Module One, Vignette Three

Hector was a 15 year- old male who lived in a home where there were frequent violent episodes between his mother and his mother's boyfriend. Mother has been seeing this man for the past year, prior to that time there were no reported areas of concern. These episodes involved mother's boyfriend using objects to hit the mother and weapons to threaten the mother and her children. It was not uncommon for these episodes to occur in front of the boyfriend's friends who often cheered him on and also threatened Hector to keep him quiet. Hector was placed in the home of a foster parent at the age of 16 after hospital staff notified child protection services upon mom's second hospitalization for the abuse. Hector's foster parents report that he is often not cooperative when they ask him to do something, instead of complying, he just sits there, ignoring them; they notice this particularly when his foster father gives him a directive. The foster parents often describe him as "shut down," expressing very little emotion. In addition, Hector does not spend much time with the family, but instead prefers to be alone in his room. This is a source of frustration for the family as they are an active family and enjoy spending time on family outings. At school, teachers report that Hector is never a problem in class, instead he's a very quiet youth who would rather remain quiet than participate in class. He is not doing well in school due to his lack of class participation and forgetting to turn in his homework assignments. Lastly, one of Hector's teachers is afraid he may be getting bullied on the way to school.

1.) What type of trauma did Hector experience? Acute, chronic, or complex

2.) Is Hector presenting with a survival in the moment response of fight, flight, or freeze?

3.) What situation at the foster home may be reminding Hector of his past trauma experience?

4.) How may Hector's behavior at the foster home have helped him survive his past experience with his mother's boyfriend?