



New York State Education Department
Office of Special Education
Educational Partnership





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Introduction to the Behavior Pathway

The Basis for Understanding Behavior and Behavioral Supports

Produced by the Technical Assistance Partnership for Behavior

Updated 7/12/2023

Blueprint for Improved Results for Students with Disabilities



Self-Advocacy

Students engage in self-advocacy and are involved in determining their own educational goals and plan.



Family Partnership

Parents, and other family members, are engaged as meaningful partners in the special education process and the education of their child.



Specially-Designed Instruction

Teacher's design, provide, and assess the effectiveness of specially-designed instruction to provide students with disabilities with access to participate and progress in the general education curriculum.



Research-Based Instruction

Teachers provide research-based instructional teaching and learning strategies and supports for students with disabilities.



Multi-tiered Support

Schools provide multi-tiered systems of behavioral and academic support.



Inclusive Activities

Schools provide high-quality inclusive programs and activities.



Transition Support

Schools provide appropriate instruction for students with disabilities in career development and opportunities to participate in work-based learning.

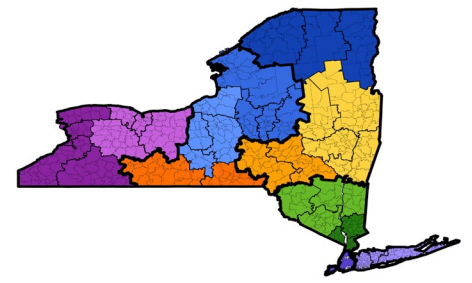


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Disclaimer

The resources shown are designed to provide helpful information. Resources are provided for instructional use purposes only and do not constitute NYSED endorsement of any vendor, author, or other sources. To the best of our knowledge, the resources provided are true and complete.

Who Are We?



- The Office of Special Education (OSE) Educational Partnership is a coordinated and cohesive network focused on enhancing services and improving outcomes for students with disabilities and providing effective support for educational organizations (EOs) and families
- Regional Partnership Centers (RPCs) and Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Centers are in each of the 12 regions of NYS and their own teams of specialists provide coordinated, direct supports and services to the EOs within their region

Today's Facilitators

Participant Introductions

- Name
- Role
- District
- School
- Population Served

Training Expectations

<u>EXPECTATION</u>	<u>BEHAVIOR</u>
BE RESPONSIBLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✧ Take care of your personal needs✧ Return on time and quietly✧ Sign attendance sheets / complete eval. form✧ Use electronic devices when necessary
BE RESPECTFUL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✧ Put cell phones to “off” or “vibrate”✧ Listen to others attentively✧ Honor confidentiality when applicable✧ Stay on topic
BE ENGAGED	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✧ Be an active participant✧ Participate with an open mind✧ Take notes✧ Make plans to stay until training dismissal

Virtual Training Expectations

<u>EXPECTATION</u>	<u>BEHAVIOR</u>
BE RESPONSIBLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✧ Take care of your personal needs✧ Return on time and quietly✧ Sign attendance sheets / complete eval. form✧ Use electronic devices when necessary
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BE ENGAGED	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✧ Be an active participant✧ Participate with an open mind✧ Take notes✧ Make plans to stay until training dismissal

Objectives

- **Identify** the components on the Behavior Pathway and how you can use it to understand why behaviors occur
- **Develop** a working definition/elevator speech for each component on the Behavior Pathway
- **Explain** the different types of function of behavior and how each of the components on the Behavior Pathway leads to identifying the function
- **Apply** the new knowledge learned on the Behavior Pathway to one of your students

Agenda

- What is Behavior?
- Overview of the Behavior Pathway
 - Behavior
 - Antecedents
 - Consequence
 - Setting Events
 - Function
- Closure and Wrap-up



Slide Marker Icons



What is Behavior?

Learned

- Culture, Context and Experiences

Teachable

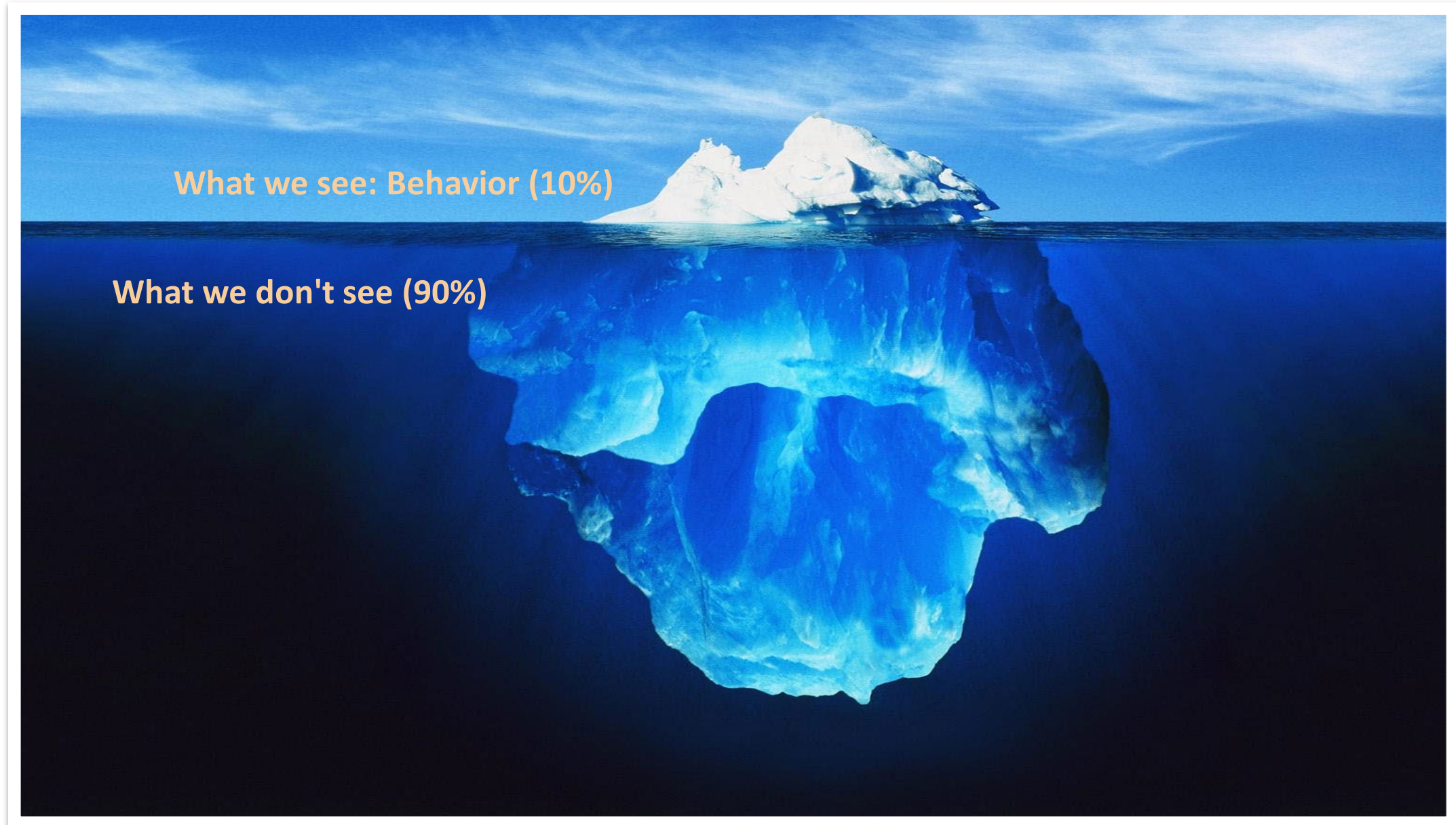
- Alterable, Change or Shape

Meaning

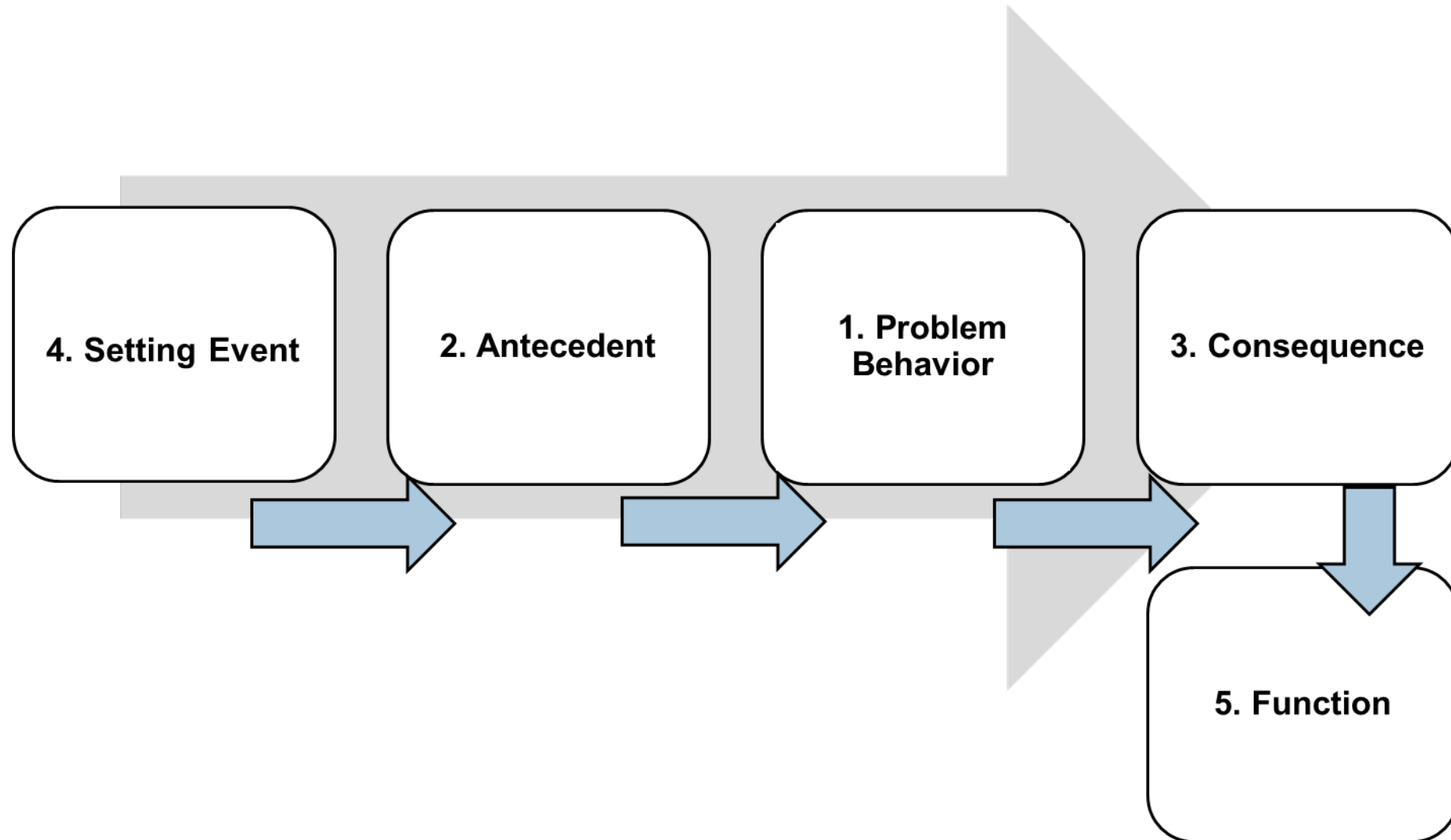
- Function, Purposeful, Why



Behavior Is Like An Iceberg



The Behavior Pathway

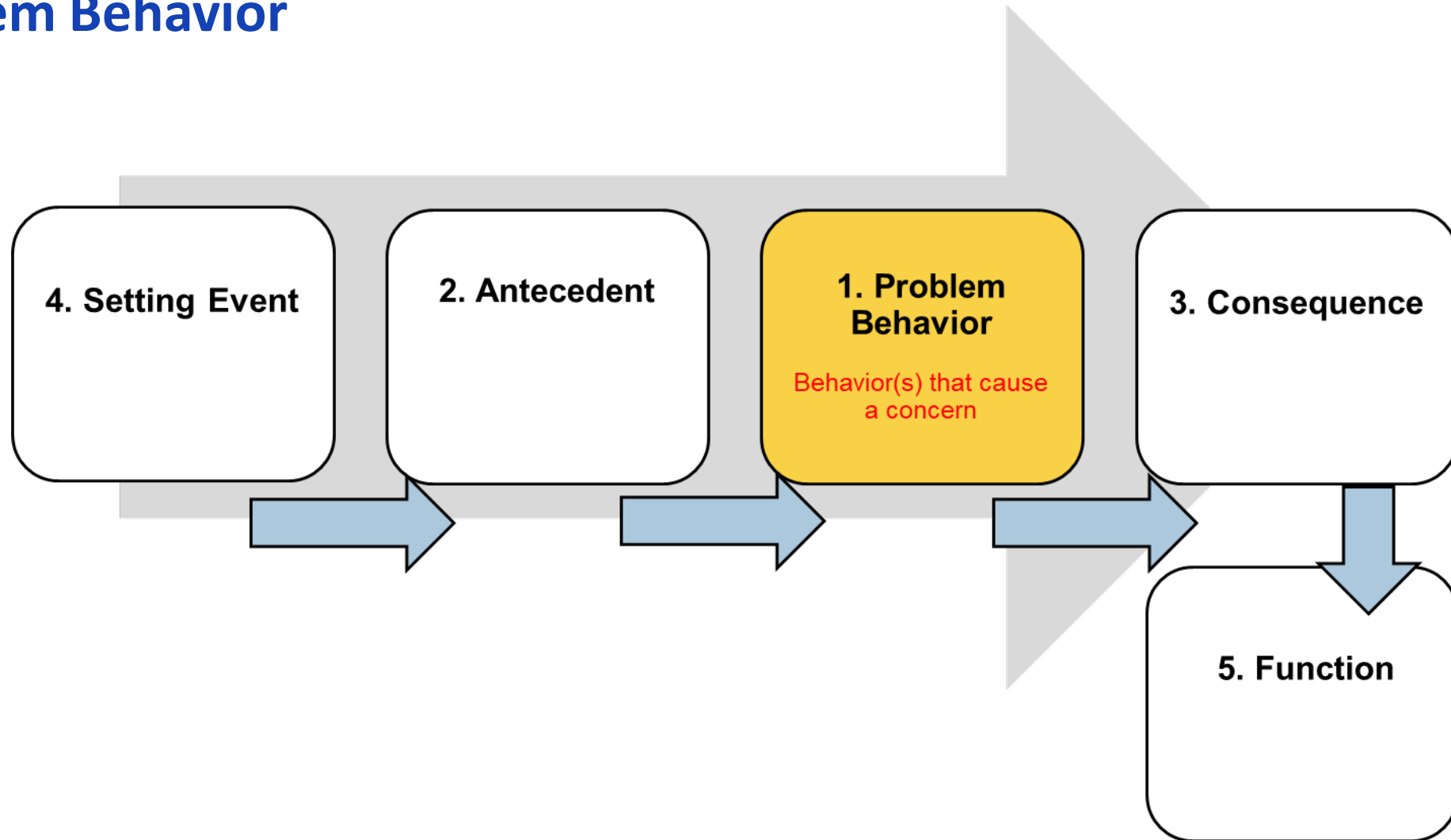


Behavior



The Behavior Pathway

Problem Behavior



Problem Behaviors

Identified problem behaviors must be:

- Observable: The problem behavior must be an overt action that can be seen
- Measurable: The problem behavior can be counted, timed or otherwise quantified
- Defined: The problem behavior must be stated so clearly that it passes the “stranger test” —that is, it can be **accurately documented** by a person who is unfamiliar with the student

When descriptions of problem behavior meet these criteria, we say that the problem behavior has been **operationally defined**.

Which term is *observable* and *measurable*?

Aggressive—OR—hits with fist

Bullies—OR—takes objects from peers

Arrives at class 10 minutes late—OR—irresponsible

Out of seat 55% of time—OR—hyperactive

Inappropriate language—OR—curses

Off task—OR—not oriented to teacher or task

Example: Defining the Behavior

Flopping: Having any part of the body (other than feet) on the floor, without permission.

Examples: Falling out of chair; dropping to floor in hallway; sitting on floor

Non-examples: sitting on floor with permission; stomping feet; running away

Example 2: Defining the Behavior

Talking Out: Any verbalization made by the student that was not initiated by the teacher and/or distracts others from the assigned tasks in the classroom.

Examples: Answering a question directed to another student by the teacher; saying a swear word; talking when the teacher is giving directions

Non-examples: Answering a question that the teacher directed to the child; yelling to another student during recess; talking with a peer during group work

Are these *observable* and *measurable*?



- Gets out of desk and hits other students
- Has separation anxiety (from parent)
- Is spacey
- Refuses to follow adult directions
- Is emotionally disturbed
- Displays low frustration tolerance

YOUR TURN

Activity: Defining Behavior



Purpose: to build fluency in operationally defining behavior.

- **Directions:**

- Using the four examples of problem behavior on the next slide...
- Determine which of the statements provides an observable & measurable definition of the behavior
- Make sure it passes the “stranger test”
- Please write the letter(s) in the chat box



YOUR TURN

Activity – Share Out

- A. Jeff makes noises when the teacher is providing instruction
- B. Hailey is constantly off task during math
- C. Kevin sits at his desk with his head down, when given a prompt to start work
- D. Brenda is physically aggressive in the cafeteria



Is the behavior...

Observable?

Measurable?

Does the behavior pass the “stranger test?”

Examples of “operationally defined” behavior...

Refuses to follow directions

Destroys classroom property

Leaves the building and run towards the road

Refuses to enter the classroom

Throws chairs

Bangs head against the wall

Puts head down on desk

Refuses to start assignments

Disrupts instruction with repeated vocal outbursts

Flapping, flicking, and spinning

Bites self or others

Violates personal space

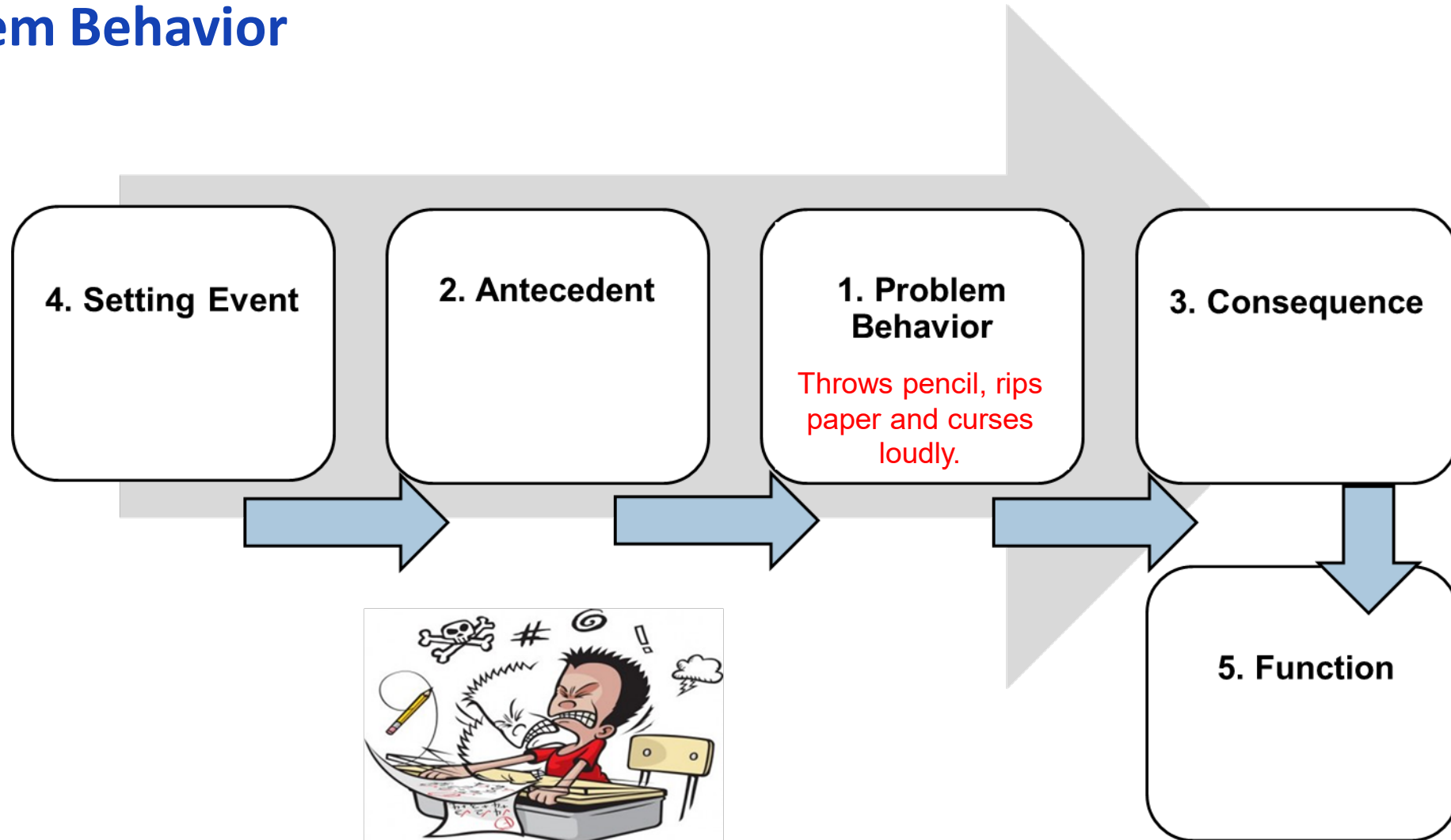
Joe's Behavior Pathway

Joe throws his pencil, rips his paper and curses loudly.



Joe's Behavior Pathway

Problem Behavior

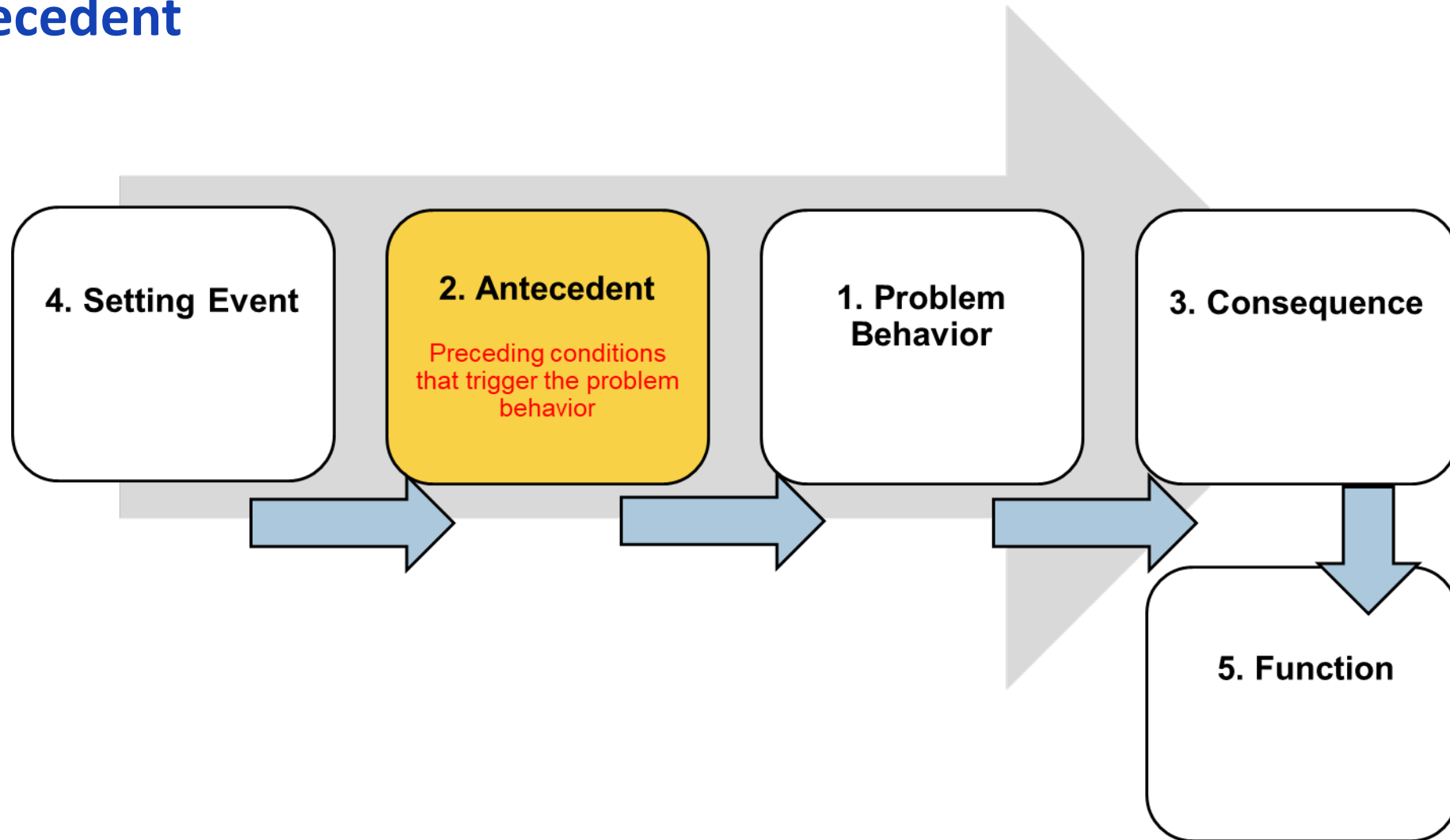


Antecedents



The Behavior Pathway

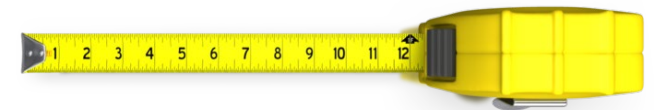
Antecedent



Antecedents

Essential Characteristics

- Antecedents **trigger** or **prompt** behaviors
- They are **observable** and **measurable** characteristics of the environment.
- They are **present in the environment** prior to the occurrence of the behavior
- They have a directly **functional cause/effect** (if this, then that) **relationship** to the occurrence of a target behavior





Antecedents

Examples

- **Location**- density of people, type of lighting, noise level, size of room, unfamiliarity.
- **Activity**- non-preferred, long, boring, lengthy, passive.
- **Task**- difficult, new, number of errors made, length (trials), physical effort required.

Antecedents

Examples Continued

- **Instruction** - pace, number and types of prompts, response opportunities, teacher proximity, availability of teacher attention or schedules for other forms of reinforcement.
- **People** - teacher directives, verbal/non-verbal prompts, tone of voice, past experience, unfamiliarity.



Antecedents

Examples and Non-Examples

Examples	Non-Examples
Teacher directive	Uninvolved parent
Independent work longer than 10 minutes	Unmotivated student
Noise volume	Auditory sensitivity
Physical proximity of Mrs. Jones	Angry, sad, frustrated (emotions)

Example...



When given a teacher directive to begin independent work
(antecedent)



Travis will remain off-task, leave his space and engage his peers
(problem behavior).



Does the antecedent meet all antecedent criteria?

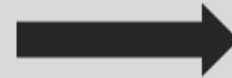
YOUR TURN

Activity – Identifying Antecedents



2. Antecedent:

Triggers

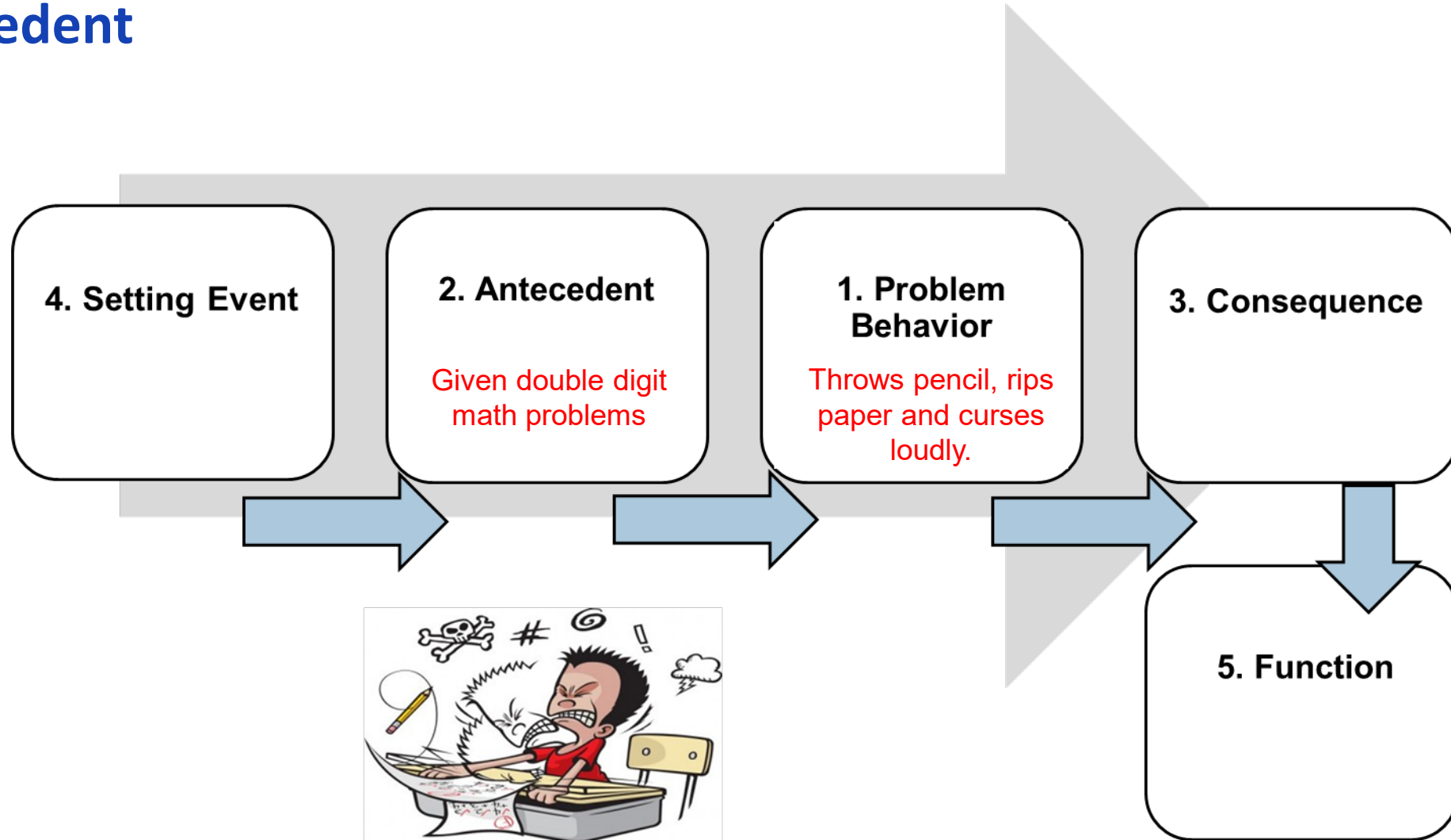


1. Behavior:

Given a directive to provide an answer during large group instruction, Tomeka looks away and does not respond.

Joe's Behavior Pathway

Antecedent

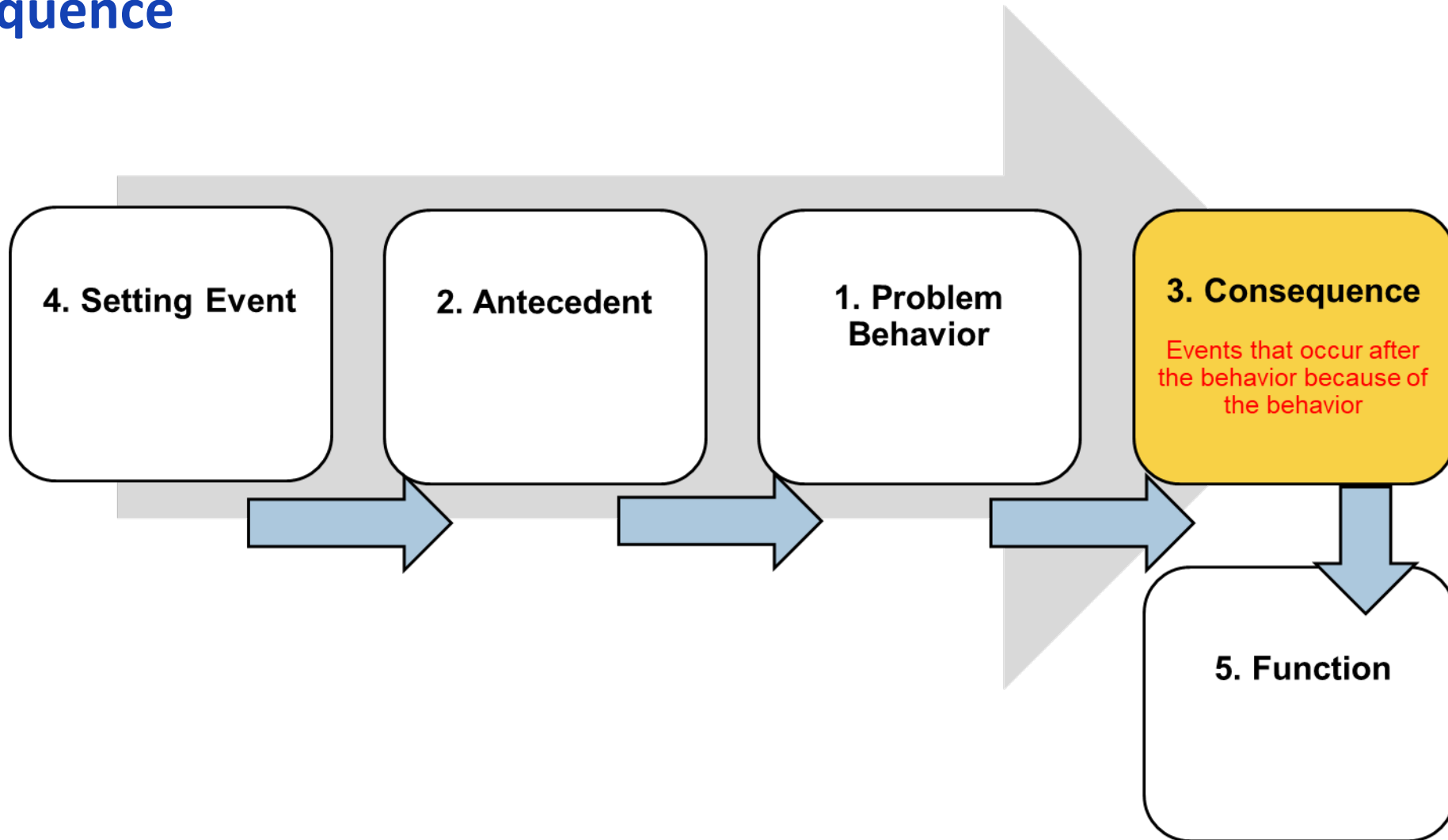


Consequence



The Behavior Pathway

Consequence



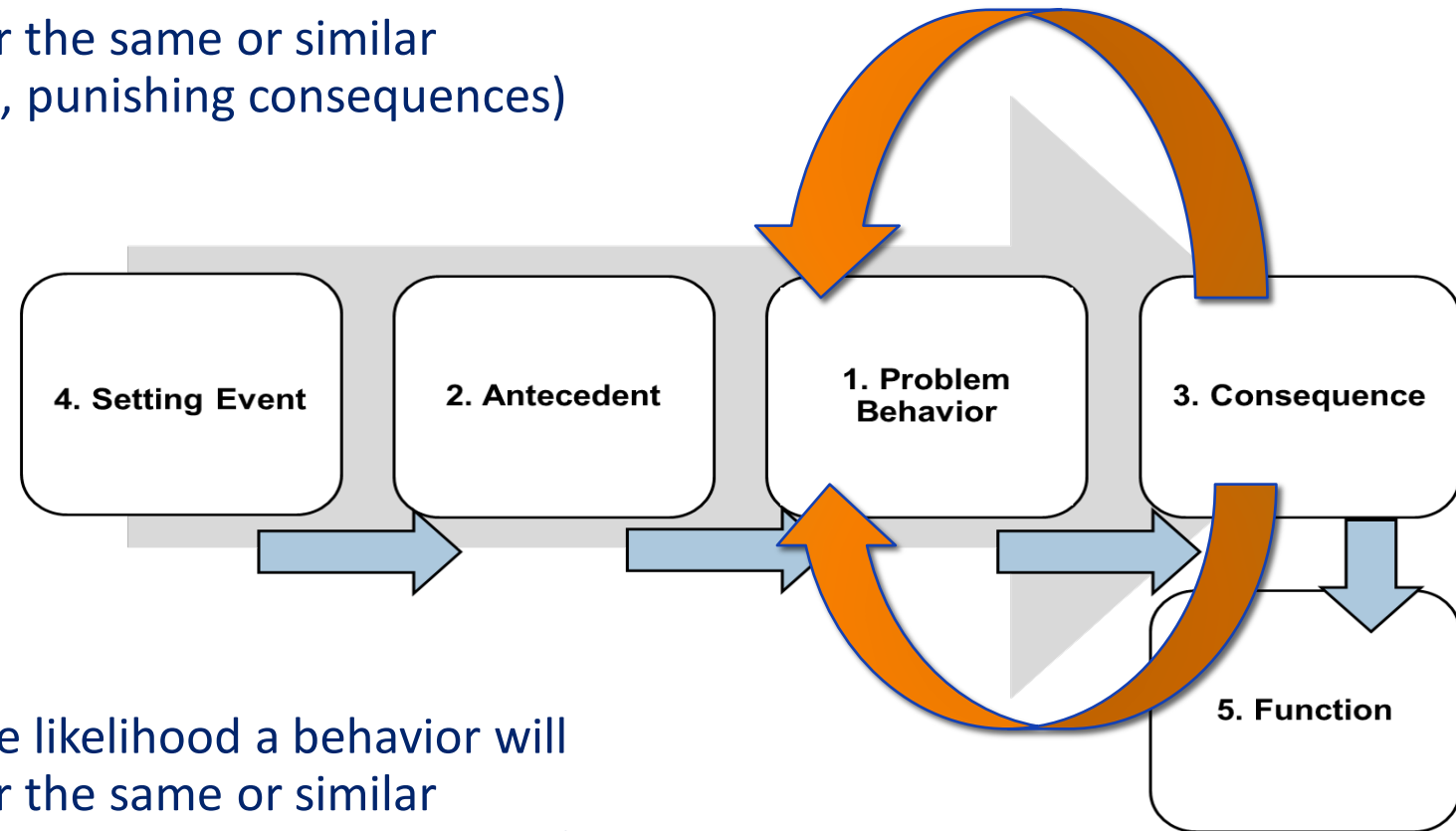
Consequence

Essential Characteristics

- They are either:
 - Observable and measurable reactions in the environment, or
 - Create an internal state of pleasure or remove an internal state of discomfort (e.g., automatic reinforcement of stereotypical behavior)
- They occur following behavior
- They are functionally related to behavior in that a behavior is said to elicit/evoke the consequence, or cause the consequence to occur
- Their functional relationship to behavior may also be said another way -- -- consequences that are elicited/evoked by a given behavior may, in turn, sustain or strengthen that behavior (reinforce), or weaken or suppress that behavior (punish)

Consequences Shape Behavior

Consequences can **decrease** the likelihood a behavior will occur again in the future under the same or similar environmental conditions (e.g., punishing consequences)



Consequences can **increase** the likelihood a behavior will occur again in the future under the same or similar environmental conditions (i.e., reinforcing consequences)

Consequence

Examples

- Examples of behavior **sustaining** or **strengthening** consequences:
 - Teacher attention (smiles, prompts, scolds)
 - Peer attention
 - Being ignored or left alone
 - Being sent away
 - Getting a toy, or a good grade
 - A satisfying level of physical activity

YOUR TURN

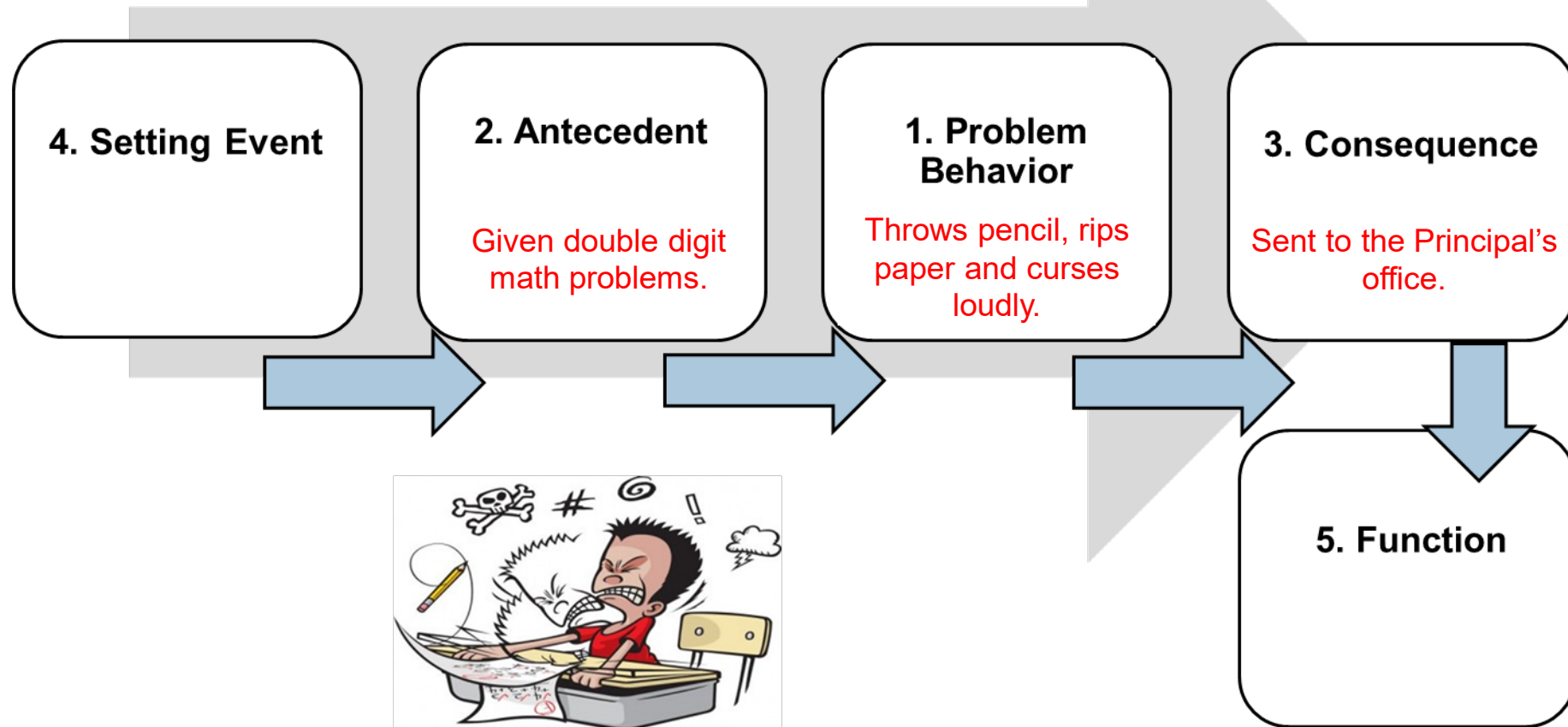
Activity – Identifying Consequences



- During recess, when peers tease him, Ben hits his peers, and they leave him alone
- During reading, when asked to read aloud Tracy tells jokes, the other students laugh, and she is sent to the office
- During circle time, when praised Jessie starts crying, the teacher stops circle time and comforts her

Joe's Behavior Pathway

Consequence

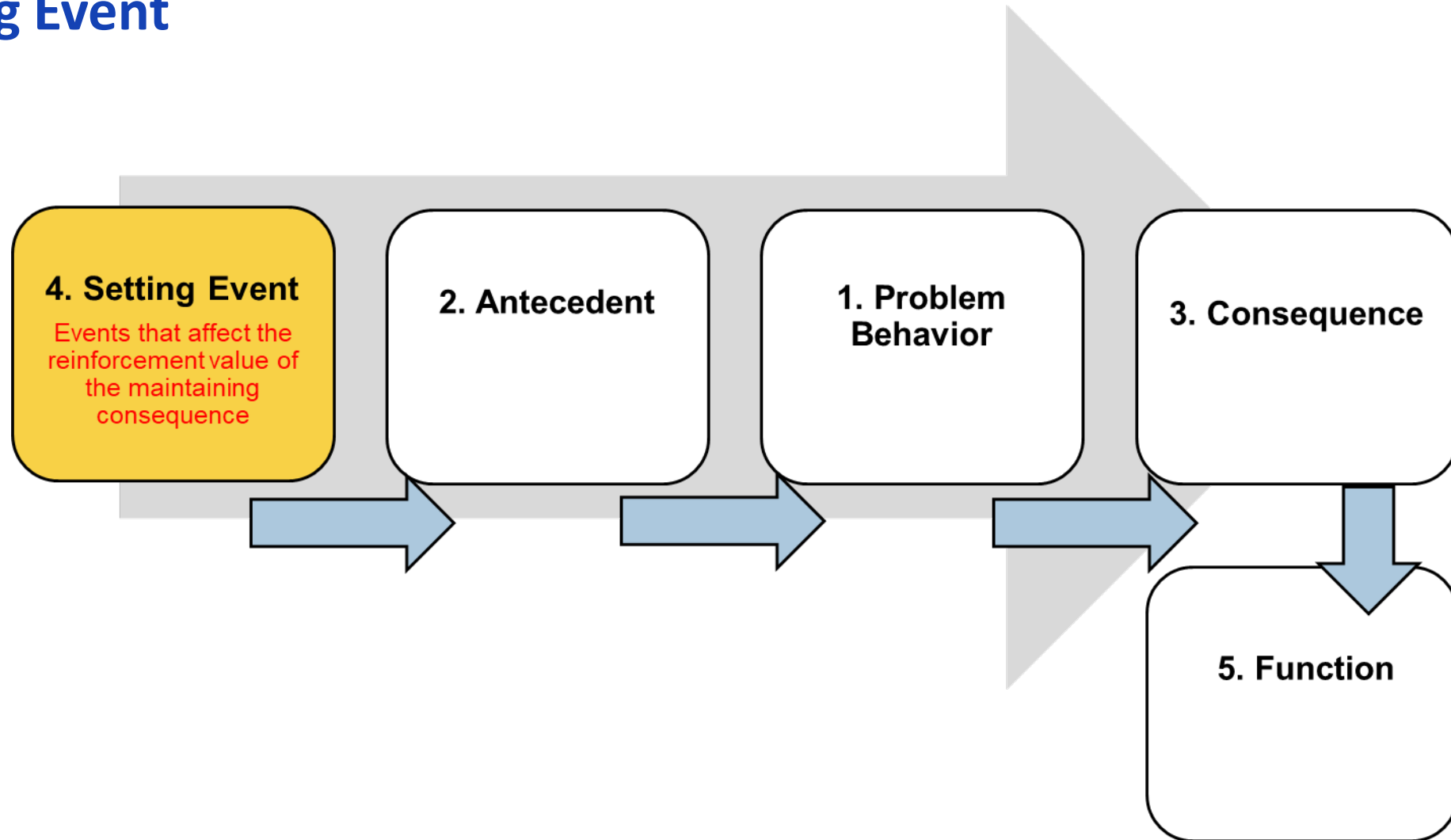


Setting Events



The Behavior Pathway

Setting Event

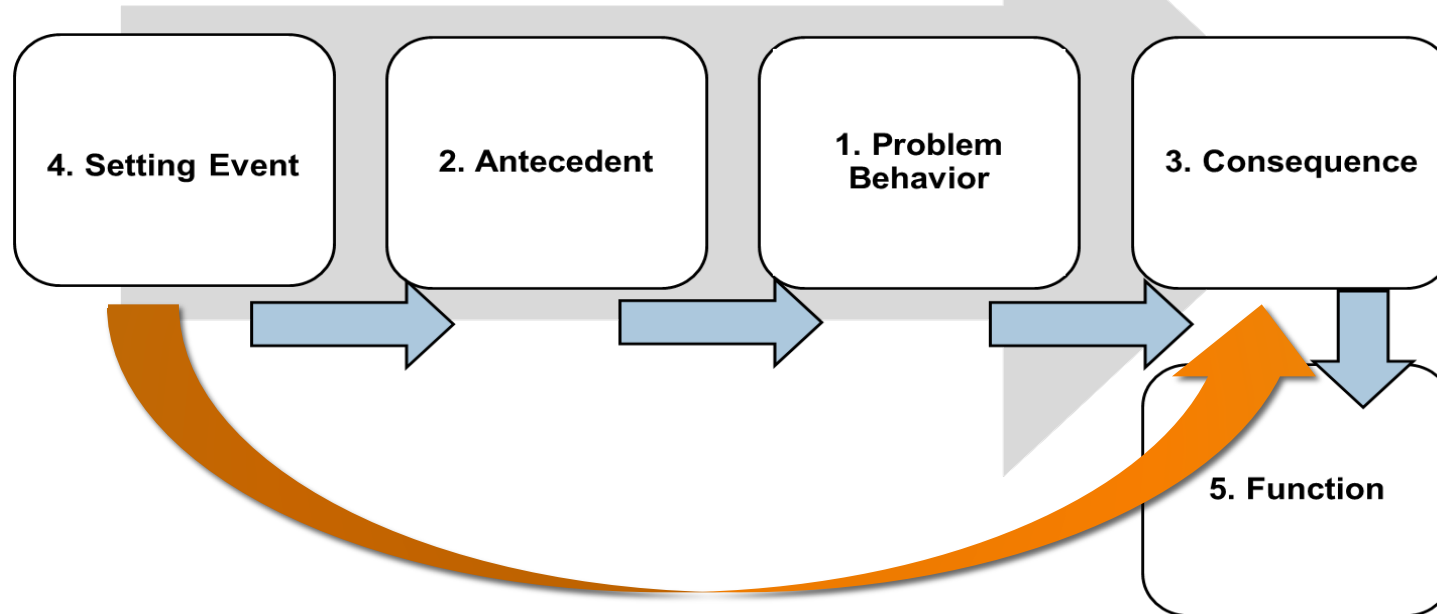


Setting Events

Essential Characteristics

- Examples of behavior sustaining or strengthening consequences:
 - They can be **environmental, social, or biological** in nature
 - They are present **prior** to the occurrence of the problem behavior
 - They **increase the probability** the antecedent will trigger the behavior by increasing the anticipated value of the reinforcing consequence

Setting Events Strengthening and Weakening



Setting events temporarily affect the expected reinforcement value of the consequence.

When given an apple (antecedent), hunger due to missed breakfast (setting event) increases the likelihood Bob will eat it (behavior) because doing so will be especially rewarding (consequence).

YOUR TURN

Activity – Identifying Setting Events



- Fatigue (lack of sleep)
- Previous conflict
- Time of day
- Hunger (lack of food)
- Illness
- Transitions
- Staffing pattern
- Changes in other environments (parental relationships, moves, deaths)
- Medications

Which of these are:
Environmental?
Social?
Physical?

Setting Events

Examples and Non-examples

- **Examples:**

- Previous arguments with staff
- Bullied on bus ride
- Arriving at school with incomplete homework
- Headache
- Morning conflict at home

- **Non-Examples:**

- Birth order
- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Emotion dysregulation
- Poor social skills
- Low academic ability
- Race/Ethnicity

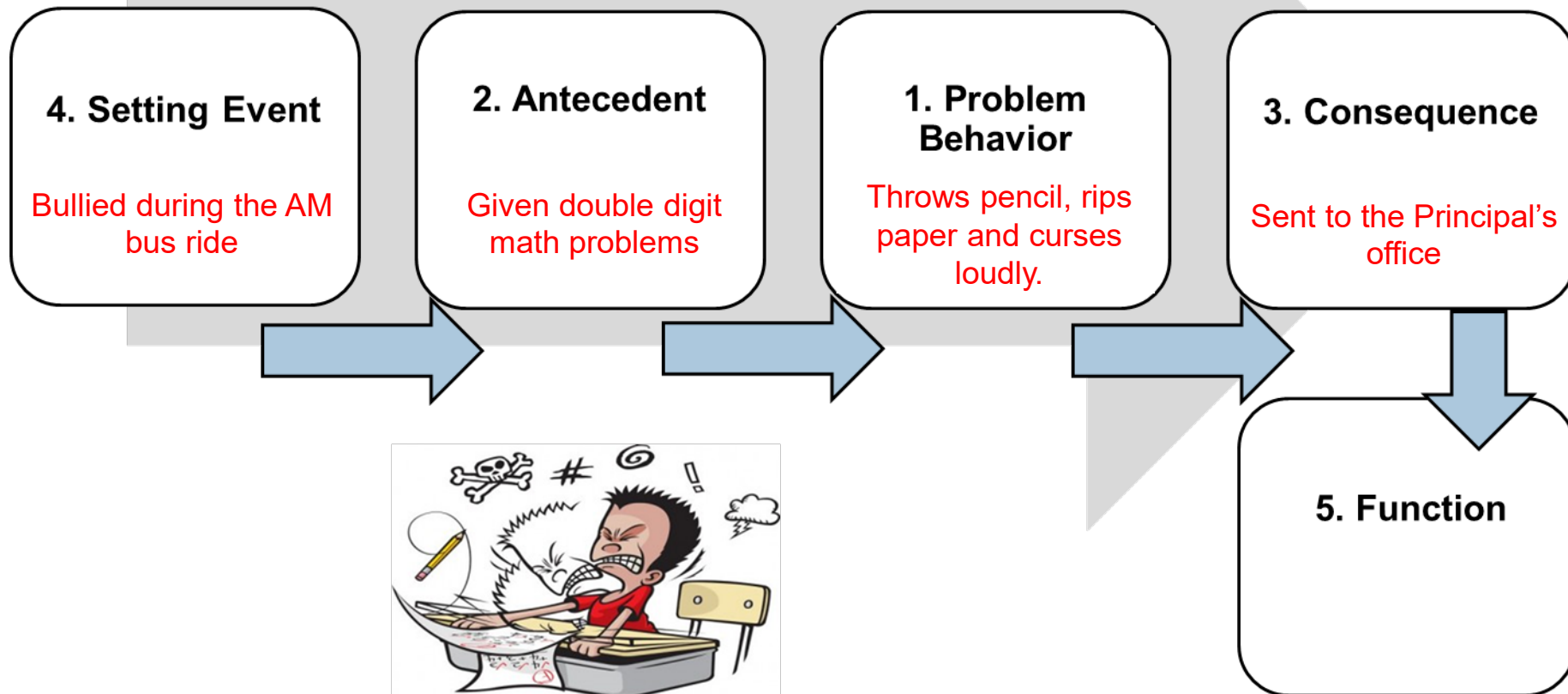
Setting Events

Additional Examples using Scenarios

- Kevin is more likely to put his head down and close his book during 7th period English classes
- Kyrie is more likely to refuse directions to remain in his seat at the library table and use profanities when Steph, LeBron and Josie are also present in the library
- When Carla has spent the weekend at her father's house, she is more likely to argue with Mr. Jefferson and refuse to follow his directions during Monday "Do Nows"

Joe's Behavior Pathway

Setting Event

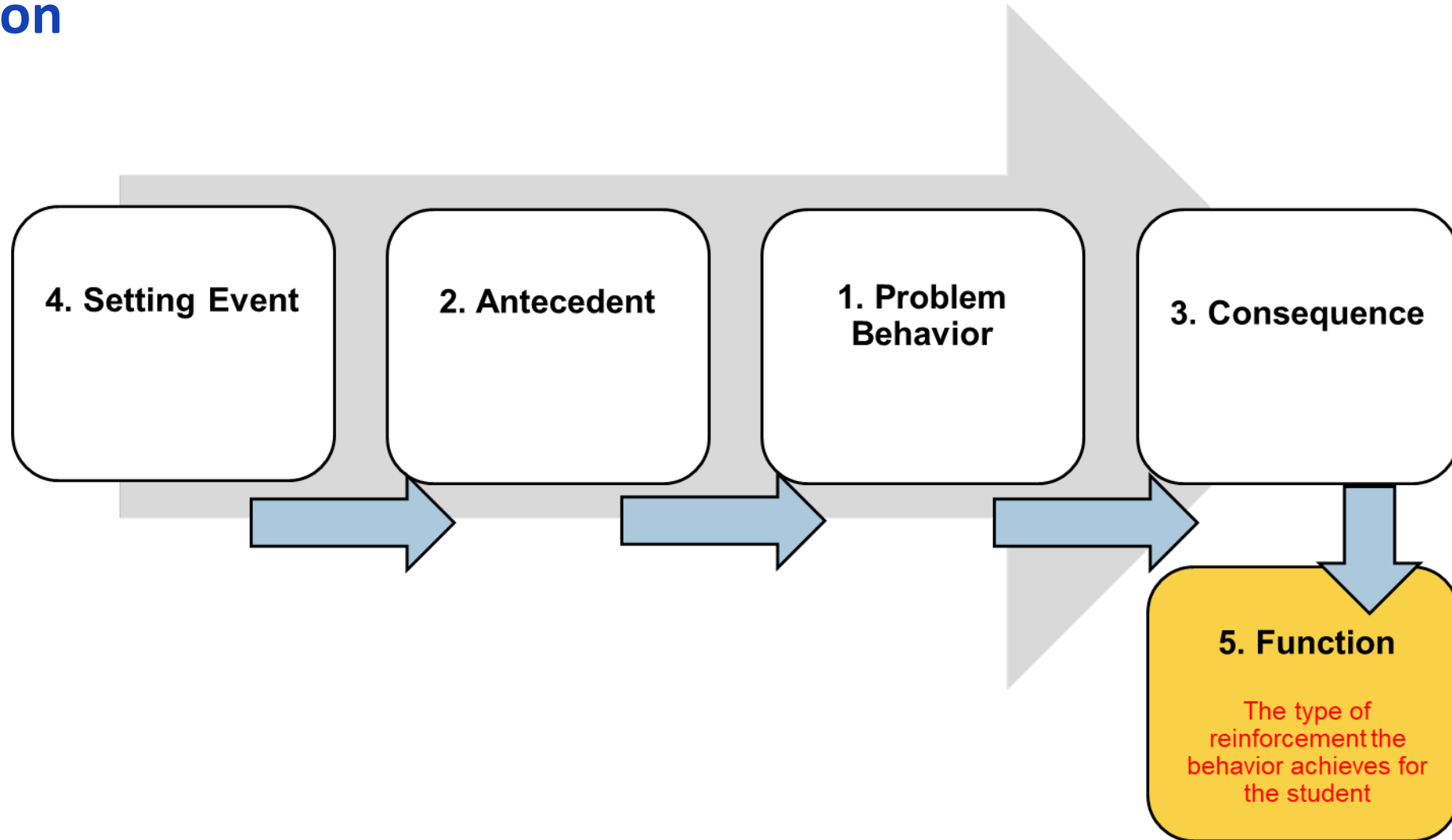


Function



The Behavior Pathway

Function

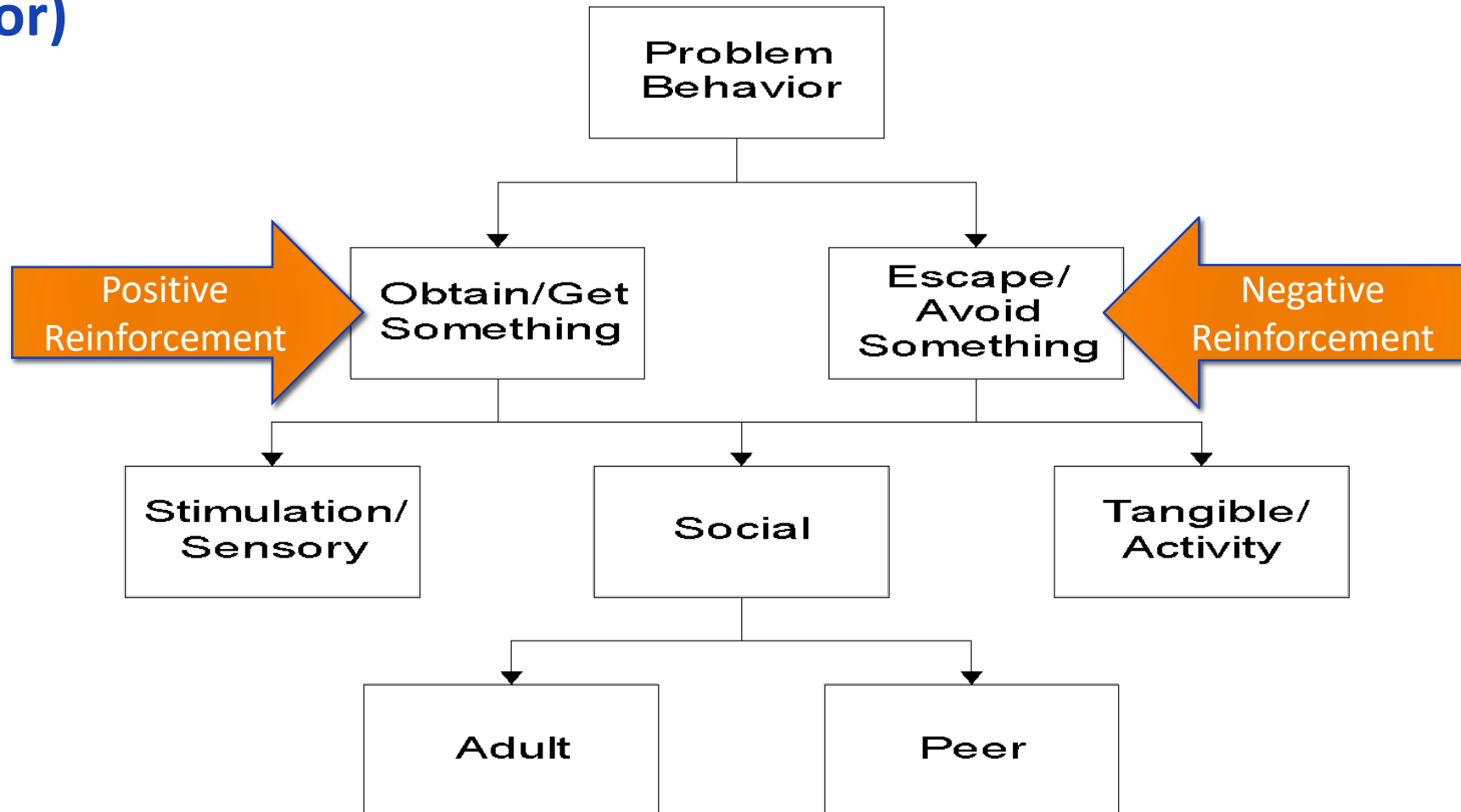


Reinforcement Theory

- Reinforcement always involves delivery of a consequence that **sustains or strengthens the behavior**
- Reinforcement **maintains** or **increases** the likelihood the behavior will reoccur again under similar conditions in the future

Possible Functions of Behavior

(Or the various ways reinforcement can grow and sustain a behavior)



Hypotheses

- All **Get/Obtain** functions are said to fall under the positive reinforcement hypothesis
- All **Escape/Avoid** functions are said to fall under the negative reinforcement hypothesis

Common Functions of Behavior

• TO AVOID/ESCAPE:

- Peer attention
- Adult attention
- Difficult task
- Boring task
- Easy task
- Physical demand
- Non-preferred activity
- Reprimands
- Sensory stimulation

TO OBTAIN/GET:

- Peer attention
- Adult attention
- Desired activity
- Desired object/items
- Sensory stimulation: auditory, tactile, etc.

YOUR TURN

Activity – Identifying Function

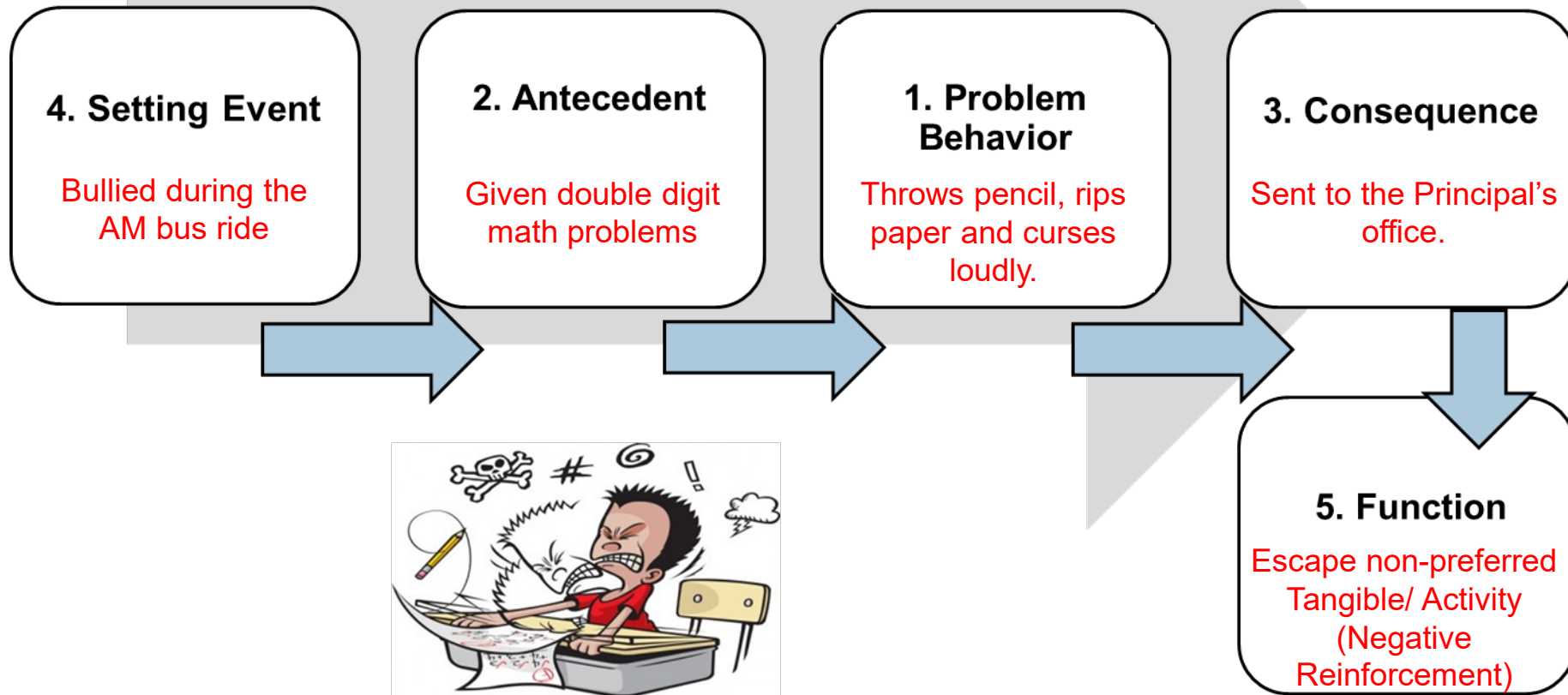


- When told to work with a partner in science, Steve tears up his assignment and stomps his feet. The teacher then has Steve return to his desk, and he completes the same assignment, while the rest of the class works together with their partners

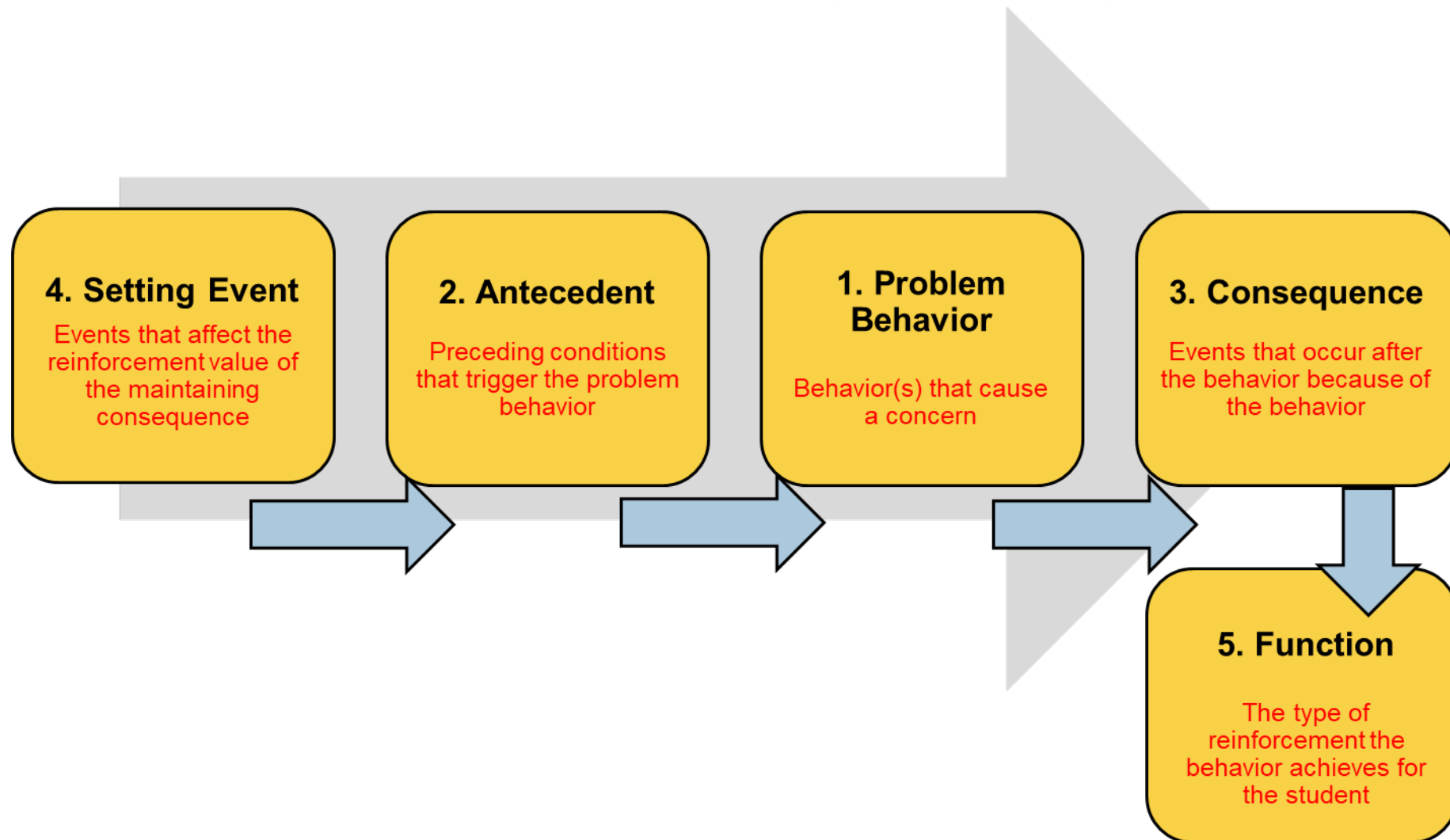
- What is the function of Steve's behavior?

Joe's Behavior Pathway

Function



The Behavior Pathway Components



Pause and Think!



- What questions might you still have?
- What is one new concept or idea you have learned from this training?
- Is there still something you need more information on?

Objectives:

How did we do?



Are you able to:

- **Identify** the components on the Behavior Pathway and how you can use it to understand why behaviors occur
- **Develop** a working definition/elevator speech for each component on the Behavior Pathway
- **Explain** the different types of function of behavior and how each of the components on the Behavior Pathway leads to identifying the function
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