

# Direct Behavior Rating: Application Across Problem Solving Tiers

By T. Chris Riley-Tillman and Rose Jaffery

The role of formative assessment is becoming more prominent in modern education with the growing popularity of schoolwide problem-solving models such as Response to Intervention (RTI) and Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS). In any problem-solving model, high quality formative assessment data are critical. Specifically, in service delivery models such as RTI and PBIS, formative assessment data are used to determine the level of intervention a student will receive. Without such data, any service delivery system based on a schoolwide problem-solving model will grind to a halt. DBR offers a method of formative assessment ideal for application in a problem-solving model. The flexible, feasible, and efficient qualities of DBR allows for versions to be useful across the three tiers in a problem-solving model. In this guide, use of DBR across problem solving tiers is explored.

## **Basic Question – Is a child responding to intervention?**

“Is a child or group of children responding to intervention” represents the core question in a problem-solving model. Before considering how DBR can be applied, it is first critical to think about what “intervention” is in each tier.

- Tier I: Standard schoolwide behavior programs
- Tier II: Class or small group functional related behavior intervention
- Tier III: Individual functionally based intervention

For each tier of intervention it is critical to use feasible and defensible social behavior assessment methods to formatively assess progress.

## **How can DBR be used across a problem-solving model?**

Building on the basic question in relation to DBR it is logical to ask, “How can DBR be used to assess if a child or group of children are responding to an intervention.” When considering this question across tiers, we see a variety of uses.

- Tier I: Individual and group screening, classwide progress monitoring
- Tier II: Group and individual progress monitoring
- Tier III: Individual progress monitoring, with supplemental sources for high stakes decisions

## **DBR Across Tiers**

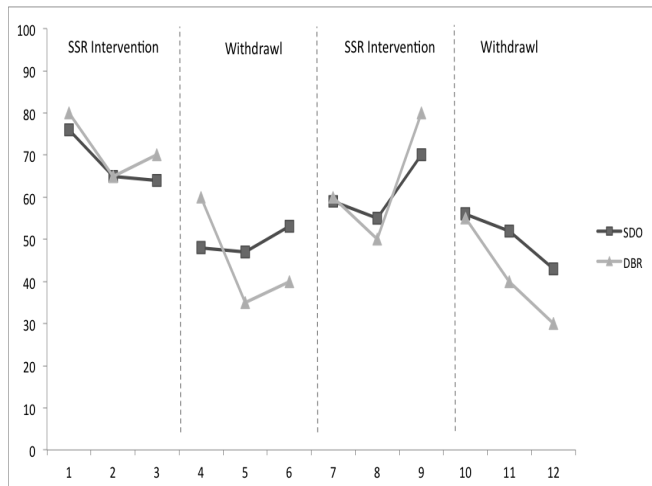
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## Examples of Using DBR Across the Tiers

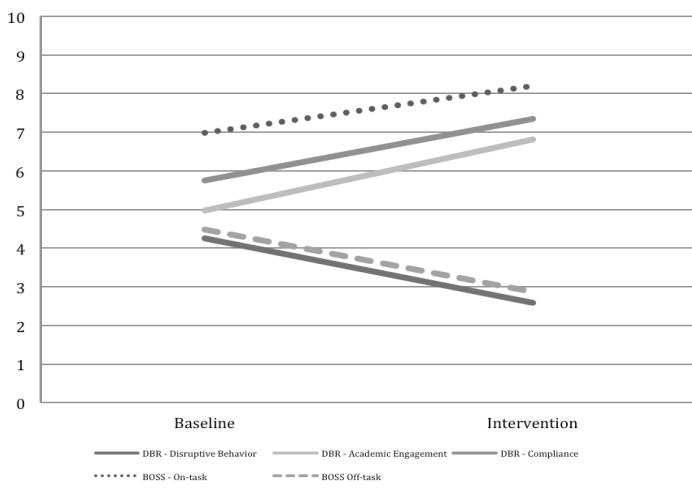
Perhaps the best way to illustrate the utility of DBR is to present a number of empirical studies which use DBR across a school-wide problem solving model (all graphs below show example data).

### Tier I - Riley-Tillman, Methe, & Weegar (2009)

In this example, the effectiveness of a classwide intervention was examined using DBR. Specifically, the classwide intervention included modeling and prompting of silent reading with the goal of increasing academic engagement. The classroom teacher completed a DBR-SIS for the whole class which supported that the class was responsive to the intervention. Note: In this study, researchers completed systematic direct observation (SDO) validated the teacher ratings indicating that DBR data can be sensitive to classroom-level intervention effects, and maps closely to resource-intensive SDO.



### DBR Intervention Tracking

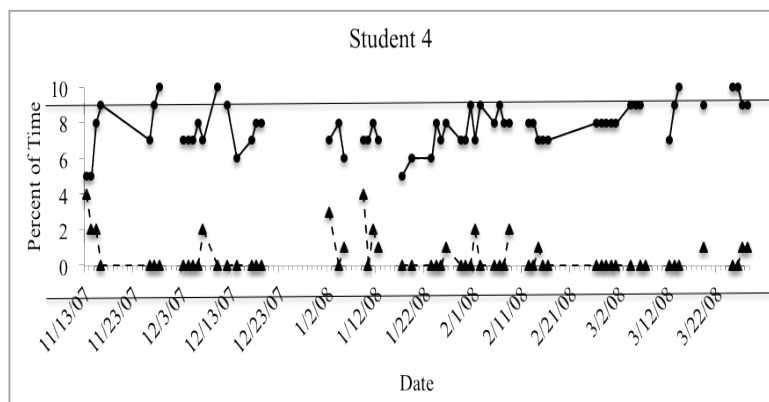


### Tier II R Chafouleas, Sanetti, Kilgus, & Maggin (2012)

In this example, 20 intervention cases were monitored using DBR-SIS. As can be seen in the graph, changes (in expected directions) in student behavior across phases and sources are observed using DBR-SIS. High correspondence between DBR-SIS and SDO (labeled as BOSS) absolute change metrics (scaled to OP 10 in this graph) suggests that students were ranked similarly across the two measures with regard to intervention responsiveness. This study provides preliminary support for the use of DBR-SIS to differentiate between those who have or have not responded to intervention.

### Tier III R Chafouleas, Kilgus, & Hernandez (2009)

In this example kindergarten teachers completed DBR-SIS in the morning and afternoon from Nov-March for all students. The results indicated that "local" cut-score comparisons could be useful in examining individual student performance. Periodic re-assessment of all students may be needed to re-confirm appropriate comparison.



Chafouleas, S.M., Kilgus, S.P., & Hernandez, P. (2009). Using Direct Behavior Rating (DBR) to screen for school social risk: A preliminary comparison of methods in a kindergarten sample. *Assessment for Effective Intervention, 34*, 224-230.

Chafouleas, S.M., Sanetti, L.M., Kilgus, S.P., & Maggin, D. (in press). Evaluating sensitivity to behavioral change across consultation cases using Direct Behavior Rating Single-Item Scales (DBR-SIS). *Exceptional Children*.

Riley-Tillman, T.C., Methe, S.A., & Weegar, K. (2009). Examining the use of Direct Behavior Rating methodology on classwide formative assessment: A case study. *Assessment for Effective Intervention, 34*, 224-230.

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