

## ABC State Research Pack for Individual Teacher

1. Download Pack. Read through. You are free to use the ABC state intervention as you see fit. The following steps means data collected may be used for academic purposes.
2. Take snapshot of academic information on the students (ATL, grades, behaviour). If you decide to share your experience for research evidence, then this data will be needed.
3. Optional: Deliver questionnaire to students. Requires computers. 15 mins class-time. This is not essential but it might provide insight into why a class changes its state. You are asked to complete your own questionnaire. The questionnaires are a self-evaluation of social intelligence, time orientation, and data to construct a sociogram.
4. Introduce ABC State Intervention to students. See Basic Rules. Commence period of research (half-term, term).
5. Record ABC State of class daily (taking seconds), and optionally record salient experiences in journal (teachers and students).
6. After intervention period, take snapshot of academic information on the students (ATL, grades, behaviour).
7. Ask students whether anyone wants to opt-out of the research: note names and their data will not be included in the research.
8. Check with head of school that school data (ATL, grades, behaviour) can be shared with researcher.
9. Send data to researcher: before and after data snapshots, record of ABC state, any opt-out students, and any commentary.

### Data Collection

- ATL: Attitude-for-Learning or equivalent, teacher's evaluation of students attitude, common to many schools
- Grades: based on departmental policy; please include departmental legend
- Behaviour: please use the school's formal data on student behaviour and include legend
- Optional Questionnaire: [Student Questionnaire](#), and [Teacher Questionnaire](#)
- Event Diary: record of class ABC state and optional commentary; use the [online form](#) (send request to researcher to get a personalised form)

### Researcher Involvement

The researcher ([David Mendes Pinto](#)) is available online to assist in conducting any of the steps. Only information carefully collected according to the process above can be included in analysis and contribute to an academic paper.

Data collected in this way may provide sufficient evidence for a paper, but transferability and dependability of results will be improved if the researcher can support in-person; see School and Researcher Delivery for an example of what is possible.



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# ABC State Research

self-discipline through social-responsibility

## School Delivers Intervention to Classes

1. Agree on specific classes or year group who will conduct the research, and duration. Researcher provided with academic information on the students (ATL, grades, behaviour).
2. Researcher present research intervention at staff meeting or CPD time to ensure staff are comfortable delivering and recording the research Intervention. 20+ mins.
3. (If year group, Researcher presents research to students at year meeting.)
4. Teachers deliver questionnaire to students. Requires computers. 15 mins class-time. Introduce ABC State Intervention. Commence period of research.
5. Teachers record ABC State of class daily (taking seconds), and optionally record salient experiences in journal (teachers and students). Researcher is available online to assist.
6. Midway through research duration, researcher visits school to check in with students and staff; restate ABC State Intervention. 5-20 mins class-time.
7. After duration (half-term, term), teachers deliver concluding questionnaire. Requires computers. Teachers (optionally Researcher too) gather salient experience from students and teachers. 15-30 mins class-time. Researcher provided with ABC state of classes and academic information (ATL, grades, behaviour).
8. Researcher invited to school (3, 6 or 12 months) for follow-up meeting with head teacher, optionally staff and students.

## Researcher Delivers to Classes

The method is almost identical except the reduced time taken to share the research intervention with staff (step 2) since explanations when researcher delivers the Intervention (steps 4 through 7) may suffice. Regarding ethics and parental consent, parents may be notified via email/newsletter:

[school] is partnering with the Information School at The University of Sheffield to conduct research on 'Self-Discipline through Social-Responsibility'. All data gathered will be anonymised. Please reply if you would prefer your child's participation be removed from the research data.

## Teachers Follow Online Research Pack (see following for more detail)

Similar to above, where individual teachers trial ABC State with online support from Researcher. Sharing of student information with Researcher (steps 1 and 7) must be ratified by Head.

## OVERALL AIM

Test whether ABC Class improves metacognition and social cohesion in standard school classes. Establish ABC State as a procedural basis for a 'Self-Discipline System' to complement standard Consequence Systems.



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# ABC State Intervention

self-discipline through social-responsibility

social-responsibility through self-discipline

## Basic Rules (for students)

ABC State is described to the students as follows:

- A-state is where everyone has their self-discipline.
- B-state is where someone loses their self-discipline (not paying attention, not working, dropping litter) but when someone points it out they correct it (pay attention, do work, pick up litter).
- C-state is when someone loses their self discipline, it is pointed out, and they continue. Then the teacher is empower (by government) to enforce sanctions.

ABC refers to the whole class dynamic, not the individual. Teachers record the state of the class after every lesson and **prepare for that state of class in the following lesson**. C-state is a normal class where teacher implements Consequence discipline system.

## Observable Consequences

- A-state is where *everyone* can conduct rote/drill and more complex social engagements (group work etc), and perform a greater variety of activities due to quick turnarounds.
- State of the class determines teaching role: disciplinarian (C) or learning facilitator (A).
- C-state have the 'locus of control' centered on the teacher; A-state has a distributed 'locus of control' centered in the collective of students.
- Classes tend to fluctuate between AB or BC.
- A-state classes are positively self-organised, B-state may be influence by strong personalities; adult guidance helps a class shift from C to B to A state by reflecting on collective social skills.
- Teacher are *not* responsible for state of class; they are only responsible for behaviour if C-state, otherwise for AB-classes the **responsibility is on students**. Although the teacher is discouraged from employing Consequence system for AB classes, obviously at all times the teacher is ultimately accountable for safety in class.
- C+ is a well-disciplined class, not to be confused with A-state; C+ is an equally valid 'ideal' state where the 'threat' of Consequence system is present but not executed.

## Explanations (Why ABC State Works)

- AB-classes rely on interdependence (Deutsche 1945) and cooperative learning (Johnson 2003)
- Provides language and conceptual framework for social self-organisation (Lepskiy 2015)
- ABC is not a 'reward', but a simultaneous emergent state of autopoiesis (Maturana 1980)
- Participants enjoy a 'before-the-fact' sensitivity, a conjoint journey of discovery (Shotter 2016)
- Social complexity is immersive and beyond computational (Anderson 2014)
- The collective state determines teacher role, enabling transformative praxis (Bhaskar 2000)
- Every class is action learning/research where teacher is researcher (Reil 2019)



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## Hints (for Teachers)

- Prepare standard classes for C-state, and set more challenging tasks (requiring greater social cohesion or self-discipline) for A-state classes; the intrinsic reward is in the enjoyment of the capacity of the class to do more socially demanding tasks.
- Share how you feel genuinely in AB-state; relate more as equals rather than roles.
- Don't get annoyed if students fail to live up to their promises; do show disappointment if you genuinely would like to operate in AB-state classes.
- If a class drops state (eg B to C), don't name individuals; just refer to some people ('they know who they are') who are not pulling their weight; it a collective learning opportunity.
- Do not use C-state as 'punishment'; consider C+ state of 'normal' well-run classes.
- Do not consider B or A state as 'reward' or a 'grade'; if a class sustains high self-discipline, the emergent state of the class is A or B.
- Reinforce the collective trust engendered by students who co-operate to sustain AB classes.
- Determining the state ABC is part of the intervention; you have final say, but base it on your evaluation of your own behaviour (whether you had to use discipline, or you were stressed, or you had to 'compensate' for individual or the collective behaviour) and how well the class actually organised themselves.
- Performance is more important than result; improving performance in every class will lead to better performance during exams, and thus results.
- Stabilise periods of 20 mins 'solid' work (drills, exercise, silent individual work) ensuring everyone starts and stops together; reward with more enjoyable social activities. Combine with accelerated learning so that particularly challenging skills and tasks are achieved; this reinforces the benefit of deliberate, conscientious effort in short bursts.
- Witness interpersonally intelligent students (naturally social), perhaps help class acknowledge them; more so with intra-personally intelligent students.
- General rule of thumb: for loud students to learn to be quieter and -- just as important -- for quiet students to be louder; hearing new voices in the class is naturally stimulating.

## Social Cohesion (Potential Wider-scale Activities)

- Teams by friendship, by ability, by optimum teamwork.
- Scores for teams, rows, columns; deriving individual 'team-working' score.
- Data on different class states which an individual participates in, enabling student reflection.
- Swap teachers to test independence and cohesion of class state.
- Student-led projects.
- Group tests, rather than individual ones.
- Bespoke class arrangements: by ability/topic (eg for exam preparation), as individuals/teams.
- Whole year state, whole school state; which school might achieve consistent A state?
- Year 7 same class across multiple subjects; year 8 randomly mixed; potentially year 9 self-selecting or teacher-selected.
- Specialisation of role, 'Classroom Coordinator', whose sole role in form, PSHE or during classes is to facilitate social learning by sharing metacognitive, collaborative and mediation skills.



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