

**Sample Mid-Term Exam or Final Exam
Instructor Form with Answers**

**Uses material from chapters 1-8
Select 3 or 4 problems per test**

The following problem solving situations were taken from student practicum reports and from personal classroom observations. You can use this format to write similar assessment items, using any scenario that provides adequate evidence for determining the cause.

The answers provided (in italics) are not necessarily the only possible answers. If a student can provide good evidence for another cause, that should be accepted. It is important that they use only the information provided in the problem, as a model of good observation skill and sticking to the facts.

Directions to Students: Use the following behavior problems to demonstrate your understanding of course content. Select from the types of causes and approaches described in the text.

1. Situation: A group of children are working on a paint project. They are at a small table with large pieces of paper and the papers keep overlapping. There isn't another table to go to due to the activities going on in the room. One of the children is getting frustrated because one edge of his picture is getting messed up from the other paper's. He asks the other child to move his paper. The other boy says he has no room to move either.

a. Probable cause of the problem?

The environment is not meeting the child's needs: inadequate space for activity.

b. What evidence did you use to decide on that cause?

Children are in one another's way and there seems to be no other space to work.

c. Describe the guidance/discipline approach that best deals with that cause.

Teachers need to plan better for activities that take up space. For now, they could help some children move to the floor.

2. Situation: Tate is in Kindergarten and it's story time. All the children come and sit down on the floor. Tate is seen pressing down on the head of the child in front of her saying that she can't see.

Adult response: The teacher tells her to stop hurting Atticus and to choose a better spot to sit.

Child response: Tate gets very mad after several attempts to get the person in front of her to move, she stomps out of the room into the hallway.

Practicum Student observation: I watched her leave and walked out into the hall to find her muttering to herself. I made a statement, "Tate, you look very upset?" She tells me about how she couldn't see and no one would move for her so she could see, Mrs. M just got mad at her.

a. Probable cause of the problem?

Missing skill of perspective taking.

b. What evidence did you use to decide on that cause?

Tate talks only about her own problem seeing; she seems unaware even that pushing on another child's head may be inappropriate.

c. Describe the guidance/discipline approach that best deals with that cause.

Tate needs to hear from other children how they feel about wanting to see; she also needs to hear from Atticus about how her behavior makes him feel.

d. Another possible cause of the problem?

The environment may not be appropriate: there may not be enough room for the group gathering or it may be the wrong type of space.

e. What evidence did you use to decide on that cause?

The problem seeing may be a pervasive one.

f. Describe the guidance/discipline approach that best deals with that cause.

The teacher would then need to rearrange the room.

3. Description of Situation: “It's not mine!” Ava told her child care provider. “I've already cleaned my lunch spot.” Still, it seemed obvious that those were Ava's things and that she hadn't sponged her spot.

Adult Response: Her caregiver pointed-out to Ava her name on the thermos lid lying on the table along with much of her other lunch paraphernalia.

a. Probable cause of the problem?

Missing intellectual skill of distinguishing the truth from her wishes.

b. What evidence did you use to decide on that cause?

Young children's intellectual development does not readily distinguish a “lie.” When they want something to be true, it often seems to them that it is.

c. Describe the guidance/discipline approach that best deals with that cause.

The caregiver did something helpful: she respectfully pointed out the evidence of the truth. She did not call Ava a liar.

4. The situation: Logan sees a package of cookies high on a bookshelf (where the teacher thought no one would see them). Logan climbs up on the counter and gets the cookies when no one is looking. The teacher finds Logan happily eating the cookies.

Adult reaction: The teacher says it makes her very sad that the cookies are gone because they belong to Micah (a younger child - the son of another teacher). She realizes that she had not specifically said that things on top of the bookshelf were off limits.

Child response: Logan seems sorry that he has taken the cookies without asking.

a. Probable cause of the problem? *Missing perspective taking skills*

b. What evidence did you use to decide on that cause?

Logan doesn't seem to feel guilty; suggesting that he didn't realize the cookies might belong to someone.

c. Describe the guidance/discipline approach that best deals with that cause.

If Micah were there to tell him those were his cookies, it would be best. But the teacher's “I message” on behalf of the other child may be effective.

5. Description of situation:

The class has walked to the music room and is waiting outside for the previous group to finish. Tim begins to jump around a little and soon bumps into Chea, who pushes Tim, making him bump into Sabrina. Now both Chea and Sabrina are upset and angry at Tim.

a. Probable cause of the problem? *Inappropriate adult expectations*

b. What evidence did you use to decide on that cause?

Waiting with nothing to do is pretty guaranteed to cause behavior problems.

c. Describe the guidance/discipline approach that best deals with that cause.

Best to avoid the wait, but if beyond the teacher's control, then quiet activity such as fingerplays should be presented to channel children's behavior acceptably.

6. Description of Situation:

It is choice time and Lorraina and Amelia, have asked to have the paint refilled so they can paint at the easel. A third girl, Mary, says, "But I want to paint!" She says this loudly and with a tone of voice that indicates that she thought they had taken the easel from her.

Amelia says, "You can paint with me!"

Mari wails, "NO! I want to paint by myself."

Tom, a fourth child, is standing nearby. Amelia asks him if he wants to paint with her. He accepts, happily, and they don't paint shirts.

Mari cries, "No, no! Tom can't paint, Amelia said I could paint with her."

Amelia looks at the adult, as if to say "help".

Tom says, "Amelia said I could paint with her."

Adult: "Mari, I did hear Amelia ask you to paint, but I thought you said no. What else could you do?"

Mari calms down and answers, "I know, I can paint with Lorraina."

Lorraina: "No I want to paint by myself, you can paint when I'm done."

Mari: taking a paint brush from the easel on Lorraina's side says, "I'm going to paint with you."

Lorraina puts her body in the way, trying to block Mari's attempt to paint on her clean, white paper.

Mari paints on Lorraina's face and arm.; Lorraina leaves the easel crying; Mari begins to paint.

(The adult was standing just two feet from this situation, refilling paint cups. She reports that it sounds like this took several minutes to transpire, but was really complete in about 90 sec.!)

a. Probable cause of the problem? *Lack of perspective taking*

b. What evidence did you use to decide on that cause? *Mari seems totally oblivious to the wishes and views of others. Her initial interpretation of the situation was egocentric and so were her following behaviors.*

c. Describe the guidance/discipline approach that best deals with that cause.

The teacher needs to begin working with Mari to help her hear what the other children are saying. Obviously it will take repeated efforts over time before Mari will make progress, but such intervention will assist her growth.

7. Description of Situation:

Sara goes to the block area and begins pulling out blocks. Her friend Nova joins her. Summer & Erika eventually join them. Erika is the last to begin a building project. The focus is on the big colored cardboard blocks, so they are mostly in use by the time she begins. Erika grabs blocks from Sara's building, which then falls. Sara doesn't notice the culprit, and patiently begins to build again. Erika grabs some more, and now Sara has a frustrated look on her face. Adult: "Erika do you see that Sara is using these blocks?"

Erika: "No, I want them!"

Adult then suggests the wooden blocks, which are plentiful.

Erika refuses, and grabs a toy dino and begins smashing the other girls' constructions. Adult watches as the other children just yell Erika's name in an angry tone. The teacher asks the girls to tell Erika how they feel about her smashing their buildings. Finally the teacher says, "See, Erika, they don't like that. Let's build something out of these blocks."

Erika: "No, I don't know how!"

Adult offers to help her, and starts 2 walls. Erika isn't very interested. Next she goes to the pretend play restaurant, and again begins just grabbing things, upsetting the other children.

a. Probable cause of the problem? *Missing skills for entering play*

b. What evidence did you use to decide on that cause?

Erika's interest is not in the materials she is grabbing. Her behavior is typical of a child who wants to play with other children but does not know how.

c. Describe the guidance/discipline approach that best deals with that cause.

Erika needs coaching on how to enter play. She needs help noticing what the other children are doing and then figuring out how to contribute to that play.

8. Situation: It is recess and a group of children are playing jump rope. It is the same group of girls who jump everyday. There are always arguments over who will hold the rope and who will jump. After a heated argument, two of the girls grab the rope and start turning. A few minutes later a girl comes up to the duty teacher holding her face and crying/screaming. The child explains that while she was jumping the kids began turning the rope really fast so that she would mess up and then the rope hit her in the face.

Adult response: Adult checks child's face to make sure she is okay and asks if her face hurts. Child nods. She takes her in to get an ice pack and then comes back out with the girl. She goes over to the group of girls jumping and asks what happened. The girls say they don't know. The teacher asks them again what happened to make the child get hit with the rope.

Child response: The children explain that the girl who had got hurt had been turning the rope fast to make them mess up and so they did it to her. They didn't mean for her to get hit in the face. The child who is hurt starts yelling and said that they did hit her on purpose.

a. Probable cause of the problem? *For those who hurt the first girl: missing information*

b. What evidence did you use to decide on that cause?

The children weren't aware that their behavior could cause someone to get hurt. They seem sincere in not having meant to hurt her.

c. Describe the guidance/discipline approach that best deals with that cause.

Related consequences of restitution could have been used effectively here: instead of the teacher taking the injured girl to get an ice pack, those who injured her should have done so and become more aware of her injury.

d. Another possible cause of the problem? *For the injured girl: lack of perspective taking*

e. What evidence did you use to decide on that cause?

The injured girl did not seem aware that the others would be angry at her for turning the rope fast for them.

f. Describe the guidance/discipline approach that best deals with that cause.

The children appear to have used related consequences of retaliation here, demonstrating why it is not a good choice.

g. Another possible cause of the problem? *For both sides: lack of communication skill*

h. What evidence did you use to decide on that cause?

None of the children told one another how they felt. They just tried to get even instead of negotiating.

i. Describe the guidance/discipline approach that best deals with that cause.

Lessons in "I messages" and conflict resolution would seem appropriate.

9. Situation: A little boy is on the playground hiding behind a post. He looks like he is about to cry. The teacher goes up to him and tries to find out what's wrong.

Adult: "You look sad. What's wrong?"

Child: "Those boys won't play with me. I started to chase them and they said to stop. They don't like me."

Adult: "Did you try to find out why they don't want you to chase them?"

Child: "I kept asking them to stop running, but they wouldn't listen."

a. Probable cause of the problem?

Missing skill of entering play

b. What evidence did you use to decide on that cause?

He is specific about his goals and clearly describes an inappropriate way of attaining them.

c. Describe the guidance/discipline approach that best deals with that cause.

This child needs coaching on entering play: first help noticing what the other children are doing and then figuring out how to contribute to that play.

10. Situation: A group of Kindergarteners is playing house. A student comes to the teacher to say that Shawn has taken all the play money that Jason had. When the teacher gets to the area, Shawn is on his way out and Jason is looking after him.

Adult response: The teacher says, "Shawn what is the problem here?" He just looks at her. She repeats the question, thinking that maybe Shawn hadn't heard. Still, no answer. The boy who came to get the teacher in the first place tells her again that Shawn took all the money right out of Jason's hand. The teacher asks, "Jason what is the problem?"

Jason's response: "I was playing with the money and Shawn came right up and took it even when I told him I was playing with it. **Shawn says,** "But we are almost out of money in the playstore."

The teacher asks Shawn, "Is that a problem?" **Shawn:** "Yes because there is not enough money in the store". Jason just looks at Shawn. The **teacher** says: "Jason do you understand

that Shawn is worried because there is no money in the store?" **Jason:** "Yes, but I'm playing with this money."

a. One Probable cause of the problem? *Shawn seems to be missing communication skills*

b. What evidence did you use to decide on that cause?

The teacher's assistance is necessary for him to state his problem.

c. Describe the guidance/discipline approach that best deals with that cause.

Shawn needs scaffolding as he learns to express his needs and to use "messages."

d. Another Probable cause of the problem?

Jason and Shawn both seem to be missing perspective taking skills

e. What evidence did you use to decide on that cause?

Jason doesn't seem to be able to relate to the problem of others needing some money too. Shawn's grabbing the money out of Jason's hand is typical of young children's egocentric approach: they are unaware of the other child's feelings.

f. Describe the guidance/discipline approach that best deals with that cause.

Both boys need to listen to "I messages" from one another as they begin the long process of de-centering.

11. Situation: It is group time in the Head Start class: first there was a story and then some songs and now it is sharing time. But several children apparently don't want to be there; they keep running off and have to be brought back by one of the teachers. The children are expected to listen respectfully while others share but many of them are not doing so.

a. Probable cause of the problem? *Inappropriate adult expectations*

b. What evidence did you use to decide on that cause?

It would take a long time to have both a story and songs, let alone sharing at the same time. Sharing time is notoriously boring to children anyway - young children are not exciting speakers usually.

c. Describe the guidance/discipline approach that best deals with that cause.

Allowing those who wanted to have sharing to stay for it and allowing others to choose other quiet activities that will not disturb sharing.

d. How could this problem have been avoided?

By planning more developmentally appropriate, shorter group time and/or small group sharing.

12. A problem for you to solve:

Description of the situation: You saw Kailyn bring the funnel over to the water table and then walk away to get something else. The next thing you know, Judy and Kailyn are fighting over the funnel, each holding on to it and tugging. "I had it first!" yells Judy. "No, I had it first!" insists Kailyn.

a. Probable cause of the problem?

Missing perspective taking skill

b. What evidence did you use to decide on that cause?

Each girl is speaking only of her own viewpoint. In addition, Kailyn obviously never considered that someone might not know she planned on using the funnel. Judy, similarly, never considered that Kailyn might not be finished with it.

c. Describe the guidance/discipline approach that best deals with that cause.

Teach missing perspective taking skill: help each to share her perspective, using an I message.

13. Description of situation: It is the beginning of group time and the teacher is trying to get the class attention. One child says she is sick and asks if she can go to the window seat and lie down. The teacher gives her permission. Then Megan decides to go over to the window seat to lie down also.

Adult response: Megan, come and see this; you'll like it.

Megan ignores her and the teacher then ignores Megan, focusing her energy on keeping the lesson going with the rest of the group.

a. What is a cause that would be addressed by this teacher response?

Attention Getting

What would you expect the child to do in this case?

Come back to the group eventually

b. What is a cause that would not be addressed by this response?

The program or environment is not meeting the child's needs

What would you expect the child to do in this case?

Continue to stay away from the group activity

14. A problem for you to solve:

Children involved: Alyssa and Stephanie age 6
time: 11:30 a.m.

Description of the situation:

Alyssa and Stephanie were washing their hands at the classroom sink in preparation for lunch. Alyssa squirted soap on her hands and it sprayed onto Stephanie's arm. Stephanie started to cry and tried to squirt soap back at Alyssa.

a. If the cause of this problem has to do with lack of communication and/or social skills, what would be the appropriate guidance approach? Describe in detail how you would implement that approach.

Adult intervention needs to be aimed at teaching the missing skills: "I messages" would be useful for either skill. Scaffolding conflict resolution based on I messages might be useful. Student answer should demonstrate understanding of how to do these things.

b. If the cause of this problem has to do with inappropriate adult expectations, what would be the appropriate guidance approach?

Describe in detail how you would implement that approach.

Perhaps the sink area is too crowded and everyone is too rushed. If so, different routines need to be set in place. Student ideas might include staggered schedules for handwashing, starting sooner, using more than one sink etc.