Who is in my Pocket

This child appears to explore the unknown, questions the fabric of reality, and appears to enjoy the discovery of new ideas and entities. We will call this child Gin. He appears distracted, but confused when he enters class because he examines the environment upon entry. This child appears to love creative works because he spends his time exploring the wonders of his imagination and reality. He never speaks much, but he is patient and respectful. He seems to make lots of friends, but never seems to keep them for long because he roams from one group to the next and shows little attachment. Why does Gin choose not to do his work? All he does is draw creations all over his work. Now, we will explore his focus level and engagement with learning.

Gin appears to be focused, active with class discussions, and participates willingly in class and group discussions. However, he still chooses to illustrate pictures on his worksheets. Every assignment I give him results in no effort. What motivates this young child to accomplish tasks? I tried asking him questions to test his understanding of class content, and he demonstrates that he has learned the content during class lessons. However, his effort for practicing the content never happens. Gin has one mother, no siblings, and no father. The mother spends lots of time working, so Gin spends his time under the authority and watch of babysitters; this discovery is made possible from a discussion with the mother. Now, we will explore Gin’s personality.

Gin appears to be friendly enough, but what causes a young child to remain silent, respectful, and active in group learning, but never finish his class work? Gin does not appear to be bullied by others, he does not appear upset or scared, and he does not appear to be happy either. The only emotion I ever witness is a look of inquisitiveness, which explains his enthusiasm to learn in class. Gin shows all of the signs of wanting, being excited, and happy to learn. However, he just refuses to accomplish his assignments, which does not provide me with any evidence of his learning. I know Gin can learn, but how do I convince him to accomplish his tasks?

Learning Profile

This student has issues related to accomplishing tasks, which provide practice and evidence of learning, so according to the author, the best approach to encourage behaviour change is to change the environment. As an example, we can change the layout (desk layout) of the classroom, which might support behaviour alterations and motivation (Mckenna, 2011). Now, we will start to think of new ideas: It is possible that this student requires a more competitive area, but we want to avoid making it too competitive; how about we reward some students by recognizing their efforts in class. As an example, if a student answers a question correctly, we can tell them they did a good-job (this idea came from the group discussion) (J. Euraoba, personal communication, November 5, 2020). However, the best solution is to discuss ideas with the parents and the student because the parents or student can provide better insight into an ideal environment. Now, we will explore differentiation for instruction.

This student enjoys creating art, so we can focus on an arts-infused instruction strategy, and we can focus more on group projects and de-tracking; furthermore, group projects are achieved collectively, so if Gin has problems working independently, we can focus more on group or collective work (Boaler, 2016) (Aamodt, 2020). We can concentrate on providing art-based group projects, which might motivate Gin to accomplish the projects with his partners. We can build upon the idea of altering the classroom layout; as an example, we can move the desks into groups, and these desk-groups will make up the teams for future art-infused team-projects (Mckenna, 2011). Also, we can focus on inquiry based instruction, too, because it provides more opportunity for group-work (Aamodt, 2020). Thinking of new ideas, we can focus on creating study-buddies, which are collective-forms of minor tasks, so the students can work on small-tasks (like answering inquiry questions to a text) in their teams or groups, which will provide collective learning and discovery (Boaler, 2016, pp. 111 - 141). Now, we will explore ways to differentiate assessment.

Assessment differentiation is pretty straightforward because of the focus on arts-infused group-work, so we will focus on creating new ideas. We can start on assessing based on collective results; as an example, all members are given the same grade determined on what they accomplish. This will prevent group-related competition, and it will encourage group-members helping and supporting each other. This type of focus will result in less-written testing and more oral and visual presentation, which will allow the students to learn from each other, too (Boaler, 2016). Also, if a group’s performance is low, we can have a consultation with the members and switch-up the groups. Now, we will explore different ways to approach resources.

Gin seems to enjoy creativity, not automated worksheets, and resources will have to be selected based on the project being assigned, so if we focus on an arts-infused instructional strategy, we can provide more artistic resources. We can use or implement some aspects from inquiry, which will allow us to select from more varied resources, and we can avoid or minimise the use of individual worksheets or written assignments. As long as we focus on collective art-based projects, minor group-tasks, and implement inquiry when appropriate we can use creative resources (crayons, poster-paper, safe-glue, and etcetera), minimise text and written-strict resources, and maximize collaborative-art projects. Verbal and visual aspects to projects can be very useful for Gin and people similar to Gin, and visual-text combinations will be very effective, too. As educators, we can be supportive and caring mentors, so no student needs to experience being alone or hopeless, which teachers can accomplish because we develop natural-mentorships with our students (Luzius-Vanin, 2019, pp. 99 - 100).

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