

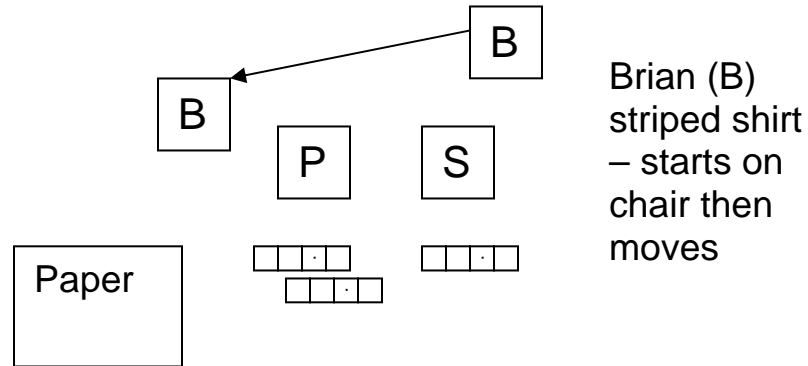
## SPHSC 308 Observation – Experiential Activity

Video: Brian - 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classroom. Cooperative Math Activity. Students working in groups – talking amongst themselves. Teacher circulating. Focus on boy in striped shirt.

### Observation Question:

How does Brian interact with peers during cooperative math activity?

Diagram:



Girl in pink (P) and girl in shorts (S) on the floor, with unifix cubes in front of them. Another girl (X), off to the side of girl in shorts, enters the picture later. Brian kneeling behind them on a chair, twisted, facing them.

**Situational Context:** Setting-3<sup>rd</sup> grade regular classroom; Activity-cooperative group math activity involving unifix cubes; Environment: Approximately 15 children in room, with male teacher, small groups of children. Brian is with 3 girls in group on the floor. Children and teacher are talking, and while there are small groups, there is milling around the room.

### Thick Description:

Girl in pink is counting cubes, girl in shorts is bouncing. Girl in pink says “Brian” and gives him a stack of cubes. Brian is sitting

backwards in chair behind the girls. Girl in shorts is trying to assemble her cubes. He comes down to sit with the girls when he gets the cubes. [Seems fine about doing this-no hesitation]. He sits sort of towards the back of them to the side [as if only partially joining them], looking at his cubes. Both girls hold cubes [maybe counting them]. The teacher says something to them. The girl in shorts says "Michael Michael" looking behind her somewhat. She then says "Brian we need your ten. Brian we need your ten" [referring to the unix cubes]. As girl in shorts is looking away and talking, girl in pink takes her cubes. Girl in pink turns head to engage him. Girl in pink assembles cubes. Girl in shorts watches for a moment [she looks as she is engaging in the activity for a moment]. Brian and girl in pink work together for a moment. He looks at cubes while she is counting. Girl in shorts is distracted by someone else. Teacher says something about unix cubes. Brian looks up. Girl in pink says to girl in shorts (and girl out of view) "you guys, don't play" [in a bossy kind of voice]. Girl in shorts says "ok" and straightens her legs out as she sits. Girl in pink returns to the cubes with Brian looking in. Girl in pink is manipulating all of the cubes, counting them. Gradually Brian turns away, almost with his back to the girl in pink. He turns back a bit,

looking at the cubes. Girl in pink then talks to other girls, turning her back more to Brian. Brian then looks away again. Then puts his head on his knees. Looks back in but never joins.

**Reflection:** Brian does not seem engaged in activity. Needs to be drawn in. Is a passive participant.

**Interpretation: (Situational Context: Setting – classroom; Activity – cooperative work activity – math/unix cubes)**

Environment	Brian Verbal	Brian Nonverbal
Group activity Brian on own	Nothing	Sits on the outskirts – in chair at beginning, then on the edge on the floor, sometimes watches group, sometimes looks away, head on knee
Peers talk to him, give him cubes - or when teacher talks to class	Nothing	Responds – pays attention, takes cubes, looks on, listens, follows instruction – looks up at teacher
Brian has cubes – on own	Nothing	Sits still, looks at cubes, manipulates cubes
Peers focus on work/cubes	Nothing	Looks on sometimes
Peers direct attention to others	Nothing	Turns away, disengages, looks away, looks down

**Interpretation:** When Brian is on his own, he may look at cubes, may look on or look away. When peers talk to him or otherwise engage him with the task, he looks at them and looks at the cubes. He also looks up when the teacher speaks to the class. When his peers are talking amongst themselves, particularly when he is on the side, he looks down or looks away.

**Conclusions:**

This boy appears to have difficulty engaging in small cooperative group activities. He participates when included by others, but frequently disengages if he is not getting attention or being included. He appears to lose interest and appears to need structure that peers provide.

What additional observation would you like to do?  
How might you change the situational context to see if Brian's behavior changes?  
Why?

Who might you want to interview?  
Why?  
What questions would you ask?