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# The Impact of Grace and Courtesy Instruction and Modeling on the Normalization of a Montessori Primary Classroom



*What effect does teaching and modeling daily grace and courtesy lessons have on increasing normalization in a primary Montessori classroom serving children ages three to six years of age?*

► Choosing this topic

For over a century, Montessori teachers all around the world have worked towards the common goal of having a normalized classroom. Many teachers believe that the lessons in grace and courtesy as well as modeling proper behavior can aid in accomplishing this goal. Prior to this study, my classroom environment was far from normalized and I wanted to see if the implementation of lessons specifically designed to deliver skills and concepts of grace and courtesy would affect the normalization of the classroom.

► Why it is important?

Maria Montessori (1949) stated "It is the most important single result of our whole work." The normalization of a classroom can be seen when the children are working as if the teacher did not exist. The children are focused, calm, cooperative, and respectful. If normalization is not achieved or maintained in a classroom environment, the students are unable to reach their fullest potential and conflicts may arise.

# A Review of Literature

- A belief that social skills, peacemaking, conflict resolution, empathy, and the ability to self-regulate need to be taught and practiced daily is becoming more widely accepted. Along with this belief is a focus on developing and refining these skills earlier in life to help promote a more peaceful society.
- Conflict naturally occurs in human interaction and if managed properly, it can be a constructive avenue for needed change. It is believed that social and emotional learning points to the advantage of early exposure.



- ▶ This study was conducted for twenty school days
- ▶ Prior to the implementation, a student-teacher conference was conducted to gain a baseline of knowledge and feelings towards the subject area
- ▶ Each day of the study students were given a lesson on grace and courtesy, participated in an activity regarding the days lesson, had the teacher model desired behavior, reviewed the skill as needed, and reflected on the outcome of the day
- ▶ Data was collected on a daily basis using three additional tools to inform future lessons and overall progress of the implementation
- ▶ A student-teacher post conference was conducted to document knowledge gained by this study.

# The Research Process

# Research Findings and Data Analysis

## Student-Teacher Conferences

- Students are listed in age order
- Each student gained knowledge as a result of this implementation
- Age was not a factor in the overall knowledge gained by conducting this study
- In addition to knowledge gained, students reported an increase of positive feeling towards the lessons of grace and courtesy

Student	Pre-"test"	Post-"test"	Gain Score
A	10	18	+8
B	7	14	+7
C	8	17	+9
D	10	18	+8
E	4	13	+9
F	14	17	+3
G	6	17	+11
H	0	7	+7
I	5	13	+8

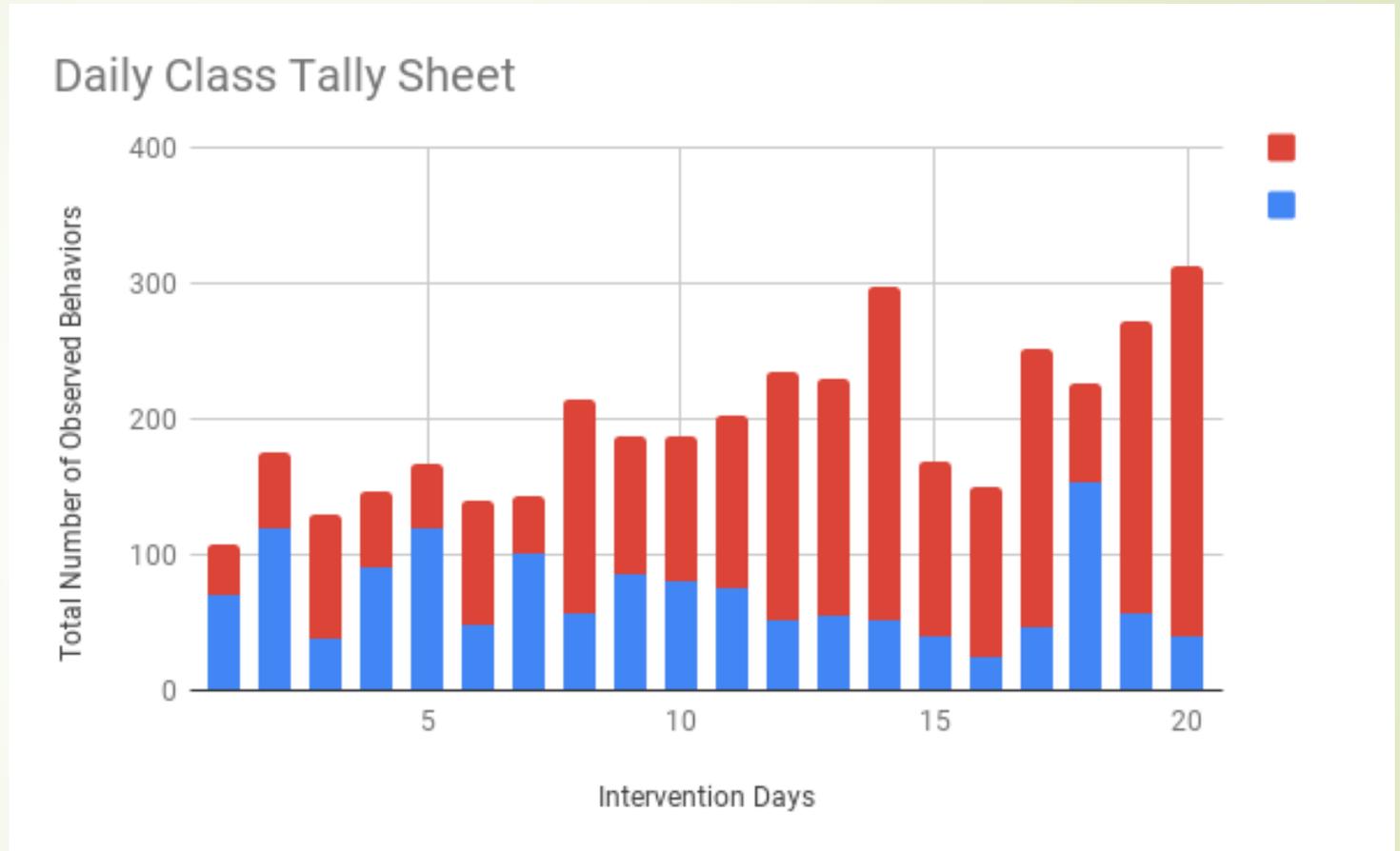
# Research Findings and Data Analysis

## Daily Class Tally Sheet

- For Fifteen minutes each day, an observation of classroom behavior was documented on a tally sheet
- Both desired and undesired behaviors were noted for each individual student as well as the class as a whole
- As the intervention progressed the number of undesired behaviors decreased while the number of desired behaviors increased

Key: **Red=desired behaviors**

**Blue= undesired behaviors**



# Research Findings and Data Analysis

## Daily Journaling

Each day following the morning work cycle a journal entry was made by the teacher reflecting on the planned lesson, the instruction and modeling, reviews given throughout the day, and future planning.

The initial entries noted the students being interested in the lessons but having a long way to go toward normalization.

Mid-intervention entries indicated a need for additional review of previously presented lessons.

Concluding entries included the feelings of more involvement, enjoyment, and a deeper level of comprehension and control.

By keeping a self-reflective journal, the teacher was able to clearly see the areas of need and observe the positive strides made by the students and teacher as a result of this study.



# Research Findings and Data Analysis

## Behavioral Self-Assessment

Each day the students and teacher rated the class on desired behaviors observed

A rating of one indicated undesired behaviors observed while a five rating indicated desired behaviors observed

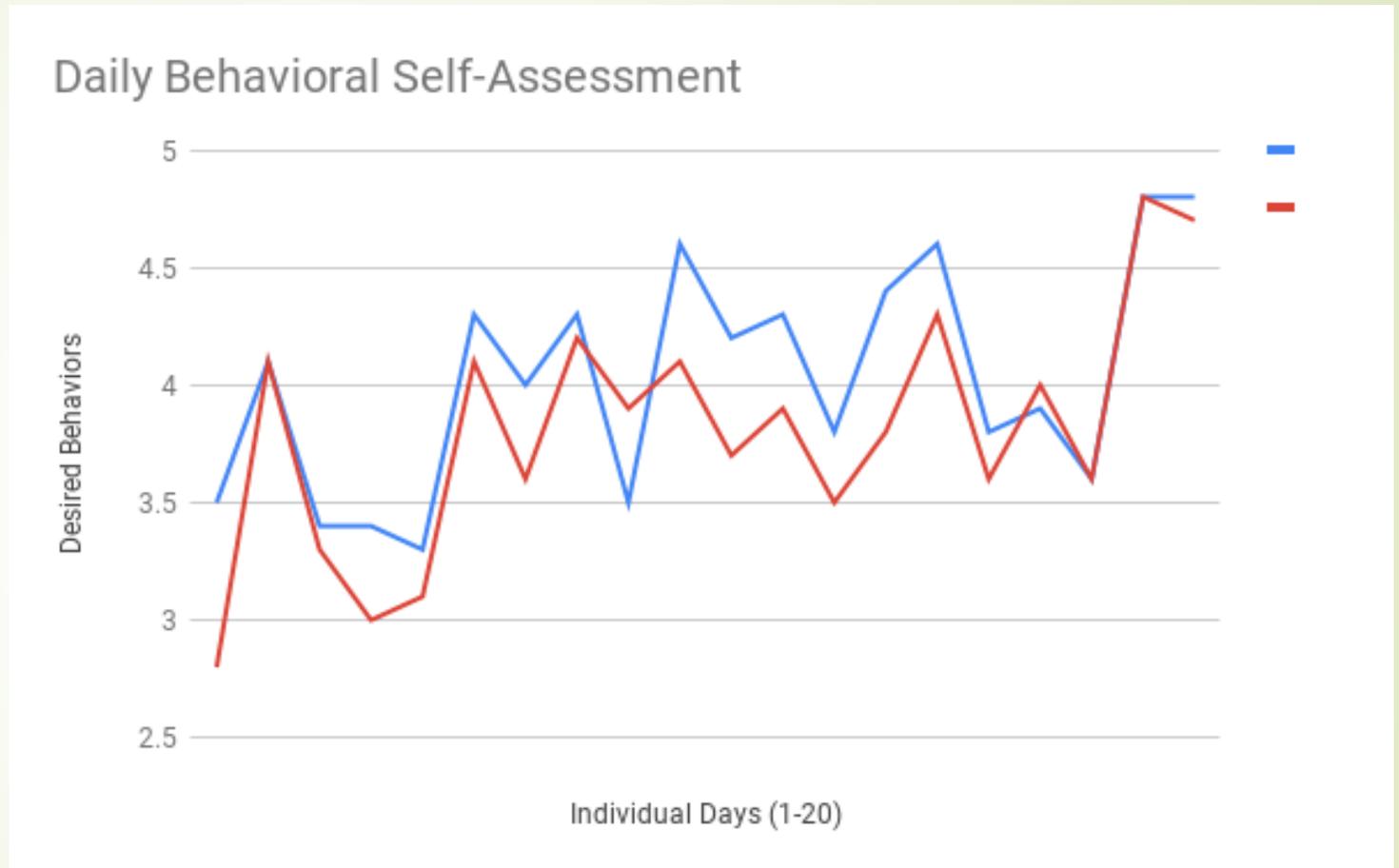
The first week ratings indicated the majority of the days fell between a 2.5-3.5 on the scale while the middle and final weeks scored between a 3.5 and 4.75 on the scale

Both teacher and student ratings followed a similar pattern even though the numbers were not always the same

This data shows a gradual progression towards desired behaviors over time

Key: Red = Student rating

Blue = Teacher rating





# Planning for the Future

- Based on the results of this study, it is recommended that instructing, modeling, and reviewing the lessons of grace and courtesy on a daily basis would bring about and continually support the normalization of a primary classroom.
- Daily reflective journaling can be used to document observations and inform future planning.
- Increasing the timeline of this study and adjusting the data forms may allow for deeper insights and additional knowledge on this topic to be obtained.

Are there any  
questions,  
clarifications,  
or comments?

Thank you so much for your time

