

Transforming Behaviors

Lesson 1: Elementary Ed



NEW APPROACHES TO
CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT



Passions and Visions



- Why are we here?...

Today's class is organized as follows



- **Student profiles**
- **Prior assessments**
- **Scenes**
- **Role playing exercises**
- **New Approaches**
- **Transformations**

KI'ARRA



Profile



- African American
- Low-income
- Average test scores

Prior Assessment



- “Talks out in class”
- “Anger management problems”
- “Disruptive/non-compliant”

The Scene



- *[Ki'arra has been given her “3rd strike” in your class for eruptive behavior. (lashing out at other students during lecture) She is scheduled to be expelled from the after-school program and has been forbidden to attend your electronic music production class].*
- Ki'arra runs up to you crying, and pleads with you, “I can't get kicked out! Please! My parents will beat me up! Please don't kick me out! Please! I'm sorry! What can I do?”

Ideas?



- Imagine you are Ki'arra's teacher.
- How would you handle this situation?

Prior Assessment



What does this assessment communicate to you?

- *“Talks out in class”*
- *“Anger management problems”*
- *“Disruptive/non-compliant”*

New Approach



- What is Ki'arra's **strength**?
 - Leadership qualities
- What is Ki'arra's exhibited **need**?
 - *Pay attention to me!*
 - ✦ Solo recording session
 - ✦ 'Ki'arra Day'
- **Reframe:** *What are her unique skill sets? How can they contribute to the whole?*
 - Recording Coach
 - "More Chutzpa!!!"



The Transformation



Discussion



JAYLEN



Profile



- African American
- Highest math scores in his age group
- Low-income: poverty level

Prior Assessment



- “Talented and gifted”
- “Severe trauma”

The Scene



- *[You are leading a creative writing class. Students have been asked to write a story about something that is important to them].*
- Jaylen has been separated from the group by his main teacher. His desk is now in the corner of the room because he's seemingly unable to control his *inappropriate outbursts*.
- Every teaching assistant in the room has approached Jaylen, asking him what he wants to write about, offering him suggestions.
- Jaylen is noticeably guarded, overwhelmed from the barrage of *positive encouragement*.
- **Note: Jaylen has a very active brain. He makes complex origami just to keep himself occupied in class.**

Ideas?



- Imagine you are Jaylen's teacher.
- How would you handle this situation?

New Approach



- Signs and signals
 - Jaylen's body language indicates he's on 'lock-down' and he's not going to let anything else in.
- Change tactics
 - Try something drastically different. Shift the current relationship dynamic: ***Persistent Teacher vs. Reluctant Student.***

Role Reversal



T = Teacher

S = Student

TAS = Teacher as Student

SAT = Student as Teacher

Beginning Scene

(Jaylen is quietly working on his origami, avoiding eye contact. His body is tense and guarded.)

Role Reversal



T: “Okay, Jaylen. Role reverse!”

S: “Huh?”

T: “You be the teacher and I’ll be the student.”

S: “Um...okay.”

(Teacher and student switch places)

Role Reversal



TAS: “Mr Katz, I don’t know what to write.”

SAT: “Haha!”

TAS: “And do you have to loom over my shoulder like that? It’s overwhelming me.”

SAT: “Oh, sorry... *Jaylen.*” 😊

T: Role reverse!

Role Reversal



T: “Sorry, I didn’t know I was overwhelming you.”

S: “That’s okay.”

T: I wonder how I can help you choose a topic for your story...”

S: “Maybe you could just ask *Jaylen* what his interests are.”

T: “**Role reverse!**”

Role Reversal



TAS: (*stepping out of role*) “Go ahead and ask.”

SAT: “What are you interested in, Jaylen?”

TAS: “Well, I like origami, and making fart noises in class when I’m bored.”

SAT: “That’s not an interest!”

TAS: “Hey, you’re the teacher. You’re supposed to be nice.”

SAT: “Oh yeah... Maybe you could write about pirates.”

TAS: “Yes, pirates! I love pirates!... *Right?*” 😊

S: “Right.”

T: “**Role reverse!**”

Role Reversal



T: “So, how should our pirate story start?”

S: “Once upon a time, there was a band of pirates...”

T: “Go ahead and write it down.”

S: “Okay... who wore really cool backpacks.”

T: “**Role reverse!**”

S: “**No, I got this!**”

T: “Oh... should I leave?”

S: “Yeah, I’m in the middle of writing a story.” 😊

T: “Of course. Far be it from me to interrupt.” 😊

The Transformation



- As I crept away, Jaylen wrote several paragraphs about *Pirates*. I informed the other teachers that he was ***not to be disturbed***.
- According to his teacher, this was the first time Jaylen had worked independently on a lesson.

Discussion



GABRIEL



Profile



- Native American
- High academic achievement
- Low-income

Prior Assessment



- “Class Clown”
- “Bully”
- “Troubled Youth”

Scene 1



- *[It's Day 2 of your Myths and Legends class. Students have been asked to write a legend about themselves in 3rd person narrative.]*
- You ask Gabriel to read from today's PowerPoint on *community building*. He says he has a hard time reading, so you help him sound out the words, making a point about *inclusion*. When the slide is complete, Gabriel laughs out loud. He can read perfectly well. **You've been had!**

Ideas?



- Imagine you are Gabriel's teacher.
- How would you handle this situation?

Reactions vs. Responses



- Gabriel was kicked out of class.
- This felt like a *failure* at the time, but it motivated me to respond differently to the next situation...

Scene 2



- Gabriel is sent to you at lunch to discuss his behavior in class this morning.
- **Note: Technically, you can't give advice, counseling, etc. w/o out permission from a parent or a tribal elder.**

Ideas?



- Imagine you are Gabriel's teacher.
- How would you handle this situation?

New Approach



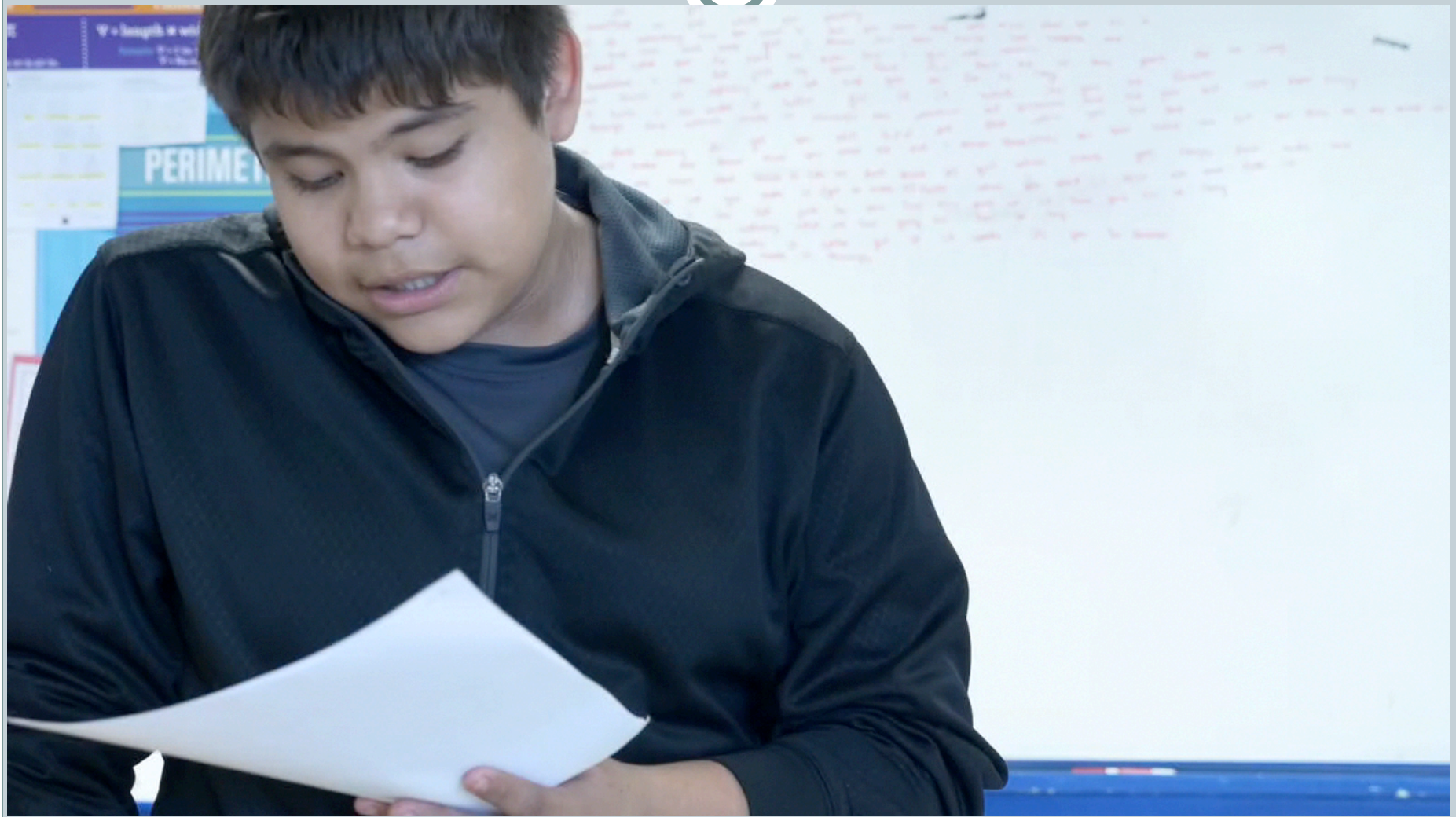
- **Full Transparency**
 - “Your principle told me that you’re one of the smartest kids in school. That was a pretty good trick in class today...”
- **Accountability**
 - “Do you see how it was hurtful? How?”
- **Engagement**
 - “Can you think of a way that you can feel powerful without taking power away from *me*?”
- **Mirroring**
 - “I’m going to sit here and eat this sandwich while you come up with an IEP for yourself.” (Giving him some ‘push back’ and responding to his need to be challenged)

The Transformation



- Gabriel said he needed me to engage with him more often, or he would likely resort to picking on people.
 - *“I’m not mean, I just get so BORED!”*
 - Gabriel became my student teacher.
 - And, rest assured, he read **ALL** the PowerPoints from then on.
- 😊

Gabriel the Tiger



Classroom management



- What is the secret to classroom management?

Student Engagement!



But wait, how do we engage students again?



- Observe
- Connect
- Respond
- Reassess
- [Repeat]