



Flipping the Script

Function Based Protocol for Elopement

@characterstrong




Turn & Talk:

Where are you
traveling from?

What are you hoping
to learn today?



Would
You
Rather...



1: One week of lesson
plans written and ready...

or



2: One free personal day off?

What makes behavior a **PROBLEM?**



Context determines if a behavior is a

PROBLEM?

A yellow squiggle, consisting of three curved lines, is located below the word "PROBLEM?".

The dimension is what makes it a

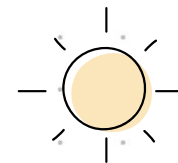
PROBLEM?



Frequency
How often?



Duration
How long?




Intensity
How big?

**Impact on self, others, or the environment
determines if a behavior is a**

PROBLEM

A yellow squiggle, consisting of three horizontal, wavy lines, is positioned directly below the word "PROBLEM".

**All Behavior is Directly
Related to the Environment
in Which it Occurs**

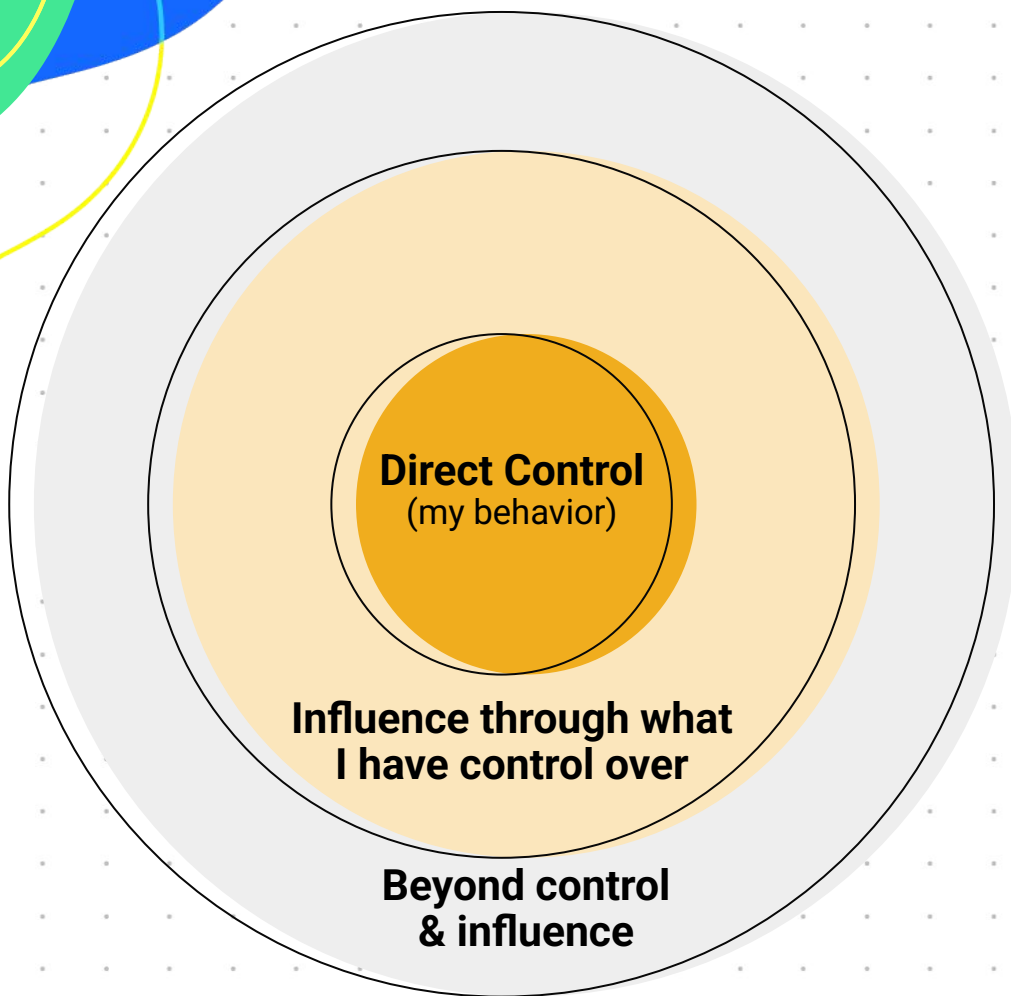
A yellow brushstroke underline is positioned beneath the word "Occurs" in the text.



Behavior serves a **Purpose**



Educators Have Control Over
Effective Practices to
Prevent and Address
Challenging Behavior



Internal Locus of Control

We can't **make** students do anything or feel a certain way, but we can wield a significant amount of **influence** through what we have direct control over.

So, what do we have control over?

Goal setting

Group contingencies
(all-for-one)

Teaching coping skills

Wise feedback

Teaching help-seeking

Pre-correction

Performance feedback

Restorative conference

Peer mentoring

Positive peer reporting

Self-monitoring tools

Banking Time

So, what do we have control over?

Prompts & Reminders

Interspersing
Choice

Making IT life relevant

Praise & Recognition

Solution-Focused
Problem-Solving

Motivators &
incentives

Giving students voice

Teaching Replacement
behavior

Positive
communications home

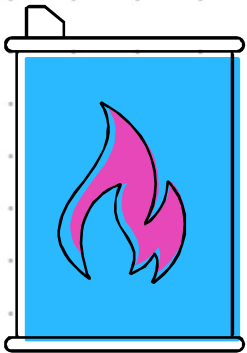
Opportunities to
respond & interact

Community building
activities

Greetings at the door

Organizing Ourselves to Address Behavior

Setting Event



Lighter Fluid

Activating
Event



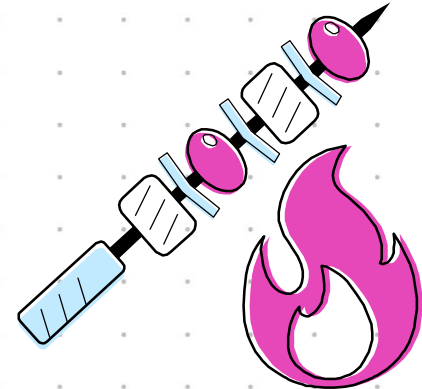
Match

Unskillful
Behavior



Charcoal Grill

Maintaining
Consequence



Delicious Meal

Prevent

Teach

Respond



***“Consistency is
its own form of
greatness.”***

— James Clear Author of Atomic Habits

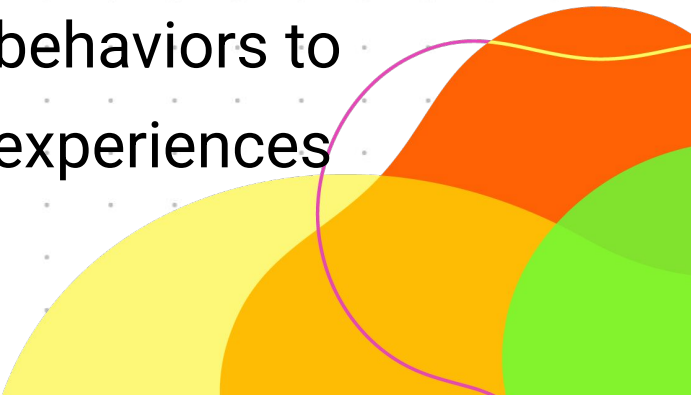
Elopement Defined

A thick, hand-drawn style yellow underline is positioned directly beneath the title "Elopement Defined".

When a student leaves a class or the school campus without permission from the adults who are responsible for them

Prevalence of Elopement

A thick, hand-drawn style yellow underline is positioned directly beneath the title 'Prevalence of Elopement'.

- Prevalence varies by school context
 - On average, **1 out of every 200 elementary students** exhibit elopement behavior
 - **30-50% of elopement behavior** involves significant safety concerns*
 - Elopement is a part of a broader category of behaviors to **escape, avoid, or seek relief** from unwanted experiences
- 
- In the bottom right corner, there are several overlapping circles in shades of orange, yellow, and green, creating a decorative graphic element.

A couple of obvious things about elopement



Causes educators to go into crisis, reactionary mode



Student who is eloping is missing out on key opportunities on a trajectory toward more negative outcomes



Doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results doesn't work

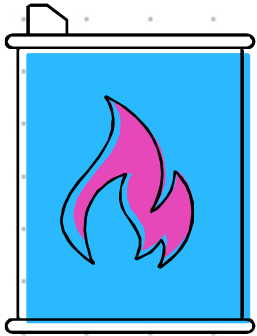


Removing the student from class and opportunities to learn helps the school but not the student

Function of Elopement

Factors that affect the
students motivational
state

Setting Event



Lighter Fluid



Unwanted
Experience

Activating
Event

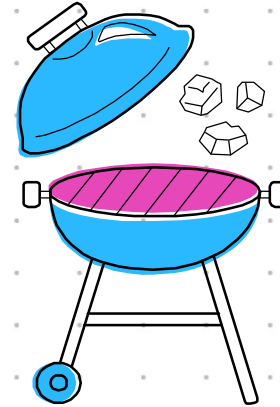


Match



Elopement

Unskillful
Behavior

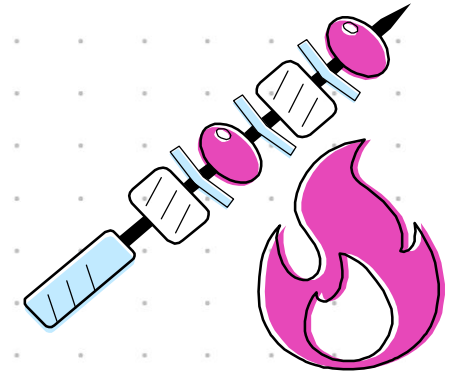


Charcoal Grill



Escape to something more
preferred

Maintaining
Consequence

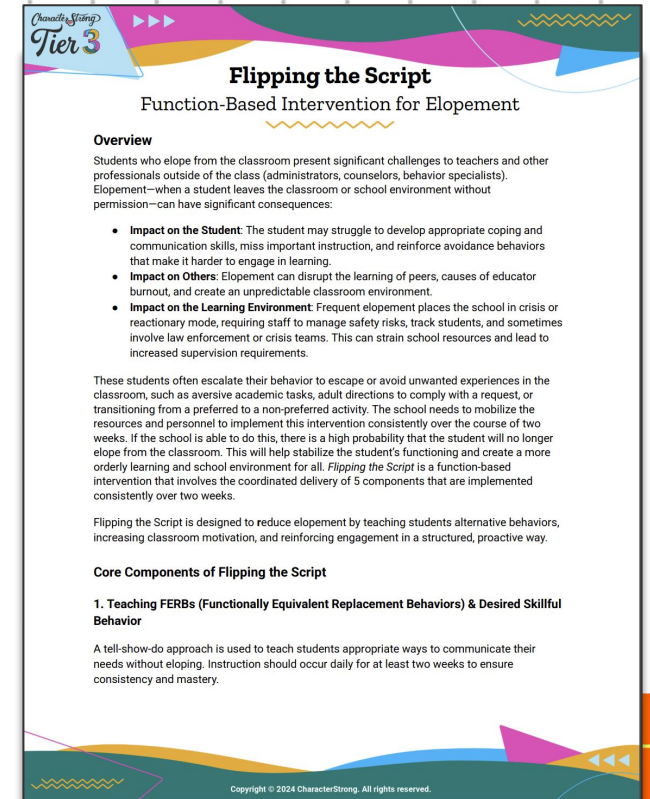


Delicious Meal

Flipping the Script

A function-based intervention that involves the coordinated delivery of **five components** that are implemented consistently **over the course of two weeks**.

Flipping the Script means being willing to switch what is happening in class contingent upon the elopement behavior.



Behavioral Pathway Chart

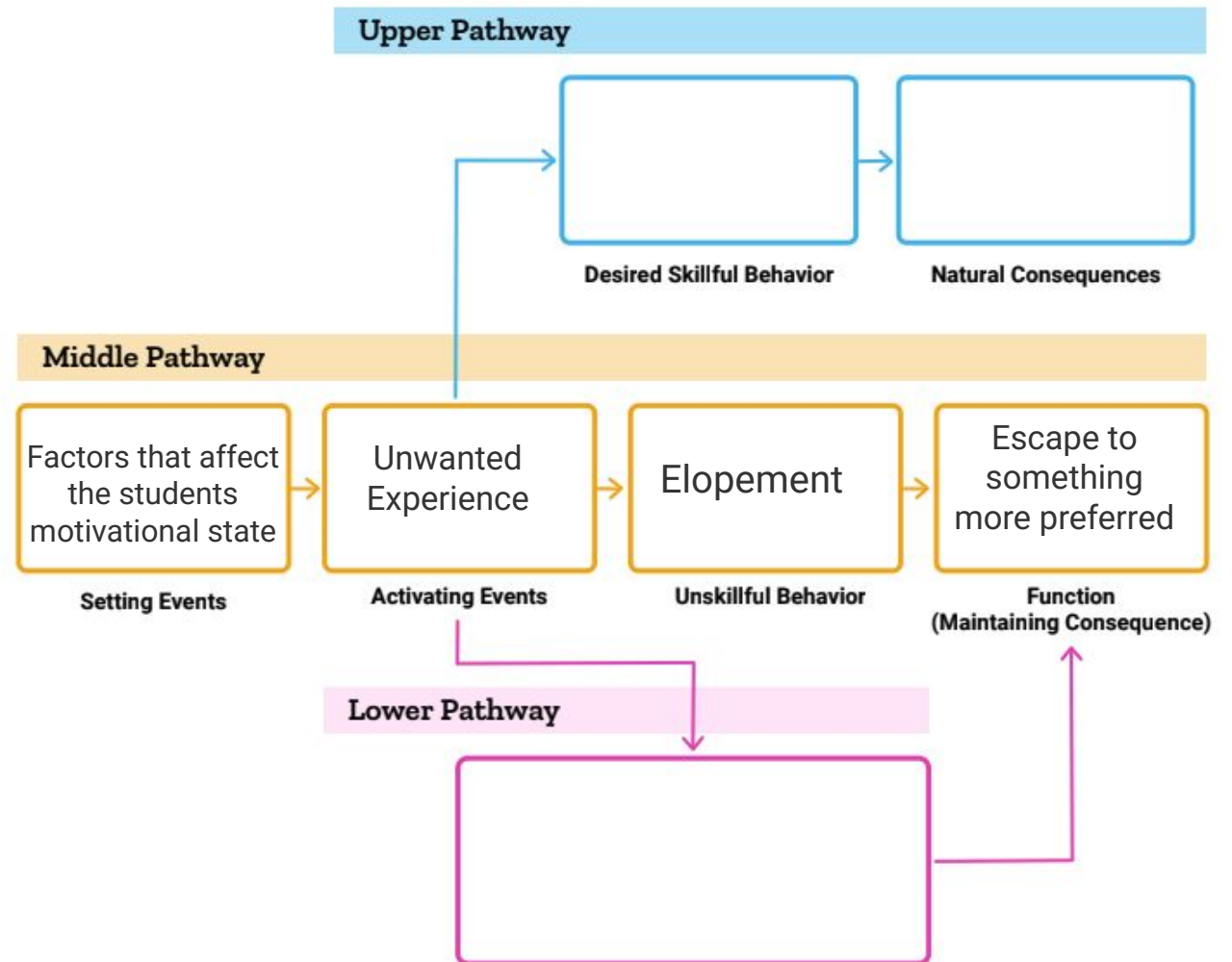
Middle Pathway (Results of the FBA Depicting the Pathway We Want to Prevent)

Upper Pathway (The Pathway that Reflects the End Goal We Want to Support and Achieve)

Lower Pathway (The Pathway that Represents What We are Willing to Accept as an Alternative to the Middle Pathway)

Unskillful Behavior:

Elopement: student leaves class or the school campus 2 times per week without permission from the adults who are responsible for them.



5 Steps



Teach Replacement Behaviors

Functionally-Equivalent Replacement Behaviors
Desired Behavior



Prevent through a Neutralizing Routine and Precorrection



Put the Student in a **Decisional Dilemma**



Flip the Script Contingent Upon Elopement Behavior



Consistent **Differential Reinforcement**



Step 1

Teach

Functionally Equivalent
Replacement Behavior

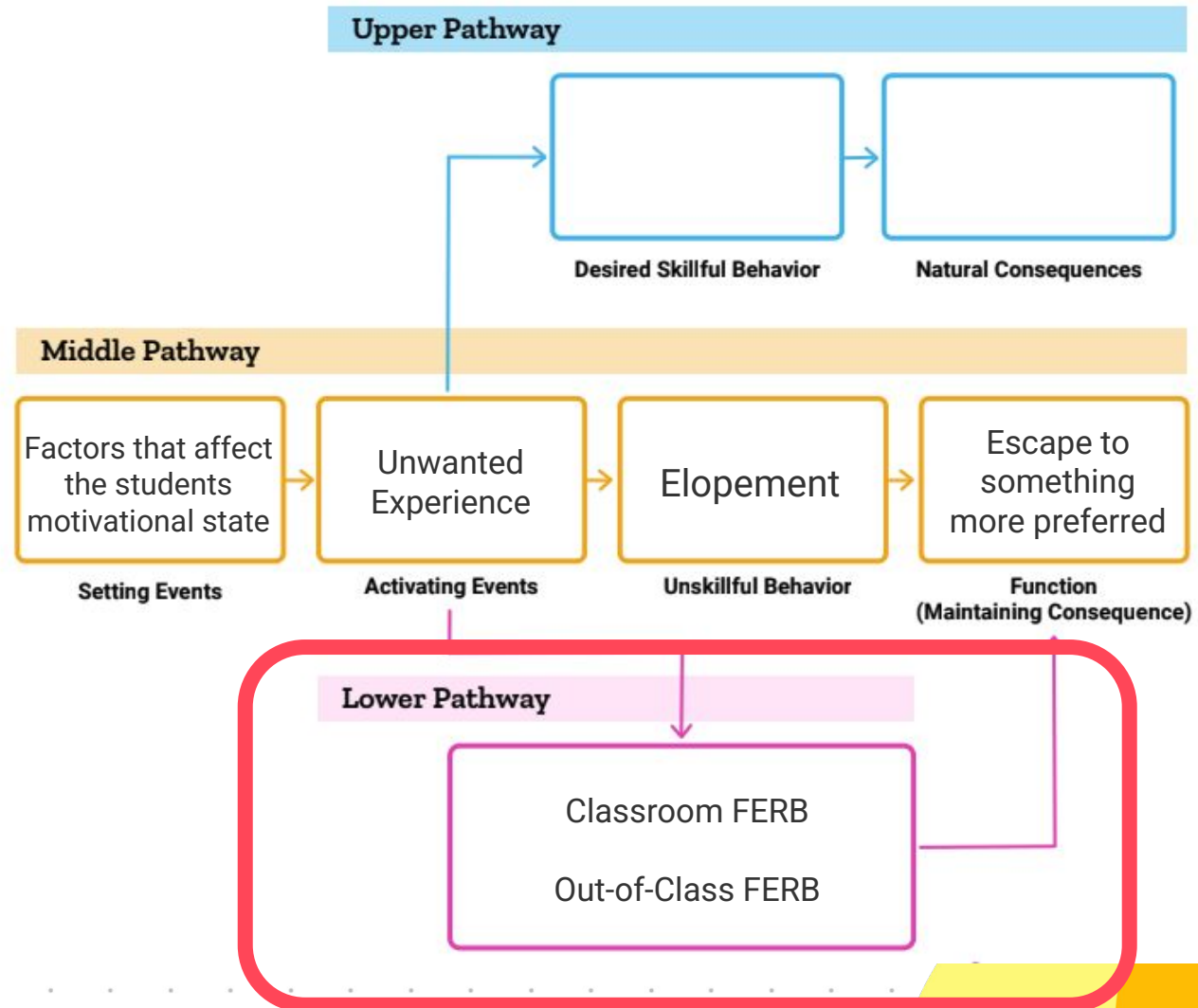


Desired Skillful Behavior

Step 1: Teach Functionally Equivalent Replacement Behaviors

Unskillful Behavior:

Elopement: student leaves class or the school campus 2 times per week without permission from the adults who are responsible for them.



Functionally Equivalent Replacement Behaviors (FERBs)

Socially acceptable behavior that serves the same function as the elopement (i.e., escape to something preferred)

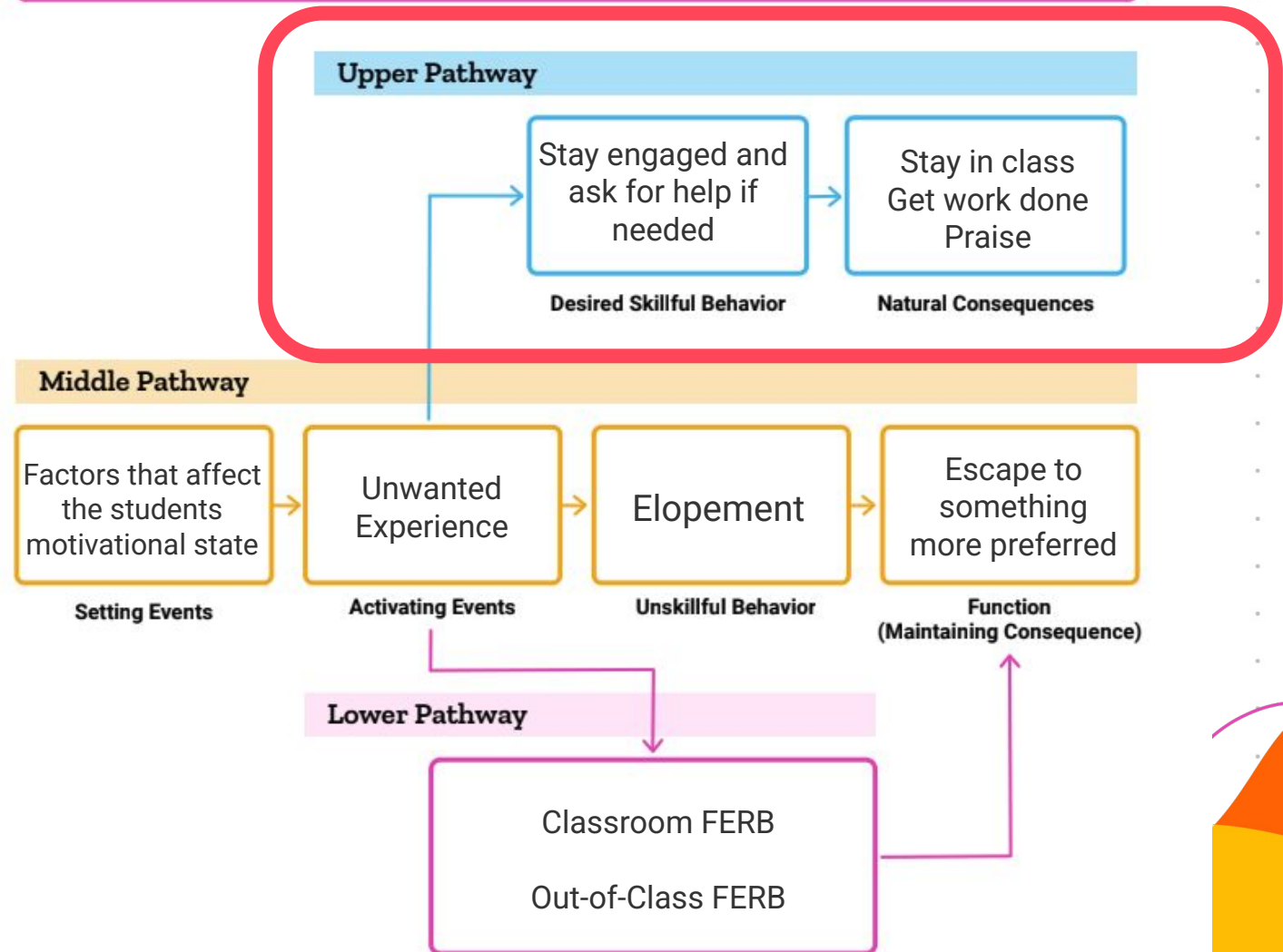
Two FERBs:

- **Classroom FERB** – teaching the student how to communicate that they would like to avoid unwanted situation in the class and access something preferred.
- **Out-of-class FERB** – teaching the student how to communicate that they would like to leave class and access a setting with preferred activities.

Step 1: Teach Desired Skillful Behavior

Unskillful Behavior:

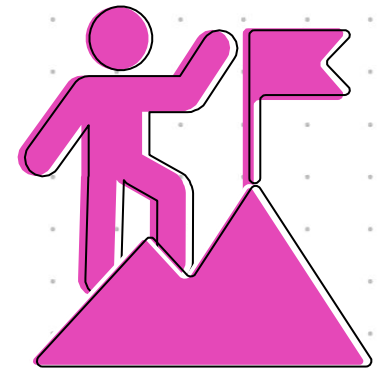
Elopement: student leaves class or the school campus 2 times per week without permission from the adults who are responsible for them.



Desired Skillful Behavior

The behavior we want all students to exhibit when the activating event happens.

- Maintain engagement in learning
- Positively interact with others





Step 2

Prevent

Neutralizing Routine
Precorrection

Setting Events

Factors that increase motivation to engage in behavior

Setting events are factors outside the time and place of the behavior that increase the likelihood of the unskillful behavior when an activating event occurs.

Setting events influence a student's internal motivational state, making them more likely to engage in unskillful behaviors in response to specific activating events

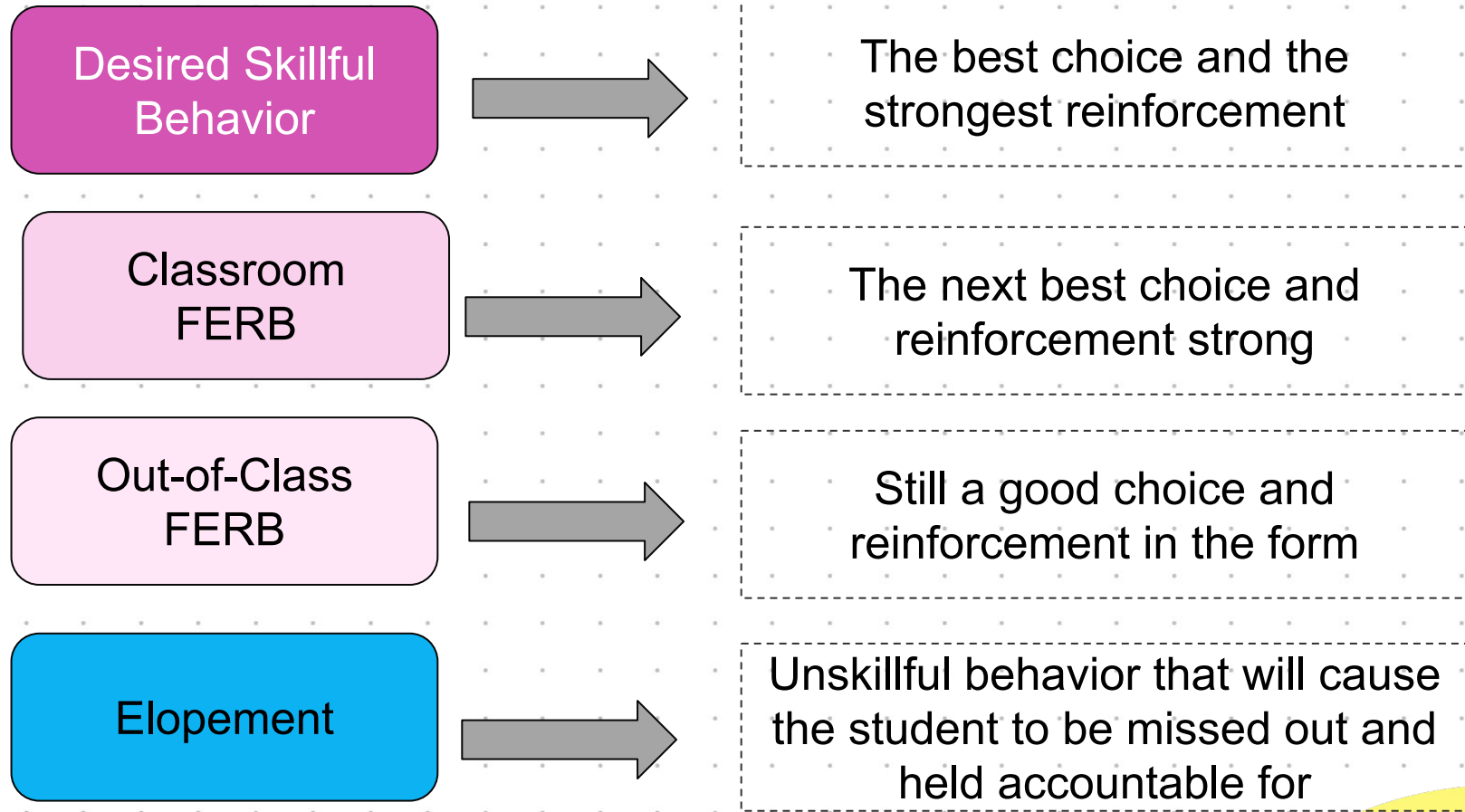
Step 2: Prevent Neutralizing Routine

Example Setting Event: **Home Stressor**

Internal / Motivational State	Eliminate It	Neutralize It
Upset, distressed, or distracted about something happening at home	<p>Connect with the family to provide support and connect to services that reduce the home stressors or work with the student on how to navigate and minimize experiencing specific home stressors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Supports: Parent training, connecting to family therapy • Wraparound Supports: Employment, healthcare, and other peer supports • Student Plan to Reduce Home Stressors: Resolve conflicts, establish healthy boundaries, etc. 	<p>Check in with the student to determine if they are upset or distressed by something happening at home. If the student is upset or distressed, then:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in a routine that can help them get in a more positive frame of mind (helpful thoughts, gratitude, mindfulness activity) • Support the student to use an emotion regulation strategy: Deep Breathing, Mindful Walking, Playful Activity, Guided Imagery, Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Step 2: Prevent

Visual Precorrection





Step 3

Respond

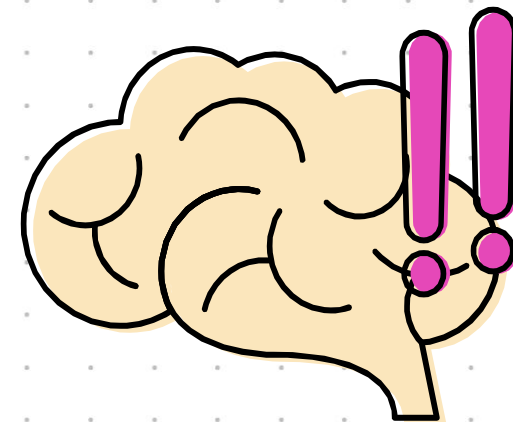
Decisional Dilemma

Step 3: Respond

Create the Decisional Dilemma

Near or at the time of the elopement behavior put the student in a dilemma by deciding whether eloping from class is worth it relative to engaging in one of the FERBs or desired behavior.

- **Decisional Dilemma 1:** Do you need to leave the class or can you stay in class so you're able to earn [reinforcer] and be with us in class?
- **Decisional Dilemma 2:** Do you need to get out of doing [unwanted situation] or can you stick with it to earn [reinforcer] and keep participating in class?





Step 4

Respond

Flip the Script

Flipping the Script

Flipping the script means contingent upon elopement behavior turning class into the wanted and preferred place to be.

→ This promotes learning that elopement out of class results in an unwanted outcome because it causes the student to miss out on something preferred/wanted.

***Need to understand the student's preferences, likes, and motivators to inform what happens in the class to flip the script**



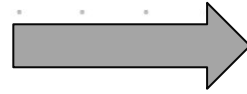
Step 5

Respond

Reinforcement

Consistent Differential Reinforcement

Desired Skillful
Behavior



Strongest reinforcement (pairing
multiple preferred experiences,
items together)

Classroom
FERB



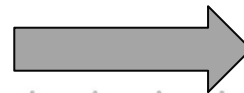
Reinforced by escape plus
something else

Out-of-Class
FERB



Reinforced by escape and access
to preferred setting

Elopement



Flipped Script that caused
missing out and a restorative
accountability process

Preferred Activity

Character Strong
Tier 3

Preferred Activities by Grade Level

Guidelines for Selecting Preferred Activities

When choosing preferred activities for students, it's essential to ensure they align with their needs, interests, and developmental levels while also maintaining a school-appropriate focus. These activities should be engaging and meaningful without disrupting the transition back to academic tasks.

When selecting activities, ask yourself—are we choosing something that is...

- ✓ **Student-Centered & Relevant** – Does it reflect students' interests, needs, and learning styles? Does it empower and engage them?
- ✓ **School-Appropriate** – Does it support a positive classroom environment? Is it manageable and not overly stimulating?
- ✓ **Easy to Transition From** – Will students be able to shift back to classwork smoothly without resistance?
- ✓ **Rooted in Deeper Learning** – Does it build skills, encourage reflection, or promote problem-solving and emotional growth?
- ✓ **Fun, But Meaningful** – Is it enjoyable while still reinforcing learning, mindfulness, creativity, or relationships?

Real Life Experience

Davis arrives at school feeling angry because he did not get the breakfast he wanted at home and had a difficult bus ride. His frustration carries over as he enters the classroom.

Ms. Ansley greets Davis at the door and takes a mindful moment with him to help him reset. She previews the day's agenda and reminds him of the opportunities available to him

During math, Davis becomes restless when he struggles to complete the problems. Noticing his frustration, Ms. Ansley discreetly points to the reinforcement opportunities displayed on his desk as a reminder of the supports available to him.

As Davis' frustration continues to build, Ms. Ashley reminds Davis of the behaviors he was taught. He requests to leave the classroom to finish his work elsewhere.

Ms. Ansley responds politely and allows Davis to step out. However, she gently reminds him that staying in the classroom to complete his work would allow him to earn his preferred activity.

Decisional Dilemma: What Decision Will Davis Make? Complete the work? Remove himself within the room? Leave the room when permitted? Run away?

Prepared to Handle Situations: If the student does not make the right choice

Dos

- Flip the script with compassion
- "When you're ready to complete your work, you can earn your preferred activity."
- Prepare a de-escalation plan with support

Don'ts

- Rub it in with the student that the missed out when flipping the script
- Remove the reinforcement too soon.
- Punish
- Engage in power struggles

Prepared to Handle Situations: Doesn't work right away

Dos

- Stick with intervention
- Keep teaching
- Give more time
- Adjust the support -
find a new entry point
*"What if we try the next
one together..."*

Don'ts

- Bail on the intervention
- Admire the problem
- Threaten to remove the
preferred activities
- Lecture or become overly
verbal
- Disengage

Flipping the Script Protocol

Teach

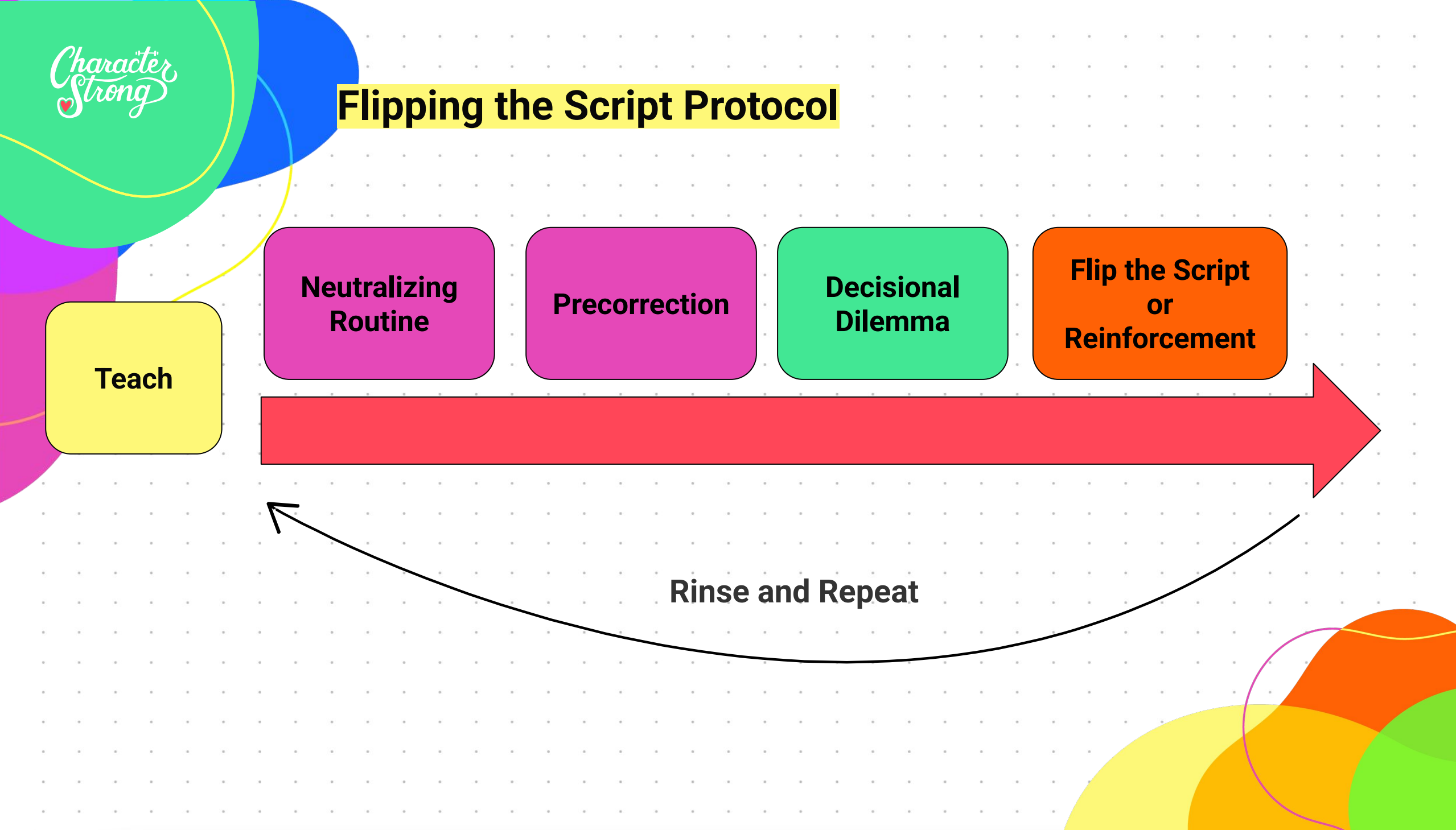
**Neutralizing
Routine**

Precorrection

**Decisional
Dilemma**

**Flip the Script
or
Reinforcement**

Rinse and Repeat



Menu of Tier 3 Supports

Gather FBA Data

Use FBA to Develop Hypothesis

Define Unskillful Behavior

Define Unskillful Behavior

Identify Where the Behavior Happens

Identify When the Behavior Happens

Identify Who is Present

Activating and Setting Events

Identify the Activating Event

Determine the Setting Events

Function of Unskillful Behavior

Function of Unskillful Behavior

Get, Obtain, Access

Avoid, Escape, Relief

Review Hypothesis

Generate the Hypothesis

Rate the Hypothesis

Create a Pathway Chart

Develop Behavior Support Plan

Define Unskillful Behavior

Unskillful Behaviors that Impact on Self, Others or the Environment

Define the top 1 or 2 behaviors that the student exhibits to get a need met that has an impact on self, others (peers and/or adults), or the learning environment. Select the categories to define in observable terms the behaviors to decrease with the Behavior Support Plan. If the behavior category is not listed, then click on Add Other.

The information you input here will generate the first of three tools located in Step 3: Implement and Monitor Progress to gather baseline data and progress monitoring data to evaluate the student's response to intervention.

☐ Behavior that disrupts learning
 ☐ Physical behavior toward self or others
 ☐ Verbal Threats
 ☐ Elopement (leaving or running)
 ☐ Refusal to follow directions
 ☐ Bullying or intimidating other students
 ☐ Damaging property
 ☒ None of the above? Add Other

Back

Gather FBA Data

Use FBA to Develop Hypothesis

Create a Pathway Chart

Develop Behavior Support Plan

Teaching Strategies

Define Teaching Strategies

Complete Teaching Strategies

Confirm Teaching Strategies

Prevention Strategies

Define Prevention Strategies

Prevention Strategies

Setting Event Strategies

Responsive Strategies

Define Responsive Strategies

Responsive Strategies

Consistent and Progressive Response

De-Escalation Plan

Consider De-Escalation

Identify Dates and Review Strategies

Identify Important Dates

Review Strategies

Define Teaching Strategies

Teaching Strategies are some of the most powerful ways to support the student to acquire and apply skillful behaviors as replacements for the. Here take the information in the Pathway Charts around behavior and develop Teaching Strategies.

Back

Next

Character Strong
Tier 3

20

Total # of Students
School Can Serve



6

Total # of Students
Receiving Tier 3

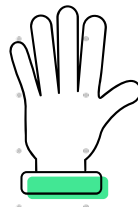
Dashboard

Search @olivia

Start Tier 3 with a New Student

Student Name ↓	Grade ↓		#	Intervention	Case Manager
Houston Kraft	6	Phoenix Baker @phoenix		Environment	Lindsay Norlin
Clay Cook	7	Olivia Rhye @olivia ✓		Skill	Clay Cook
Miranda Samon	7	Lana Steiner @lana		Environment	Mikayla Harmon
Rajah Wigglebutt	8	Demi Wilkinson @demi		Environment + Skill	Miranda Samon
Cory Notestein	8	Candice Wu @candice		Skill	John Norlin
		Natali Craig @natali			

How comfortable do you feel implementing
Flipping the Script?

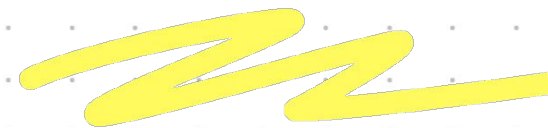


Temperature

Check

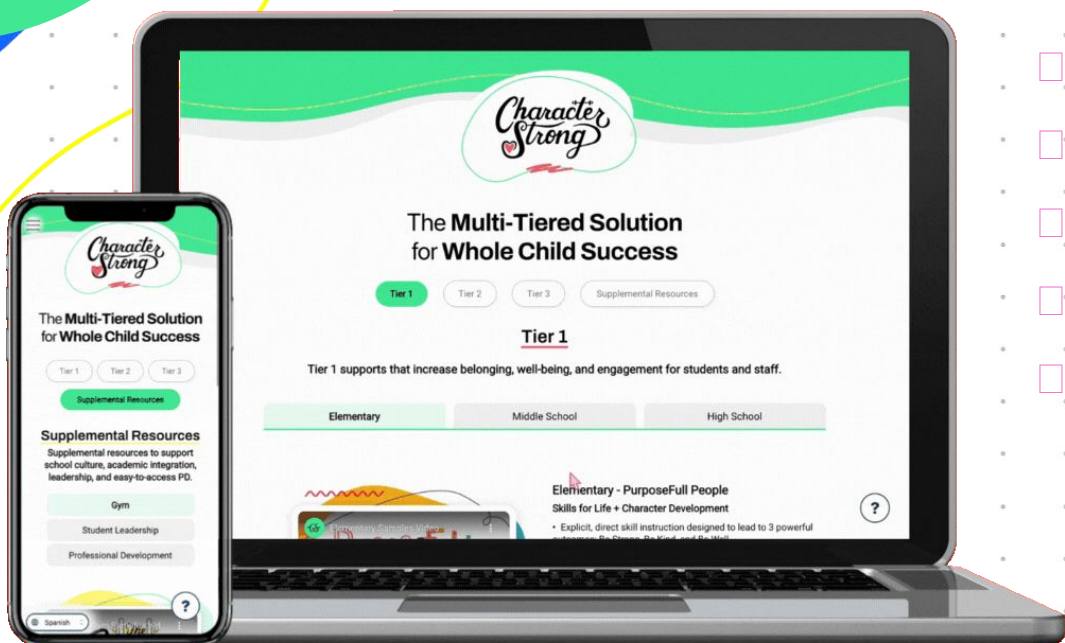


60 Second Feedback





Tier 1 Curriculum



- PreK - 12th Grade Vertically Aligned Curriculum
- Designed by Educators for Educators
- Every lesson is unique and does not repeat
- Research-Based Lessons
- Plug and Play Resources

Scan to
Learn More





A 2-day event designed to certify school, district, and regional leaders in **advanced tools, resources, and research-based strategies** critical for the high-fidelity, sustained implementation of Tier 3 supports.



Austin, TX November
4-5, 2025



Register Here!





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