

Case Study Part III

It was difficult at first to connect with my chosen student, Tibalt, since he was suspended for 10 days and was absent for two weeks. However, when the student returned he seemed more focused and glad to be back in school. I noticed that the student was more social with his fellow classmates. At the beginning of class he was more social with his classmates rather than sitting silently at his seat. Tibalt interacted with the other students. My results to connect emphatically with the student were that the student is starting to be more expressive and open. I have been asking the student more questions during passing time and asking questions after class about how he has been doing, how he feels, and about his interests. The student has been starting to be more open and replies with more varied answers. Tibalt started off with the usual “yes”, “no”, “good”, “bad” single word answers, but now has started to be more expressive by saying why he is bad and why he had a good weekend. For example, I asked him how his weekend went, and he said well because he went to see a movie over the weekend. I had designed a lesson with a power point with lots of pictures and animations to try to capture the attention and help visual learners. I ran the power point as the class read aloud the chapter. After the lesson I ask him about how he felt about the lesson. He said that he liked the pictures and asked me to help him since he didn’t understand the debate between Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson. He stayed during learning lunch to complete his class work assignment and asked many questions about the parts of the lesson that he didn’t understand. Learning lunch is during a student’s lunch period where they can come into the classroom to work on their missing assignments. During his first learning lunch back from suspension he was focused and tried his best to look up the answer in his textbook or use the smart board to scroll through the power point when I questioned him to check for his understanding. The following week I had changed my classes’ seats for the new

marking period. I moved Tibalt up to the front of the room, so I could check if he was paying attention and so that he could be closer to the board. I hoped that the move would help him have less trouble zoning out and help him feel more comfortable in asking questions. I noticed that he complained about his seat at first, but there was a change in his behavior. He was following along when we read and was focused on the class discussion the whole hour. I also started to employ Lemov's strategy of cold calling and pre-calling into my classroom. Since Tibalt does not volunteer answers in class, I used cold call to check his understanding and to make sure his attention was still on the lesson. It caught him by surprise the first time and tried his usual "I don't know", but he did go back to the section to find the answer. When I called on him a second time, he jumped into action and re-read the section to find the answer to the question I asked him. It took Tibalt awhile to answer as he searched, but eventually he answered the question. I gave encouragement and stated that his answer is correct and was a very important point. After I employed this strategy I have noticed that he has been following along more closely during the lessons and following along in the readings. He has also been listening more closely to the class discussions so that he does not miss a point given by the class. The student currently still has missing assignments and the second week he was back from suspension decided to not come to learning lunch to work on his missing assignments. However, another in my student who was going to attend learning lunch convinced Tibalt to stay. Tibalt stayed for learning lunch worked on his assignment and he started to ask me questions about college. The first thing he asked me about was whether or not dorms are expensive to live in. I told him that it was expensive and that college can be quite expensive. He expressed to me that since living in the dorms was expensive he would want to find a college close to home so that he could live at home and save on money. He said that he wanted to go to a good college, but one that was not too expensive. I found this to

be a great improvement in my relationship with Tibalt since he has never expressed to me his future plans without being prompted by a writing assignment. The other student at learning lunch started to talk to me about where I have visited around the world, and when I asked that student where he would like to visit, Tibalt joined our conversation by stating that he would like to travel, too. He didn't know where he would travel, but he said that he would like to travel someday. I have noticed that Tibalt has been much more energetic during class and does not zone out as much. He has been following along and asks questions when he does not understand something from the lesson. I have also seen improvements in the quality of his work that he turns in. He has not turned in an incomplete assignment yet since he has been back.

When I saw his mother during parent teacher conferences she was worried about his behavior and attention in class. She told me that he was still off his A.D.D. medication. I told her that Tibalt was doing well and was not a behavior problem at all. I told her that he was been starting to answer questions when called on and he was focused during class. I also told her that he has been attending learning lunch.

As I worked with Tibalt my negative feelings and hopelessness of connecting with Tibalt began to fade away. I was excited when he came to learning lunch and started sharing snippets of his future plans. I was also glad that he responded well to the cold calling and the seat change to the front of the room. As I worked with Tibalt it also did not take time away from my other students. It was helped me to improve my effectiveness in the classroom. I started to use cold calling and called on not only Tibalt, but other students as well. I began focusing my attention on the students who do not volunteer answers often in class. In the hour that Tibalt is in, almost all of my students now participate and volunteer answers on a daily basis. The students who fell through the cracks like Tibalt and would zone out have been focused. Other students have been

ready with an answer to provide or searches for the answer when called upon. Employing cold calling to get more participation from Tibalt has gotten me more participation from the whole class. The class now runs very smoothly and the class discussions are now not as dominated by the same group of students. Other students have been contributing their answers more.

The next time I run into a case like this in the future I will be sure to use cold calling to help guide the student's attention and help him/her feel a part of the lesson and class discussion. I will talk with the student, encourage the student, and call on them to help them feel wanted in the classroom and show that their thoughts and work is valuable. The cold calling has been working wonders in my classroom with students who are generally very quiet and has increased the participation level in my class. The class is much more energetic. I will be sure to employ this strategy throughout my teaching career. I will also be sure to listen to student suggestions and talk with students about their future plans to gain a better relationship and understanding with the student.