



## HS LESSON 5: Collecting Data on Cartoons for Young Children

**LESSON DESCRIPTION:** In this lesson, students will read research articles on media and young children. They will learn how to use the Cornell note taking system when studying or listening to a lecture. Students will collect data on how much physical aggression is shown in videos meant for young children. They will create graphs of the data and draw conclusions about the effects of cartoons and videos on children’s social and emotional well-being.

Teacher’s Note: Select two videos for young children: one video with high levels of violence, e.g., *Power Puff Girls* and one video with low levels of aggression, e.g., *Winnie the Pooh*.

**FOCUS QUESTIONS:** How much physical aggression is there in cartoons clearly marketed to very young children? How do you collect data on media violence?

**OBJECTIVES:** Students will:

- Conduct short research projects to answer a question including an analysis of media.
- Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

### Core State Standards

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST. 9-12.7** Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST. 9-12.9** Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis reflection, and research.

**LENGTH OF LESSON:** This lesson will take two to three class periods.

### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Two videos meant for young children
- Research articles regarding screen use and young children
- HANDOUT 1: Instructions on Taking Notes (1 per student or display on projection device)
- HANDOUT 2: Taking Notes Based on the Cornell Method (2 per student)
- HANDOUT 3: The Cartoon and Behavior Observation Chart (1 per student)
- Class Video Observation Form
- HANDOUT 4: Cartoon and Aggression Observation Bar Chart (1 per student or display on projection device)

## PROCEDURE:

**Activity 5.1: The teacher will read the article, “Preschoolers Behaving Badly: Expulsions Rise” and teach students how to use the Cornell note taking system when studying or listening to a lecture.**

1. **Tell Students:** The purpose of this lesson is to look at research related to media aggression and then collect data on physical aggression in cartoons.

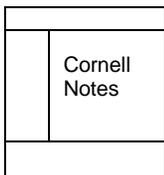
What grade do you think has the highest rates of school expulsion?

(After you have heard several students respond, tell students you will read a newspaper article with the answer and they may be surprised.)

2. **Tell Students:** While I read the article you will take notes. An important study skill when learning new information is to take good notes. In the 1950’s, an education professor at Cornell University developed a method of taking notes to help college students improve their study skills. You are going to learn how to take Cornell notes and then use the method while I read the article.
3. Distribute **HANDOUT 1: Instructions on Taking Notes Based on the Cornell Method** or display on a projection device. Explain Cornell note taking.
4. Distribute **HANDOUT 2: Taking Notes Based on the Cornell Method** (1 copy per student). Read the article on “Preschoolers Behaving Badly: Expulsions Rise” and guide students in the process of using the Cornell method of note taking.

**Activity 5.2: Students will read a research article about media violence and young children and share what they have learned with other students in their group.**

1. Students will be organized into groups of six and will work in pairs. Give each group three different articles on violent media and young children. Each pair will be given two copies of the same article and two copies of the **Cornell Handout**. They will read the article and work together to fill out their own handout.
2. **TELL STUDENTS:** Each pair of students will become the expert on the research article they have been given. Read the article silently and then work with your partner to complete the Cornell Handout. When everyone in your group has finished you will share what you learned with the others in your group.



After all of the students have completed the Cornell Handout show students how to create their own Cornell worksheet by drawing two horizontal lines and one vertical line on a sheet of paper or notebook page.

3. **TELL STUDENTS:** Each expert pair of students will explain what their article was about to their group while the other four students take notes using the Cornell method. At the end of this activity each student will have read one article, listened to summaries about the other two articles and have notes on all three articles.

**Activity 5.3: Students will collect data on how much physical aggression they see in two cartoons.**

1. Give each student **HANDOUT 3: The Cartoon and Behavior Observation Chart**.
2. **TELL STUDENTS:** You will be watching two cartoons to identify how much physical aggression, e.g. (hitting or kicking) is in the cartoons. Later we will look at verbal or social aggression, e.g. (gossiping or saying something mean to someone.) Put a tally mark every time you see a character in the video show physical aggressive behavior. It may be difficult to count all the behaviors especially for any of the cartoons with high levels of aggression. Each student may have different results but we will average the students' observations for a class average.
3. Students will view the video, "Powder Puff Girls" for 5 minutes. The students will only tally physical aggression. The next lesson will use the same videos and look for verbal aggression and social or relational aggression.
4. Students will view the video, "Winnie the Pooh" for 5 minutes. The students will only tally physical aggression. The next lesson will use the same videos and look for verbal aggression and social or relational aggression.
5. Have a teacher-led class discussion about the data they collected and their conclusions.

**Activity 5.4: Students will create graphs of the data they collected on aggression in cartoons.**

1. Enter the students' totals on the **Class Video Form** and have the students calculate the class average.
2. Distribute **HANDOUT 4: Cartoons and Aggression Class Average Bar Graph** to each student and have them create a graph on the amount of physical aggression observed in the videos. (You can also show this form on a projection screen and do this as a whole class activity or give students the task of creating a graph without specifying that it should be a bar graph.)

**Activity 5.5: Class Discussion & Identify Main Problems**

1. Have a class discussion about what they learned from the articles and any problems they identified. Have students find information in the text that supports their position.
2. Ask students what they learned from the data collection or articles that they can relate to their own experiences with screens (e.g., video games and movies). Ask students what impact they think aggression in videos can have on young children?

# Preschoolers Behaving Badly: Expulsions Rise

By SUSAN DONALDSON JAMES Jan. 24, 2008 —

Janine Butler, a 28-year-old New Jersey teacher, knows something about out-of-control students. One girl threw objects, threatened Butler with knives and tried to bite her. The final straw came when another student scratched and hit her.

"No one would do anything," said Butler, who eventually quit. "I felt alone."

Tantrums, aggression, biting and kicking are becoming increasingly common in preschool, according to child development specialists. With bad behavior on the rise, so are preschool expulsions, according to a Yale University study published earlier this month.

Walter Gilliam, director of the Center in Child Development and Social Policy, told ABCNEWS.com that he didn't set out to study preschool expulsions. But when he was analyzing prekindergarten policies at 3,898 schools in 40 states, he found expulsion rates three times higher than for older grades.

Researchers identified a wide range of anti-social behavior from cutting computer cords as a way to "liberate the mice" to hair-pulling. Biting was the most common offense.

"Nobody knows why," Gilliam said. "A lot of people blame parents. A lot of people blame the schools or an education system that pushed programs to preschool that are not developmentally appropriate. Now the stakes are higher in preschool."

He concludes that expulsions set children up for educational failure and recommends better teacher training, smaller classes and greater classroom support from psychologists and social workers.

"We agree with the findings," said Don Owens, spokesman for the National Association for the Education of Young Children, who said many parents were afraid to talk openly with the media about their children's expulsions for fear of branding them.

Some studies show that aggression in preschool may be an indicator of delinquency and crime later on, according to a policy report by the National Institute for Early Education Research, which helped fund the Yale study.

Many teachers, like Butler, worry that some children lack the social skills required to learn. Most of the nation's preschools are run privately and are not obligated to serve a difficult child, said Karen Hill Scott, a Los Angeles development psychologist and researcher.

"If the child is a problem, they don't have to support them," said Scott. "Public schools have to figure out a way to manage them."

The rise in socially aggressive children is a "warning sign" that reflects directly on parenting, according to Scott.

## Media Violence and Young Children

Cartoons offer colorful action, and toddlers will be attracted to them, but many contain a high degree of violence. Children who watch high levels of media violence are more likely to be aggressive. In 1956, researchers looked at the behavior of children watching TV. Half watched a violent cartoon and the other half watched a non-violent cartoon. During play time, children who watched the violent cartoon were much more likely to hit other children and break toys.

Over the last sixty years there have been hundreds of studies that have documented that exposure to violence in television can contribute to aggressive behavior, desensitization to violence, and fear of being harmed. One study conducted in 2009, *Exposure to Media Violence and Other Correlates of Aggressive Behavior in Preschool Children*, L. Daly, L. Perez, *Early Childhood Research and Practice*, found that watching aggressive television programs was related to aggression during free play. Parents were surveyed about their child's favorite programs and videos. Television programs and videos were rated for violence. Observations of the children's interactive play were coded prosocial, assertive, and verbal and physical aggressive. The study showed that preschool children who watched the most media violence were the most aggressive during free play. The most common type of aggression was the use of physical force. For example, if a child had an object that another child wanted, the second child would hit or shove the first child and take the object. The findings showed both boys and girls watched the same amount of violent programs but boys were 3 times more aggressive.

The National Television Violence Study is the largest content analysis undertaken to date. It analyzed programming over three TV seasons from 1994 to 1997. Among the findings:

- Nearly 2 out of 3 TV programs contained violence, averaging about 6 violent acts per hour.
- Violence was found to be more prevalent in children's programming (69%). Children's shows featured more than twice as many violent incidents.

The average American child will witness 200,000 violent acts on television by age 18. Kids may become desensitized to violence and more aggressive. TV violence sometimes begs for imitation because violence is often promoted as a fun and effective way to get what you want. Young kids are particularly frightened by scary and violent images. Telling kids those images aren't real won't console them, because they can't distinguish between fantasy and reality. Behavior problems, nightmares and difficulty sleeping may be the result of media violence.

## **Early Exposure to Media Violence and Later Child Adjustment,**

Fitzpatrick, Caroline PhD; Barnett, Tracie PhD; Pagani, Linda S. PhD,

### **Abstract**

**Objective:** The extent to which early childhood exposure to violent media is associated with subsequent adverse child functioning remains disconcerting. In this study, we examine whether preschool child exposure to what parents generally characterize as violent television programming predicts a range of second-grade mental health outcomes.

### **Methods:**

Participants are from the Quebec Longitudinal Study of Child Development (N = 1786). At 41 and 53 months, parents reported whether the child had viewed television shows and videos consisting of what they judged as violent content.

**Results:** According to parents, children watched on average 1.8 hours of mixed programming per day. Parent-reported child exposure to televised violence was associated with teacher-reported antisocial symptoms, emotional distress, inattention, and lower global academic achievement, in second grade. Violent television viewing was also associated with less child-reported academic self-concept, and intrinsic motivation in second grade. Effects remained significant after adjusting for preexisting child and family characteristics such as baseline child aggression.

**Conclusions:** This prospective study suggests risks associated with early childhood violent media exposure for long-term mental health in children. These findings, suggesting relationships between early childhood violent media exposure and negative socio-emotional and academic outcomes, support the notion that access to early childhood violent television represents a threat to population health and should be discouraged by adult caregivers.

**Early Exposure to Media Violence and Later Child Adjustment,** Fitzpatrick, Caroline PhD; Barnett, Tracie PhD; Pagani, Linda S. PhD, *Journal of Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics*: May 2012 - Volume 33 - Issue 4 - p 291–297

## Screen time linked to psychological problems in children

Children who spend longer than two hours in front of a computer or television screen are more likely to suffer psychological difficulties, regardless of how physically active they are.

The PEACH project, a study of over a 1,000 children aged between ten and 11, measured the time children spent in front of a screen as well as their psychological well-being. In addition, an activity monitor recorded both children's sedentary time and moderate physical activity. The results showed that more than two hours per day of both television viewing and recreational computer use were related to higher psychological difficulty scores, regardless of how much time the children spent on physical activity.

The authors of the report, published in the November edition of the American journal *Pediatrics*, conclude that limiting children's screen time may be important for ensuring children's future health and well-being.

Lead author Dr. Angie Page, said: "While low levels of screen viewing may not be problematic, we cannot rely on physical activity to 'compensate' for long hours of screen viewing. Watching TV or playing computer games for more than two hours a day is related to greater psychological difficulties irrespective of how active children are."

Children's psychological well-being was assessed on the basis of a strengths and difficulties questionnaire which rated their emotional, peer, conduct and hyperactivity problems. The children were asked to rate a series of statements as true on a three-point scale, varying from not true, to somewhat true to certainly true. Statements to assess their emotional well-being included; 'I am often unhappy, down-hearted or tearful', while statements to assess their peer problems included; 'I am usually on my own', 'I generally play alone or keep to myself'.

This work was supported by the World Cancer Research Fund (WCRF UK) and the National Prevention Research Initiative.

## HANDOUT 1: Instructions on Taking Notes Based on the Cornell Method

Write the Title or Main Topic

Write Your Name and Date

**Step 2.** After the lecture or after you've completed the reading write key words or phrases for the main ideas or important information.

You can even include a small drawing that is a cue for the key ideas.

Write your key words next to the notes in the right column.

Another technique is to develop questions based on the notes in the right column.

Writing questions help strengthen memory and develop higher levels of understanding.

**Step 1.** Write notes when listening to a lecture or reading. Use short sentences or even fragments. If reading, you may wish to skim the article first, underlining key ideas.

Notes can be an outline or bullet points. You will have to write small and neatly.

Focus your notes on major topics and subtopics and avoid writing every word your instructor says or every word in a sentence you've read.

**Step 3.** Summarize the article in 2 or 3 sentences using your own words. Think about how you would explain to someone else what the lecture or article was about.

**Step 4.** Review – Read the right side of the paper with your notes first. Then cover the right side and then looking at the left side, say aloud, the explanations that go with the key words in your own words. If you've written questions answer the questions, facts, or ideas, in your own words.

## HANDOUT 2: Taking notes Based on the Cornell method

TOPIC:		NAME:	
		DATE:	
Keywords, pictures or questions	Note Taking – Use short sentences or even fragments		
Summary			



## CLASS VIDEO OBSERVATION FORM

Enter each student's total for each behavior. Have the students figure out a class average. There is only space for 15 students. Make two copies and combine Total Numbers to find the class average.

Video # 1: Winnie the Pooh																		
	STUDENTS																	
Aggressive Behavior	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Hit, kick, punch, slap, throw objects																		

	STUDENTS																
Aggressive Behavior	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	TOTAL	# of Students	Average		
Hit, kick, punch, slap, throw objects																	

Video # 2: Power Puff Girls																		
	STUDENTS																	
Aggressive Behavior	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Hit, kick, punch, slap, throw objects																		

	STUDENTS																
Aggressive Behavior	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	TOTAL	# of Students	Average		
Hit, kick, punch, slap, throw objects																	

# HANDOUT 4: Cartoons and Aggression Class Average Bar Graph

40				
38				
36				
34				
32				
30				
28				
26				
24				
22				
20				
18				
16				
14				
12				
10				
8				
6				
4				
2				
0				
	<b>Agg. Beh</b>		<b>Agg Beh</b>	
	<b>Video 1</b>		<b>Video 2</b>	