

Data Collection Methods: When to Use

Method	Definition	When to Use	Example Behaviors
Frequency	Tallying or counting a behavior or skill observed	When you want to assess how many times a student engages in a behavior	Making noises, hitting, answering questions correctly
Cumulative Duration	Recording the total time the student is engaged in a behavior or activity	When you want to know how long the student engages in a behavior	Staying in seat, engaging with peers, arguing with teacher
Latency	Measuring the amount of time that lapses between the antecedent and the behavior	When you want to know how long it takes before the student engages in a behavior	Sitting after being prompted, cleaning up after being prompted, eating after food is in front of student
Partial Interval	Observing whether a behavior occurs or doesn't occur during a specified time period	When you want to know an approximation of the degree to which a student engages in a low frequency behavior you want to decrease	Staying in seat, writing in journal, engaging in conflict with peers, rocking, flapping
Whole Interval	Observing whether the behavior occurs during the entire duration of a specified time period	When you want to know an approximation of the degree to which a student engages in behavior you want to increase	Attending to instructing, writing, walking, reading, working on a task, playing cooperatively with peer
Momentary Interval	Observing whether a behavior occurs or doesn't occur at the end of the interval period	When you want to know an approximation of the degree to which a student engages in a high frequency behavior	Cursing, writing, engaging in conflict with peers, screaming, tantruming

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Permanent Product	Recording tangible items or environmental effects that result from a behavior (measures behavior after it has occurred)	When you want to know an approximation of the degree to which a student engages in a low frequency behavior	Accuracy of tests, worksheets, and writing samples or the # of assignments turned in
Opportunity Recording	Recording the duration of time or each instance of the behavior	When you want to know the degree to which a student engages in an appropriate behavior across opportunities	Responding to questions, raising hand to answer a question, walking in the hallway
Trials to Criterion	Recording the number of responses, instructional trials, or practice opportunities needed to reach a predetermined performance criterion	When you want to assess the efficiency of one or more instructional strategies	Hand washing, spelling words, match facts

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