

## Abnormal Psychology

### Chapter 13 Case Study - Billy

*"It wasn't three seconds and he was out of his seat again," exclaimed Miss Harrington, the extremely frustrated 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher. She was seated at a small, round table in the school library along with the school psychologist and Mrs. Johnson, Billy's mother. All Billy knew was that he was in trouble again. In fact, he practically had his own private seat in the vice principal's office he was there so much. His mother had to take off work again and he knew he would really be in trouble this time. After all, he really didn't mean to spit on the floor. It just came out before he could stop it. So what if that stupid "Jenny Jones" got a little on her foot. She was retarded anyway. Billy hated Jenny because she was the teacher's pet. She never got into trouble.*

*Billy, a "stocky" ten-year-old, lives at home with his mother and three older brothers. Until this year, he was an average student who got along well with everyone in the class. He never got in trouble. Just before classes started last fall, his parents separated after his dad was caught cheating on his mother with a woman at work. Since that time, he has become increasingly distractible and disinterested in classroom activities. Much to the frustration of Miss Harrington, Billy often wanders around the classroom bothering people at other tables. It seems that he just can't sit still. While he can stay focused on his work for a couple of minutes, it isn't long until he needs a drink or has to sharpen his pencil. That wouldn't be so bad, but, he never is able to get back to his seat and finish his work. He usually ends up knocking one of his friends on the back of the head with his pencil or shooting baskets with wadded up paper. As a result, he is usually sent to see Mr. Simmons, the Vice Principal. The last time he got in trouble, it was because he was verbally disruptive during math drills. He told Mr. Simmons, that he raised his hand, but, his mouth would answer before he could stop it. He didn't mean to shout out the answers before everyone else. Billy asked if he could go back to class. When released, he slowly walked back to the classroom. If he hadn't heard the bird singing in the tree, he would have been back sooner. When he heard the chirping, he stopped and watched the blue jay for several minutes.*

*When Billy got home that afternoon, he was grounded again. His mom got even angrier when she couldn't tell if Bill was listening to her. He kept looking "glassy-eyed" when she was attempting to find out if he took his medication. Billy is supposed to take Ritalin for ADHD, but, he always forgets to go to the nurse at lunch time. His mother makes sure that he takes it in the morning, but, as the nurse is busy with all of the children who need medication, he often misses the lunch-time dose. He couldn't remember if he took it that day or not. Besides, he didn't like*

*taking Ritalin. It made him “jittery” and “itchy” inside. His mother finally gave up and told him to go do his homework. Billy quickly looked through his backpack, but, he had left his papers at school again. Now, his mother was really mad! Why couldn’t he be like he used to be? He never forgot things. He never got in trouble at school. He was a good kid, then.*

Please answer the following questions:

1. Was Billy correctly diagnosed with ADHD? Why or Why not? Please be specific. You will need to go through the diagnostic criteria in the text on page 504 to determine if they were met.
2. What do we know about the effects of genetics on the cause of ADHD?
3. Were Billy’s side effects typically of those found with the use of Ritalin? If not, what are the typical side effects?