HOW TO WORK WITH A DIFFICULT STUDENT

by:

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One of the challenges of being a teacher is having to deal with difficult students. This student may not be a problem to other students, but seems to know just how to push your buttons. Sometimes they are the ones who intentionally ask questions that are irrelevant to your discussion or maybe they are those who always want to speak to you every minute of every day when you need some quiet time in school. How do you deal with them?

Well, there are instances where a difficult student in your class is a difficult student to other classes or even to those classes before you and so, as you approach their parents, it is not new to the parents that you are having a problem with their child. This maybe the reason why they are hesitant to listen to your concerns. Have you ever tried approaching the parents or guardians with understanding, as if whatever other teachers say about their child do not affect you? It may be the solution. Inform them that you want to know the student more so you can help him to excel in class. This could make parents or guardians be at ease to you and help you to deal with their child.

Another way is to make them your assistant. Students who are difficult tend to be that way because they feel that they are being stereo-typed as a trouble maker, so they make the most out of it to irritate teachers more as a sort of revenge. It has been an effective strategy for many teachers to turn these students to an assistant who do things for them, like running errands for them, asking them to do simple things for them or foe the class. In imitating this strategy, you might have the privilege to see how these once difficult students to become a more productive student in your class.
Also, an effective technique in dealing with difficult students is to have a one-on-one talk. Take time to have a heart-to-heart talk to your difficult student. The secret is making them feel that you care about him and that you like him although you do not like what he is doing in class. It is essential for that student to feel that you do not take him for granted, that he belongs to your class. Talk to him about what you expect about him in class. You have to give him guidelines to follow to make him improve in class. Tell him that he is accountable with the actions he will do but always make him feel that you are not giving up on him. You’ll never know, you might be only inspiration he needs to have a direction in life.

But, by doing all these techniques, your student might think he could do whatever he likes to do because you are on his side already. They must know their limitations. Children learn best in a structured environment where they develop a sense of safety and security. You must set rules to follow and be consistent with the consequences they will face in doing the opposite. You can have an agreement on the first day of class, on the punishments that will be fair for them. This way the students will learn what is expected of them, and they can’t say that it is not fair and just.

References: