Many African American adolescents who enter high school with low achievement are at-risk for being perceived as defiant and uncooperative by their classroom teachers. This generalized view of risk, however, offers little understanding of the differentiated behavior these students have with their teachers. The study followed 35 African American students, who have a history of low achievement, across multiple classrooms in their school day. Hierarchical linear modeling showed that there was greater variability in teacher-perceived defiance, cooperation, and office discipline referrals “within-student” compared with “between-students.” This shows that individual students tended to be perceived differently across their teachers. Similarly, the study found that students also tended to differentiate their teachers. Students who reported unfair treatment with a particular teacher were more likely to receive a discipline referral and be perceived as defiant and uncooperative by that teacher. Implications for a strengths-based approach to classroom behavior are discussed. © 2010 Wiley Periodicals, Inc.