

### **Classic Autism Learner Profile**

A hypothetical open-ended interview has been completed below based on the following profile:

- Marty
- 6 years old
- Very limited vocal verbal language
- Autism
- Aggression, meltdowns, stereotypy
- Very few play skills
- Reinforcers include listening to YouTube videos, lining-up cars and other small toys, likes squishy toys, & Koosh Balls.

A hypothetical Interview-Informed Synthesized Contingency Analysis (IISCA) was then designed.

Finally, a hypothetical skill-based treatment (SBT) was then designed, which includes 3 branches of contextually appropriate behavior (CAB) chains.

**Open-Ended Functional Assessment Interview**  
Developed by Gregory P. Hanley, Ph.D., BCBA-D  
(August 2002; Revised August 2009)

**Date of Interview:** 12/1/2019  
**Child/Client:** Marty  
**Respondent:** Jody  
**Respondent's relation to child/client:** Mom  
**Interviewer:** Katie Miller, BCBA

**RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

**1. His/her date of birth and current age:**

- 11/25/2013
- 6 years, 0 months
- Male

**2. Describe his/her language abilities.**

- Mostly nonverbal
- No functional language
- Knows a few words (tablet, cookies, mama, maybe a few others)
- Sometimes scripts words/noises from TV shows and YouTube videos

**3. Describe his/her play skills and preferred toys or leisure activities.**

- Marty doesn't have many play skills.
- He likes to run around the room, listen to YouTube videos, and line-up cars and other small toys.
- He likes sensory items, squishy toys, and Koosh Balls.
- He doesn't play with toys as intended.

**4. What else does he/she prefer?**

- Sitting on Mom's lap (sometimes), cookies and crackers

**QUESTIONS TO INFORM THE DESIGN OF A FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS**

**To develop objective definitions of observable problem behaviors:**

**5. What are the problem behaviors? What do they look like?**

- Aggression (biting, scratching, hitting)
- Meltdowns (aggression, crying, throwing self to the ground)
- Stimming (hand-flapping, gets excited and overdoes it sometimes, and often repeats words over and over and louder)

**To determine which problem behavior(s) will be targeted in the functional analysis:**

**6. What is the single-most concerning problem behavior?**

- Aggression, will be quick to bite and scratch people

**7. What are the top 3 most concerning problem behaviors? Are there other behaviors of concern?**

- Biting, scratching, hitting, tantrums

**To determine the precautions required when conducting the functional analysis:**

**8. Describe the range of intensities of the problem behaviors and the extent to which he/she or others may be hurt or injured from the problem behavior.**

- Marty can break skin if he gets a good bite and can draw blood if his nails aren't trimmed.
- He's also hurt himself during severe tantrums while throwing himself on the ground and hitting his head accidentally.

**To assist in identifying precursors to or behavioral indicators of dangerous problem behaviors that may be targeted in the functional analysis instead of more dangerous problem behaviors:**

**9. Do the different types of problem behavior tend to occur in bursts or clusters and/or does any type of problem behavior typically precede another type of problem behavior (e.g., yells preceding hits)? Are there behaviors that seem to indicate that severe problem behavior is about to occur?**

- Marty might first push you away, or ignore you.
- If you try to take his things away, he'll grab them back and whine.
- If you persist, he'll bite or scratch you and then throw himself on the ground and cry and scream.

**To determine the antecedent conditions that may be incorporated into the functional analysis test conditions:**

**10. Under what conditions or situations are the problem behaviors most likely to occur?**

- When you interrupt what he's doing and try and get him to do something else.

**11. Do the problem behaviors reliably occur during any particular activities?**

- When he has to come to the table to eat (we don't ask him to do this anymore),
- When he has to get ready for bed (take a bath, brush his teeth),
- We've avoided doing any academics at home because he won't sit at a table.

**12. What seems to trigger the problem behavior?**

- Changing his routine abruptly, making him change activities without him knowing.

**13. Does problem behavior occur when you break routines or interrupt activities? If so, describe.**

- Yes, if interrupted while playing, especially when lining-up his toys or running around the room while talking to himself.
- He likes to do the same thing when he gets home from school and doesn't like when we must do something different.

**14. Does the problem behavior occur when it appears that he/she won't get his/her way? If so, describe the things that the child often attempts to control.**

- Yes

**To determine the test condition(s) that should be conducted and the specific type(s) of consequences that may be incorporated into the test condition(s):**

**15. How do you and others react or respond to the problem behavior?**

- We try and sooth him and use a calming voice to calm him down and rub his back.
- We keep some of his toys with him at the table and bring them to the bathroom to make it more fun.

**16. What do you and others do to calm him/her down once he/she engaged in the problem behavior?**

- We give him space sometimes, but also talk him through the situation.
- We let him know what he's working for, what we can do after he listens to us.
- Sometimes when he is too upset, we'll give him squeezes and hugs.

**17. What do you and others do to distract him/her from engaging in the problem behavior?**

- We try to move quickly.
- If we need to transition to something else, like go to the car or get ready for bed, we try to make it fun like a game.

**In addition to the above information, to assist in developing a hunch as to why problem behavior is occurring and to assist in determining the test condition(s) to be conducted:**

**18. What do you think he/she is trying to communicate with his/her problem behavior, if anything?**

- He wants to have control over the situation and doesn't like to be interrupted.
- He wants his things, his iPad and his toys, and wants to run around the room without anyone stopping him.
- Sometimes I don't know, it can escalate quickly out of no where.

**19. Do you think this problem behavior is a form of self-stimulation? If so, what gives you that impression?**

- Yes, he likes his sensory toys and to flap his hands.

**20. Why do you think he/she is engaging in the problem behavior?**

- To get us to stop interrupting him so he can run around.

## Form for Designing the IISCA

Once the open-ended functional assessment interview is complete, use this form to design an IISCA.

Client Pseudonym:	Marty	Names of caregivers in attendance:	Marty's Mom – Jody
Client language abilities:	1-2 word phrases	Primary language of caregivers:	English

1. **Implementor:** Note who will implement the analysis and why this person was selected to be the implementor.

- His primary therapist, a BCaBA – Heather.
- She works with him 4 times a week, knows him well, and PB regularly occurs during their sessions.

2. **Location:** Describe the general location and specific area in which the analysis will take place. Consider the extent to which the location/area can be designed to be the most comfortable/preferred location for the child/client.

In the clinic, we'll start in his typical practice room, he has no problem being in the room so long as he has his iPad and sensory toys.

3. **Materials:** Describe the equipment and materials to be placed in the analysis space to immediately occasion engagement and maintain a happy, relaxed, and engaged demeanor.

- iPad, cars, other small toys (he has a bin)
- Sensory items, squishy toys, and Koosh Balls
- Comfortable mats and bean bag chairs, so he has somewhere comfortable to lay on the ground.

Also, describe the materials to be arranged in the area or on the table of high expectations

- Small table and chair
- Play sets to occasion functional play skills
- Materials related to his IEP goals: colored cards for matching, items to be sorted by color, etc.

4. **Interactions during Reinforcement.** Describe where the implementor will be positioned and how they will interact with the child/client. Also note the interactions that will be minimized during this time.

-Remain in a seated/crouched and central position  
 -Be oriented toward child/client at all times  
 -Respond in kind to all questions, social bids, social referencing, joint initiations, etc.  
 -Provide a comment on engagement when the child does something impressive

-Refrain from asking any questions, placing social demands, issuing any instructions, redirecting behavior, touching any of the materials, offering choices, reminding the child about what they can do, following them around the area

- The implementer will arrange themselves on the floor, near Marty in a seated position.
- If he sits in the implementer's lap, give him physical attention (must be sensitive to him pushing hands away if physical attention is too much).
- Smile if he looks at you, and refrain from touching his toys.
- If he appears to need help (with YouTube video for example), offer help but don't force it.

**5. Progressing the EO:** Describe how the implementor will progress the establishing operation, e.g.:

Stand  
 Clap softly  
 Move close  
 Instruct child to stop or relinquish  
 (vocal then model then physical prompts  
 may be used in that order and as needed)  
 Instruct child to transition to area of high expectations  
 Instruct child to get ready to learn  
 Provide instructions to complete challenging work, tasks,  
 or expectations

*Throughout progression:*

- Minimize stereotypic behavior with vocal and physical redirections
- Do not comply with any requests
- Redirect/minimize reinforcement for social bids
- Engage and attend to others while the high expectations are in place

- Follow steps to the left
- When asking Marty to relinquish his items, don't use a model prompt, instead gently put your hands in front of his items (iPad, lined up toys).
- Moving his items may evoke SPB and prevent you from being able to go back to HRE quickly as he wants them in a particular way.

**6. Responding to problem behavior.** Describe how the implementor will respond to PB occurring in the EO.

Immediately provide free access to his items, sit back down, and move slightly away from Marty.

**7. Responding to leaving.** Describe how the implementor will act if the child leaves the analysis area.

Follow Marty wherever he goes, to the extent that you can bring items/people into the room that he appears to want.

**8. Changes for Safety.** Describe any changes to typical procedures must be made for safety reasons.

If Marty wanders, don't block access to any items as this may cause SPB and many other children will likely be around.

**9. Data Collection.** Name and define the severe problem behaviors (these are referred to as R1s in data collection):

- R1:
  - Scratching
  - Biting
  - Aggression
  - Forceful flop to the ground

Name and define the precursors, associated-non-dangerous problem behaviors, and indicators (these are referred to as R2s in data collection):

- R2:
  - Grabbing
  - Whining
  - Screaming

Once the IISCA is complete (control over problem behavior has been shown), use the form below to design a skill-based treatment that will strengthen the life skills of communication, toleration, and compliance via intermittent and unpredictable reinforcement of each.

**10. Describe the initial, intermediate, and then more complex communication response (i.e., the better mand) to produce the reinforcers; also describe how you will teach that behavior.**

**Simple FCR:**

- Gesture, tap chest with fingers using both hands

**Complex FCR:**

- Tap behavior technician on arm or shoulder and then tap chest with fingers using both hands

**Teaching Procedure:**

- When possible, use a second prompter to help teach Marty.
- One technician puts the EO in place, the other first attempts to model the FCR,
- If no responding, provide full physical prompt.
- Use errorless prompting, at first provide the prompt immediately after the EO presentation.
- The technicians will repeat the FCRs vocally ("Excuse me... my way...") while prompting the gestures.

**11. Describe which denial/delay signals you will use, which tolerance response(s) you will teach, and how you will teach the tolerance response.**

**Delay/Denial signals:**

- Technician will tell Marty "Not right now" or "No." while also shaking their head side to side.

**Tolerance Response:**

- Thumbs up

**Teaching Procedure:**

- Follow above teaching procedure steps.

**12. Describe the initial contextually appropriate behaviors (CAB 1). These are the behaviors that will be instructed following tolerance responses and strengthened via the termination of the delay.**

**CAB 1: Instructional control of stopping ongoing activity & relinquishing all positive reinforcers (e.g., a. pause game, b. look up, c. hand me the iPad):**

- If on the ground lining up toys: stand up, put arms down
- If running around: stops, hands over items, puts arms down

**Branch A: Marty will transition to a table to complete pre-academic work (imitation, echoics, matching) for up to 10 min.**

**CAB 2:** Instructional control of transitioning to alternative area and readying to listen/learn

- Walk several steps
- Walk several steps with a calm body and quiet mouth
- Walk to table with calm body and quiet mouth
- Same as above, plus sit in chair
- Same as above, plus hands in lap

**CAB 3:** Instructional control of a few (1-3) responses/time units of cooperation within a single, relevant activity

**Activity and Prompts:** Early imitation training, first attempt to prompt gross motor imitation (arms up, pat body parts). Initially reinforce approximations and use prompting. If a second prompter available, use them to physically prompt. Also consider reinforcing eye contact that spontaneously occurs.

**CAB 4:** Instructional control of a few (1-3) responses/time units of cooperation within **multiple** relevant activities

**Activity: Imitation**

- |            |                  |                                      |
|------------|------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Arms-up | 2. Pat shoulders | 3. Open mouth/ stick tongue out/lips |
|------------|------------------|--------------------------------------|

**Activity: Matching (Probe field size – start with one)**

- |           |                    |            |
|-----------|--------------------|------------|
| 1. Colors | 2. Animal pictures | 3. Numbers |
|-----------|--------------------|------------|

**Activity: Imitation (echoics) – reinforce ANY approximations**

- |             |             |                   |
|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| 1. Mi/mo/my | 2. Bi/bo/ba | 3. Oo, aa, uu, ee |
|-------------|-------------|-------------------|

**CAB 5:** Instructional control of **1-10+** responses/time units of cooperation w/in multiple activities

- 1, 3, or 5
- 1, 3, 6, or 10
- 1, 3, 6, 10, or 10+

**CAB 6:** Instructional control of 1-10+ responses/time units of cooperation w/in multiple activities **while being challenged**

- After some accurate, independent responding emerges, increase the expectation to include accuracy.
- Correct incorrect responding.
- Require a calm body and quiet mouth, response doesn't "count" if with stereotypy/vocals

**Branch B: Marty will brush his teeth and wash his hands independently.**

**CAB 2:** Instructional control of transitioning to alternative area and readying to listen/learn

- Walk several steps toward the bathroom
- Walk several steps with a calm body and quiet mouth
- Walk to the bathroom with calm body and quiet mouth
- Same as above, plus stand on the stool in front of the sink

**CAB 3:** Instructional control of a few (1-3) responses/time units of cooperation within a single, relevant activity

**Activity and prompts:** Brushing teeth

- Pick up toothbrush
- Put under water
- Put toothbrush to teeth

**CAB 4:** Instructional control of a few (1-3) responses/time units of cooperation within **multiple** relevant activities

**Activity:** Brush teeth

- |                      |                     |                                   |
|----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Brush front teeth | 2. Brush back teeth | 3. Use small amount of toothpaste |
|----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|

**Activity:** Wash hands

- |                      |                      |                       |
|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Turn on the water | 2. Put soap in hands | 3. Rub hands together |
|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|

**Activity:** Brush Hair

- |                        |                      |                   |
|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Bring brush to hair | 2. Brush one section | 3. Put brush down |
|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|

**CAB 5:** Instructional control of **1-10+** responses/time units of cooperation w/in multiple activities

- Brush teeth and/or wash hands and/or comb hair for:
  - 10, 60, or 120 seconds
  - 10, 60, 120, or 300 seconds
  - 10, 60, 120, 300, or 300+ seconds

**CAB 6:** Instructional control of 1-10+ responses/time units of cooperation w/in multiple activities **while being challenged**

- Give vague instructions, “Brush your teeth” instead of “Turn on water, pick up toothbrush, brush front teeth...”
- Use graduated guidance to prompt Marty through these steps initially.

**Branch C: Marty will engage in functional play with several toys (play dough, cars, marble run) for at least 5 min.**

**CAB 2:** Instructional control of transitioning to alternative area and readying to listen/learn

- Walk to table with calm body and quiet mouth
- Same as above, plus sit in chair
- Same as above, plus hands in lap

**CAB 3:** Instructional control of a few (1-3) responses/time units of cooperation within a single, relevant activity

**Activity and prompts:** Play Dough

- Roll premade playdough “snake”
- Roll a ball of playdough in hands
- Flatten out a ball of playdough

**CAB 4:** Instructional control of a few (1-3) responses/time units of cooperation within **multiple** relevant activities

**Activity:** Playdough

1. Roll playdough “snake”
2. Roll a ball of playdough
3. Flatten ball of playdough

**Activity:** Car set

1. Roll car
2. Put car down a ramp
3. Roll car up a ramp

**Activity:** Marble run

1. Put marble in a marble run set
2. Stack one piece
3. Stack several pieces and put marble through

**CAB 5:** Instructional control of **1-10+** responses/time units of cooperation w/in multiple activities

- Engage with Play dough and/or car set and/or marble run for:
  - 10, 60, or 120 seconds
  - 10, 60, 120, or 300 seconds
  - 10, 60, 120, 300, or 300+ seconds

**CAB 6:** Instructional control of 1-10+ responses/time units of cooperation w/in multiple activities **while being challenged**

- Give vague instructions, “Play with the cars,” instead of explicit instructions,
- Use gradual guidance to guide functional play.
- Count novel responses.
- Play with him and make play noises when appropriate (“vroom vroom”).
- If a new, spontaneous response occurs, reinforce!