

Chapter 15

YouTube in the Classroom?

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Among Mrs. Grant's 22 first graders, ten are English language learners, while another two are autistic and have special needs. One of the autistic students is physically and verbally aggressive. Mrs. Grant realized that the classroom had many obstacles to overcome before becoming an emotionally and physically safe place for all the students. Mrs. Grant played a video explaining the importance of classroom rules. She showed another YouTube video showing students following their classroom rules.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Classroom climate can make or break a student's ability to be successful in school. It is the classroom teacher's responsibility to establish a positive learning environment. This environment should be physically and emotionally safe for all students. However, with the influx of special needs students into the regular education classroom, the challenge of providing a positive classroom climate is greater now than ever before. Students who do not feel physically and emotionally safe will find it impossible to focus on academics or relationships with others. Teachers need a deliberate and specific plan to teach and foster respectful and caring behavior. Helping students to develop these quality attitudes will result in greater academic

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achievement. It will also result in learners being able to get along with each other in school now and later in the work place. Helping students understand traits such as respect, integrity, safety, and effort, will have a lasting impact on their lives. Researchers find that high quality schools are characterized by supportive school climates. Supportive school climates promote resilience—the ability to rise above at-risk factors—in students.

Teachers must reach out for resources that will speak to the students of today and incorporate those resources into the classroom. Video which supports positive, caring and respectful behavior is one resource that can help a teacher establish the positive classroom climate she knows her students need.

Video is available to classroom teachers through sites like TeacherTube and YouTube. YouTube offers a great selection of educational videos and YouTube videos stream faster than the TeacherTube videos. Founded in 2005, YouTube is the main provider of online video in the United States. A downside of YouTube video is the advertisement that plays ahead of the video. Additionally, some of the advertisements are not appropriate for student viewing.

Another video resource is Discovery Education streaming, which was created by the Discovery Channel. It is a dynamic video resource which offers education videos to students of all grade levels.

TeacherTube is a video sharing website whose main goal is to provide an online community for sharing instructional videos. It was launched in 2007 by Jason Smith, a Texas school superintendent, along with his wife Jodie Smith and brother, Aaron Smith. As of October 2010, TeacherTube has over 725,000 educational videos. It has been enjoyed by educators for whom YouTube content has been blocked by campus firewall and other filtering systems or who work for a campus that does not own a subscription to Discovery Education streaming or other video archives.

THE CASE

Mrs. Grant has a class of 22 first graders. Ten of the students are English language learners, while another two are autistic and have special needs. One of the autistic students is physically and verbally aggressive. The class has 13 boys and 8 girls. She realized that the classroom had many other obstacles to overcome before becoming an emotionally and physically safe place for all the students.

During the first three weeks of school the aggressive autistic student screamed, dumped books from student baskets, poured water on the student tables and student work, and ran from the room to escape correction. Mrs. Grant was advised by others in her school that the relationship building activities she had planned for the class would not work with this student. In addition, there were several instances of sexually

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