feedback, teams, rapid correction, and public posting—with results that have large effects on lifetime academic success.

Challenging Students to Increase PAX Minutes (more engaged learning)

Wise elders of every original people knew that a challenge was the best way to motivate young people to do their best. Small challenges enable young people to develop the spirit and skill to triumph with life’s harder tasks. Creating challenges to do more average PAX Minutes in a classroom builds students ability to control their attention and work together for a greater good. But first, you have to create a PAX Minutes Chart to challenge them. Here is how you create such a chart for your class.
Calculating PAX Minutes
The math behind PAX Minutes is fairly simple, and is computed for each game played. Here is how:

Table 1: Computing PAX Minutes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operation</th>
<th>Entry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Enter the number of minutes the PAX Game was played:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Enter number of Teams who won that Game:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Multiply (A) X (B), and enter that number here:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Enter total number of PAX Teams playing this game:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Divide C by D, enter the results here:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Add the product of E to a PAX Chart (see examples)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example of Computed PAX Minutes
Here is an example of a computation of PAX Minutes. Before the students played the PAX Game, they had already “won” 27 PAX Minutes that week.

Table 2: Example of Computed PAX Minutes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operation</th>
<th>Entry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G. Enter the number of minutes the PAX Game was played:</td>
<td>12 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Enter number of Teams who won that Game:</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Multiply (A) X (B), and enter that number here:</td>
<td>36 mins.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Enter total number of PAX Teams playing this game:</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K. Divide C by D, enter the results here:</td>
<td>9 mins average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L. Add the product of E to a PAX Chart (see examples)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart Before Playing New PAX Game

Chart After Playing New 12-minute Game

Note: The chart with your PAX kit may vary in design, but has the same function.
Setting Up a PAX Minutes Chart

Use dry erase marker to write the big or total goal for the day, week, or month.

Write in the target goal set on the timer for the current PAX Game.

Update the total PAX Minutes won so far here.

Be sure to clarify what time frames. You can have several charts: a day, a week, a month, and even year PAX Minutes thermometer.

Create the scale labels for your PAX Minutes Thermometer.

Color in your class PAX Minutes.

Please Laminate Your PAX Minutes Thermometer Charts. Please use dry erase markers.

Download Blank Poster @ http://bit.ly/PAX-Min-Poster-2013
Challenging Groups of Students to Create More and Bigger PAX for All

As students in your class begin to develop their ability to play the PAX Game well and to work together in positive relationship to foster PAX in each other, you are ready to challenge them for higher levels. You will know they are ready by several indicators, which some of the students start to show:

- Some ask to play the PAX Game.
- Some suggest appropriate Granny’s Wacky Prizes.
- Some tootle one another, or give thumbs up for PAX.
- Some start use PAX in their drawings or writings.
- A bold child may even correct an adult for “not being PAX.”
- Some children may help a new student learn about PAX, or explain it to parents.

Congratulations for any of these behaviors or outcomes in your classroom. You are being a PAX Leader, who helped the students learn that they can actually “better their world and themselves.” This is a great gift for themselves and collective efficacy of the peers. Our young people need these skills to do well in the world, especially when challenges arise that require effort and cooperation of others to achieve. That is pretty much most of life.

Now, you can now nurture higher levels of PAX skills of self-regulation, cooperation for a bigger goal, and increase their cognitive stamina for hard academic tasks or challenges that they will face from testing, to projects or papers, or any kind of work that will require their full ability to keep focused, be mindful, yet relaxed and gracious with others at the same time.

Life’s challenges also require that children learn how to lose, and pick themselves up to try again. Too many of our children melt down with a loss or avoid anything that might cause them to loose. This keeps them in a sort of prison of life, unable to stretch or take intelligent risks and work with others to achieve a greater good for themselves and others.

PAX Minutes Create a Purposeful Challenge

Your students surely know by now that PAX means peace, productivity, health and happiness. These are necessary conditions for any human group to flourish.

More PAX Minutes mean more absolute PAX in your class. PAX is not rigid or a robotic society. Well fostered, PAX creates joy, relationships, fun, learning, a sense of safety and wellbeing, considerable accomplishment, a sense of “flow in the moment”, and horizon of possibility and hope by children and among their caregivers like you.

Charting PAX Minutes gives your students a tangible sense of self-efficacy that quickens their ability to persevere. There is a paradox in charting PAX Minutes, though that creates the expansion of PAX competencies and skills.

The paradox is that you must challenge your class or school to create MORE PAX, using soft-team competition with other classes, grade, wings of the school, or even other schools. This principle of soft-team competition was well understood by all early human societies as part of their survival and vitality for tough times.

Soft-team competition between classrooms, wings, grades or other schools, however, for more PAX minutes does not mean there are ultimate losers in a heated gladiatorial contest of PAX. Rather, every team or group will be ultimate winners when PAX
(productivity, peace, health and happiness) is widespread. If every class in your school increases PAX Minutes, then the whole school and even the community benefits by more PAX.

**Posting PAX Minutes Publicly Creates Cohesion for Action**

Perhaps you’ve noticed United Ways or other community organizations using a thermometer to mobilize people for action. Yes, it works. It’s an ancient idea to encourage civic engagement for a greater good.

You might have been “challenged” to contribute to the cause, too.

For young people, the thermometer has to be on a scale they can understand and influence. Creating a PAX Minutes Thermometer is just such as scale. Having other classrooms, grades, or your whole school have their PAX Minute Thermometer stimulates soft-competition to work toward the greater good. What could the school do to foster BIGGER PAX?

- Create a PAX Minute Chart (Thermometer) for the whole school.
- Create a PAX Minute Chart for each grade.
- Create a PAX Minute Chart for each class by grade level.

Those charts might be publicly posted in common’s areas for all to see, such as the hallways, lunchroom, by the front door like this illustration below.

**Using Public Posting of PAX Minutes to Generate More PAX**

With publicly posted PAX Minute Charts (Thermometers) that are updated daily or weekly, you and others can challenge classrooms, grades, etc. to create more PAX each day or week. The “winners” perhaps get a special privilege for that day or week, such as being released first for the busses, first recess, a local volunteer performer (magician, sports start) to visit their classrooms, etc. The list of non-cost possibilities is endless.

Now, if the “big thermometer” of PAX Minutes (e.g., whole school) reaches a certain goal, then the whole school earns something, which the community may donate, or the staff may agree to refer to each student for the whole day as “Prince first name” or “Princess first name” because they have created Principality of PAXdom. The local media will want pictures of all this, which is great publicity and helps pass bond issues for our schools. What do ALL the students learn? “We better our world, and we better ourselves.”