Synopsis: Functional Behavior Assessment and Positive Behavior Support

A. Historical explanations of challenging behavior (CB)
   1. The child
   2. The disability
   3. The home context
   4. A previous trauma

B. A different approach to challenging behavior (CB) – function-based
   Assumptions
   1. All behavior has a purpose or function
   2. All behavior is rational or logical from the behaver’s perspective
   3. Challenging and adaptive behavior are acquired in the same way
   4. Most behavior is conditional/contextual and is determined by multiple factors
   5. Behavior is best managed by a combination of prevention and reaction strategies

   Functional behavior assessment (FBA)
   1. A process or means for identifying the function of behavior
   2. FBAs help identify triggering events and reinforcers for CB
   3. FBAs consist of informant strategies, observation, and environmental tweaks
   4. The outcomes of FBAs are hypotheses about triggers and supports for CB

C. Positive behavior support (PBS)
   1. Linked logically to the hypotheses generated with FBAs
   2. Hallmark is the identified function; it must be preserved
   3. Functional equivalence is key factor; replacement must have same function
   4. Replacement behavior must be more efficient than CB (5 criteria of efficiency)
   5. Build a competing behavior model (O’Neill et al., 1997) to develop intervention
Synopsis: Single-Case Research (SCR) Design and Methodology

Purpose of research (to understand living organisms and the physical world)

Types of research (different types to answer different questions)
- Qualitative (naturalistic, ethnographic, case study)
- Quantitative descriptive research
- Quantitative experimental (group and single-case research/SCR)

Similarities
- Experimental (goal: seek cause and effect or functional relationship)
- Manipulate independent variable/intervention/instruction
- Basic treatment/no treatment comparison
- Control threats to internal validity (alternative explanations)

Differences
- Small- vs. large-N (focus on individual vs. group)
- Number of assessment occasions (repeated measures vs. pre/post)
- Dependent variables (what's measured and how it's measured)
- Data evaluation (visual inspection vs. inferential statistics)
- Goals (meet social vs. experimental criteria)

Unique Aspects of SCR
- Applied
- Clinical and educational applications
- Addresses scientist/practitioner split
- Addresses research-to-practice dilemma
- Seek large effects that can be seen visually (graphed data)

Methodology
- Operational definition of socially important behavior (dependent variables)
- Measurement by human observers using individually developed codes
- Experimental designs and how they control threats to internal validity
- Visually inspect and analyze graphed data to evaluate outcomes